**Tips for Teaching for Social Studies and English**

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# Classroom management & preparations

## Use an LMS such as Google Classroom

Google Classroom ties Google Drive, Google Docs, Sheets and Slides, and Gmail together to help educational institutions go to a paperless system. Google Calendar was later integrated to help with assignment due dates, field trips, and class speakers. Students can be invited to classrooms through the institution's database, through a private code that can then be added in the student's user interface, or be automatically imported from a school domain.

Teachers can create, distribute and mark assignments all within the Google ecosystem. Each class creates a separate folder in the respective user's Drive, where the student can submit work to be graded by a teacher. Assignments and due dates are added to Google calendar, and each assignment can belong to a category (or topic). Teachers can monitor the progress for each student by reviewing revision history of a document, and after doing the grading, teachers can return work along with comments.

There is also Google Meet, which lets teachers have a unique meet link within each class.

### Assignments

Assignments are stored and graded on Google's suite of productivity applications that allow collaboration between the teacher and the student or student to student. Teachers may choose a file that can then be treated as a template so that every student can edit their own copy and then turn it back in for a grade instead of having all students view, copy, or edit the same document. Students can also choose to attach additional documents from their Drive to the assignment.

### Grading

Teachers have the option to attach files to the assignment which students can view, edit, or get an individual copy. Students can create files and then attach them to the assignment if a copy of a file wasn't created by the teacher. Teachers have the option to monitor the progress of each student on the assignment where they can make comments and edit. Turned-in assignments can be graded by the teacher and returned with comments to allow the student to revise the assignment and turn back in. Once graded, assignments can only be edited by the teacher unless the student turns the assignment back in.

### Communication

Announcements can be posted to the class stream which can be commented on by students allowing for two-way communication between the teacher and students. Students can also post to the class stream but these posts won't be as high of a priority as an announcement by a teacher and can be moderated. Multiple types of media from Google products such as YouTube videos and Google Drive files can be attached to announcements and posts to share content. Gmail also provides email options for teachers to send emails to one or more students in the Google Classroom interface. Classroom can be accessed on the web or via the Android and iOS Classroom apps.

### Originality Report

Originality report lets educators and students see the parts and sections of the submitted work that contains the exact or similar wording to that of another source. For students, it highlights source materials and flags missing citations to assist the student in improving their writing. Teachers can also view the originality report, allowing them to verify the academic integrity of the student's submitted work. On G Suite for Education (free), teachers can turn on originality report for 3 assignments but have limited cloud storage. This restriction is lifted on G Suite Enterprise for Education.

### Archive Course

Classroom allows instructors to archive courses at the end of a term or year. When a course is archived, it is removed from the homepage and placed in the Archived Classes area to help teachers keep their current classes organized. Teachers and students can still view it but won't be able to make any changes to it until it is restored.

### Pros and cons

advantages: ease of use; universal device accessibility; use of Google Drive as an effective way for teachers to quickly share assignments with students; the paperless process meaning the end of printing, handing out, and potentially losing work; and the fast feedback system between students and teachers.

disadvantages: limited or no support for external files or services; lack of automated quizzes and tests; and a lack of live chats that can aid in feedback efforts.

## Prep involving the multiple intelligences

### Preparing the m.i. activity centers

Discuss higher-order thinking skills and the multiple intelligences frequently with the students. Charts can be posted in the classroom, and students can identify their own strengths and weaknesses (self-evaluation) and those of their classmates (peer evaluation).

Linguistic:

Book nook or library area (with comfortable seating), language lab (cassettes, earphones, talking books), and a writing center (writing implements and paper, computers, and printers)

Logical-Mathematical:

Math lab (calculators, manipulatives, math software) and science center (experiments, recording materials, science software)

Spatial:

Art area (paints, collage materials), visual media center (videotapes, slides, and graphics software), and visual-thinking area (maps, graphs, visual puzzles, picture library, three-dimensional building materials)

Bodily-Kinesthetic:

Open space for creative movement, hands-on center (clay, carpentry, blocks), tactile-learning area (relief maps, samples of different textures, sandpaper letters), and a drama center (stage for performances, puppet theater)

Musical:

Music lab (cassettes, earphones, music tapes), music performance center (percussion instruments, tape recorder, metronome, music software), and a listening lab (“sound” bottles, stethoscope, walkie-talkies)

Interpersonal:

Roundtable for group discussions, desks paired together for cooperative learning, a mailbox or email account for teacher-student communication (including questions from shy students about course content), a poster showing people cooperating, quotes on the wall about the power of groups, and a social area (board games, comfortable furniture for informal social gatherings)

Intrapersonal:

Study carrels for individual work, loft (with nooks and crannies for individuals to “hide” in and get away from people), and a computer hutch (for self-paced study)

Naturalist:

A plant center with gardening tools, and a map of the flora and fauna found across the world

### Music to set the mood

Avoid saturation and use the music for a limited amount of time.

Use music with wide variations and dissonance. Try Renaissance of the Celtic Harp, Blue Danube by Strauss, Romeo and Juliet, "None But the Lonely Heart Prelude" (Tchaikovsky), "Love-Death" (from Wagner's Tristan und lsolde, and Handel’s Water Music. Also consider using movie soundtracks. The best ones are the original scores, not the complication of pop, rap, or rock hits. Try "Lara’s Theme” from Dr. Zhivago; ”Love Theme" from Exodus; “Verismo,” Arias sung – and conducted - by Jose Cura; themes from My Own Story; Bravo Pavarotti; and Scheherazade. Experiment with music from “Terms of Endearment,” “The Mission,” “On Golden Pond,” “Shawshank Redemption,” and “Life Is Beautiful.” Composers such as Wagner, Chopin, and Tchaikovsky are excellent.

The best background music must be predictable, so that it does not distract. You might consider jazz instrumentalists like George Benson (Breezin’), Kenny G, or David Sanborn. Environmental music can work wonders, too. Consider using ocean sound, waterfall, or rain forest soundtracks. Composers (Baroque era) who have predictability and balance to their music are Bach (Brandenburg Concertos), Handel (Water Music), and Vivaldi (Four Seasons), Music for Accelerated Learning (Halpern), and Mozart (Eine Kleine Nachtmusik).

Music that stimulates creativity is different from the predictable and balanced genres for background. Use these expressive and innovative musical types to stimulate ideas before or during challenging tasks. Try John Cage (Three Constructions), Duke Ellington (The Ellington Suites) and Berlioz (Symphonie Fantastique). Also try Peter Gabriel (Passion), Isaac Hayes (Hot Buttered Soul, Bud Powell (The Best of Bud Powell on Verve), The Kronos Quartet (Pieces of Africa), and Beethoven (Fifth Symphony).

Use calming music too: piano music (Eric Satie), Bach's Goldberg Variations (Glenn Gould), Music for Airports (Brian Eno), Inner Rhythms (Randy Crafton), and all releases from David Kobialka on violin, Georgia Kelly on harp, and Michael Jones on piano.

Students can make requests with instrumental songs that make them feel calm, inspired, or energetic.

### Visuals to set the mood

* Students color-code what they learn.
* Students draw symbols to recall certain things more easily.
* Students start the day by mapping what they remember from yesterday. They can work with a partner. Then let them send out spies to learn from other maps and add to their map again.

### Kinesthetic learning to set mood

Encourage sculpture and clay models; they develop a great amount of visual-spatial skills.

Use more drama, theater, and role-plays. Get your class used to daily or at least weekly role plays. Have students do charades to review main ideas. Students can organize extemporaneous pantomime to dramatize a key point. Do one-minute commercials adapted from television to advertise upcoming content or review past content.

Do less sitting and more standing, leaning, squatting, walking, perching, or lying down. The body has a strong influence on what the brain can learn.

Ball-toss games can be used as review, for vocabulary-building, storytelling, or self-disclosure. Students can rewrite lyrics to familiar songs in pairs or on a team. The new words are a content review. Then they perform it with choreography. Play a tug-of-war game where everyone gets a partner and picks a topic from the list that all have been learning about. Each person has his own opinion about the topic. The goal is to convince their partner in a 30-second argument why their topic is more important. After the verbal combat, the issue has to be settled physically with a giant tug of war. All partners are on opposite sides.

Stretching: To open the class, or anytime that you need some more energy, get everyone up to do some slow stretching. Ask students to lead the group as a whole, or let teams do their own stretching, and rotate stretching leaders.

Invite students to come up to projected images, touch a detail they found interesting, and interpret it.

#### B.E.S.T. = Body, Energy, Space, Time

Body: Parts of the body; shapes; actions or movement

Energy: smooth or sharp; weight - heavy or light; tension: tight or loose and relaxed; flow - bound or free;

Space: level - low, medium, or high; direction - forward, backward, or sideways; size - large and small; place or destination; pathways - patterns made in the air or on the floor; focus - where the mover looks

Time: rhythm - pulse, beat; speed - time or tempo; accent - light or strong emphasis; duration - length; phases - movement sentences and patterns

#### Combining sports moves

Ask the students to pick any sport, from tennis to basketball. Then ask them to name some of the moves used in that sport and describe them. The students then show these moves on a dance floor, but either speeded up or slowed down. Then combine the moves from two or three sports and you've got a series of movements that kids seem to like.

### Mult. intel. classroom checklist

Linguistic

How are spoken words used? Are the teacher’s words too complex or too simple?

How are students exposed to the written word? Are words represented on the walls (through posters or quotations)? Are written words presented through primary sources (novels, newspapers, etc.) or through textbooks and workbooks written by committees?

Is there too much “linguistic pollution” in class (endless exposure to dittos and busy work), or are students being empowered to develop their own linguistic materials?

Logical-mathematical

How is time structured in the classroom? Do students have opportunities to work on long-term projects without being interrupted, or must they continually break off their activities to move on to a new topic?

Is the school day sequenced to make optimal use of students’ attention spans (morning best for focused academic work, afternoon best for more open-ended activities), or do students have to perform under conditions that don’t match changes in their attention span?

Is there some consistency to school days (e.g. routines, rituals, rules, effective transitions to new activities), or is there a sense of chaos, of reinventing the wheel with the start of each new day?

Spatial

How is the classroom furniture arranged? Are there different spatial configurations to accommodate different learning needs (e.g. desks for written work, tables for discussion or hands on work, carrels for independent study), or is there only one arrangement (e.g. rows of desks)?

Is the room attractive to the eye (e.g., artwork on the walls), or is it visually boring or disturbing?

Are students exposed to a variety of visual experiences (e.g., optical illusions, cartoons, illustrations, movies, great art), or does the classroom environment function as a desert?

Do the colors of the room (walls, floors, ceiling) stimulate or deaden students’ senses?

What kinds of illumination are used (fluorescent, incandescent, natural)? Do the sources of light refresh students or leave them feeling distracted and drained?

Is there a feeling of spaciousness in the learning environment, or do students feel stressed in part due to overcrowding and lack of privacy?

Bodily-kinesthetic

Do students spend most of their time sitting at their desks with little opportunity for movement, or do they have frequent opportunities to get up and move around (e.g., through exercise breaks and hands-on activities)?

Do students receive healthy snacks and a well-designed breakfast or lunch during the day to keep their bodies active and their minds alert, or do they eat junk food during recess and have mediocre cafeteria meals?

Are there materials in the classroom that allow students to manipulate, build, be tactile, or in other ways gain hands-on experience, or does a “don’t touch” ethos pervade the room?

Musical

Does the auditory environment promote learning (e.g., background music, white noise, pleasant environmental sounds, silence), or do disturbing noises frequently interfere with learning?

How does the teacher use his or her voice? Does it vary in intensity, inflection, and emphasis, or does it have a dull monotone quality that puts students to sleep?

Interpersonal

Does an atmosphere of belonging and trust permeate the classroom, or do students feel alienated, distant, or mistrustful of one another?

Are there established procedures for mediating class members, or must problems often be referred to a higher authority (e.g., the principal) for resolution?

Do students have frequent opportunities to interact in positive ways (e.g., peer teaching, discussions, group projects, cooperative learning, or parties), or are students relatively isolated from one another?

Intrapersonal

Do students have opportunities to work independently, develop self-paced projects, and find time and space for privacy during the day, or are they continually interacting?

Are students exposed to experiences that heighten their self-concept (e.g., self-esteem exercises, genuine praise and other positive reinforcement, and frequent success experiences in their school work)?

Do students have the opportunity to share feelings in the classroom, or is the inner life of a student considered off-limits?

Are students with emotional difficulties referred to professional counselors for support, or are they simply left to fend for themselves?

Are students given authentic choices in how they are to learn, or do they have only two choices: “My way or the highway?”

Naturalist

Are students given an opportunity to do some of their learning outside of their school building in natural settings (e.g., field trips, gardening, class on the lawn), or do they remain isolated from the natural world during most of their in-school time?

Does the classroom contain any living things (e.g., pet visitors, aquarium, gerbil cage, plants, terrarium)?

Does the classroom provide windows that look out onto the sky, clouds, trees, lawns, or other natural phenomena?

## Seating LD students or those with behavioral problems

Have a method ready for matching students to a desk. Have a strategic location ready for students who need to be isolated. Place your desk close to students and frequently used materials and equipment, but far from the door in an area where you can view the entire classroom.

## Material for the walls

(Talk with the janitor about what you want saved on the whiteboard.)

### In general

* A big welcome
* School schedule
* Emergency evacuation map
* Faculty phone list
* Calendar
* Upcoming birthdays
* Extra-credit board
* Cafeteria menu
* Word wall for content
* Bellwork space for work to do right now
* Sign-out sheet
* A poster for silent signals
* Space for students to design
* Instructions for electrical equipment
* An example of the proper heading or style for papers to be done in class
* Attendance chart – have students slide over their names when they come in each day
* Materials related to the topic being studied (photographs, period clothing, etc.)
* Newspaper clippings and current events
* Word wall for conflict resolution and social-emotional learning vocabulary
* Assignments on overhead or whiteboard
* Daily agenda on overhead or whiteboard
* the enduring understandings, essential questions, criteria or scoring rubrics in student-friendly language, and also samples or models of student work
* Wall decorations, including posters emphasizing the benefits of cooperation and groups
* Classroom rules / behavior plan with positive and negative consequences
* Classroom guidelines - information on what to do and how to do it
  + Procedures for classroom routines and for any learning centers
  + Assigned duties
* Optional classroom management chart - poster board with student pockets and stoplights (everyone starts off on green; then yellow…)
* Students’ work - Cover one or more boards with colored paper and trim, and leave it bare.
  + Black out the students’ names (ask students in advance).
* Ways to contact you anonymously if students don’t want to approach you directly. Create a new email account, such as [FeedbackForMe@gmail.com](mailto:FeedbackForMe@gmail.com), and post the username and password on the wall so that students if they desire can give you specific and anonymous after-class feedback, about themselves, another student, or you yourself (positive or negative). You might also post here your mailing address at the school and encourage written anonymous feedback, which students could also just leave on your desk in a clear spot after folding it and putting your name on it.

### Next to the door in particular

Your name, room number, section or period, grade level and subject, seating assignment, and a welcome or greeting

### On the blackboard in particular

* Your name, room number, section or period, grade level and subject
* Seating assignment
  + Use alphabetical order. As they go to their assigned seats, inform them that they will find their first assignment at their seat. Tell them to start it immediately. It should be short, maybe interesting, easy to compete, and successful for all students.

### “Belonging versus Fitting In” (on a poster)

Belonging is being somewhere you want to be, and they want you.

Fitting in is being somewhere you want to be, but they don’t care one way or the other.

Belonging is being accepted for you.

Fitting in is being accepted for being like everyone else.

If I get to be me, I belong.

If I have to be like you, I fit in.

## Supplies

### Supplies students will need to get

2 highlighters; 4 pens; 4 #2 pencils; 1 eraser; 1 eraser pen; 1 composition notebook; 1 3-subject spiral notebook; a bookmark; 1 pack of 3x5 index cards; 1 handheld pencil sharpener; 1 12” ruler; packs of Post-it notes; 1 box of crayons for home use; 2 USB Flash Drives of 16 GB each (1 for home); and an accordion file (3-ring binders tend to break.)

### Teacher supplies

Learn about general supplies - procedure to requisition supplies, location of supplies, supplies with free access and those that require special permission. Ask if there is a teacher resource center (a supply center).

Keep all receipts for supplies that you have to purchase. Ask colleagues for the cheapest place. Get extra material for students who may not be able to afford materials or supplies.

Other supplies to consider: belt-pouch for wallet, transparency sheets for overhead, sponges for pencil-tapping, textbooks and supplementary materials, plan books, clock, attendance materials, paper clips, construction paper, manila folders, different kinds of tape, extra writing paper, grade book, rubber bands, stapler and staples, spare pencils, and overhead projector

#### For those without their own room

In your supply cart: transparency sheets, markers, water, paper towels, tissues, chalk, paper, paperclips, extra pens and pencils, file folders, large manila envelopes, rubber bands, color-coded folders for each section, overhead projector, LCD, cart, and a large sheet taped to the front of the cart for bulletin-board space.

Ask the early students to erase the boards, arrange chairs, and position the projector.

#### Health supplies for the classroom

Make sure the students know where these are: tissue box, hand sanitizer (Purrell), rubber gloves, first-aid kit, paper towel, mop, broom, and kitty litter in case a student vomits.

#### Other classroom supplies

* Reading materials: Newspapers, magazines, etc.
* Items about the topic being studied
* Ceiling projector or overhead projector
* Tennis balls on chair and table bottoms if the floor is not carpeted
* Clipboard
* Scissors
* Bucket with pre-sharpened pencils so students don’t have to sharpen pencils during class
* A checklist of things to have/get
* Chalk/whiteboard markers
* Flashlight for emergencies
* Student folders and shelving bins for class sections
* Mp3 recorder: After each class you can quickly record comments regarding 1-2 students and not be left high and dry when it is time to write comments at the end of a marking period.
* Butcher paper for costumes: Students can take a long strip (say, 6 feet long) and cut a hole in the middle for their head. Drape the remaining paper over the front and back of the actor, sandwich-board style. Then, draw the costume onto the butcher paper.

#### For the teacher’s desk

Obtain a teacher’s manual for the textbook. To minimize theft, place your desk far from the door. Only leave out those items you are willing to lose. If you want everything around your desk treated as personal property, state this when teaching class routines and procedures. Have a password for your computer and a locked drawer in the desk.

### Group supplies: tubs and folders

#### Group tubs

Group tubs are material tubs that are placed in the center of the group table. The tub can be anything from a decorated shoebox to a coffee can to a plastic tub with a lid. They are time-savers because they let groups quickly access and store the materials they need for their group projects and activities. Tape the list of materials on the inside lid or on the backside of the tub. Materials might include markers, scotch tape, scissors, a ruler, glue stick, and paper clips. Choose a color-code system and stick to it.

At the end of those classes that require the group tub, an assigned student (the “Materials Monitor”) puts the materials back into the tub and returns it to its place on the classroom shelf, close to where the group folders are.

#### Group folders

Have group folders for handouts, homework, and paper-based projects. The Materials Monitor distributes and collects these papers.

#### Sheet protectors

Copy any non-consumable handouts and/or put them into sheet protectors. Tell students not to write on these handouts as you need them for other classes, and collect them at the end of the activity for reuse.

## Paperwork

### School forms

* Forms for attendance, absenteeism, discipline, and tardiness
* Passes for free periods, lunch, health/nurse, library, hall, bathroom, and the office
* Schedules for lunch, gym, art, music, and the library
* Report cards/ comments
* Class rosters
* Class syllabus

Have students fill out the passes and then request your signature or stamped signature.

### Student folders

Keep complete and accurate records. Share these records with the parents. Use accordion folders with 10 to 14 slots to organize anything: attendance, excuse notes, lunch passes, health passes, report cards, comments, and discipline forms. Also make a file folder for each child for all parent/teacher communication.

### Wednesday going-home folder

Homeroom teachers should have a folder for each student. Put a sheet inside the folder listing the dates of each Wednesday, a place for comments, and parent signature. Any information that parents need to see could go home on Wednesday. This could include news about special events, permission slips for field trips, quizzes and tests that need to be signed, and notification of missing assignments. Hold the parents accountable for missing homework from earlier weeks. Then clear the missing assignments from previous weeks - not from the grade book but from the reminder list, at least once the parents have signed and returned the letter. Send the folder every Wednesday even if there is no specific item, but just to maintain the routine. For the tests and quizzes that parents receive, they can write their own comments before the work is added to the students’ portfolios.

### Student folders for study hall

Each student has a folder and is given a weekly chart. Each day they retrieve their folders when they enter study hall and record in 15-minute intervals what they are working on in that day. There is room to record if they leave the room for any reason. At the end of each week the charts are collected and kept in a binder.

### A teacher notebook

This helps you monitor the students’ notebooks. Here you record each notebook assignment, attach student handouts, store copies of content notes, and make annotations on the activities for future reference - notes on how they went, which groups or individuals had trouble with them and why, and what questions really worked to prompt good critical thinking. By keeping a master notebook, you have a visual record of what took place in class. If you incorporate details about the lesson objectives, standards addressed, materials needed, and procedures, the notebook will serve as your lesson-planning book as well. It is the ideal place to reflect on the outcome of lessons and to record ideas about how to make them more effective in the future.

### Substitute packet

Have a substitute packet available in case you are absent. Leave a tote bag for the substitute that includes your daily schedule, a list of good helpers, seating chart, lesson plans, building-wide consequences for rule violations, storybooks, worksheets that students have already done (they will serve as review), and the name of a staff member with whom substitutes can check with if they need help. When having a substitute, communicate to students the expectation that they are to behave for the substitute the same way they behave for their teacher. Ask a neighboring teacher to take the most difficult students while the substitute is in the classroom.

### Emergency lesson plans

These should not be bound by a certain time period.

### Roster sheet

Use this when the class has to do something. Make a class list with columns. Draw the necessary columns next to the students' names and assign headings for that specific list. It can be used to stay organized as students bring in supplies, money for field trips, and important signed forms.

### Note cards for calling on students

The first week of school, write students' names on 3"x5" note cards. When looking for "helpers," when taking turns reading, or answering questions, refer to the cards. This will give everyone an equal chance and keep them on their toes. Use a blank card to separate the beginning and end; when you get to the blank card, shuffle the cards before going on. It also cuts down on discipline problems because if students are not doing what they should be, then they forfeit their turn.

### The grade book

* Do not involve the class in the roll-taking procedures.
* Use MS Excel or PowerGrade. On Excel, keep a summary of what you did that day.
  + Sample categories: attendance, homework assignments, classroom work, test grades, skills mastered, project grades, extra-credit work, classroom behavior, and cumulative progress
  + 4 attendance categories: present, excused absence, unexcused absence, and tardy
    - present: nothing in this space
    - for an absence: Put an A in this space. If the student brings a note that makes it an excused absence, draw a diagonal across the A. An excused absence does not release a student from the responsibility for the work.

An unexcused absence will not have a diagonal.

* + - tardy: This is denoted with a T; if the student has a pass excusing the tardiness, erase the T.

### Other forms

* Passes
* Clock sheets for group work (your 3 o’clock partner, your 6 o’clock partner, etc.)

## People to know at the school

* Secretaries
* Principal
* IT person
* Teaching team
* Security
* Counselors
* Librarian
* Mentor
* Janitors
* Building engineers
* Photocopying person
* Predecessor (meet for coffee, etc.)
* Special education folks: Get a copy of any IEP objectives for each student. Check to see which students go to special classes. Ask for the procedure for an LD student coming back early from a teacher.

### Working with the librarian

Visit the library to see the location of the card catalogue, special reference materials, media resources, computer programs, and videos. Start a collection of books about your unit for your classroom. Also, see how you can keep newspapers in the classroom for reading purposes (browsing, location of weather maps, and photographs related to areas of the world).

## Developing a realistic course calendar

Pick the essential course content. Start with a school calendar and mark all non-instructional days. Also consider the time it will take you, early in the year, to make a cooperative, tolerant classroom. Then count the available instructional days for the year. Allocate instructional days for each unit, and allot time for assemblies, school field trips, standardized tests, etc..

Next, create a final semester or course assessment that both prepares students for any mandatory standardized testing and lets students show what they know about major themes and key standards. Then schedule a start date for each unit on the course calendar. As you teach the first unit, keep in mind the planned start date of the second unit.

## Packets for students the first day

Emergency forms, school rules, early dismissal procedures, supplies, transportation rules, note to parents, request for homework space at home for students, homework policy, and syllabus

## Ten ways a wiki can help with organizing

1. FAQ: Have the class create an FAQ that will help new students and those in years later.
2. Calendar: Encourage students to add their own personally important dates.
3. Classroom policies: Have students draft rules and policies, and debate them in writing.
4. Hub: When a student creates anything online, have them link to it so that everyone can use it.
5. Organization: Save links, documents, and quotes related to units or the classroom as a whole.
6. Track assignments: If you ask students to put their research on wikis, check their progress.
7. School tour: Have your class take photos and write about their favorite spots at school.
8. Exam review: Have students share review notes and other helpful pieces of information.
9. Get feedback: Ask students to post comments on wiki pages.
10. Study buddy matching: Let students match themselves up into study buddy pairs.

## Other things to do or prepare

* Read over the teacher observation form, “Classroom observation form.”
* Prepare the classroom management plan.
* Prepare class records and seating charts. Seat students by first name until base groups.
* Check to see how photocopying works. Duplicate materials needed for the first few days.
* Make a checklist for returned forms (can be used later for report cards and other items).
* Get handbooks for students, roster printouts, student list (class list), and the teacher’s roster.
* Prepare a file for correspondence from parents. Make a communication log.
* Make syllabus. On it say, “I reserve the right to adjust the syllabus.”
* Clear your desk.
* Check electric equipment before using it.
* Document missed prep periods.
* Make a pencil-sharpening policy. Strategically place the pencil sharpener. Maybe assign someone to sharpen pencils – 1 basket of sharpened pencils, and 1 for the unsharpened.

# Interacting with families

## Parents’ voicemails: Use transfer-to-text

Use automated transfer-to-text for parents’ voicemails and your spoken words for email replies. It will save you time.

## Letter to parents before the school year

Send a letter home to the parents before school begins. Do not fill this first letter with rules and regulations, but tell them that you are looking forward to having their child in your class.

Also ask them to put the dates of the school’s open house on their calendar, and explain why it is important for them to attend. You will be explaining homework, grading, behavior, and classroom procedures, etc. Be sure to offer your contact information and encourage them to contact you if you want them to. Lastly, include information on what materials you want the students to have ready for school.

### At-home study tips to mention

* Color-code school supplies according to each subject (binder, pen, notebook, pocket dividers, etc.) This will improve organization.
* Perhaps use an accordion file instead of a 3-ring binder. 3-ring binders tend to break.
* Set up a work area with books, papers, pens, pencils, and anything else for your child.
* Whether it’s a homework assignment, school project, or just cleaning, make any project more manageable by setting a timer for 15 minutes and having your child do as much as she can. Once the 15 minutes are up, your child can spend the next 15 minutes relaxing, listening to music, etc. Then it’s back to the project.
* Hang a white board with dry-erase markers at home. At the top, write the days of the week, then each week write in tests, practices, parties, games, and notes. Each week, just wipe the board clean and compile a new plan!
* Create a fun weekly theme at home that mirrors what your children are doing at school. This provides children with a relationship of learning between school and home.
* Discuss a current-events topic with your child at the dinner table and have a “cooperative debate” with him or her. Each one chooses a side and argues politely for it. Then, switch sides and argue for the other side. This is the best way to gain deep learning about a topic.

### Helping with activities

As you plan units of study, incorporate parents whenever possible. Sharing lets the children learn about each other's families, helps both children and parents feel welcome, and enriches the curriculum, all at the same time. For example, parents might be willing to come in as guest speakers for topics the class is learning. Parents might also want to lend items from trips to distant cities or distant lands that are pertinent to your study.

### Other topics to cover

Describe what your course is about including requirements, goals, and key learning experiences. Describe your hopes and expectations for students. Share what might be challenging for students in this class, but let parents know what steps students can take if they're having difficulty. Also let them know how they can communicate with you if they have questions or concerns.

Tell parents what kinds of homework assignments students can expect. Suggest specific ways that they can support and encourage their child's success in the classroom.

Any type of question, interview or survey can be easily developed to involve parents in homework. This also increases the amount of homework turned in and helps families understand what is being studied in school.

All communications should include ways for parents to ask questions and share ideas, input, and reactions to improve school programs and children's experiences. You may also want to create an e-mail account for users to send anonymous feedback to your own school e-mail account. You would have no way to respond, but you would at least be able to hear their complaints and incorporate that into future lessons. Check with administrators before doing this.

#### The family interest inventory

Another way to gather information early is to send out a form that asks parents to list special talents, skills, interests, or family traditions that they would like to share with the class. This creates a connection with the family and welcomes parents into an active role in classroom life.

## Introductory letter to students

In addition to the letter for parents, send a letter home to each student before school begins. Include a message of welcome, and tell the students who you are. Help them prepare by listing the materials they should have with them. You may also want to have a home visit with your advisees or give them a telephone call.

### Or through video

Create a 5 to 10 minute clip where you introduce yourself and highlight a few important things that you want them and their parents to know.

## Set up parent e-mail group / Twitter list

Gather email addresses from parents. Parents can be asked to volunteer for different activities and so forth. You may also want to have a Twitter account for stating homework assignments.

## Discussing child misbehavior with parents

Write down observations of child behavior with no value judgments and the dates. Then call, early and often. Use the word "concerned," and be specific and descriptive. If problems arise between you and the parent, notify a supervisor immediately. Have another staff member be present at all conferences for this. Keep copies of any letters and notes sent home.

## Back-to-school night (Parents’ night)

### In advance

Even though the event is advertised school-wide, send an invitation or flyer home to let parents and guardians know how much you are looking forward to meeting them. For those parents that can’t make it, offer to meet them at another time.

Ask parents to give information about their child that might not be available from another source. You might ask about interests, successes, fears, concerns, and influential people in the child's life. Essentially, ask them how they would like to partner with you in the education of their child. You may want to develop a survey that asks about their hobbies, their travels, their collections, their careers, etc., and whether or not they are willing and able to share their knowledge and skills with the class.

If at all possible, have student work on a display. Have copies of the textbooks and supplementary materials used by students available for parent review. A video of students working is a great way to let parents experience classroom life.

### That night

Talk to parents as a group and not individually. Use the teaching method that you tend to use with the students so that their parents can experience that teaching method.

#### Intro about you

What are your beliefs about education and learning? Why are you excited to be a teacher? What life experiences or people have influenced you? What are your hopes and dreams as a human and as an educator? You can be really brief but do reveal enough about yourself to let the parents know what you stand for and that they can count on you to be a partner with them in the education of their child. Let them know that you are prepared, positive, and professional.

#### Share these orally and in writing

* the forms that need to be completed
* the amount of time that students should spend on homework
* how much help students can receive from parents
* the power of “cooperative debates” at home
* what is going to be studied that year
* an overview of the learning outcomes for the year,
* the learning experiences that students will be involved in,
* and how they will be assessed.

## Teacher-parent conferences

A well-maintained log of behavioral and academic notes makes it easier to focus on the specifics in parent-teacher conferences. Come to any meeting with an outline of classroom expectations, the syllabus, and a written list of materials the child will need to bring to school. Don't be surprised if, a week or two later, the parent requests another conference to review the syllabus and classroom expectations. These can be overwhelming to the parent in the beginning. Also ask about any allergies.

### Student-led parent conferences

In student-led parent conferences, students review their work with both you and the parents present. When students are well-prepared to tell their own story, they experience more responsibility, pride, and accomplishment. Here, students reflect on and speak about their learning and sharpen their presentation skills.

Student-led parent conferences can be a powerful motivator, changing students' perception of education to something in which they actively partake. The conferences also increase the school's communication with parents in a way that reflects well on the school. Some students will never look good on a report card, but at student-led parent conferences, even struggling students can shine.

#### Preparation

Be clear with students about what it takes to succeed. That way, the student can aptly describe that success to the parents. For student-led parent conferences, you may want to discuss serious problems elsewhere with the parents.

First, give a brief overview of the expectations and procedures for the conference. Students should practice leading a conference and role play with a partner. They should focus on speech, manners, posture, breathing, eye contact, appropriate vocabulary, and appearance. Complete sentences are a must, and the students should avoid interrupting their listening parents when they ask a question. On the day of the conferences, schedule several conferences simultaneously (4-5) every half hour; your job is to walk around the room and monitor each conference.

* Examine your school's policies about student-parent-teacher conferences.
* Send an invitation with date, time, when, and where you can be reached.
* Provide evening and weekend conferences for working parents.
* Make positive phone calls...send non-threatening notes.
* Send a form for parents to list questions they may want answered.
* Collect and date students’ work. Add their reflective comments.
* Meet parents in the first few weeks to discuss their child's interests, health, fears, etc.
* Invite parents to visit before there is a problem...build rapport.
* Ask the student, “What do you think we should talk about with your parents?”
* Make a list of two or three points to cover during the conference.
* Inform the parents of the purpose for the conference.
* Review the student's history and your anecdotal notes.
* Prepare “learning-at-home” packets for parents/student.
* Display the students' work.
* Prepare a "wait' area. Ask homeroom mothers to serve coffee, etc.
* Find adult-sized chairs. Do not sit behind your desk.
* Provide a place for coats, umbrellas, etc. Place some toys in a basket for younger siblings.
* Be aware of single parents, or recently married parents new names.
* Have a 'get-acquainted' time at all functions. Parents need to 'network'.
* Prepare a weekly or monthly newsletter of events and children's work.
* Schedule translators to attend conferences. Prepare notices in parent/student's native tongue.
* Plan a way to remember if they prefer being called by their first names or not.

#### 

#### During the conference

Students might …

* discuss what their goals are and how they're going to achieve them;
* share their strengths and weaknesses;
* describe the processes, difficulties, and successes of various assignments;
* share a portfolio of their best work, with an index card of reflection tied to each piece; and
* interview their parents about their concerns with a common list of probing questions.

You should …

* Be positive. Discuss the child's strengths and areas needing improvement.
* Define your mutual goals for achievement.
* Ask the parents about their children as learners. Ask what their child loves and hates about school, what motivates the child, and what has worked well with teachers in the past.
* Say how each student is working towards being a caring, respectful, and productive citizen.
* Give detailed observations about what’s working and what’s not for each student, but use simple layperson’s language and not educational jargon.
* Be clear about gossip or discussion of another child or family.
* Brainstorm ideas to encourage improvement.
* Define the help you can provide. Be cautious of your advice and opinions.
* Examine several alternatives to the problems.
* Help the parents find someone with special expertise in problem areas.
* Summarize the important points of the conference and make an action plan.
* Conclude on a positive issue and in a timely manner.

#### Goal-setting component

Here students work with their parents to create two academic goals. They could also choose one personal goal, such as becoming a better listener or being nicer to a sibling. Then students write a plan outlining how they will reach the goals and to whom they will go for help. Some students tape the goal statements on their desk. These goals are then reviewed, reworked, and updated monthly when students reflect in writing on their goal progress. They then create plans to overcome problems, and set new goals if the old ones have been met.

#### Post-conference

* Students write a letter to their parents thanking them for attending and for their feedback.
* Give yourself time to de-brief each conference experience.
* If necessary, plan to meet the parents again.
* Keep accurate records of conference discussion points.
* Use a tape recorder for your comments if necessary.
* Write a thank-you note with a brief summary of discussion points and an action plan.
* Regularly evaluate progress toward improvement.
* Adjust plans and develop a new action plan, if needed.
* Tell the child how pleased you were to meet with his/her parents.
* Ask parents to write a letter or note to their child about their portfolio of work.
* Keep all “home-to-school” and school-to-home” correspondence.
* Notify your administrator of problems that arose in the conference. Submit this in writing.

#### Still meet regularly with parents

The student-led parent conference is no substitute for the parent-teacher conference. It also must evolve from instructional strategies that develop the students' ability and towards assessments of their learning that involve them in creating the criteria by which their work will be judged.

In a traditional parent-teacher conference, let the parent take the lead in how much is covered in the first meeting. Some parents will have a lot of useful information to share with you while others are hesitant. Being prepared, positive, and professional is the best approach to take. To demonstrate powerfully that parents matter, hold your first parent conference before school starts or during the early weeks. You'll gather crucial information about the child and family, which can mean more effective teaching from the very start.

One way to structure this first conference is to invite parents to share their goals, hopes, and dreams for their child. You could ask, "What do you think is the most important thing for Helen to learn this year?" or "What's your biggest hope for Jeff this year?" Such questions immediately and meaningfully engage parents and set a collaborative tone. The answers will give you important insights into your new students.

#### Cautions

If the conference is not truly a student-led event, it can become a forum for the parents and teacher to criticize the child in the child's presence. Or if a child is unprepared and inarticulate about his work, the parents may lose confidence in the school. Portfolios should be teacher-facilitated, not teacher-directed. A goal-setting conference in the fall and a student-led portfolio presentation in the spring are meant to get students engaged in their learning goals.

# First days of school

## What students want to know on the first day

* Am I in the right room?
* Where am I supposed to sit?
* Who is the teacher as a person?
* Will the teacher treat me with respect?
* Can the teacher say my name correctly?
* What are the rules in this classroom?
* What will I be doing this year?
* How will I be graded?

### Introducing yourself

Your name, hometown, educational and teaching background, and why you want to teach

### Five tips to foster positive expectations

Use their name, say “thank you” and “please”, smile, and be sincere.

## Managing classroom behaviors

Care more about getting good results than being liked.

State that you have one expectation for students to live up to: respect – respect for the classroom, the school, the teachers, their classmates, and themselves, which includes respecting this great learning opportunity they have. With “respect” in mind, ask students to make a list of appropriate behaviors. Display the list and remind students to use them. Add to the list as needed.

If they choose to misbehave in class, and it is indeed a choice, give then a non-verbal reminder to come back to the task. The next infraction in that session is a verbal warning: “(Student’s name), respect please.” Don’t say what they were doing; they know they are guilty. Then, if they have another infraction in that session, calmly say, “You chose to be disrespectful,” and mark them down for 3 minutes of clean-up duty during their free time. For continuously non-compliant students, talk to them privately and calmly and not in front of their friends.

### Positive attention

When some students or groups are off-task or misbehaving, give praise in front of everyone to other students or groups who are behaving and working hard. Specifically say what you like about their behavior. Highlighting good norms changes bad behavior more than calling out bad norms does. Those who have completed the task feel appreciated and recognized for the effort.

### The behavior plan

First look to the school-wide behavior plan. If there is no school-wide behavior plan, go to your administrator with your plan. Present it in writing, with rules, consequences, and rewards. Check that it does not violate any board policy and can be supported by the administration. Then post it on the classroom wall. You might also post a class roster on the bulletin board for all to see with room to mark each student’s daily behavior, and the class could aim for a group reward.

#### Introducing it

“We are all here for YOU to succeed and to enjoy this class. Because I care about each of you, I am here to help you. We need to have a class where you can be without fear or distraction.

“We are going to do a ‘think, pair, share’ (think to self + make notes, discuss with partner, share with class) on this question: ‘What are the qualities of a good teacher?’ I promise that I will work my hardest toward achieving most of these qualities. I will ask you to help me by using this language to ‘grade’ me when you do evaluations.”

Then have the students brainstorm qualities of a good student. You may want them to post them on a page of the school’s intranet. Ask students to pick out their three strongest and three weakest qualities. Have them draft some basic rules of the classroom and then have them vote on it: ten total. Then mention the three R’s (respect for others, the school’s property, and the school’s rules) and the three P’s (participating, polite, and prepared). Also explain the concept of “response-ability.”

Provide a copy of the plan for each student. Send home a copy of the plan for parents to sign and a copy for them to keep. Tell them that the administration supports the plan. Review the plan with new students, and enforce consistently.

For negative consequences, do not stop instruction when giving out the consequence. Immediately give out the penalty in a quiet and non-disruptive way and move on. Ask disruptive students to sit close to you and away from other problem students. As for praise, either specialize praise or don’t say it. Also, write postcards home for good deeds and good behavior.

#### A sample behavior plan for parents and students

Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

##### Rules and expectations

The three R’s - Respect others, the school’s property, and the school’s rules.

The three P’s – Please be participating, polite, and prepared.

Other rules we decided on:

##### Consequences

Every choice has consequences, both good and bad. The key word in the phrase is choice. If you are breaking a rule and misbehaving, you are choosing to do so.

###### Positive consequences

Praise (daily), positive notes home (random), phone calls home, better grades (from more time focused on learning), and the joy of learning (each day of the school year)

###### Negative consequences

Action plan (signed by parent, teacher, and student), problem-solution chart, time out, demerit or fine, detention, cafeteria clean-up, phone call home, assignment to write six ways to correct the problem, being the last to leave, no praise in class, and/or exclusion from class participation

Students: I have read this plan and understand it. I will honor it while in this teacher’s class.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parents: My child has discussed the plan with me. I will support it.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Teacher:: I will be fair and consistent in administering the plan.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*IMPORTANT\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

Please keep this sheet in your binder at all times. Thank you.

#### Action Plan for managing behavior

Step 1

Give the student a copy of “My Action Plan” and be prepared to assist him or her with answering the three questions.

1. What’s the problem? Students explain the rule or rules that he or she has violated.
2. What’s causing the problem? The student is to list all the factors that are causing an occurrence of the problem. The only way to solve a problem is first to isolate and identify it.
3. What plan will you use to solve the problem? The student is to write the action plan needed to solve it. Have him or her look at the factors causing the problem. Through problem-solving, the student devises his or her own plan to correct the problem.

Step 2

Have the student show responsibility by signing the action plan. If the problem is not corrected, go back and modify the third part of the action plan. Commend the student when that occurs.

Step 3

Tell the student to show the action plan to a parent. Inform the student that when you call tonight, you will not call to cause trouble. You will be calling to discuss the action plan and the behavior, not the person.

Step 4

Call the home in a pleasant, friendly, but businesslike manner. Explain that you are happy to have the student in your class and that the purpose of tonight’s call is to discuss the action plan.

Step 5

Explain to the parent that the child has come up with a plan. Impress the parent by explaining that this is something the student has done as a result of problem solving and the use of higher-order thinking skills.

Step 6

The reason you are calling is simple. “Mr./Mrs. NAME, I am calling to see if I can enlist the cooperation of adults at home, working together with the school, to see if we can arrange NAME to follow through with what he said he would be responsible for doing.”

##### Sample action plan

Name:

What’s the problem?

What’s causing the problem? (List the factors.)

What plan will you use to solve the problem?

How can the teacher or other students help you?

Student’s Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent’s Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Teacher’s signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

#### Student behavior and consequences log

(if necessary)

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Student Behavior and Consequences Log | | | | |
| Student’s Name | Date and or period | Behavioral occurrence | 1st, 2nd, or 3rd occurrence | Actions taken by teacher or student |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |

Directions: Use this record-keeping format to record both positive and negative consequences that require teacher responses. This data will become useful for noting behavioral patterns, informing administrators, and providing reference points during parent conferences.

### Improving behavior with the multiple intelligences

First help each student to identify his strongest intelligences.

Linguistic: Talk with the student. Provide books for the student that refer to the problem and point to solutions. Help the student use “self-talk” strategies for gaining control.

Logical-Mathematical: Have the student quantify and chart the occurrence of negative and positive behaviors.

Spatial: Have the student draw or visualize appropriate behaviors. Provide the student with a metaphor to use in working with the difficulty (e.g., “If people say bad things to you, see the bad things as arrows that you can dodge.”). Show the student slides or movies that deal with the issue or that model the appropriate behaviors.

Bodily-kinesthetic: Have the student role play the inappropriate and appropriate behaviors. Teach the student to use physical cues to deal with stressful situations (e.g., taking a deep breath, tightening and relaxing muscles).

Musical: Find musical selections that deal with the issue the student is facing. Provide music that reflects the appropriate behavior (e.g., calm music for an out-of-control child).

Interpersonal: Provide peer group counseling. Buddy up the student with a role model. Have the student teach or look after a younger child. Give the student other social outlets for his energies (e.g., leading a group).

Intrapersonal: Teach the student to voluntarily go to a non-punitive “time-out” area to gain control. Provide one-to-one counseling. Develop a behavior contract. Give the student the opportunity to work on high-interest projects. Provide self-esteem activities.

Naturalist: Tell animal stories that teach about improper and proper behavior (e.g., The Boy Who Cried Wolf,” for a persistent fibber). Use animal metaphors in working with difficult behavior (e.g., for an aggressive child, ask the student what sort of animal he feels like and how he can learn to “tame” it within him).

### Behavior via class meetings

* Introduce the problem and review the rules.
* Gather information.
* Begin discussion – “What do you need in order to…”
* Propose solutions
* Choose a solution.
* Choose a consequence.
* Close the meeting.

### Tips for reaching attention-deficit students

1. Use hand signals, voice changes, and musical sounds to get their attention.
2. Reduce test anxiety by making the first question easy, increasing the font size, and going over directions with the students before they begin. Grade with a green pen, not a red pen.
3. Give those who tap their pencils a sponge or mouse pad to muffle the tapping. Give antsy students errands to run. Let students get up and change seats once in a while during class.
4. Don't take disruptions personally.

### Give positive written feedback

Once a quarter give each student a written compliment that mentions something you appreciate about their presence in your class. Alternate weeks for different classes so you create a cycle that you can repeat every quarter. One way to make this less daunting is to put a list of 30 or 40 appreciation responses on your computer. You can write in the students' names, print out your messages, and cut them into strips. For example:

* Dear Cho, I know that talking in class is not your favorite thing, so I have appreciated your participation in small group work.
* Dear Alicia, I've noticed that you've been on time for the last two weeks. I appreciate the effort you've made to do this.
* Dear Manuel, thanks for participating in the discussions we've been having. Your questions have challenged all of us to be clear about what we mean.
* Dear Mia, I have appreciated it when you've been helping to pick up and organize stuff at the end of class. It makes it so much easier to do projects when people are ready to pitch in. Thanks.
* Dear Greg, I know this is not an easy class for you, so every day you're here shows that you're willing to stick with it and keep trying. I appreciate your perseverance.

## Teaching procedures

Procedures are presented on an as-needed basis. Don’t pass out the syllabus until most of the procedures have been taught.

### The four steps to teaching procedures

1. Relay it. Define the procedure in concrete terms and model it step by step.

2. Repeat it. Have a student verbally repeat the procedure once you have explained it. You may want to have a student, a pair, or a group model it too.

3. Rehearse it. Have students practice it until they can do it automatically without you.

4. Reinforce it. Each time the students do the procedure correctly, praise them. When they fail to do it correctly, have them do it again the proper way (lining up, etc.)

### Ones to teach on the first day

1. Beginning of period
2. Quieting of a class and getting their attention
3. Students going to the bathroom or their locker
4. Movement of students and papers
5. End of period

#### Beginning of each class

##### Students entering the room

###### Initially

Have the students sit alphabetically by first name.

###### When pairing or grouping the first time

Before class, prepare a transparency that shows who will sit where. Draw a permanent classroom map showing the arrangement of desk pairs. Use an erasable marker to write students' names next to the desks at which you want them to work. This keeps you from having to put nametags on tables that could then easily be switched around by students wanting to be with friends.

###### Once they are in a pair or a group

When they enter the room, they should immediately sit with their partner or their group.

##### Attendance

Choose a place where your seating chart, attendance forms, tardy slips, and grade book can be conveniently stored. You should have an unobstructed view of all the students from this location. Keep an attendance chart for each class period, and use it to check attendance. You may want to have an "in" board where students put themselves "in" each day as they enter class, simply moving a clip or magnet, or making a check mark on a dry-erase board. However, they might do this for absent friends.

Have the students sit alphabetically by first name, initially.

Have students begin an assignment the moment they enter the room.

* Daily questions - Complete at bottom of homework. Work silently on your own.
* Quick Starts: a political cartoon, a song, a slide, a quote, several quiz questions on a previous day’s topic, a news article, a film clip, or a quote related to the work in progress.
* Concept webs are also a great way to open a class.

###### Absent students

Assign “absent” buddies for homework (same gender, same as “hall” partner). If the partner is absent, the student picks up a pre-made form from a designated spot in the class room and fills it out. The form contains lines for the student to write notes in the following labeled categories: name, date, section or period, today in class, homework, reminders, and notes.

The buddy collects any handouts for the day and staples them to this form. The paper or papers are then placed in an “absentee” bin labeled with the period or section. On the day the absentee returns to class, they stop by the bin on their way into the classroom and pick up their note sheet. This stops interruptions during class.

Have the returning students leave their absence notes at the location where you check attendance.

#### Getting students’ attention quickly

“ME-ME:” Mute (stop talking), Ears (listen), Motionless (freeze!), and Eyes (looking at me).

#### Students silently signaling you

Students can silently signal for some things so they don’t disrupt class. Only respond to the signal for these things, and post them on the classroom wall:

* Bathroom - arms crossed above head
* Need a new pencil from the classroom bucket - hold pencil above head
* Need a new tissue - hand pinching nose
* Confused – hand waving past their head and above it (“over my head”)
* Question when working alone on the classroom computer – put a red cup on the computer top (a cup that you have tied there in advance)

##### Knowing when they are ready to move on

###### Reading

They can close their books or set them face-down on their desks so they don't lose their place.

###### Writing

They put down their writing utensil.

###### Response boards

If you use response boards, use boards that have different colors on each side or use a different color tape to distinguish the two sides. When students are done, they turn over their boards.

#### Collecting papers if desks are in grid

Have students pass papers to the side. You can then observe from the front and walk down the side of the classroom to collect the papers. Also, students won’t have to turn around.

#### Homework

##### Consider having a drop-off crate

Students can drop their homework into the box or crate. Perhaps you shape it like a mailbox. This way you don’t have to collect it from them.

##### Homework format

###### Assigning each student a number

Assign each child the number that corresponds to the number of their surname in the alphabetized grade book. Each child writes that number in the upper right-hand corner of everything that has to be turned in. With this done, you can simply put the papers in numerical order and call out any missing numbers. It also helps with recording grades in the grade book and saves loads of time.

###### Assignment heading

Name (student number if it is an essay), date, subject, section, and page number or assignment

##### Missed and late assignments

Set up an answering machine or webpage as a homework hot line. Your students will have no more excuses for missed assignments. Mark late papers late unless there is a note from parents. Have parents e-mail to confirm.

##### Grading a classmate’s homework

If you have students correct each other’s homework (before you grade it yourself), have them use a different ink than the assignment. Have them make no mark if the answer is correct, and a neat x if the answer is wrong.

##### If giving written feedback

Consider not writing a grade on the homework but only in your gradebook. This way the student is more likely to read the written feedback.

##### At-home strategies to teach them

* Have a designated study space.
* Have a designated time.
* Keep papers organized (perhaps bins for home and school).
* Turn off the phone, television, and music during study time.
* Check assignment book for all assignments before leaving school.
* Check website for all assignments and then if needed, contact a friend.
* Have scheduled breaks.
* Chunk long-term assignments into easily managed sections.
* Study for tests over a period of several nights.
* Keep study area full of supplies: pencils, erasers, highlighters, rulers, calculator, markers, etc.

#### When the end-of-class bell rings

Class does not stand up before the bell. Be alert a few seconds before the bell rings on the first day. Anticipate that you will need to correct the students if they do not wait for your dismissal.

### Ones to teach in the first week

#### Tardy students

Follow school policy. You may want to put a spiral tablet or a clipboard on a table near the door. Have late students sign it. Some teachers assign detention before or after school (or lunch detention) each time students are tardy without a valid excuse.

#### Using technology

Explain when and how the computers in the classroom will be used. Monitor students as they access information on the web. To eliminate the argument that a site was accidentally found, teach students to use the back button on the browser and get your attention immediately if they access an inappropriate site by mistake.

Don’t assume that all students have internet access at home.

##### “Lower your lids, please”

Students should "lower their lid" for laptops to give you their attention.

#### For grouping, use clock sheets

Clock Buddies is a way to create pairs for partnered activities while avoiding the problem of kids always having the same partners. Each student has his or her own copy of a sheet, with the names of different classmates on each hour's slot. Each of those other students, in turn, has this student's name in the matching hour slot on each of their clock sheets. The clocks are then attached to the inside cover of their notebook or workbook. You can have am & pm.

#### Sponge activities

If a student or group has finished a task early, give them a sponge activity or ask them to develop their own. Sponge activities soak up extra time in useful ways. The class could have a regular sponge activity, such as reading a book or working on homework, or some kind of enrichment activity on the same theme as the lesson. Sponges are often used as a follow-up to a lesson to reinforce or extend student learning.

Group sponges include a group question or problem, a topic to discuss, or a content-related group task. Individual sponge activities include homework, silent reading, drawing, writing a letter, and working quietly on a computer.

#### Other ones for the first week

* Seeing where assignments are posted
* Needing a pencil and sharpening a pencil
* Getting materials from the shelf and putting them away
* Using the group-materials tub
* Ringing phone
* Visitors are in the classroom
* Going to the office
* Signing the library sign-out sheet
* Throwing out trash
* Makeup work
* P.A. announcements and other interruptions
* Fire and disaster drills
* If the phone should ring
* Chairs up

## Graded notebooks

Students should have a 3-ring binder with reinforcers that they can call their notebook. All class notes and notebook assignments should be included, even for days the student is absent. Check these notebooks for completeness, usually about every 3-4 weeks, except for the first few weeks of class when they will need to be checked more regularly.

Most teachers create a list of criteria about how the notebooks will be graded. Ask students to attach that list to the inside cover of their notebooks. Aspects might include thoroughness, quality, organization, and visual appearance.

### Decorating the notebook

Encourage students to decorate their notebooks however they see fit, such as for the cover, the running table of contents, and the title page for each new unit. Colored pencils, markers, scissors, glue sticks, and colored highlighters will spark creativity.

They should also have an author page about themselves at the front. Their page could include a portrait or photograph, as well as personal information or favorite quotes.

### Types of entries

#### Double-row entries of KWL learning

In these notebooks students will write journal entries several times in each unit for each subject, entries for what was learned.

In the first row for that entry, near the beginning of that lesson, students enter the “KW” portion of the KWL model or their pre-reading strategies and thoughts if the period is reading.

In the second row for that entry, students enter the “L” of the KWL model or their post-reading strategies and thoughts. Completing the second row is more important. The first row for the next lesson’s entry can also be completed moments after the student completes this second row for the initial entry. For example, if a reading class is finishing up, the students might predict in the first row for the next entry what they think will happen in the next chapter and then re-read this entry tomorrow before actually reading that chapter.

#### Entries for connections and reflections

Students might also complete entries where they are connecting the learning to their own lives, the outside world, or to another subject, or where they are reflecting on the emotions they felt after learning this content or finishing this reading section.

#### Entries of taped Post-it notes

Students might also create entries where to the pages of their notebook they adhere Post-it notes full of thoughts that occurred to them while reading one of the class books.

#### Entries of relevant artwork

Have the students include a "Making Connections" section in which they place articles, pictures, or cartoons from magazines, newspapers, or the Internet into their notebook. They should include a 4-5 sentence summary and reflection on how the materials relate to the topic of study. They might also include some of their own drawings in it.

### Google Slides & Docs as an option

Google Slides and Docs can be used as a digital notebook option here.

### Notebook evaluation sheets

Create a notebook evaluation sheet and distribute it to students to fill out before they turn in their notebooks. Before using such a form, students should know the criteria for the assignments.

#### Sample

Name:

Notebook Evaluation Sheet:

Directions (verbatim to students): Before turning in your notebook, grade yourself on the assignments below as well as on the notebook’s overall visual appearance. Grade yourself fairly and honestly. I will grade you as well. I will clearly tell you what I am looking for. My grade is final, but you may arrange a time to meet with me to discuss the difference in assessment. I reserve the right to change the grade if I made an error in judgment.

Categories: Notebook assignment, due date, possible points, student assessment, teacher assessment (and then at the bottom of the notebook evaluation sheet: extra credit, visual appearance, totals, student comments, and teacher comments)

Needs improvement: 20 Fair: 30 Good: 40 Excellent: 44

Quality and completeness: All class notes and work are completed and of high quality, even

for days when you are absent.

Student Evaluation: \_\_\_ Teacher Evaluation: \_\_\_\_

Appearance & organization: Work is organized with effective highlighting and use of color.

Student Evaluation: \_\_\_ Teacher Evaluation: \_\_\_\_

Extra Credit: Newspaper cutouts, drawings, graphics, or unassigned personal responses:

Student Evaluation: \_\_\_ Teacher Evaluation: \_\_\_\_

Student Comments:

Student Evaluation (Assessment of reflection): \_\_\_

Teacher Evaluation: \_\_\_\_

Teacher Comments:

### Notebooks for formative assessment

Monitor notebooks aggressively in the first few weeks of the course. Glance at notebooks each time they are used for the first two weeks of the semester. Walk around the classroom while students are working, and give positive comments and helpful suggestions.

While students work on another assignment, walk around the classroom and conduct a quick check for the previous night's homework. Give each student a special stamp or a mark, such as 0, check minus, check, or check plus. This ensures that students complete their work on time and lets you give them immediate feedback. Also, give a model of outstanding work for a particular assignment or set of class notes. Have students, in pairs, assess their own notebooks according to the model. Lastly, let students use their notebooks on a quiz or test. This rewards those students who have thorough, accurate content information in a well-organized notebook.

### Or for summative assessment

Explain the criteria used to grade notebooks. At the beginning of the year, clearly explain the criteria on which notebooks will be assessed. This may include the quality and completeness of assignments, visual appearance, neatness, and organization. Consider creating a simple rubric.

Stagger notebook collection and grading. Grade selectively. Don't feel compelled to grade every entry. Assess the most important entries, and consider spot-checking the others.

## Discussing study skills for all subjects

### A mnemonic for memorizing

CRIME: chunking ( 7 +/- 2), rehearsal, imagery, mnemonic (for that concept), and elaboration

### Long-term projects

* Start early.
* Set mini-deadlines.
* Use weekly/monthly calendar.
* Get supplies early.

### Tests

* Review test material.
* Create study guide, outline, flashcards.
* Study with your parents.
* Play a study game.
* Administer practice tests.
* Eat a healthy breakfast.
* Get a good night sleep.
* Ask "How did the test go?"
* Limit TV the night before.

### Organization

* Color code notebooks for each subject.
* Encourage use of the assignment book.
* Use folders.
* Use checklists.
* Have a homework spot at home.
* Weekly clean out your notebooks (file papers where they belong), book bag, and locker.
* Use an accordion file maybe instead of a 3-ring binder. 3-ring binders tend to break.

## Goal setting with students

Near the beginning of the school year, brainstorm with students on goal setting. Discuss the importance of setting goals and of making the goals specific and realistic. List some class goals on the chalkboard, such as improving attendance, improving grade-point averages, and getting to know each other, and some individual goals that students have.

Next, each student is to set three individual goals for the year and to explain in writing how each goal will be achieved. Set goals for yourself as well and share them with students. Urge students to be as specific as possible. They then write a letter to themselves making two predictions about how they will fare with these goals over the next three months.

Midway through the year, pull out the goal letters and reevaluate the goals that were set. If the goals have been met, new ones are set. If students decide that their goals were unrealistic, they alter them to create more reasonable ones. Again, the assignment is to write out any changes and adjustments made to the original goals and to explain how the revised or new goals will be met.

Finally, in the last couple weeks of school, get out the goal papers once more and do a final evaluation. At this point, students write how they feel about the goals they set and about having met or not met these goals. To conclude, students set three new goals for summer vacation.

### Group-conferencing instead

Regularly conduct goal-setting conferences with each long-term group or base group. Very few teachers meet regularly with individual students because most teachers simply do not have the time to do so. Group goal-setting conferences are much more doable.

Once students know how group goal-setting conferences work, have them do this on their own. Do not try this until midway through the year. While the groups are meeting, you go from group to group and monitor how well the groups are following the prescribed conferencing procedure.

#### Goal worksheet

Group: Unit: Date:

Directions:

Write out the learning goals for each member of your group for this unit. Include goals for helping and encouraging the learning of group mates. Each goal should be specific and realistic.

Individual learning goals: Group goals:

Member 1: 1.

Member 2: 2.

Member 3: 3.

Member 4:

Member signatures:

#### Conferencing between two groups

This will be rare, but if groups show that they are adept at holding group goal-setting conferences on their own, try holding a group-to-group goal-setting conference. This increases the interdependence among groups and provides another way for members to achieve their goals.

## Icebreakers

### Name toss

On a 5” x 8” note card, ask everyone to write one word that begins with the first letter of their first name that reflects something about them (i.e. Carol= creative). In a circle ask everyone to say their name, the word, and the connection they have to the word. Place the cards in the center of the circle. Using a timer, ask for three volunteers to see how long it will take them to return the correct card to the person who wrote it. Do this a number of times to see if successive groups can beat the previous time.

### Get the autograph of someone who...

For each of the 35 categories below, students find someone in the class who fits the description. Before they get his or her autograph, they must shake the person's hand and introduce themselves ("Hello, my name is ... ") and ask one question about the listed item the person is signing. For example, for the question about leaving the state, the first student might ask. "Where did you go?" Students are allowed only two signatures from the same person and will have to circulate throughout the classroom.

After most students have completed the activity, go through the categories to find out which students in the class fit each characteristic. Students begin to make connections with each other as they acknowledge the talents, interests, and experiences represented in the class. By the end of the class period, you and the students will feel far more comfortable with one another.

1. Has left the state over the summer

2. Has the same shoe size as you

3. Likes to watch football

4. Likes to draw

5. Plays a musical instrument

6. Has been to a play

7. Has had braces

8. Is wearing jeans

9. Is in another class with you

10. Is new to this school

11. Is from a different ethnic group

12. Has traveled to another country

13. Has the same color eyes as you

14. Likes to read in bed

15. Was born outside the United States

16. Likes to dance

17. Has a hair style different from yours

18. Is much taller than you

19. You have never spoken to before

20. Loves history

21. Dislikes history

22. Has been surfing or ice skating

23. Likes the outdoors

24. Has more than two brothers and sisters

25. Is an only child

26. Likes to sing

27. Speaks another language

28. Likes the same TV show as you

29. Likes to swim

30. Was born in the same month as you

31. Has biked over 25 miles in one day

32. Knows how to sew

33. Chews sum

34. Likes broccoli

35. Plays on a sports team

### What do we have in common?

Give each student a sheet that has three columns and a place for three students' names.

Then ask students to pair up with someone they don't know well or use grouping cards to place people in pairs.

Give each pair two minutes to write down all the similarities they can think of, such as physical characteristics, family stuff, things they both do, possessions they both own, etc.

Then ask students to pair up two more times, repeating the process.

At the end of the activity, ask: “What surprised you about what you discovered you had in common with someone else? How many similarities did you find the first time? The last time? Did it get easier for anyone? Why?”

Point out that when we are having a disagreement or having trouble working together, it's especially important to remember what we have in common.

### Our multiple intelligences

#### Multiple intelligences survey #1

This survey will help you identify your areas of strongest intelligence. Read each statement. If it expresses some characteristic of yours and sounds true for the most part, write T. If it doesn't, write F. If the statement is sometimes true and sometimes false, leave it blank. Everyone will have different answers. Think about what is true for you.

1. I'd rather draw a map than give someone verbal directions.
2. If I am angry or happy, I usually know why.
3. I can play (or used to play) a musical instrument.
4. I compose songs or raps and perform them.
5. I can add or multiply quickly in my head.
6. I help friends deal with feelings because I deal with my own feelings well.
7. I like to work with calculators and computers.
8. I pick up new dance steps quickly.
9. It's easy for me to say what I think in an argument or debate.
10. I enjoy a good lecture, speech, or sermon.
11. I always know north from south no matter where I am.
12. I like to gather together groups of people for parties or special events.
13. I listen to music for much of the day, on the radio, CDs, or other media.
14. I always understand the drawings that come with new gadgets or appliances.
15. I like to work puzzles and play games.
16. Learning to ride a bike (or to skate) was easy.
17. I am irritated when I hear an argument or statement that sounds illogical.
18. I can convince other people to follow my plans.
19. My sense of balance and coordination is good.
20. I often see patterns and relationships between numbers faster than other people.
21. I enjoy building models (or sculpting).
22. I like word games and puns.
23. I can look at an object one way and see it turned backward just as easily.
24. I can identify when there is a key change in a song.
25. I like to work with numbers and figures.
26. I like to sit quietly and reflect on my feelings.
27. Just looking at the shapes of buildings and structures is pleasurable to me.
28. I like to hum, whistle, and sing in the shower or when I'm alone.
29. I'm good at athletics.
30. I enjoy writing detailed letters to friends.
31. I'm usually aware of the expression on my face.
32. I'm sensitive to the expressions on other people's faces.
33. I stay in touch with my moods. I have no trouble identifying them.
34. I am sensitive to the moods of others.
35. I have a good sense of what others think of me.

The numbers below correspond to the numbered statements in the survey. Circle each number below for each item you marked T. For example: The first number in group A below is 9. If you marked #9 above with a T, circle that number below. If you marked it F, don’t circle the number below. When you have finished, add up the circles – not the numbers - in each group. A total of four circled numbers in any group indicates strong ability. Your teacher will tell you which intelligence to write for each group.

A: 9, 10, 17, 22, 30 = \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ intelligence B: 5, 7, 15, 20, 25 = \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ intelligence

C: 1, 11, 14, 23, 27 = \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ intelligence D: 8, 16, 19, 21, 29 = \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ intelligence

E: 3, 4, 13, 24, 28 = \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ intelligence F: 2, 6, 26, 31, 33 = \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ intelligence

G: 12, 18, 32, 34, 35 = \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ intelligence

Answer Key: Do not reveal to students until after they have scored their tests.

A = verbal-linguistic B = logical-mathematical C = visual-spatial D = body-kinesthetic

E = musical-rhythmic F = intrapersonal G = interpersonal

#### Multiple intelligences survey #2

For each scenario, rank the seven options by putting a 1 next to the option you like the most, etc.

1. As you plan a trip with your friends, you are asked to be responsible for one of the following:

A. \_\_\_ Calling all your friends to tell them of the group's plans.

B. \_\_\_ Running the errands needed to prepare for the trip.

C. \_\_\_ Keeping a trip diary recording your thoughts and feelings.

D. \_\_\_ Figuring out the distance to your destination.

E. \_\_\_ Preparing songs to sing on the trip.

F. \_\_\_ Writing a story about your trip for the newspaper.

G. \_\_\_ Mapping the group's journey.

2. What would your friends say is true about you?

A. \_\_\_ You are happiest when you are talking to other people.

B \_\_\_ You like to dance or play sports.

C. \_\_\_ You are in touch with your thoughts and feelings.

D. \_\_\_ You have fun working on computers or with numbers.

E. \_\_\_ You like to sing, rap, or tap out rhythms.

F. \_\_\_ You enjoy writing notes or letters.

G. \_\_\_ You draw, sketch, or paint well.

3. Which of the following electives would you most prefer?

A. \_\_\_ Peer Counseling

B. \_\_\_ Drama

C. \_\_\_ Psychology or Comparative Religions

D. \_\_\_ Architectural Design, Auto Shop, or Computer Literacy

E. \_\_\_ Band or Chorus

F. \_\_\_ Creative Writing or Journalism

G. \_\_\_ Art

Rank your preferences for the following extracurricular activities:

A. \_\_\_ Working as a tutor or joining a team.

B. \_\_\_ Taking part in the school play, a dance production, or a martial arts class.

C. \_\_\_ Dealing with feelings or personal issues with a group of peers.

D. \_\_\_ Designing the set for a play, joining the chess team, or joining the math club.

E. \_\_\_ Joining a musical group such as a jazz band, a chorus, or a rap group.

F. \_\_\_ Working as a writer for the school newspaper or joining the debate team.

G. \_\_\_ Painting murals on the school's walls.

What would you most like to be when you get older?

A. \_\_\_ A counselor, social worker, or teacher

B. \_\_\_ A dancer, actor, builder, or athlete

C. \_\_\_ A psychologist or poet

D. \_\_\_ A scientist, computer programmer, or banker

E. \_\_\_ A singer, songwriter, or musician

F. \_\_\_ A lawyer, writer, or journalist

G. \_\_\_ A cartoonist, painter, or graphic artist

Teacher Answer Key: A= interpersonal; B = body-kinesthetic; C= intrapersonal; D = logical-mathematic; E= Musical-rhythmic; F=verbal-linguistic; G =visual-spatial

# Use *Understanding by Design* (UbD) to start at desired endpoint of learning

## Eight principles of teaching & learning

1. Plan instruction with students’ final understanding in mind, and move backwards from there.
2. Everyone can learn any subject if lessons spiral upwards from easier ideas to harder ideas.
3. Learners construct their own representations of knowledge.
4. Knowledge can be represented as networks structured around powerful ideas.
5. Students need to chunk, or group and interconnect, knowledge.
6. Learners make sense of new information by relating it to prior knowledge.
7. New learning results in a restructuring of existing knowledge.
8. Learning is active rather than passive.

### Constructivism in the classroom

Learning in a constructivist way involves 1) inducing cognitive conflict within oneself, 2) inducing socio-cognitive conflict with another in your zone of proximal development, 3) reflecting, and 4) noticing weaknesses in your learning patterns and correcting these, thus building your metacognition. Constructivism applies to teachers themselves only in the way that teachers construct their own beliefs and models about how they teach and how students learn.

## Nine evidence-based instructional strategies

The meta-analytic data (effect sizes, etc.) is from John Hattie’s *Visible Learning* (2008).

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Category | McREL definition | Average effect size | % gain in  learning | # of  studies |
| Naming similarities and differences | Enhance students’ ability to use knowledge by engaging them in mental processes that involve identifying ways items are alike and different. | 1.61 | 45 | 31 |
| Summarizing and note-taking | Enhance students’ ability to synthesize information and organize it in a way that captures the main ideas and supporting details. | 1.00 | 34 | 179 |
| Reinforcing effort & providing recognition | Enhance students’ understanding of the relationship between effort and achievement. Provide students with rewards or praise for their accomplishments related to the attainment of a goal. | .80 | 29 | 21 |
| Homework and practice | Extend the learning opportunities for students to practice, review, and apply knowledge. | .77 | 28 | 134 |
| Nonlinguistic representations | Enhance students’ ability to represent and elaborate on knowledge using mental images. | .75 | 27 | 246 |
| Cooperative learning | Provide students with opportunities to interact with each other in groups in ways that enhance their learning | .73 | 27 | 122 |
| Setting objectives and providing feedback | Provide students a direction for learning and information about how well they are performing relative to a particular learning goal so that they can improve their performance. | .61 | 23 | 408 |
| Generating and testing hypotheses & predictions | Enhance students’ understanding of and ability to use knowledge by engaging them in mental processes that involve making and testing hypotheses / predictions. | .61 | 23 | 63 |
| Cues, questions, & advance organizers | Enhance students’ ability to retrieve, use, and organize what they already know about a topic. | .59 | 22 | 1251 |

## Aspects of UbD and backward planning

UbD is an instructional-planning model developed by Jay McTighe and Grant Wiggins. For more, see <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Understanding_by_Design> .

### Goal is students’ attainment of “enduring understandings”

Enduring understandings are those principles or generalizations that students will retain long after they have forgotten many of the details about them. They are as useful and valid in the “real world” outside of school as they are in the classroom.

Enduring understandings are central to a discipline and are transferable to new situations. For example, in learning about the "rule of law," students come to understand that "written laws specify the limits of a government's power and articulate the rights of individuals, such as due process." This inference from facts, based on big ideas such as "rights" and "due process," gives a unifying conceptual lenses through which to examine the Magna Carta as well as emerging democracies in the Third World. Such understandings are generally abstract in nature and often not obvious; they require “uncoverage” through sustained inquiry rather than one-shot coverage. The student must "come to understand" or "be helped to grasp" the idea, as a result of work. To treat an understanding as a fact is to likely bypass the student getting it.

An enduring understanding…

* refers to transferable, big ideas and principles that endure beyond a specific topic;
* involves abstract, counterintuitive, and easily misunderstood ideas;
* summarizes important strategic principles in skill areas;
* lets us wisely and effectively use and transfer what we know from different contexts;
* describes hard-won insights into how knowledge is generated, tested, and used;
* is an important inference stated as a specific and useful generalization;
* is acquired by “uncovering” (i.e., it must be co-constructed by learners) and “doing” the subject (i.e., using the ideas in realistic settings and with real-world problems);
* is not a goal but rather six facets that help identify criteria and resulting rubrics for assessing the degree of understanding; and
* can be brought to life by inquiries, simulations, debates, or other kinds of inherently engaging experiences.

Types of understanding/bodies of knowledge, from least important to most important:

* Worth being familiar with (covering)
* Important to know and do
* Enduring understanding (uncovering) *[Most important]*

National or state standards are often based on enduring understandings.

#### A practical tip

When creating enduring understandings, check to see that your stated understandings do not end in an adjective (e.g., fractions are important).

### Enduring understandings are reached by correctly answering essential questions

A question is essential if it…

* can be investigated, argued, and looked at from different points of view;
* has no one obvious right answer; can be argued effectively from both sides;
* naturally arises in everyday life, and/or in “doing” the subject;
* is stated simply and clearly;
* prompts students to synthesize and evaluate information;
* is broad and full of transfer possibilities;
* is a question at the heart of a subject or curriculum and moves students to a deeper understanding of the standards addressed in the unit;
* stimulates thought, provokes inquiry, and sparks more questions – including thoughtful student questions; and
* constantly and appropriately recurs; it can fruitfully be asked and re-asked over time, and as a result of further learning.

Let essential questions guide your development of performance tasks, and share them with the class at the beginning of instruction. Write it on a big piece of paper above the door. Have students put it on the title page of their notebooks, and constantly refer to it when you debrief an activity. They should mostly be “how” or “why” (vs. “what”).

If asked to teach to a jurisdiction’s standards, develop and list a minimum of four essential questions for each standard.

### Teach essential content and skills so students can answer essential questions

#### Essential content: Concepts and classifications

Concepts are ideas and information that students need to know. They are listed as the direct objects in the standards and objectives.

Share multiple examples of the concept and then explain the similarities.

##### Types of classifying

* Deciding whether a new item is an example: The teacher asks, "Is this an example?"
* Distinguishing examples from non-examples: "Which of these are examples?"
* Producing examples: "Find or make an example."
* Correcting non-examples: "What changes are needed to make this an example?"

#### Essential skills

Skills are what students are expected to do to show mastery of the concepts and content. They are the verb in the standards and lesson objectives.

Break the skill into its parts, explain and model each part; provide plenty of practice in purposeful ways and application opportunities. Then give immediate feedback. Modeling consists of demonstrating and explaining the steps your students are to follow as they develop the skill on their own.

Also be sure to have the students practice the skill in various functional settings.

##### Use direct instruction for teaching essential skills

1. Set clear goals for students.
2. Model the steps needed to accomplish a particular academic task.
3. Present a sequence of well-organized assignments.
4. Give students clear, concise explanations and illustrations of the subject matter.
5. Ask frequent questions to see if students understand the work.
6. Give students frequent opportunities to practice what they have learned.

###### Use the SAFE acronym

* Sequenced—a connected set of activities to foster skill development,
* Active—active forms of learning to help students master new skills,
* Focused—specific sections devoted to developing personal and social skills, and
* Explicit—clearly identified skills so that students knew what is expected

###### Think-aloud strategies

Think-aloud strategies let you verbalize your thoughts for learning skills or processes.

* *Make predictions:* "From the title I predict that this section will tell how airplane pilots adjust for winds." Or, "In this next part I think we'll find out what caused these plane crashes."
* *Describe images* "I picture a man in my mind. He looks like a nice, well-dressed businessman." Or "I can see the horse kicking down the stable door as the flames close in."
* *Share analogies:* "This is like when I was late for school and it began to thunderstorm."
* *Verbalize confusing point:* "I am not sure how this fits in." "This is not what I expected."
* *Demonstrate fix-up strategies:* "Maybe I'll reread this." Or, "Perhaps I better change my picture of what is happening"

After several modeling experiences, students should practice using the target strategy in pairs.

#### List the essential content and skills

List these concepts and skills so that you can more easily develop activities and assessments that connect to the standards and enduring understandings.

### Six facets in understanding essential content and skills

There are six ways, or facets, of analyzing the enduring understandings of a unit. Each facet is like a criterion in a performance assessment. Together, they do not present a quota but a framework for designing lessons and assessments that better measure understanding.

When we understand, we reveal it in our ability to

* Apply: Effectively use and adapt what we know in diverse contexts.
* Empathize: Get inside, find value in what others might find odd, alien, or implausible; and perceive sensitively, based on prior direct experience.
* Explain: Provide thorough, supported, and justifiable accounts of phenomena, facts, and data.
* Interpret: Tell meaningful stories; offer apt translations; provide a revealing historical or personal dimension to ideas and events; and make it personal or accessible through images, anecdotes, analogies, models.
* Have perspective: See points of view, with critical eyes and ears, and see the big picture.
* Have self-knowledge: Perceive the personal style, prejudices, projections, and habits of mind that both shape and impede our own understanding; we are aware of what we do not understand and why it is so hard to understand.

#### Application

Application is the ability to apply knowledge and skill in diverse and real-world situations. It is different in two ways from knowledge and simple comprehension: The student is not prompted to give specific knowledge, nor is the problem familiar.

Criteria: effectiveness, efficiency, fluency, adaptability, and gracefulness

Questions to ask students:

* How and where can we use this knowledge, skill, or process?
* How is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ applied in the larger world?
* How could we use \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to overcome \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ ?
* How should your thinking and actions be changed to meet the demands of this situation?
* How might \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ help us to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_?
* In what new contexts could you apply this concept or knowledge?

#### Empathy

Empathy is the ability to grasp another's emotional reactions and the world - or text - from their point of view. It is using one's imagination to see and feel as others see and feel, to imagine that something different might be possible, even desirable.

Empathy is not the same as perspective. When we see in perspective, we see from a critical distance; we detach ourselves to see more objectively. With empathy, we see from inside the person's worldview. We embrace the insights, experiences, and feelings that are found in that subjective realm. Empathy is thus the deliberate act of finding what is plausible, sensible, or meaningful in the ideas and actions of others, even if they appear puzzling or off-putting.

Criteria: sensitivity, openness, perceptiveness, receptiveness, and tactfulness

Questions to ask students:

* How does it seem to you?
* What do they see that you don’t?
* What would it be like to walk in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_’s shoes?
* What do you need to experience if you are to understand them?
* What was the author, artist, or performer feeling, seeing, and trying to make you feel and see?
* How might \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ feel about \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_?

#### Explanation

One needs to be able to explain how things work, what they imply, where they connect, and why they happened. Verbs such as justify, generalize, support, verify, prove and substantiate get at what is needed. When you can explain to this degree, you can show your work, explain why the answer is correct, subsume current work under more general and powerful principles, give valid evidence and argument for a view, and defend your views.

Criteria: accuracy, coherence, justification, prediction, proof, and verification

Questions to ask students:

* Why is that so?
* What explains such events?
* What accounts for such action?
* How can we prove it?
* To what is this connected?
* How does this work?
* What is the key idea in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_?
* What are examples of \_\_\_\_\_?
* What are the characteristics and parts of \_\_\_\_?
* What caused \_\_\_\_ ? What are the effects of \_\_\_\_\_?
* How might we prove, confirm, justify \_\_\_\_ ?
* How is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ connected to \_\_\_\_\_?
* What might happen if \_\_\_\_\_?
* What are common misconceptions about \_\_\_\_?
* Please describe \_\_\_\_\_

#### Interpretation

To interpret is to ask, “What does it all mean to me? What is its importance to me, to us?” It is an act of translating and perhaps creating metaphors, narratives, images, and artistry.

Criteria: meaningfulness, insightfulness, significance, and illumination

Questions to ask students:

* What does it mean?
* What does it illustrate or illuminate in human experience?
* How does it relate to you in particular?
* What makes sense?
* What does \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ reveal about \_\_\_\_?
* What is an appropriate analogy for this? How is \_\_\_\_ like (the student’s choice)?
* Why does it matter?

#### Perspective

Seeing perspectives that are plausible, critical, and insightful is an important part of understanding something. Through perspective we can see vantage points and the right context. Also, we can remove ourselves from getting caught up in the views and passions of the moment.

Criteria: credibility, revelation, insightfulness, plausibility, and uniqueness

Questions to ask students:

* What are the different points of view about \_\_\_\_\_?
* How might this look from \_\_\_\_\_’s perspective?
* What is assumed that needs to be made explicit and considered?
* What is justified or warranted?
* Is the evidence reliable? Sufficient?
* Is it reasonable?
* What are the strengths and weaknesses of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ ?
* How is \_\_\_\_\_\_ similar to or different from \_\_\_\_\_\_\_?
* Is it plausible?
* Why are its limits a concern?
* What are other possible reactions to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ ?
* What is a novel way to look at this?

#### Self-knowledge

Self-knowledge refers to accurate self-assessment and an accurate awareness of one’s biases. The learner knows with clarity and specificity what he or she does not understand. This capacity is wisdom. Self-knowledge also involves the degree to which we are aware of our biases and how these influence our thinking, perceptions, and beliefs.

Criteria: self-awareness, self-adjustment, metacognition, self-reflection, and wisdom

Questions to ask students:

* How have your views been shaped by your upbringing?
* What are the limits of your knowledge about \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_? What are your blind spots?
* What are you prone to misunderstand because of prejudice, habit, or style?
* How do you learn best? What strategies work best for you?
* How do you know that you know \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_?
* How can you best show that you understand \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_?
* How did you come to understand it?
* If you had to pick one group of humanity to “walk the plank,” other than criminals, which group would it be and why?

# UbD’s “w.h.e.r.e.to.” framework connects essential content and skills to lesson plan

## What is w.h.e.r.e.t.o.?

* Where and Why
* Hook and Hold
* Engage and Equip
* Rethink, Revise, and Reflect
* Evaluate
* Tailored
* Organizing knowledge (graphic organizers and lesson plan)

## W.h.e.r.e.t.o - Where (should we be when we finish?) and Why

Ensure that students understand where the unit is headed, and why. Help them to see the answers to these two questions upfront:

1) What are my final performance obligations, the anchoring performance assessments?

2) What are the criteria by which my work will be judged for understanding?

### Base each unit’s rubrics on U.b.D.’s six facets of understanding

Share your rubrics with students as often and as early as possible so they know what is expected.

#### Creating a rubric

* Involve the students by having them identify the characteristics of an exemplary project so that they will have a clearer understanding of the parts of the whole.
* Show the point levels with specific examples of products or performances.
* Do not combine independent criteria. For example, combining accuracy and organization creates a problem since the product might be well-organized but inaccurate.
* Use descriptive language to denote quality as opposed to value-laden language, such as “not as thorough as...” or “excellent.”
* Write them in “kid language” so that the feedback is clear. Also, avoid making rubrics with an odd number on the likert scale. Otherwise, you may end up giving that middle grade a lot.A rubric for rubrics

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Criteria | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| Useful | Assessment is useful and convenient to the learner from the beginning of the discussion about the task, and it concentrates all student energy on what is important to accomplish. | Learners can understand the assessment and begin to use it before the task has begun. It focuses their energy on what it is important to accomplish. | Assessment is available to learners at some point before the task is done. Students can use it to see what is important to accomplish. | Assessment is not available to the learner or the learner cannot interpret or understand it. |
| Self-Assess | Learners are required to self-assess and reflect and concentrate on quality of work. | Learners are encouraged to self- assess and reflect on quality of work. | Learners are invited to self-assess, but may not reflect on quality. | There is no reason to self-assess or focus on quality. |
| Descriptors | Has explicit descriptors which let the teacher distinctly discriminate within a range of quality. (4 or 6 are ideal so no "middle" exists.) | Has specific ones that allow the teacher to find a range of quality, limited so that differences are clear (3-7 levels). | Has descriptors which help teacher measure specific items, but there may be too many items. | Has no understandable descriptors. |
| Key Elements | Measures only vital elements which are critical to the task. No items of low consequence. | Measures key elements which are essential to the task. Few items of low consequence. | Meaningful items assessed, but may be of limited significance. | Inappropriate items are assessed (due to ease of grading?). |
| Valid | An explicit set of objectives is measured. Understanding is a prerequisite to scoring well. Students cannot score well or poorly due to factors unrelated to objectives. | A distinct set of objectives is measured. Students must understand the concepts to score well and will score well if they understand. | Vague objectives may be present. Students who understand objectives tend to score higher. | Students do not know what is expected. Assessment does not measure what it says it measures. |
| Reliable | Different teachers grading the same task will get the same results. | Different teachers grading the same task will get highly similar results. | Teachers are guided to similar results. | There is no consistency of results. |

##### Exemplars

Also called anchors, exemplars are performance samples that are used to set the specific standard for each level of a rubric. They support students by providing them with tangible models of quality work. For example, attached to the paragraph describing a level-6 performance in writing would be 2-3 samples of writing that illustrate what a level-6 performance is. Note that some argue that providing exemplars leads students to imitate rather than create.

###### Get permission to use some students’ work

The best copyright policy is to treat student work in the same way you would treat the work of any other artist or author: Request a signed permission. Because most K-12 students are minors, certain situations may also require permission from a parent or legal guardian. Often the best option is to work out the publication arrangements at the beginning of a project, obtaining the necessary consent from both students and parents. Recognizing student work in this manner helps the student understand the concept of authorship. It also develops an appreciation for the rights accorded those who produce intellectual and creative works.

### Base summative assessments on each unit’s rubrics

#### Assessing your assessment intentions

To plan, conduct, and manage meaningful assessments, answer the following questions:

1. Will individual assessments, group assessments, or both levels of assessments be made?

2. What are the processes and outcomes that will be assessed?

3. What is the sequence of instructional tasks?

4. What is the purpose of the assessment?

5. In what setting will the assessment be conducted?

6. Who are the stakeholders in the assessment?

7. What assessment procedure will be used?

#### Portfolios

##### Definition

A portfolio is a collection of student work that tells the story of student achievement or growth for the purpose of either assessment or instruction. It is not a folder of all the work a student does but rather a collection of the student’s best work or best efforts in which the student also reflects about his or her own thinking processes.

a. Tests, prompts, tasks, and self-assessments should be placed in different sections.

b. All student work should be labeled by date and, at the secondary level, by subject.

c. Attached to student work should be a copy of the assessment instrument and the scoring scale.

d. Within each of the sections, all student work should be kept in the order in which it was done.

e. Anecdotal records are valuable if specific enough in detail to reveal to the reader what behaviors where observed that warrant the conclusion in the records.

f. Student journals are valuable if they reflect on what the student is learning and the rationale for the strategies of learning and/or problem solving being employed.

g. The portfolio as a whole should give a reliable, holistic picture of the student across the subjects, across the modes, and in the content standards and performance competencies spelled out by the district, the state and/or a national organization.

##### Goals

* Reflect stated learner outcomes identified in the core or essential curriculum;
* Focus on students' performance-based learning experiences as well as their acquisition of key knowledge, skills, and attitudes;
* Contain samples of work that stretch over an entire marking period;
* Contain works that represent a variety of different assessment tools; and
* Contain a variety of work samples and evaluations of that work by the student, peers, and teachers, and possibly even parents.

##### Benefits

* Promote student self-assessment, self-reflection, and control of learning;
* Support student-led parent conferences;
* Certify student competence;
* Enable comparisons over time;
* Identifies strengths and weaknesses through good criteria; and
* Enables goal setting.

##### Students’ responsibilities

* Select portfolio content;
* Develop criteria for both selection and success; and
* Self-reflect.

##### Portfolio types

###### Growth portfolios

A growth portfolio shows how skills, attitudes, etc. have changed over time. Growth is tracked using "developmental continuums," which describe stages of development for reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Student status on the continuum is marked at several designated times during the school year. Teacher judgments of developmental stage are backed up with samples of student work. The collection becomes meaningful when specific items are selected out to focus on particular educational experiences or goals. It can include a student’s best and weakest work.

###### Journal portfolios

A student writes a journal entry and reads it to a peer. Then on each Friday, the child picks a favorite and submits it to the teacher. The selected entry becomes part of the “journal portfolio.”

###### Literature response portfolios

An example:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Response Type** | **Selection (genre)** | **Date/ Student’s comments** |
| Paraphrase | a poem |  |
| Compose new verse | a song |  |
| Memorize and reenact | a famous speech |  |
| Book review | a book |  |
| Explain | an oath or creed |  |

###### Process portfolios

A process portfolio shows how a piece evolved from brainstorming to publication.

###### Showcase portfolios

This summative portfolio is for evaluating students' mastery of key curriculum outcomes. It is for the students' very best work, determined through a combination of student and teacher selection. Only completed work is included. This type of portfolio is compatible with audio-visual artifact development, including photographs, videotapes, and electronic records of students' completed work. The showcase portfolio should also include written analysis and reflections by the student in which the student explains how certain works were chosen for inclusion.

One type of a showcase portfolio is a “passportfolio,” which shows a readiness to move on to the next level of schooling. It might contain a "problem-solving investigation," a "creative expression" (presenting a scientific idea in a unique manner), a "growth through writing" section that shows progress in understanding a scientific concept over time, and self-reflection that enlarges on the entries.

###### Annual ones for a student’s archive

Use the term “portfolio” when referring to a single year's selection of works and “archive” for the total collection that is held and updated over the years. Establishing the physical space to house an archive is an important step: It signals to all students that each of them is an important part of the history of the school.

##### 

##### Portfolio checklist

How will you use the portfolio?

\_\_\_\_ For student self-reflection

\_\_\_\_ As part of a regular school evaluation/report card

\_\_\_\_ At parent conferences

\_\_\_\_ In IEP/SST meetings

\_\_\_\_ In communications to next year’s teachers

\_\_\_\_ In curricular planning

\_\_\_\_ In acknowledging students’ accomplishments

\_\_\_\_ In creating cooperative-learning activities

\_\_\_\_ Other:

What will the portfolio look like?

\_\_\_\_ Two pieces of posterboard stapled or taped together

\_\_\_\_ Box or other container

\_\_\_\_ Scrapbook

\_\_\_\_ Diary or journal

\_\_\_\_\_ Manila folder

\_\_\_\_\_ Bound volume

\_\_\_\_\_ CD-ROM

\_\_\_\_\_ Internet Web site

\_\_\_\_\_ Other:

Who will evaluate the portfolio?

\_\_\_\_ Teacher alone

\_\_\_\_ Teacher working in collaboration with teachers

\_\_\_\_ Student self-evaluation

\_\_\_\_ Peer evaluation

How will the works in the portfolio be arranged?

\_\_\_\_ Chronologically

\_\_\_\_ By student: from “crummy” to “great” (with reasons given)

\_\_\_\_ By teacher: from poor to superior (with reasons given)

\_\_\_\_ From birth of an idea to its fruition

\_\_\_\_ By subject area

\_\_\_\_ Other:

How will it be organized?

\_\_\_\_ Only finished pieces from a variety of subjects

\_\_\_\_ Different expressions of a specific objective

**\_\_\_\_** Charting of progress from first idea to final realization

\_\_\_\_ Representative samples of a week/month/year’s work

\_\_\_\_ Only “my best” work

\_\_\_\_ Includes “group” work

\_\_\_\_ Other:

What procedures will you use in placing items in the portfolio?

\_\_\_\_ Selecting regular times for pulling student work

\_\_\_\_ Training students to select (e.g., flagging with stickers)

\_\_\_\_ Pulling items that meet preset criteria

What factors will go into evaluating the portfolio?

\_\_\_\_ Number of entries

\_\_\_\_ Range of entries

\_\_\_\_ Degree of self-reflection demonstrated

\_\_\_\_ Improvement from past performances

\_\_\_\_ Achievement of preset goals (student’s, teacher’s, school’s)

\_\_\_\_ Responsiveness to feedback/mediation

\_\_\_\_ Depth of revision

\_\_\_\_ Group consensus (among teachers)

\_\_\_\_ Willingness to take a risk

\_\_\_\_ Development of themes

\_\_\_\_ Use of benchmarks or rubrics for comparison

\_\_\_\_ Other:

Self-assessment/reflection:

\_\_\_\_\_\_ Do students help set their personal assessment goals and select assessment activities?

##### Family involvement

Explain to parents the value of student portfolios -- what they mean, how they are used as a part of the curriculum, their value to the children, and how they fit into an assessment program for the school. Emphasize that portfolios do not replace more standardized measures. Standardized tests ask, "Which child knows more?" whereas portfolios ask, "What does this child know?"

Near the beginning of the semester, consider sending home a portfolio packet to parents explaining what a portfolio is, why you’re doing it (the educational rationale), and how they can become involved, if interested. An example is below. Later on, consider conducting student-led conferences where students formally present their portfolios to parents and teachers.

Student’s name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. What are the strengths of your child’s writing?

2. What areas of your child’s writing need improvement?

3. If you could improve something about the way your child reads, what would it be?

4. My child does his/her best when \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Please feel free to provide additional information on the back of this form.

Parents are the most natural audience. Other audiences could be siblings, other students from the same or different grade levels, prior teachers in the school, or senior citizens in the community.

###### Mid-year portfolio family response form

Dear Family Members,

Here are samples of work that your child and I have chosen for portfolio assessment. Please ask your child to explain what he or she has done. Then write a short note to your child in the space below, telling your thoughts about what you have seen. Please have your child bring the portfolio, with your note, back to school.

Sincerely, (Teacher)

Dear \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_,

Sincerely, (Family Member)

###### Parents’ response form at the end of the year

Student’s name: **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** Date: **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

Dear Parent,

Enclosed is your child’s final portfolio representing selected samples of “growth as an effective communicator” this year. This portfolio documents the development over the past ten months of your child’s ability to communicate in a variety of ways. The portfolio gives your child an opportunity to select, evaluate, and reflect upon his/her progress as a communicator. This will hopefully enable your child to set goals for improving skills and see more clearly how much has been accomplished. Your child has practiced how to present the portfolio to you. I encourage you to spend some time with your child as he/she shares this new adventure with you. I am sure that you will enjoy every moment of the trip!

I would greatly appreciate feedback from you and would find your responses to the following questions extremely helpful. Thank you for your continued enthusiasm and support.

Sincerely,

(Teacher’s name)

1. After viewing the portfolio, I found evidence of growth in the following areas:
   1. Expression of ideas \_\_\_\_\_
   2. Focus (staying on topic) \_\_\_\_\_
   3. Vocabulary/language \_\_\_\_\_
   4. Spelling \_\_\_\_\_
   5. Punctuation \_\_\_\_\_
   6. Revising from draft to final \_\_\_\_
   7. Organization \_\_\_\_\_

2. I feel my child has shown the greatest growth in the following area:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

3. I would like to see my child further improve in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

4. In what ways have you seen growth in your child’s reading ability and/or interests? Explain.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

5. Additional Comments: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

##### Five stages of creating a portfolio

1. Planning: Teacher and students focus the goals of the portfolio and frame its objectives.
2. Considering the contents: Students collect, select, and reflect on the materials they will include in their portfolio.
3. Designing: Students organize the materials they have selected and assemble them into digital pieces that make up the portfolio.
4. Evaluating: Students conduct a formative evaluation to improve their portfolio-in-progress and also write a summative reflection to determine its quality.
5. Publishing: Students and teacher perform the activities necessary to present the portfolio materials in a format that others can view.

###### 1. Planning

Focusing and framing help the teacher and students plan the portfolio. Focusing is the decision-making about the purpose of the portfolio and its intended audience. Framing is the decision-making about the commonality of the portfolio’s various components. To help define the purpose and audience of their portfolio, students should answer the following questions:

1. Why am I creating this portfolio in the first place?

2. What kind of portfolio do I want to create?

3. For whom am I creating the portfolio?

4. What are my goals (short- and long-term) for creating a portfolio?

Three ways to frame a portfolio are around a theme, a question, or a set of standards.

A theme promotes continuity while also illustrating artistry. The portfolio’s organization expresses talent and creativity just as much as the artifacts contained within. Themes might reflect the topic of the course or a student’s personality traits. The contents as a whole paint a vivid picture of the student as an intelligent creator. To develop their portfolio around a theme, students ask themselves these questions:

1. Is there any metaphor, idea, or image that recurs in my life or sums up who I am?

2. How could I demonstrate my talents by illustrating them through this theme?

3. What components might I include to do this?

4. How might I use the help of others to ensure that my theme is consistent and understandable?

A question as a portfolio frame allows students to be more introspective and reflective. First, the student develops a compelling question such as, "What do I hope to learn about this topic?" or “How does this topic affect my life?” The question can also be an “essential question” of the curriculum. Then all artifacts are selected to answer this question. Reflective statements and your feedback complement the artifacts in answering the question.

Lastly, a set of standards as a portfolio frame enables you to connect the students’ growth in knowledge and skills with educational benchmarks set up by curriculum professionals.

###### 2. Considering materials

First, students collect as many resources or artifacts from their learning as possible. They then select a subset of artifacts from this larger collection based on some kind of criteria tied to the portfolio’s focus and framework. Lastly, they reflect on how these pieces fit together to best communicate the goals of their portfolio to their intended audience.

*Don't get too focused on picking the contents.* Portfolios tell a story; put in anything that helps to tell it. The real contents are the student's thoughts and reasons for selecting a particular entry.

Classify the resources in the portfolio by artifacts or supporting information. Artifacts are critical because they show the students’ knowledge and skills. Supporting information helps the audience better understand the portfolio’s purpose and might include personal information, the rationale statement, a philosophy statement by each student about their preferred learning and studying methods, and a table of contents.

The more items students have to choose from, the more choices they will have in the selection process. Every choice they make forces them to think critically about their increasing knowledge and skills. They have to make tough decisions based on questions such as

* Is the work my best work for this criterion?
* Does it demonstrate growth?
* Does it reflect a criterion for which I am framing the portfolio?
* Should I include this artifact/item in my portfolio? Why? Why not?

When students have their first artifacts for their portfolio, they create a log sheet where they explain how the artifacts meet the standards, theme, or the overarching question of the portfolio. They may even want to rate the items (i.e., definitely include or maybe include). Throughout this process they need to remain focused and keep the portfolio’s purpose and audience in mind.

Students can write and organize reflective statements about their learning in several ways. They can include reflective statements for each and every artifact or just for each portion. They can also rely on the following four questions:

1. How does this artifact demonstrate competence in a particular standard?
2. Why did I include this artifact (why is it important to me)?
3. What did I learn as a result of using/creating this artifact?
4. How would I do things differently as a result of the artifact?

You can also guide them through a reflection activity with a set of lead-in sentences such as, "I enjoyed . . . ," "I thought I would . . . , but instead I . . . ." Model a reflection by preparing one for something you have learned. Have students reflect on how they learned what they learned. Learning strategies can include study habits, test taking strategies, or any other strategy used to learn something new in your class.

Key issues during Stage 2 include finding the right time for the selection of materials and reflection, organizing and presenting the portfolios, and maintaining and storing the portfolios.

###### 3. Organizing and producing it

Organizing involves creating a table of contents and grouping both the artifacts and supporting documentation into the categories of the table of contents. The table of contents serves as the "navigation scheme" linking the different parts of the portfolio. Producing has two steps. First, create a storyboard to show how the artifacts will appear to the viewer, and then integrate the storyboard and table of contents into a collection of digital files. The process of creating a storyboard forces students to consider how they will present information in their portfolio.

The contents should include:

1. a cover sheet that creatively reflects the nature of the student's (or group's) work;

2. a table of contents that includes the title of each work sample and its page number;

3. for group portfolios, a description of the group and its members; and

3. the rationale explaining what samples are included and why, and how they give a holistic view of a student's work or the group's work;

4. The work samples - individual or group projects: This could include individual work samples that the group helped to revise (compositions, presentations, etc.);

5. observation data of group members interacting as they worked on group projects;

6. a self-assessment written by the student in question or the group members;

7. future goals based on the student's (or group's) current achievements, interests, and progress;

8. teacher’s comments and assessments and comments from the parents and other groups; and

9. members’ self-assessment, including facilitation of group effectiveness and others' learning.

###### 4. Evaluating it

In addition to a summative evaluation done by you with a rubric, have students reflect on the learning process and their evolving comprehension of key knowledge and skills. This might be in a learning log or a reflective journals. In addition, you might have parents add a reflection.

Reflection questions:

* How does your work show how you have improved?
* What task or assignment was the most challenging and why?
* Which section are you most proud of and why?
* In what ways does your work illustrate your strengths and weaknesses as a learner?

###### 5. Publishing it

Lastly, check to see what technology resources your school has that will allow the students to publish their portfolios in interesting digital formats. After publishing, verify the appearance of their portfolios across multiple platforms, software, and browsers.

Portfolio evenings / celebrations

Schedule a portfolio evening, in which students present their portfolios to their parents. Here students explain to their parents the process by which the materials were generated, the self-reflections involved in the selection of the materials, the conversations with the teacher that spurred particular choices, and any other aspects of their "learning stories" they want to share.

To prepare, students spend several weeks talking about their portfolios and archives with their teachers, with peers, and often with older students. Specific lessons should be focused on how to organize selections of work, how to place them in chronological order, how to think about work as evidence of competence in more than one subject area, how to compare earlier work with present work, how to show the acquisition of more advanced skills, and most importantly, how to reflect on the portfolio as a whole. Students can also complete portfolio menus called "Ask me about" sheets. On these organizing sheets the students highlight the contents of their portfolios and emphasize learning experiences that are important to their portfolio story.

Another aspect of the portfolio evening is the production of a classroom video of approximately 15 to 20 minutes in length that shows a day in the life of the students, including the learning that takes place in various subject areas. Producing this video gives the students an important metacognitive task as they reflect on each segment of the school day.

The dates of the portfolio evenings should appear on the annual school calendar, and parents can be invited by a formal letter. The event could take place over two nights, with half of the class and their parents attending each night for approximately 90 minutes. In the days just prior to the event, the students add final touches to their presentations and select an area of the classroom where they can hold a private conversation with their parents.

##### Questions on the portfolio approach

1. In what areas of our assessment approach are we lacking essential information or instruments? How might a portfolio process complement or address our current approach?
2. What are the major behaviors, outcomes, or behavioral indicators that form the basis for the curriculum during a specific period of time (e.g., a unit, quarter, semester, course, etc.)? Which of the outcomes can be assessed most effectively using a portfolio approach?
3. As students learn the essential knowledge and skills we have identified, what observable behaviors will verify their learning and their progress in achieving identified standards?
4. What are the primary activities that can be designed to verify students' acquisition of essential skills and knowledge? Which of these activities might be especially appropriate for assessment and evaluation?
5. How can we ensure that students understand the purpose and process involved in developing and maintaining a portfolio?
6. Will students always select pieces of work that we have responded favorably to? If so, how can we avoid our evaluation being substituted for theirs?
7. What if students’ selections are not easily accessible on a selection day?
8. How many selections should be made?
9. Do all selections have to be in final draft form?
10. Is all work “OK” or are there limits to what they select?
11. What process will be used to facilitate student reflection and self-assessment?
12. How can we involve parents/families in the portfolio assessment process, including providing up-front training as we begin to use this process?
13. How can we integrate oral communication skills (e.g., presentations, oral defenses, dialogues, and audio-visual demonstrations) into our portfolio assessment process?
14. What process will be used for providing feedback?
15. What factors, including the criteria and standards, will be used to assess the portfolio?
16. How can we grade or score both individual portfolio elements and the portfolio as a while? For example, do we have rubrics, rules, scoring keys, and/or checklists that may guide and inform this process?

##### Pre-portfolio questionnaire

Name: Date:

1. Do you like to write?

I enjoy writing. \_\_ I sometimes enjoy writing. \_\_ I write only when I have to. \_\_

1. Check the writing skills you most want to improve this year (choose no more than five):

* Spelling \_\_
* Making paragraphs \_\_
* Punctuation \_\_
* Having an interesting introduction \_\_
* Having a strong conclusion \_\_
* Putting events in the correct order \_\_
* Keeping to the topic \_\_
* Using more interesting words \_\_
* Starting sentences in different ways \_\_
* Thinking about what to write/ starting \_\_
* The revising stage of writing \_\_
* Other \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. Please explain the kind of things that help you when you’re writing:
2. What kinds of problems do you have when you write?
3. Check your two favorite kinds of writing:

* Personal narrative about yourself \_\_
* Make-believe stories \_\_
* Factual reports \_\_
* Letters \_\_
* Poetry \_\_
* Journals \_\_

1. What do you read in your free time? (Check one or more.)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Short stories |  | Comic books |  | Fiction books |  | I don’t read in my free time. |  |
| Poems |  | Online articles |  | Newspapers |  |  |  |
| Magazines |  | Non-fiction books |  | Biographies |  |  |  |

1. Why is reading important to you? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
2. What topics interest you? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .
3. When you read by yourself, how do you feel? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .
4. When you read with a group of others, how do you feel? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .
5. What do you do when you come to a word you do not know? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .
6. When you don’t understand something you’ve read, what do you do? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .
7. At what time of day do you most enjoy reading? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .
8. How can I help you become a better reader or writer? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

##### Setting up a portfolio assignment

Clearly state the purpose of making a portfolio, and show a successful portfolio.

###### Student-reflection form for a selection

The student fills this out after making a selection and then discussing it with you.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date piece was written: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. I think this is my best sample of a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_

2. Some of the things I learned from completing this writing sample are \_\_\_

3. One way I think I have improved is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

4. Some things I still have to improve on are \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

###### Documenting the multiple intelligences

*To document linguistic intelligence:*

prewriting notes; preliminary drafts of writing projects; best samples of writing; written descriptions of investigations; audiotapes of debates, discussions, and problem-solving processes; final reports; dramatic interpretations; reading-skill checklists; audiotapes of reading or storytelling; samples of word puzzles solved; etc.

*To document logical-mathematical intelligence:*

math skills checklists, best samples of math papers, rough notes from computations/problem-solving processes, final write-ups of science lab experiments, photos of science fair projects, documentation of science fair projects (awards, photos), Piagetian assessment materials, samples of logic puzzles or brainteasers solved, samples of computer programs created or learned, etc.

*To document spatial intelligence:*

photos of projects; three-dimensional mockups; diagrams, flow charts, sketches, or mind-maps of thinking; samples or photos of collages, drawings, and paintings; videotapes of projects; samples of visual-spatial puzzles solved, etc.

*To document bodily-kinesthetic intelligence:*

video clips of projects and demonstrations, samples of projects actually made, videos or other records of the “acting out” of thinking processes, photos of hands-on projects, etc.

*To document musical intelligence:*

audio files of performances, compositions, and collages; samples of scores (performed or composed); student’s lyrics of raps, songs, or rhymes; student’s discography compilation, etc.

*To document interpersonal intelligence*:

letters to and from others (e.g., writing to obtain information from someone); group reports; written feedback from peers, teachers, and experts; teacher-student conference reports (summarized/transcribed); parent-teacher-student conference reports; peer-group reports; photos, videos, or write-ups of cooperative learning projects; documentation of community service projects (certificates, photos); etc.

*To document intrapersonal intelligence:*

journal entries; self-assessment essays, checklists, drawings, and activities; samples of other self-reflection exercises; questionnaires; transcribed interviews on goals and plans; interest inventories; samples of outside hobbies or activities; student-kept progress charts; notes of self-reflection on own work; etc.

*To document naturalist intelligence:*

field notes from nature studies, records of 4H or similar club participation, photos of caring for animals or plants, videotape of demonstration of naturalist project, record of volunteer efforts in ecological activities, writings about love of nature or pets, photos of nature collections (e.g., leaves, insects), etc.

##### Group collaboration on portfolios

Students can select work samples from each category to include and to explain their proposed portfolio to their group. Group members give feedback and help choose the specific pieces that best represent the quality of work. You can then give bonus points to the other members based on the quality of each individual’s portfolio and the grade that you give it.

##### Student reflection table for all inclusions

Template: “A guide to my portfolio”

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| What is in my portfolio | Why I chose it |
| 1. |  |
| 2. |  |
| 3. |  |
| 4. |  |
| 5. |  |
| 6. |  |

I organized my portfolio this way because ……..

##### Portfolio checkpoints

While most portfolios are a cumulative product, students always need feedback. Ask students to submit preliminary selections with a sentence or two about why they made the selection.

Mid-year portfolio checkpoint:

Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Class:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Teacher’s general comments to student:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Item selected | Why I selected it | Teacher’s comments |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

1. As I look at my portfolio selections, the piece I like best is\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .
2. I like this piece the best because \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .
3. The hardest piece for me to write was \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .
4. After reviewing my mid-year portfolio, I feel \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
5. I was pleased with the way that I \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
6. I was not pleased with the way that I \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
7. My goal for the next part of the school year is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
8. I think I can achieve this goal by \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

##### Criteria for evaluating a portfolio

In addition to a rubric and a possible letter grade, consider having an oral discussion as part of the summative evaluation process. This component should involve the student, teacher, and if possible, a panel of reviewers in a thoughtful exploration of the portfolio components, students' decision-making and evaluation processes related to artifact selection, and other relevant issues.

Any component can be weighted to reflect importance in relation to standards of learning or to reflect the skills on which a particular student is working. Evaluation criteria can include

* thoughtfulness (including evidence of students' metacognitive reflection)
* development in relation to key curriculum expectancies and indicators
* accuracy of information
* peer editing
* connections to other subjects
* evidence of collaboration
* following directions
* mechanics / usage / grammar / organization
* originality / creativity
* persistence / revisions
* responses to conference questions
* timeliness
* use of multiple intelligences
* visual appeal diversity of entries (e.g., use of many formats to show achievement of performance standards)

##### Rubric for a portfolio

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Excellent | Good | Not Satisfactory |
| *Your portfolio contains:* | *Your portfolio contains:* | *Your portfolio contains:* |
| Eight appropriate selections, all legibly written and neatly presented. | Eight appropriate selections, most of which are legible and neatly presented. | Fewer than 8 selections or ones that do not meet established requirements. |
| Seven “Evidence of Learning” strips, each one attached to a selection. All strips are completed in the required format and reflect your knowledge and understanding. | Seven “Evidence of Learning” strips, each one attached to a selection. Most strips follow the required format and reflect your knowledge and understanding. | Several “Evidence of Learning” strips that do not follow the required format or do not reflect your knowledge and understanding. |
| One selection for the work of which you are least proud. This selection has a thoughtfully completed reflection form attached to it. | One selection for the work of which you are least proud. This selection has a reflection form attached, but your explanation could be more detailed. | You forgot to do this. |
| A “Dear Reader” letter that describes your feelings about your participation and learning, according to given guidelines. This letter is neatly presented and reflects much thought about the knowledge you now have and the work you have completed. | A “Dear Reader” letter that follows most of the guidelines for describing your feelings about your learning and participation. The letter contains some thought about the knowledge you now have and the work you have completed, but could be more detailed or developed. | A “Dear Reader” letter that does not follow the guidelines for describing your feelings about the knowledge you have and the work you have completed. The letter leaves the reader with little information about your experience during the past 6 weeks. |
| A neatly organized folder that is appropriately designed. | A folder that is mostly organized and appropriately designed. | A folder that is poorly organized and inappropriately designed. |

#### Learning contracts

Learning contracts are student-centered tools that you can use to teach a topic or unit. Each contract is designed by the student and includes your suggestions. Contracts give students opportunities to learn required material in ways that are most interesting, stimulating, and relevant to them. Some direct instruction is still required, but the students are given the freedom to explore the topic/unit in a variety of creative and meaningful ways. They choose whether to work individually, in pairs, or in groups.

At the beginning of the school year have your students learn about the multiple intelligences and take surveys to figure out their strong areas.  When project time comes around, encourage them to remember their strong intelligences and to choose a project that they will enjoy. Later in the year, make them stretch a bit, choosing a project that represents an intelligence they are not as strong in. Have them draft a proposal, tell you what letter grade they want, sign and date it and have you approve it. It will be tough to get them to write enough detail on their proposal.

To begin, a goal has to be set. Example: To achieve an A, the student will choose seven projects to complete; for a B, he or she will choose six; for a C, the student will choose five. Extra points may be accrued if extra details or elaboration are added. The teacher reserves the right to reject any work that is illegible or incorrect.

Make sure students can choose from an adequate number of projects. Usually, this should be double the number of projects required. Again, let the students negotiate. Always let a student choose a project he or she really wants to do, with your approval.

Initially, set a low goal for them to accomplish for the different letter grades. Once they have had more experience, the goal can be increased, but make sure adequate time to do the projects is given. This should be in writing on every student’s contract so that there will be no misunderstandings.

Set a date for completion, but be willing to negotiate. For some students, a plan by which they can accomplish the job in the time given should be developed. For instance, if the contract is due in three weeks, set three projects due in one week, two the next, and then two the next. If unforeseen interruptions come into the students’ schedules or the school schedule, dates may be changed. If a contract is due on Friday, the students will usually negotiate for an extension until Monday. This gives them some ownership and some control. This can be fun, teaching them how to negotiate in the correct manner.

*Do not wait until the last day to collect all the projects.* Collect each one as a student completes it. If all the projects from every student are turned in on the same day, you will be completely overwhelmed.

There are two ways to record students’ progress. It can be recorded in a grade book, but the students really like it when their contracts are marked. For example, each student’s contract should be stapled in his or her notebook for easy reference. As each student finishes a project, mark it off on the contract. If they should lose the paper, their projects are on display anyway, and it can be easily reconstructed.

Since the formula for success has already been stated, all you have to do is accept projects. If projects meet the necessary requirements, students earn a check for each. If students go far beyond the requirements, give them a plus. When a student comes in with an extraordinary project, the other students will usually tell how many pluses the talented student should earn. For every plus, raise the grade one point. Fashion a list of requirements and expectations but not a set of laws chiseled in stone.

Questions to consider when planning a learning contract:

* How will the student show what was learned (i.e. record work, use a computer, or work with a partner)?
* What type of time and work would help the student to finish the assignment (i.e. extra time, fewer items, and/or new work)?
* What type of resources and materials does the student need (i.e. extra help from you, use of the internet, and/or different materials)?
* What else does the student need to be successful? In response to that last question, the student would write or draw what is needed.

After the you and students agree on the contract, both parties sign it. Then the student is held accountable for his or her own learning with your guidance. However, be sure to monitor the students’ individual work at regular intervals.

##### Contracts and parents

Sell the parents on the idea of contracts before starting. A project done with parents’ help might be the best approach for teaching some concepts. Some projects will be done outside of class, but remind parents that these are the students’ projects, not theirs. If parents start to compete to see who can do the best project, the students learn nothing, which robs them of valuable opportunities to learn. When parents realize the expectations are to see projects made by elementary students, they will relax. Still, give students time in class to work on their projects.

##### 

##### Sample activity choices for contracts

Independent Study of…

(Minimum of 15 points from each section; 100 points = A+, 90 = A, etc.)

*General:*

1. Plan a two-week vacation today that would take you to some of the sights of Ancient…. (10)
2. Write letters for posters, information, etc. to the …. embassy, airlines, and travel agencies. Submit copies of the letters and make a display of materials received. (10)
3. Bring to school and share with the class a sample of food from …., or recipes of …. food. (5)
4. Put up a bulletin board about …. (10)
5. Make a brochure or video advertising a ….. site. (10)
6. Write a “Day in the Life of” a …. or …. Specify the location and time period. (10)
7. Write and perform a play or musical piece in …. style, or contemporary style, that illustrates a famous event in …. history. This might involve only you, or others too. (20)
8. Perform a song about any of the assignments on this page. (10)
9. Perform a dance, with original or pre-recorded music that illustrates any assignment on this page. If you enlist the help of others, be prepared to assess their degree of assistance with this project for partial distribution of the grade. (20)
10. Create your own project with the approval of the instructor, points to be negotiated.

*Geography:*

1. Map of …. with geographic features. (5)
2. Map of ancient …. with political divisions. (5)
3. Map of …. showing physical features, main resources, and sites. (10)
4. Map showing the features of a ….. archaeological site. (10)
5. Methods of travel and routes used in ancient….. (5)
6. Flour and salt relief map painted to show geographical features. (10)
7. List 10 major cities by latitude and longitude. (5)
8. Do a find-a-word on …., accompanied by a word list and definition of each. (10)
9. Make a find-a-word using ….’s major religious philosophies, accompanied by a fact about each. (10)
10. Make a map showing ancient methods of travel and routes. (10)
11. Make a map of the …. road/trail and list the items exported or imported along it. (5)

*Art:*

1. Make a …. screen/vase/temple. (10)
2. Make a scratch-through of a ….. scene. (5)
3. Draw pictures showing the styles of ancient ….. dress for men and women. (10)
4. Make a paper-Mache mask used in a traditional ….. play. (10)
5. Talk about one of the religious leaders of … (only a paragraph), along with an illustration that depicts ideas of this figure or a significant event in the story of this figure. (10)
6. Draw replicas of ancient …. coins and jewelry. (10)
7. Draw five symbols of …. and say why you chose them. (10)
8. Build a miniature replica of a temple, boat, wall, or famous structure. (20)
9. Draw an illustrated alphabet about ….. (p= p……, etc.). (10)
10. Draw a sketch in traditional ….style. (10)
11. Make a ….carving from soap. (15)
12. Draw an ancient …..musical instrument. (10)
13. Make a design in embroidery. (10)
14. Sew your own piece of ….style clothing. (20)
15. Make a paper cut-out. (5)
16. Reproduce ancient …..(10)

*History:*

1. Draw a diagram of the structure of the government. (5)
2. List accomplishments of an emperor/king/president/dictator/ruler. (5)
3. Make a crossword puzzle based on a legend or a historical event. (5)
4. Write an essay that explains some contributions of the ancient …..in government, science, or mathematics. (10)
5. Write an essay explaining the story of a …..hero or heroine. (5)
6. Report on the conquests or contributions of a great leader. (5)
7. Explain, using PowerPoint, the difference among …… (10)
8. Organize an academic controversy regarding religious ideas of ancient….., the structure of ….government, or another relevant issue. (10)
9. Find 10 newspaper articles about …..(5)
10. Explain their importance to the U.S. (5)

##### Contract examples

###### Example #1 – Typical learning contract

Instructions:

Do assignments from each section, to the minimum required. You may earn the rest of your points from any section. Record your overall goals on the master sheet. Submit this by \_\_\_\_ .

Each week, turn in a planning sheet listing the choices being submitted. Mark each project clearly with your name, its title and points number. The point value assigned to each project is the maximum potential. If you don’t do a good job, you won’t earn many points. You may complete extra projects for more points.

A+ = more than 100 points, A = 100 points, B = 90+ points, C = 80+ points, D = 60+ points, F = anything less than 50 points

Resources:

Your textbook contains a wealth of information. There are other resources in the classroom that can be signed out. You might also use a search engine.

The school library is open until \_\_\_\_. There are a number of good references and encyclopedia there for you, as well as Internet access. You may also access the Internet from the computer lab, also open until \_\_\_. If you plan to stay until \_\_\_\_, be certain that you have a ride home.

You will also be given some class time to work on the project. However, much of the independent study will be done at home. Remember, this is INDEPENDENT study. You may get some general guidance at home, but all work submitted must be done by you alone.

You have a choice regarding which assignments you choose to emphasize. You must, however, submit a minimum of 15 points from each section. Maps must be hand drawn. Essays must reflect original writing. Drawings must be by hand. Certain items can be submitted by disk.

When submitting an item, mark it clearly with your name, the number of points, and the title: e.g. History #2 and Government #6, 10 points. If evaluation is a group project, only turn in one contract and list all members of the group at the top of this sheet.

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Project(s):**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Details of the project(s):

(Note:  If you do not give good details in the description of your project, your grade may not be what you contracted for.  Therefore, it is better to give too many details than not enough.)

Materials I will use: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Problems I expect: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Where I will seek help if I need it: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

The criteria that should be considered when my project is graded:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

*Deadlines*:

I plan to do assignments #s \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ for a total of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_\_. (1st date)

I plan to do assignment #s \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ for a total of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_\_. (2nd date)

I plan to do assignment #s \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ for a total of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_\_. (3rd date)

Signature of student:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Please confer with your parents, who may need to give you some guidance. Remember that you must undertake the task yourself and state clearly how your parents helped.

Signature of parent:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of teacher: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

###### Example #2 - “Celebration of Learning” contract

To show that I know \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, I would like to:

\_\_\_\_\_\_ write a report \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ create a series of sketches/diagrams

\_\_\_\_\_\_ do a photo essay \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ set up an experiment

\_\_\_\_\_\_ compile a scrapbook \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ engage in a debate or discussion

\_\_\_\_\_\_ build a model \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ do a mind-map

\_\_\_\_\_\_ put on a live demonstration \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ produce a videotape segment

\_\_\_\_\_\_ create a group project \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ create an ecology project that

\_\_\_\_\_\_ do a statistical chart incorporate the subject

\_\_\_\_\_\_ develop an interactive presentation \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ develop a musical

\_\_\_\_\_\_ develop a simulation \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ create a rap or song that encompasses

\_\_\_\_\_\_ keep a journal the topic

\_\_\_\_\_\_ record interviews \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ teach it to someone else

\_\_\_\_\_\_ design a mural \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ choreograph a dance

\_\_\_\_\_\_ create a relevant discography \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ develop a project not listed above:

\_\_\_\_\_\_ give a talk Other: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Brief description of what I intend to do:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Student Date

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Teacher Date

#### Individual assessments, not a compilation

##### Principles

1. Assessment is an integral part of instruction – diagnostic, formative, and summative.
2. Devote time to essential learning. What about the subject is essential to know?
3. Set high standards for teaching and learning.
4. Clarify targets (objectives) early; share objectives in advance.
5. Aim for more authentic assessments – exhibitions of students’ abilities.
6. Collect multiple indicators of learning – an array of evidence.
7. Provide ample opportunities for students to learn.

##### Traditional

Traditional assessments can overlap the performance-based evidence, thereby increasing the reliability of the overall assessment, es­pecially if the performance task was done as a group.

* Observations & dialogues
  + These include class discussions, conferences, and monitoring.
* Long-term projects
* Quizzes and tests
  + Are simple, content-focused questions.
  + Assess – with selected-response or short-answer formats –
    - content that is worth being familiar with;
    - content that is important to know and do; and
    - factual information, concepts, and discrete skills.

##### Performance/Authentic

###### Academic prompts

These are open-ended questions or problems that require the student to think critically, not just recall knowledge, and then to prepare a response, product, or performance. Academic prompts

* require constructed responses under school or exam conditions;
* are open; there is not a single, best answer or a best strategy for answering or solving them;
* often are ill-structured, requiring the development of a strategy;
* involve analysis, synthesis, or evaluation;
* typically require an explanation or defense of the answer given or methods used; and
* require judgment-based scoring based on criteria and performance standards.

###### Tasks & projects

Performance tasks are at the heart of learning. A good performance task will…

* accommodate students with various learning styles by letting them work alone and in groups;
* give chances to rehearse, practice, consult resources, get feedback, and refine performances and products; this can be done through drafts and peer conferences for big projects;
* tie into enduring understandings and essential content and skills;
* let learners apply their learning to problems, situations, and contexts;
* be about real-world contexts and purposes;
* be revealed before the instruction of the unit; task, criteria, and standards are known in advance and guide the student's work.
* encourage students to develop their own research questions for in-depth exploration and allow them choices of products (e.g., visual, written, oral) for activities and assignments;
* be assessed using valid criteria and indicators that are reflective of the desired results;
* reflect the six facets of understanding: explanation, interpretation, application, perspective, empathy, and self-understanding;
* be written in the GRASPS format to make them more authentic and engaging;
* appeal to various modalities (e.g., present information orally, visually, and in writing);
* use a variety of resource materials (e.g., multiple reading materials at different levels) to help students understand a difficult concept.

Questions students may have

Before assigning a project, think about the questions that students will have:

* Why is this important?
* What needs to be done?
* What can I use to find what I need?
* Where can I find what I need?
* What information can I use?
* How can I put my information together?
* How will I know if I did my job well?

Tasks sorted by … the G.R.A.S.P.S. design tool

GRASPS stands for Goal, Role, Audience, Situation, Purpose/Performance/Product, and Success Criteria and Standards. It is a learning tool to help you create performance tasks that present students with a real-world problem. Students develop a tangible product or performance for an identified audience, which is sometimes real and sometimes simulated. Have at least one core performance task for assessing understanding in a major unit or course.

Consider the following set of stem statements as you construct a scenario for a performance task. Note: These are idea starters. Resist the urge to fill in all of the blanks.

Goal

Example: The goal is to assist potential small businesses in conducting a market analysis.

• Your task is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

• The goal is to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

• The problem/challenge is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

• The obstacle(s) to overcome is (are) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Role

Example: You are a consultant with an economic development corporation in a small Texas city.

• You are \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

• You have been asked to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

• Your job is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Audience

Example: People who are/might be interested in starting a small business in your community.

• Your client(s) is (are) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

• The target audience is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

• You need to convince \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Possible student roles and audiences:

Actor, advertiser, artist/illustrator, author, biographer, board member, boss, boy/girl Scout, businessperson, candidate, carpenter, cartoon character, cartoonist, caterer, celebrity, CEO, chairperson, chef, choreographer, coach, community member, composer, client/customer, construction worker, dancer, designer, detective, editor, elected official, embassy staff, engineer, expert (in -), eyewitness, family member, farmer, filmmaker, firefighter, forest ranger, friend, geologist, government official, historian, historical figure, illustrator, intern, interviewer, inventor, judge, jury, lawyer, library patron, literary critic, lobbyist, meteorologist, museum director/ curator, museum visitor, neighbor, newscaster, novelist, nutritionist, observer, panelist, parent, park ranger, pen pal, photographer, pilot, playwright, poet, police officer, pollster, radio listener, reader, reporter, researcher, reviewer, sailor, school official, scientist, ship’s captain, social scientist, social worker, statistician, storyteller, student, taxi driver, teacher, tour guide, trainer, travel agent, traveler, tutor, television or movie viewer, television or movie character, visitor, web site designer, or zookeeper

Situation

Example: Your community is not big enough to attract to national business chains or franchises; however, the economic development corporation that employs you believes that small businesses could be successful in your community. The corporation also thinks that small business start-ups could be encouraged by a market analysis done by you that examines the prospects.

• The context you find yourself in is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

• The challenge involves dealing with \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Product, performance & purpose

Example: You are responsible for designing, producing, and presenting, in an electronic format, a training session that identifies economic data sources available in the community and demonstrates how to conduct a market analysis of the community.

• You will create a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in order to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

• You need to develop \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_so that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Possible products and performances:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Written** | **Oral** | **Visual** |
| Advertisement, biography, book report or review, brochure, collection, crossword puzzle, editorial, essay, historical fiction, journal, letter, log, magazine article, memo, newscast, newspaper article, play, poem, position paper, proposal, research report, script, story, test, and website | Audiotape, conversation, debate, discussion, dramatic reading, dramatization, interview, oral presentation, oral report, poetry reading, puppet show, radio script, rap, skit, song, speech, and teaching a lesson | Advertisement, banner, cartoon, collage, computer graphic, data display, design, diagram, diorama, display, drawing, filmstrip, flyer, game, graph, map, model, painting, photo, poster, PowerPoint show, questionnaire, scrapbook, sculpture, slide show, storyboard, videotape, and website |

Standards & criteria for success

Example: Your training session must identify all economic-data sources relevant to the potential business, show the steps involved in conducting a market analysis for this business, use a series of PowerPoint slides, and take no longer than 20 minutes to present to the potential businesses.

• Your performance needs to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

• Your work will be judged by \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

• Your product must meet the following standards \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

• A successful result will \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

… by Bloom’s Taxonomy

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Knowledge | definition, fact, label, list, quiz, reproduction, test, workbook, and worksheet |
| Comprehension | collection, definition, dramatization, example, explanation, label, list, outline, quiz, recitation, reproduction, show & tell, story problems, summary, and test |
| Application | demonstration, diagram, diorama, diary, drawing, experiment, illustration, interview, journal, lesson, map, model, performance, photograph, poster, prediction, presentation, puzzle, report, scrapbook, sculpture, and simulation |
| Analysis | abstract, category, chart, checklist, conclusion, database, diagram, graph, illustration, investigation, inventory, list, mobile, outline, plan, report, questionnaire, spreadsheet, summary, survey, and mobile |
| Synthesis | advertisement, blueprint, cartoon, collage, film, formula, invention, new game, newspaper, painting, pantomime, plan, play, poem, radio, story, solution, song, and video |
| Evaluation | cartoon, conclusion, critique, debate, editorial, evaluation, investigation, judgment, opinion, panel, recommendation, report, review, scale, survey, and verdict |

… by the multiple intelligences

Verbal / linguistic:

Journal entries

Assuming the role of a key figure, students recount that person's feelings. For example, they might pretend they are a peasant, an aristocrat, or a member of the clergy during the radical stage of the French Revolution. Or, they could keep a journal about Lewis and Clark’s expedition, using drawings from Clark's own journal and a map detailing the journey's route. Encourage students to adopt a narrative format that uses (insofar as is possible) the colloquial language of the time or place. Each entry should include the correct date and a detailed account of the figure's feelings and experiences. Use visual or musical prompts to give students ideas.

Correspondence

Challenge students to write letters that convey the feelings of a key figure to a particular audience. Encourage them to use descriptive narrative and to integrate as much detailed, accurate information about the event as possible. You can motivate students with prewriting activities that make them feel as though they have witnessed the event. During a unit on World War I, for example, place students on the floor between rows of desks representing trenches, and show a series of images depicting the horrors of warfare on Europe's western front.

Poems

Assign a specific style of poetry, and ask students to use descriptive, evocative language while still making direct references to the topic. For example, after viewing images about the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II, challenge students to write haiku from the perspective of those interned. Other possibilities include illuminated poems about medieval Europe, an acrostic poem about Montezuma, poetic lyrics of a folk song about the Mexican heritage in the Southwest, or a biographical poem to celebrate the accomplishments of an important Renaissance figure.

Storyboard

Fold a 12-inch by 18-inch pieces of white construction paper into 8 rectangles: rectangle 1 - title and student’s name; rectangle 2: main character; 3: setting (time and place); 4: conditions before the problem; 5: the problem/antagonist; 6: conflict; 7: resolution; 8: ending.

More verbal/linguistic tasks/projects:

Storytelling, debate, myth, legend, short play, news article, presentation, newsletter, booklet, dictionary entry, slogan, podcast, book review, essay, riddles, word game, letter to the author, a rewriting of the story from another character’s viewpoint, a book review, a written imaginary interview with one of the characters, selection of a meaningful book passage and explanation of its significance, a rewriting of the story in a different time period, a rewriting of the story to account for a “What-if’ scenario, creation of trivia questions to ask someone else, writing of a prequel or sequel chapter, diary entries, presentation of research about some real aspect of the book, or an explanation of a real-life person who reminds you of a character in the book

Logical-mathematical:

an algorithm, a timeline, chart, an experiment, a strategy game, puzzle cards, a board game, a calendar, data interpretation, a hypothesis, a computer program, a taxonomy, a lab project, a chart, a map, or a graph

Visual:

Illustrated metaphorical representations

Students might illustrate analogies that metaphorically explain difficult or abstract concepts. Complete this statement: "The many changes in communist policies in China were like…” Use one of the following analogies or one of your own: *shifting winds*, *a seesaw*, *a tennis game*. Make a simple drawing of the analogy and label the historical comparisons.

Illustrated dictionary entries

Students explain key terms by making illustrated dictionary entries. They define the term in their own words, give a synonym and an antonym, and make a drawing that represents the term.

Illustrated proverbs

Students choose a familiar proverb that helps explain complex concepts, and then illustrate the proverb to show how it pertains to the situation they are studying.

Mosaics

Students create mosaics to synthesize content of a broad topic. Within the overall design, they put visuals and words on each "tile" to show similarities, differences, and important concepts.

Picto-words

To help define difficult concepts and themes, students can create pictowords, or symbolic representations of words and phrases that show their meaning. Example:



3-D graphic organizers

3-D graphic organizers make great displays on classroom bulletin boards and in the school’s showcase, and they can also be helpful as formative assessments and study aids. You will need folded paper, scissors, glue, and colored pencils.

* Option 1: Fold an 8.5x11 sheet of paper horizontally into a shutter fold (like folding a resume for a business envelope). Add drawings on the front so that the drawings are cut in half by the fold line (not cut with scissors, but with the open ends of the shutter.) Label as necessary.
* Option 2: Fold an 8.5x11 sheet of paper lengthwise, but make one side 1” longer than the other. On the short side, make two cuts equally distanced apart so that you can form three tabs. Now the face-up side of the longer side will be where the title is. This format can be great for Venn diagrams, with the middle tab being the one for “How are they similar?”
* Option 3: Fold an 8.5 x11 sheet into a shutter fold (like Option 1). Fold the shutter fold sideways in half. Form four tabs by cutting along the fold lines in the middle of the two long tabs.
* Option 4: Fold a large colored sheet of construction paper in half, horizontally. Make two pieces of Option 1 (above). Glue each “Option 1 piece” on the inside of each half of the construction paper. This will give you six tabs (three on the top half and three on the bottom half.).

More visual tasks/projects:

a chart, a map, a graph, a slideshow, a video, a photo album, a poster, a bulletin board, a mural, an art piece, a set of architectural drawings, a film, an advertisement, a color-coded process, a drawing, a painting, a sketch, a sculpture, a curated collection of photos, a MS PowerPoint presentation, a new dustjacket for the book, a costume, a coat of arms for a character with an explanation of its significance, a diorama, a mobile, stitching or embroidery for a wall hanging or a T-shirt about the story, or an item from home connected to the topic along with an explanation

Musical:

song lyrics, song chords, a rhythmical pattern, a presentation with appropriate musical accompaniment, an analogy between a song and the material, a musical game, a curated music collection to explain the material, or a new ending to a song

Kinesthetic:

a play, a dance, role play or simulation, a sequence of movements, a model, a puppet show, a presentation of food that the characters ate or which is representative of the book, or an interview with a real or fictional character

Intrapersonal:

a personal analogy, a goal to accomplish on your own, a description of your feelings, a description of your philosophy, a description of your personal values, self-directed learning, a self-inventory of your qualities that will help you complete a task, a journal entry, an explanation of your purpose in studying, feedback from someone on your effort towards your goal, a self-assessment, or tracking of your daily or weekly goals

Interpersonal:

a scavenger hunt, a service project, a mentorship, apprenticeship, a tutoring program, a solution to a public problem, a board or floor game, or a sales pitch to get listeners excited about the book

#### End-of-the-year assignment

At the end of the school year, students write a letter to next year’s teacher describing themselves as a learner. They will describe their academic strengths, needs, interests, and learning styles, and they will set specific goals based on their self-assessment of their performance during this academic year, the one that is ending.

### Base diagnostic and formative assessments (questions) on the summative ones

#### Diagnostic assessment

Diagnostic assessments precede instruction; check students’ prior knowledge; identify misconceptions, interests, and learning-style preferences; and serve as a needs analysis for ensuing differentiated activities. Examples include pretests, student surveys, skills checks, and the “KW” section of KWL sheets.

#### Formative assessment

Formative assessments are ongoing and provide information to guide teaching and learning for improved learning and performance. Examples include quizzes, oral questioning, observations, draft work, “think-alouds,” dress rehearsal, and portfolio reviews.

##### Aspects of effective questioning

###### Ample think time

Allow 3-5 seconds of wait-time after asking a question. You may want to even put your index finger on the side of your forehead as a thinking signal. Students can do the same and then show that they are ready to respond by putting their hand down.

Write time is an important tool too, and it enforces individual accountability. Give students a little time to each write their response before calling on someone to respond.

But don’t wait for everyone

As you see individuals or groups finishing a task, don't wait for the last one to finish. Instead, when about 80% are finished, go on to the next step. The ones who have not finished can come back to the topic later, rather than holding back the rest of the class.

###### No opt out

If a student can't answer a question, particularly a student who didn’t raise their hand but whom you called on, ask another student and then come back to that student with the same question.

###### Overarching question on the board

Put the lesson’s overarching question at the top of the board for the duration of the lesson.

###### Audiotape yourself

Check the quality of your questioning by audiotaping your classes.

###### Avoid giving definitive “yes” answers

Avoid saying "right," "great," or "very good." Instead, try, “"Thanks, (student)…. How did some of you others respond?" or “Does anyone have another way to solve this?”

##### Ways to question effectively

###### Hand signals (class-wide or group rep)

These can be done for yes/no and agree/disagree questions, as well understand/don’t understand. Have students do this blindly and above their heads. They can do a thumbs-up / thumbs-down, one finger up / two fingers up, or their arms straight up (Yes or agree) or their arms crossed above their head. This third choice might be easiest for you to see from the front of the room. For agree/disagree, then call on a few students for them to give their reasons.

Or, a group representative can signal their group's answer after the group has discussed it.

###### Answer slates

Instead of calling on students one at a time, have all students or pairs respond by holding up their slate with their answer.

###### Simultaneous blackboards

Have a predetermined place at the blackboard for each pair or group. Representatives write their answers on the board simultaneously. The other members of the group can check their group’s work or compare their group’s answer with those of other groups.

###### Think-pair-share

Think of the answer, discuss it with your classmate, and then share with class.

###### The halfway three-minute pause

Halfway through class, students stop, reflect on the new content or skill, make connections to prior knowledge or experience, and seek clarification with their partner or group of four.

###### One-minute essay at class end

At the conclusion of a lesson, students write a brief (one-minute) paragraph on an index card summarizing their understanding of the key idea or ideas presented. Collect and review.

##### Students questioning each other

###### A team checker for understanding

In pairs or groups, always have a checker for understanding. That person asks the other(s) to explain their answer aloud. How did they get that answer?

###### “RallyCoach” (Pair coach)

Partners take turns, one giving a written answer while the other coaches. One pencil is used along with one sheet of paper. Partner A solves the first problem while Partner B watches and listens, checks, coaches if necessary, and praises. The students then switch roles for the next problem and continue alternating until the end of the activity.

###### Pairs Check

Students do RallyCoach in pairs. After every two problems, pairs check their answers with the other pair in their group. Every answer is checked by two different students, once during RallyCoach and once during Pairs Check.

###### Question your partner and rotate

Students write a question about the concept and ask it to their partner (any unanswered questions are discussed in front of the class) and then rotate to someone else.

##### Specific questions to ask

###### KWL

* What do you know?
* What would you like to know?
* What did you learn?

###### Metacognition

What do I/we/you still not understand about ...?

###### Connecting knowledge

* How does this tie in with what we learned yesterday?
* How does this relate to last week’s?

###### Hypothetical

* What if…
* What would have happened if that had happened?
* What would have happened if that had not happened?
* What would not have happened if that had happened?
* What would not have happened if that had not happened?

###### Follow-up to class after a student’s answer

Can someone else …

* clarify?
* elaborate?
* verify?
* summarize

###### Asking for a think-aloud

What were the steps in your thinking there?

##### Question stems

Students make their own specific questions. Then in groups or pairs they ask their questions to each other and answer each other's questions as well as their own. Those questions that connect information to prior knowledge and personal experience will be the most effective ones.

###### Bloom’s taxonomy stems

Partners could ask and answer three questions of a certain type (i.e., compare/contrast, etc.).

|  |
| --- |
| Knowledge: Where did, what was, who was, when did, how many, find where, identify |
| Comprehension: Tell, what does it mean, give an example, describe, illustrate, make a map, or summarize; why is it important? What conclusions can you draw about \_\_\_? |
| Application: What might happen if; how might you; if you were \_\_\_, would you\_\_\_; how do \_\_\_ affect \_\_\_; where else could you\_\_\_; would you have done the same as \_\_\_; adapt; adopt; what is a new example of \_\_; how could... be used to... ? |
| Analysis: What might you use; what other ways might\_\_\_; what part was most \_\_; what is similar (or different); outline; separate; compare \_\_ and \_ with regard to \_\_\_; what causes \_\_ ? |
| Synthesis: What might it be like; pretend; design; add something new; combine; write a different ending |
| Evaluation: Would you recommend\_\_\_; why are these the most interesting; what do you think; what did you like; could this have happened; what character might you be; in your opinion, which is best, . . . or . .. ? Why? Do you agree or disagree with the statement? Why? |

###### Question-stem bingo

Row headings below in the table below:

Present

Past

Possibility

Probability

Prediction

Imagination

Event Situation Choice Person Reason Means

What is? Where/when is? Which is? Who is? Why is? How is?

What did? Where/when did? Which did? Who did? Why did? How did?

What can? Where/when can Which can? Who can? Why can? How can?

What would? Where/when would? Which would? Who would? Why would? How would?

What will? Where/when will? Which will? Who will? Why will? How will?

What might? Where/when might? Which might? Who might? Why might? How might?

Call out a quadrant (e.g., B4). Students generate either a true question (one for which they do not have an answer) or a review question (one for which they have an answer). They then write their question, ask a partner, wait for an elaborate answer, paraphrase the partner's answer, praise the partner's answer, augment the answer, and then reverse roles.

###### Analogy stem

Example: “Concept, principle, or process) is like \_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_.”

## w.H.e.r.e.t.o. – Hook (their attention) and Hold (their interest)

Hook students in the beginning and hold their attention throughout.

## Hook: Opening a unit

### Determining unit sections

Use the essential question to determine the main sections. Each section, containing a series of lessons, should provide organization as students as gather and weigh evidence from a variety of perspectives, all related to the essential question. Ask students to respond to the essential question after each section as their perspective becomes broader.

#### Identifying key lesson content

Determine what objectives and lessons to teach in each section. From your course calendar, you know how much time you have allotted for the unit. Review which topics the standards expect you to address. What lessons will both address key standards and enable students to explore the essential question from different points of view?

### Room preparations

Post material in the room to rouse interest and to link the new topic to previous work. There should be books, photos, and other materials to catch a student's eye and to allow for browsing in free-reading time. A learning center can be put in the corner to house these books and photos.

### Designing a unit "opener" activity

Design a kick-off activity for the first lesson that introduces the essential question, piques student interest, and challenges students to draw initial conclusions. For example, you might use quotes, provocative propositions, or musical or visual prompts. Be sure to support your opener activity with visuals; use images that provide evidence on more than one side of the essential question.

#### Quotes

Introduce the essential question with a famous quote. Have students discuss whether they agree or disagree. Make it clear that they are free to change their minds as the unit unfolds.

#### Provocative propositions

Present the essential question in the form of a provocative statement and have students take a stand. They can revise their stand as they gather more information throughout the unit. You might have students make a three-column table in their notebooks with these headings: factors to consider; examples that support the statement, and examples that don’t support the statement.

#### Musical prompts

Begin by playing a music selection or two to help introduce the essential question. Have students respond to the question after listening to the music. As they listen to each selection, have students record their impressions of the time period. Have them identify the mood of the piece and make some guesses as to the general mood of the people at the time. For each selection, have students share some of their impressions.

#### Visual prompts

Open by showing selected images to introduce the essential question. Have students respond to the question after viewing the images. Then place students in mixed-ability pairs and have them create a t-chart comparing and contrasting the different images. For each image, have students develop at least one argument on both sides of the chart. After students have recorded arguments for all of the images, project one of the images again. Hold a class discussion with students using the hypothetical arguments in their charts to fuel the debate. Play the role of devil's advocate if most students argue for only one side of the chart.

### Do a class KWL about the topic

When you begin, project onto a screen the unit’s topic and an outline of the objectives. The students will see what they are responsible for learning and what will be asked of them on the exam. Identify what they already know about the topic. Then ask them to think of questions that could be asked about it. As questions are generated, they will need to be recorded. New questions can come from old ones as everyone reads them over when they are recorded on chart paper, newsprint or the blackboard. Delegate the writing to certain students, dividing the blackboard into sections and keeping four students busy. This tactic keeps the pace exciting.

Then have students identify their learning goals for the unit, and allow students to identify and record personal learning goals.

## Hook: Opening a lesson

### “Bellwork”

“Bellwork” is work that students do right when they enter the classroom. It shouldn’t require any direction from you, it should take 3-5 minutes to complete, should require some writing, and it should be posted in the same place each day.

You may want the students to do their writing at the bottom of their homework assignment before they turn it in. Other options include passing in their homework before doing the bellwork or putting it on the corner of your desk for your inspection before you go over it as a class.

Activities might be a political cartoon, a slide, a quote from the previous night’s reading, quiz questions on a previous day’s topic, a provocative statement that requires taking a stand, the *K* and *W* in a KWL for a new topic you are introducing, questions about what new vocabulary words might mean or existing words that they are linked to, or a list of what they can recall from yesterday’s lesson, which they can then add to by discussing it with their partner.

## Hold attention: Showing videos

Brief the group on the video to be shown. Don’t ask specific questions beforehand except on a handout for students needing accommodation. During the video, stop the tape frequently. During each stop, ask questions and hold a class discussion. Then give a quiz.

## Hold attention: Using cooperative learning (CL)

If you use pairs or groups, have a clearly stated group goal that justifies two or more students learning together.

### Its most frequent use

Cooperative learning’s most frequent use should be for the discussion of ideas or the practice of skills that you as the teacher have presented.

### Principles of CL

#### 1. Individual accountability

Every student must show that they have learned the material. Avoid those situations where some students can slack off and ride for free on the backs of annoyed teammates.

##### 20 ways to structure it

* Keep the size of the group small. Ideally use a pair. This makes it darn-near impossible for a student to avoid doing their fair share.
* Students independently write down their answers and their reasoning before teaming up.
* Every student answers your questions with thumbs or numbered fingers (or a salute or an X).
* All students simultaneously hold up answer boards for you to check.
* Simultaneous explaining: Each member explains the group's answer to another person.
* A group member asks a question, calls for think time, has each teammate write down an answer, and then checks their answers. Remind students about the importance of wait time when asking each other questions.
* Randomly ask one member of the group to explain the learning to the whole class.
* At intervals, each student writes and hands in a paragraph on what they have learned so far.
* Give an individual test or quiz to each student. Do not let them work together on it.
* Assign each student a new task whose completion requires the mastery of the previous task.
* Peer checklists on projects: Partners check the list and sign off on it (approved by: \_\_\_\_\_\_ )
* For groups of four, assign roles.
* Assign a checker who has each group member explain the answer out loud.
* Each group member must complete part of the project in order for it to be finished.
* Students color-code individual contributions with a uniquely colored pen.
* The group keeps a record of each member's work on the project, which is spot checked.
* Each member has to do an equal amount of the oral presentation.
* Observe each group and record the frequency with which each member contributes.
* Everyone signs: “I participated, I agree, and I can explain the information.”
* Teammates evaluate each other on their contributions.

#### 2. Positive interdependence

##### Nine types

###### Goal

Goal interdependence is the most important type of positive interdependence, and you must structure it into every cooperative-learning activity, unlike the other types of positive interdependence listed below.

Goal interdependence exists when all members know they are responsible for both their own learning and the learning of the other members; when each one shows mastery of the content, or at least improves; and when they can all explain the group product or outcome that they each had a part in creating. Goal interdependence does not exist when the task can be divided up and completed individually with no need to discuss or engage with the other group members.

Supplement goal interdependence with the other types of positive interdependence. You won’t have them all in every lesson.

###### Reward (usually group bonus points)

Reward interdependence usually takes the form of bonus points, which should be kept to five for each assessment; otherwise you risk grade inflation. You don’t want to overshadow the individual work that each student has to do. For grades that go above 100 with the bonus points added to them, score them in full (such as a 103, etc.)

Use instead of a class-participation grade. It is too difficult and subjective to quantify a student’s class-participation score, and for a group to do well to get the bonus, they have to be participating with each other anyway.

Avoid group grades. No student should feel penalized academically by being placed in a particular group. In the worst-case scenario, a student might miss out on bonus points due to a group member’s incompetency, but that should not affect their base grade. The same grade for all members in a group promotes the free-rider effect, in which some members shirk their duties.

Prioritize whole-class rewards. Whenever possible, build interdependence through whole-class rather than small-group incentives. For instance, each group that meets the criterion contributes three points to the class score, and when the class gets to 100 points, they share a whole-class event - a celebration of some kind.

Stickers and certificates might work with younger students but won’t work for older ones.

Over time, phase out bonus points and other tangible rewards. Tangible, expected rewards can erode intrinsic motivation by shifting students’ attribution or reasoning in why they are helping a classmate. Without the reward, they might think, “I'm doing this because I enjoy it." But with the reward, it might be, "I am doing this to get the reward.”

Begin by always having it, and then often, then every other time, then occasionally, then rarely, and then never again, until the next year when you would start over. Rats push the lever the most, with the minimal use of pellets being offered, if they receive the reward only occasionally.

Perhaps by November you can announce that you will only give bonus points on certain occasions and will never tell the groups at the beginning of each activity, only at the end. This will make them work hard for the bonus points without a guarantee that they will get them

Ways of giving bonus points:

* Each member’s score is above a certain criterion, which might be different for each member. For example, if each student scores within 4 points (above or below) of his or her semester-average score, all members receive 1 bonus point. If each one score 5 to 9 points above their average, each member receives 2 bonus points. Or, if they each score 10 points or more above their average, or score 100 percent correct, each member receives 3 bonus points.
* The group’s average has improved from the last task.
* The group average is above a set score.
* All students improve on their previous scores (except for those who received perfect scores).
* The lowest score in the group is above a preset criterion. This will encourage the supporting and assisting of the low achievers in the group. The criterion can be adjusted for each group, depending on the past performance of their lowest member.

Also, try to not give a numerical grade to every piece of work a group or group member does.

One interesting and intrinsic reward is the allocation of extra group-reflection time at the end of a lesson. This will probably only work with the more motivated students. Group members who succeed on a task can be given more time to discuss what they did to help the group and how to further improve the group dynamic for the next activity.

###### Resource / information

There are three ways to structure resource interdependence, also called material interdependence:

1. Give one set of materials to an entire group, with each member getting just a part of the needed materials. The students will then have to work together in order to be successful. This is especially effective the first few times the group meets.
2. Give each student a different colored pen so that it’s clear who did what for a group drawing.
3. Use the “jigsaw” teaching method. Arrange the content like a jigsaw puzzle so that each student has part of the content needed to complete the assignment. Each group member can receive different books or source materials to be synthesized. Such procedures require that every member participate in order for the group to be successful.

###### Role

Roles are usually only assigned to groups of four, not to pairs. Depending on the complexity of each role, you may want to give each member two different roles, neither of which overlaps with the duties of the other roles in the group. Then rotate the roles when the time is right.

Possible roles for general use:

* Recorder: Writes down and ideas and decisions, and edits the group's report.
* Questioner: Seeks information and opinions from all members of the group.
* Presenter: Shares the group's result with the rest of the class.
* Illustrator: Draws any pictures, graphs, charts, or figures that convey the group's findings.
* Checker: Ensures that everybody understands the work in progress.
* Coach: Helps with the academic content and explains concepts.
* Reader: Reads the material to the group.
* Summarizer: Pulls together the group’s conclusions so that they can be presented coherently.
* Scout: Seeks additional information from other groups.
* Active listener: Repeats or paraphrases what has been said.
* Praiser
* Reflector: Thinks about and evaluates the group's progress and shares this.
* Observer: See page 112-115 and 143-147.
* Participation recorder: Records who speaks and contributes.
* Leader: Check to make sure everyone is listening. Coordinate the group's efforts. Equalizes participation (prevents someone from dominating the discussion) and encourages reluctant or shy students to participate. Keeps the group focused on the task and monitors the time.
* Materials manager: Picks up the group’s graded homework and supplies (the “group tub”) at the beginning of each lesson, collects the supplies at the end of class, and returns them along with the group’s homework that was due today.
* Noise Monitor: Ensures group members are using quiet voices. Students can learn to work very quietly using "12-inch" voices. The noise monitor can use a ruler to measure voice distance.

###### Sequential / task-related

Like on a factory line, each member might have to wait in starting their phase of the work until a teammate has finished with his or her contribution.

###### Outside-force / competition

Outside-force interdependence is when each group is placed in competition with some outside force, including the other groups in the classroom or the groups in the other sections of that grade. Competition is best used sparingly, with students competing against their own individual or group scores, standardized test-score averages, or against the clock when tasks are simple and speed and accuracy are important.

Have competitions against other groups in that section only after the class has built a strong sense of mutual respect and community. Do not use them as a motivator during rough times or for particularly difficult work. An example of this type of competition (inter-group competition) is Student-Teams-Achievement Divisions (STAD) on page 131.

###### Identity

Identity interdependence is used either for humor or when groups will be working together for relatively long periods of time. Ask each group to create a unique name, motto, flag, logo, shield, cheer, or special handshake. Group identities sometime relate to the specific subject that the students are studying together. A math group might name itself "The Einsteins," "The Marvelous Multipliers," or "The Curious Calculators;” social-studies groups might name themselves after explorers; literature groups might name themselves after favorite authors or characters; in a music class, groups might develop theme songs, chants, or rhythmic motifs. At other times, students will choose names, logos, or mottoes that relate to their own characteristics or interests; these tend to be quite creative and give group members a way to learn more about each other.

Encourage groups to make their own type of cheer to salute good work done by a group member. It should be a quiet one however, and perhaps even a silent one.

###### Location or classroom environment

Each group has its own physical space in the classroom that it regularly returns to. Express this clearly to students so they know when they are "with their group" or "away from their group."

Use furniture, desks, and masking tape on the floor to define the areas. Even tall plants can be moved to provide spatial boundaries. If a group will be together for a period of several days or weeks, members may wish to build a poster or collage that designates their work area.

###### Fantasy / hypothetical / situational

Build a scenario that requires each group to work through a hypothetical situation or fantasy. For example, “You are a scientific/literary prize team and …” Or, “You are lost on the moon and …” Etc.

#### 3. Social skills for groups

Do not expect students to work together productively if you have not given them the skills to do so. Have them show these skills for you. If they don’t know how to do one, teach it to them.

Keep a list of skills you teach to every class.

##### Group-forming skills

* quietly moving into groups
* greeting them by their name
* staying with the group
* using a quiet voice
* keeping hands and feet to self
* looking at the group’s paper
* looking at the speaker
* only using nice language
* taking turns
* seeing the teacher’s quiet signal

###### Moving quickly and quietly

A 15- to 20-minute investment will pay dividends in time saved throughout the year. Part of the success of group work activities depends on groups sitting in precise configurations. Students must be able to move into groups and be ready to start work in no more than one minute.

Before they move, tell them (1) the materials they need to take with them, (2) whom they will be with, and (3) where they will be working. Advise the class that you consider groups to be ready to go only when everyone is seated quietly and properly, with materials at hand. If anyone is rude, pushy, or disrespectful to anyone else during the movement, they will be disqualified.

Randomly assign students to various-sized groups and indicate where they should meet. When the directions are clear, say, "Go!" Time them, and watch that their movement meets your expectations. If necessary, allow them to discuss what went wrong. They may discover it is best to use the desks that are already in the vicinity of their assigned spot rather than dragging their own desks across the room. Have them repeat the process until they can do it in "record time."

Be prepared for students to think this exercise is silly at best and condescending at worst. Understand their feelings, but explain that it really will make a difference in how well the activity goes, and consequently in how much they will learn. Some teachers treat this like a game, called the Desk Olympics. They create various events, such as side-by-side pairs, face-to-face pairs, and groups of four, and post "Olympic records" for best times. If you play Olympic theme music before each event, students will get caught up in the fun and competition while at the same time internalizing your expectations for moving into groups.

Do this before assigning any formal group-work activities that require room rearrangement.

##### Group-functioning skills

* sharing ideas and opinions,
* asking for ideas and opinions,
* asking for help or clarification,
* encouraging others to participate,
* calling attention to time limits,
* clarifying others’ contributions,
* summarizing and integrating,
* energizing with humor and enthusiasm,
* describing feelings when appropriate,
* appreciating others’ contributions,
* listening actively,
* using I statements,
* stating the assignment’s purpose, and
* stating the group’s progress so far.

###### Role-play with cards

Have a few students role-play the social skill, both the appropriate and inappropriate behaviors, and then have the class debrief. This works especially well with older students and when you want to focus on specific situations. Establish a scenario, give a small group of students role cards describing the behaviors you want them to model during the scene, and sit back while they conduct the role play. Afterwards, ask the class what they saw, heard, and felt.

Cards for negative behaviors:

Student l: Your desk is not touching the other desks in your group. You may even turn your desk so it is facing away from the group. Do not attempt to be a part of the group.

Student 2: You take out makeup or something else to distract you. Make no effort to be a part of the group and make no eye contact or conversation with group members.

Student 3: You become the "commander." Tell everyone which role they will have (such as director, actor, graphics person, or researcher), and act authoritatively. Do not let anyone else have a say in getting the group on task. Do not use members' names when speaking to them.

Student 4: Your words and attitude are negative. Say things like, "I hate this class" and "I don't want to work with these people."

Cards for positive behaviors:

After talking about what was inappropriate and counterproductive in this unhappy group, have the same students (or others) role-play behaviors that contribute to effective, supportive groups:

Student 1: You help arrange all the desks properly. Politely remind others to remove everything from their desks except for materials they will need for the assignment. Introduce yourself to other group members and look them in the eye when you do so.

Student 2: You are helpful and offer to collect materials for the group.

Student 3: Ask, "Does everybody know each other?" If not, make sure everyone is introduced. Remind the group of the time allotted and suggest that everyone choose a role for this activity.

Student 4: You act as timekeeper and watch the clock to keep the group on time. Also, you take the group's work to the teacher to be checked before the group moves to the next step.

###### Teach … active listening

Do a lesson in which students must accurately paraphrase the last person who spoke before they express their own ideas. Teach phrases such as, "If I hear you right..." "Do you mean to say..." and "Let me see if I got this right. You feel..." The last speaker must feel accurately understood before giving the next person the signal to speak. If not, the speaker says, "I don't seem to have made myself clear. Let me try again."

Other tips for active listening:

* Refrain from interrupting and changing the subject.
* Quietly inhale once and exhale once before responding.
* Encourage the speaker by leaning towards them, maintaining good eye contact, nodding, and saying “mm-hmm” to show that you are following what the speaker is saying.

###### … confidentiality

Students must feel confident that what they say in their group (or class) will remain there; that they - not their group or classmates - are able to determine who else hears their ideas, thoughts, and feelings. This is to some extent a matter of trust, but it is also a matter of skill, and it is a skill that can be taught. For instance, students can be taught to ask about what is public and what is confidential in their work together, and when reporting what has happened during group work, students can be taught to say "our group discussed" rather than "Jesse said."

###### … leadership

Ask students to discuss the specific ways a leader should function in order to optimize the group's performance. Their brainstorming might come up with ideas such as "get the group organized," "keeps the group on task," and "helps the group deal with arguments and conflicts."

##### Group-formulating skills (discussing)

* summarizing ideas and material aloud from memory,
* seeking accuracy of others’ summaries from memory,
* relating material to what is already known,
* sharing ways of remembering information (such as mnemonics),
* checking other group members’ understanding,
* asking others to explain their reasoning, and
* asking others to plan out loud.

###### Ask for in-depth explanations

Asking for an in-depth explanation from a teammate is a very important aspect of a good group discussion. If the teammate does not give a satisfactorily explanation, you must persist in finding a quality explanation from someone else. It is not enough to just get the answer. Ask for your teammate’s reasoning behind the answer.

Ask specific, open-ended questions. Asking precise and direct questions shows your area of difficulty and confusion to the other student. It shows to them that you are trying to understand the material and have already given it some thought. Make sure your questions are open-ended questions, not close-ended (yes-no). Ask W-H questions, particularly “Why” and “How did…?” Avoid yes-no questions.

###### Elaborate on your answers

If you are giving the explanation, elaborate. Make sure that what you say is detailed and that your explanation is understood. If you can, connect your explanation to what has already been studied in class. Just as the other student persisted in asking you for an in-depth explanation, you should persist in having them restate your explanation aloud in their own words.

##### Group-fermenting skills (thinking even more critically)

* criticizing ideas while expressing respect for the person with the idea,
* differentiating members’ ideas where there is disagreement,
* integrating different ideas into a single position,
* asking for justification or rationale of others’ conclusions or ideas,
* extending other members’ answers or conclusions by adding one’s own information,
* probing by asking questions that lead to deeper analysis,
* generating more than one possible answer,
* thinking more divergently about an issue,
* arguing constructively and passionately for both sides of each issue, and
* maintaining your argument unless logically persuaded.

###### Questioning prompts

Share with students a print-out of the questions and question stems in the formative assessment section above on pages 98-100. Those questions that connect information to prior knowledge and personal experience will be the most effective ones.

##### Inter-group helping and sharing

When a group finishes, encourage members to find other groups (a) who are not finished and help them understand how to complete the assignment successfully or (b) who are finished and compare answers and strategies. They can talk about how they worked together on the task. This might provide useful information that can be shared with groups who are struggling.

#### 4. Maximum simultaneity

The more on-task conversations there are in the classroom in any given second, the more learning you are likely having. Students often learn a lot when explaining something to someone else, and this is a chief reason why pairs are better than foursomes for lower-order thinking (non-complex tasks).

##### Questions first go to fellow group members

If a student has a question, he/she must try first to get it answered within the group before asking you. If no one in the group knows the answer, then they all raises their hand to signify that it is a group question that requires your help.

#### 5. Group processing / reflection

Groups benefit from reflecting on their learning and the strategies they used. A short chat on group processes at the end of an activity improves the group’s functioning tomorrow.

At the start of the year, do this processing after every group activity. Five minutes at the end of a lesson is sufficient. As working in groups becomes more routine, do the processing less frequently, perhaps once or twice a week. This might be a whole-class debriefing, a combination of the class and foursomes, just the foursomes, the foursome and pairs, or just a pair.

Students can describe what teammate actions were helpful (and unhelpful) in doing the group's work and how the group can change their behaviors for the next lesson. Each member recaps the discussion in a reflection journal, and the group reviews these points before their next lesson.

You then guide a short debriefing with the class. Ask, "What went well and what do we need to work on?” Next, brainstorm with them a list of guidelines for future group discussions. Perhaps you make a “Looks like, sounds like” chart. Word the guidelines as positive statements, and keep the number of items limited to those you feel are most important. Then, in later classes, if an issue comes up that seems to be important, add that to the guidelines list for future use.

##### Possible questions for each group

* How did we prepare for today?
* What three things did our group do well today?
* What is one thing that I/we need to improve?
* What worked?
* What didn’t work?
* What should we do differently next time?
* How did you feel during the learning session?
* What did you find difficult, and why?
* What good contributions did you in particular make today?
* How should we prepare for tomorrow?

##### With young students

Ask students age-appropriate questions such as, “Who can tell me about someone at your table who showed a positive attitude today?” or “Which group solved a problem cooperatively?” or any questions related to any of the traits in your targeted social skill. At first, students may be a little hesitant. However, it feels great for both the one praising and the one being praised.

##### In the middle of a lesson

Stop a group 10 minutes into a 30-minute group project to ask one reflection question designed to have students reflect on their relevant social skills. Do the reflection early enough so that they have time to change their behavior and benefit from the reflection. Possible questions:

* Encouraging: "Are you and your teammates encouraging each other?"
* Staying in role: "How well are you using your roles?"
* Helping: “Are you giving help when asked? Are you asking for help when you need it? Do you think a teammate can use help?”
* Praising: “Are you praising a teammate for something? Are you receiving any praise? How does it make you feel? What could you praise a teammate for?”
* Staying on task: “Is your group getting off task? On what? Can you or a teammate get the group back on task? How can you keep on task more?”

##### A quick response if time is short

"I want one number from your group: From 1 to 5, how well did your group \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_?"

##### Principles of good interpersonal feedback

###### Giving

1. Describe specific behavior.
2. Preferably just focus on positive actions.
3. Also present feedback visually, such as with a graph or chart.
4. Be brief.
5. Do it as soon as the behavior occurred.
6. Make eye contact.
7. Use I-messages: “I felt \_\_\_\_ (adjective) when ….” [Try to give the feedback without “you.”]
   1. Other I-statements: “I heard…”, “I noticed…,” “I wondered …”

###### Receiving

Make eye contact and say, "Thanks."

##### Ensure all students get feedback

###### Prompts

a. "I appreciated it when you ..." b. "I liked it when you ..."

c. "I admire your ability to ..." d. "I enjoy it when you ... "

e. "You really helped out the group when you ... "

###### Pairs

At the end of each lesson, each student should say something positive and constructive about their classmate, something the partner did that helped the first student learn.

###### Foursomes

If short on time

"Start with person #1 in your group. Person #1 is to turn to the person on his left and complete this: "One way you helped me today was \_\_ ." That person will now turn to the person on her left and complete the same sentence. Continue round the circle so that each person receives and

gives one piece of feedback. Remember to be as specific as possible."

If you have more time

Each group focuses on one member at a time. Members tell the student one thing he or she did that helped them learn or work together effectively. The focus is then rotated for all members.

In writing

Give index cards to each group, one for each member. Each student writes something positive about the student to their left and their use of a targeted social skill, and then passes the card to the right, where another student writes on the card about that same student. Cards are then passed again, until they come back to the student who is the focus of the comments on that card.

##### Reflecting on any observation data

Allow time at the end of groupwork for discussion of data gathered by observers. Let students interpret the data on their own. Then have them ask each other these questions in pairs or groups:

* What can you conclude about our group’s functioning today?
* What could we do to be a better group tomorrow than we were today?
* What new skill should we add to our observation sheet?
* What skill should the group focus on when we work together tomorrow? Why? (Ask students to write that skill with tomorrow’s date in their group journal.)

##### Journal entries for group reflections

Journals are a good place for students’ reflections on any issue, and the issue of group productivity is no exception. At the end of the lesson or project, each student can write an entry about what they learned in class and how they helped – or didn’t help – their group. These entries can help you see their ability to identify and articulate the aspects of effective discussion. Useful prompts include, "What went well in your discussion today?"  "What was something that you did to help the discussion go smoothly?"  "What will you work on for next time?"

After each student writes, they can discuss their entry with the group, and then write again about how the group responded.

If you are short on time during the reflection, students can use bullet points in their writing.

##### Debrief with class after group reflections

After small-group processing, share your own feedback with the class. This could be from two to four minutes. Tell them the helpful behaviors you saw. Ask for volunteers to say something that their teammate or partner did that helped them learn. Next, ask the class, "What worked well today?" and "What do we still need to work on?" Do this while standing in front of a guidelines chart. If an important issue comes up, add it to the guidelines chart.

##### For group presentations (individual and group reflection)

Have them keep a reflection journal. For each entry give them a question or a prompt. Here are some possibilities.

1. What did you do to contribute to the success of your group’s presentation? Be specific.

2. List your teammates and describe each one’s contribution to your presentation’s success.

3. What did you learn about yourself from doing this presentation?

4. What did you learn about your group members from doing this?

5. What did you learn about your topic from doing this?

6, What did you learn about your community and the available resources?

7. What grade would you give yourself – and why - for researching and presenting your topic?

8. What did you like most and least about your presentation?

9. What could each group member do better?

10. Do you have any other comments you would like to express regarding this?

### Preparing students for CL

#### Content for the first CL activities

As for content and topics, first do class-building, teambuilding, and social-skill activities (in that order) before moving to academic tasks. This will help students be more effective when working together on cognitive tasks. For housekeeping activities, you might have one pair in charge of the game shelf, one pair in charge of the aquarium, another responsible for the coat corner, and the fourth pair in charge of keeping the computer table clean.

#### Initial group size and level of structure

Begin with brief and highly structured activities in pairs before moving slowly to unstructured and longer projects that require a group of four. For pair work, you may want to assign each student as a “1” or a “2” so you can say, “First I want the 1s to ask the 2s …”

#### Master one CL strategy at a time

Master a strategy before trying a new one. Once on the new one, use content that is not difficult.

#### Explain the four voice levels

* Individual level during independent work: silence
* Partner level: Pairs must be quiet enough to not be heard by the other pair in their group.
* Group level: Groups must be quiet enough to not be heard by neighboring groups.
* Class level: Students must be heard only by those in the room and not in a neighboring one.

#### Keeping groups on time

In addition to keeping students on task, a phrase that implies that they are distracted and not focused, you also need to keep them in sync with the clock. There are three ways to do this:

* + - * Groups keep their own stopwatch in their group tubs.
      * You run a timer for the whole class to see.
      * The group’s leader eyes the clock and keeps teammates on schedule.

#### Class-building and teambuilding

Cooperative learning works best when students have already worked together on class-building and team-building exercises. A short period each day for several weeks is usually adequate for this. The investment (5 to 30 minutes) pays off in opportunities for students to interact safely, to get a feel for the dynamics within the group, to break social tension, to value teamwork, and to feel at ease in working together.

##### Class-building activities

Class-building activities build a sense of a learning community. It is effective when opening an activity. Students are out of their seats and working with classmates who are not also teammates. Class-building activities are the same as ice-breakers, listed back on pages 52-56. Here are some more:

###### Kagan class-building structures

Corners,

Find Someone Who,

Inside-Outside Circle,

Mix-Freeze-Group,

Mix-Pair-Share,

Quiz-Quiz-Trade,

StandUp-HandUp-PairUp,

Stir-the-Class

##### Teambuilding activities

Teambuilding does for the group what class-building does for the class. Through teambuilding, teammates get acquainted, create a group identity, promote mutual support, value individual differences, and develop synergistic relationships.

Do it at the level of the cooperative group (two to six students) rather than at the class level. Some group members will be more assertive, and others will be more passive. The goal is to get all members some experience in being valuable group members, as well as to get them to learn that being cooperative works more effectively than being competitive.

###### Lost on the Moon

Use this activity when students are embarking on their first formal group-work activity, usually during the third, fourth, or fifth week of classes. Then use simpler team-builders whenever you form new groups for subsequent activities. With students in their groups, follow this procedure:

1. Tell students that they will be doing a team-building activity. Explain that it is designed to help them see the importance of teamwork and feel more comfortable with their group members.

2. Give each student a copy of "Lost on the Moon." Read the scenario and the directions aloud and answer any questions. Students are to complete Phase 1 on their own with no talking until everyone has completed the individual rankings. This should take 4 to 6 minutes.

3. Have groups complete Phase 2, their group rankings. If students within a group cannot agree, remind them of the directions: They are to decide on the rankings that "best satisfy" all members. Expect that some groups will finish within 10 minutes while others will take significantly longer.

4. After all groups have completed Phase 2, reveal the answers. Hand out "Answers to Lost on the Moon." Talk about NASA’s rationale for each ranking. Have students compute the error points for both individual and group rankings by finding the absolute difference between each pair of numbers. In most cases, the total number of error points will be significantly lower for the group rankings, supporting the notion that teamwork is valuable.

5. Hold a class discussion on the value of teamwork. Center the discussion on these questions:

Were your answers more accurate when you worked individually or as a group? What do you attribute this to? In what ways can working together be beneficial? When working in your group, what cooperative skills did you use?

Instructions for students:

Your spaceship has crash-landed on the lighted side of the moon. You were scheduled to meet up with a mother ship 50 miles away on the moon’s surface, but the rough landing has ruined your ship and destroyed all the equipment on board, except for the 15 items listed below.

Your crew's survival depends on reaching the mother ship, so you must choose the most critical items available for the 50-mile trip. Rank the 15 items in terms of their importance for survival. Put a “1” by the most important item, a “2” by the second-most important, and so on.

First you will do the ranking individually. Then you will consult with your group to do a group ranking. Share your individual solutions and reach a consensus ranking for each of the 15 items that best satisfies all group members. NASA experts have determined the best solution.

Item Phase 1: Your own ranking Phase 2: Your group's ranking

Box of matches

Food concentrate powder

50 feet of nylon rope

Parachute silk

Solar-powered portable heating unit

Two .45-caliber pistols

Case of condensed milk

Two 100-pound tanks of oxygen

Stellar map of moon's constellation

Self-inflating life raft

Magnetic compass

5 gallons of water

Signal flares

First-aid kit with injection needles

Solar-powered FM receiver-transmitter

Answers:

When you and your group have ranked the 15 items from the "Lost on the Moon" list, record your ranks and your group's ranks in the spaces below. Then subtract your ranks and NASA's ranks to compute your error points. Do the same to compute your group's error points. Error points are the absolute difference between your ranks and NASA's - disregard plus or minus signs. Finally, add up the total error points to compare your individual error points to those of your group's. The lowest number is the best score.

Item NASA rationale

Box of matches: No oxygen on moon to sustain flame; virtually worthless

Food concentrate powder: Efficient means of supplying energy requirements

50 feet of nylon rope: Useful in scaling cliffs, tying injured together

Parachute silk: Protection from sun's rays

Solar-powered portable heating unit: Not needed unless on dark side

Two .45-caliber pistols: Possible means of self-propulsion

Case of condensed milk: Bulkier duplication of food concentrate powder

Two 100-pound tanks of oxygen: Most pressing survival need

Stellar map of moon's constellation: Primary means of navigation

Self-inflating life raft w/ CO2 bottle: CO2 bottle in raft may be used for propulsion

Magnetic compass: Magnetic field on moon is not polarized; worthless

5 gallons of water: Replacement of tremendous liquid loss on lighted side

Signal flares: Distress signal when mother ship is sighted

First-aid kit with injection needles: Needles for medicines, etc.; will fit aperture in space suits

Solar FM receiver-transmitter: For communication with mother ship

NASA's rank Yours Your error points Your group's rank Your group’s error points

15

4

6

8

13

11

12

1

3

9

14

2

10

7

5

Your total error points: Your group's total error points:

###### Structured discussion about groups

The class is in groups of four with markers and a large piece of butcher paper per group.

Directions:

"Your groups will be given four questions to discuss with one another about working in a group. First I would like you all to silently consider the question, and then one of you will share your ideas. The person on the speaker’s right will record the ideas on the paper. The next speaker is to the left of the first speaker, and the first speaker now records their ideas. The speaker and the paper will both rotate to the left. Each of you will have a turn to be a spokesperson for your group where you will tell the class some of your ideas that your group discussed and recorded."

Part 1: “Why is it good to work in groups? What do you like about it?”

Allow students 5-6 minutes to discuss and record their ideas. Number off the students in each group from 1 to 4. Then ask a #1 from a group to reveal to the class one item from their list. The other #1s then share their ideas with the class, but they are not to repeat the ideas already mentioned. Have each group record the other group’s ideas that they didn’t have.

Part 2: “Consider the pros and cons of working with close friends in a group. A lot of experience has shown that working with friends isn't always the best choice. Why isn't it good to be in groups with just your friends? How does that harm your best effort?”

Repeat the group discussion/record and the class discussion/record, but now the #2s share.

Part 3: “Imagine you are in a very productive group where members work well together. It might be at the United Nations or an intergalactic meeting of cosmic leaders. While this group works, what behaviors should you see and hear?”

Repeat the group discussion/record and the class discussion/record, but now the #3s share.

Part 4: “Select the four class-listed behaviors that you feel are most important to use when part of a group. Each group needs to seek a consensus about the four most important group behaviors.”

Repeat the group discussion/record and the class discussion/record, but now the #4s share.

###### Kagan teambuilding structures

AllWrite Consensus,

AllWrite RoundRobin,

Fan-N-Pick,

Find-the-Fiction,

Jot Thoughts,

Pairs Compare,

RoundRobin,

RoundTable,

RoundTable Consensus,

Simultaneous RoundTable,

Talking Chips,

Think-Write-RoundRobin,

Three-Step Interview

###### Other activities

- Group handshake: Have groups develop a group handshake - a special way for people to shake hands that shows they belong to a particular group. This quick, kinesthetic task will help bring students together and ease tension. Groups might share their handshake with the class.

- Group logo: Pass out pieces of butcher paper and have each group design a logo using words, symbols, drawings, and color. The logos should reflect the interests and personalities of the group members. Have groups share their logos with the class.

- Human statues: Assign each group something different that they must work together to mimic with their bodies, such as a tree, a computer, a car, a table, a bicycle, a slide, an octopus, an elephant, or an airplane. You may want to award bonus points (or another reward) to groups who can physically represent their object or animal so well that the class can immediately identify it.

- Famous person: Have groups choose a famous person they would like to "join their group." They must explain why that person would be a helpful group member for the activity.

- Team sport: Have students choose a sport to represent their group and tell three ways their group is similar to that sport. (Our group is like volleyball because...)

- Group commonalities: Give groups 2 minutes to discover and list as many things as they can that all group members have in common.

- Line up: Have group members line up quickly according to their birth dates, the first letter of their middle names, their number of siblings, who lives closest to school, or some other criterion. Groups might compete in several fast-paced lineups.

- Help students list and describe abilities in ways that make them seem both "real" and important to the classroom. Maybe ask students, "What strengths can you bring to our classroom?"

- Ask each student to participate in drawing a group picture by passing paper and pen from student to student. Each student's task is to add something to the picture as it circulates several times through the group. When the picture is finished, discuss each student's contribution. Students will sense that the product is not complete unless each member's contribution is recognized. The group picture serves to illustrate how working together can be beneficial.

- Finish that thought: Ask students to discuss a simple, non-academic topic - something that everyone will find interesting to talk about - to ease the tension of working together. Remind students to give other group members their full attention as each student responds to the prompt.

* If I had a million dollars I would...
* I am most proud that I can...
* The funniest thing that ever happened to me was...
* Next year, I will be able to...
* If I were the teacher of this class, I would...
* My very favorite meal is...
* If you walked into my room at home, you'd see...
* The best pet in the world would be...
* My favorite movie is...

### Homeroom base groups

Base groups are groups of three or four students that last for a semester, a year, or until the students graduate. They meet regularly (for example, daily, weekly, or biweekly) for the first five minutes or last five minutes of the given time interval. If students move between classrooms throughout the day, base groups meet during homeroom. Their purpose is to foster a sense of belongingness, familiarity, and consistency for each student. Base groups are an excellent support group for those members who are going through turbulent times, who need a sympathetic listener, or who simply need more friendship-formation opportunities.

Base-group members meet in the morning to check that each person is organized for the day and to record their group’s attendance on the classroom board. They meet at the end of the day to check that all assignments for the next day have been recorded. At both times students might answer homework questions, share study strategies, pass out school notices, share information about school clubs and activities, pass information along to members who were absent or late, and offer encouragement in general.

Base-group members also exchange phone numbers and schedules so they can meet outside of class. If a group member has been absent, other members arrange to call the student and offer healing wishes along with encouragement to return to school as soon as possible.

#### Forming them

Try to have in each group a high-ability student, two middle-ability students, and one low-ability student. Choose a permanent place in the room for each group to meet. Roles are an option but might feel too restrictive to the students; if you want to assign roles, try having an explainer, an accuracy checker, an encourager, and a runner for materials from the base-group folder.

#### Questions for morning groups

Members should ask each other two or more of the following questions in each meeting:

* How are you today?
* What is the best thing that has happened to you since the last time we saw each other?
* Are you prepared for today?
* Did you do your homework?
* Is there anything you did not understand?
* May I read and edit your homework?
* Will you read and edit mine?

#### Questions for afternoon groups

Members should ask each other the first question below and either the second or third question. For the second and third questions, randomly select a member from each group member to explain his or her answers.

* Do you understand the assignment? What help do you need to complete it?
* What are three things you learned today?
* How will you use/apply what you have learned?

#### Attending parent conferences

You may want to have base-group members attend student-parent-teacher conferences, just as you might have a teacher’s aide attend. They are a part of the student’s at-school support group, and their observation of a classmate’s student-parent-teacher conference might help them to see how important their role is as a base-group teammate.

### 

### Assigning pairs and groups

Even if you are starting off with pair work (an activity for two students), put students in groups of four: one high achiever, two middle achievers, and one low achiever. Have them be seated next to someone (“their shoulder partner”), with the sides of their two desks touching, and facing the two other group members, knee to knee and eye to eye. The high achiever and the low achiever should be diagonal from each other.

Their desks should be arranged so that they can all see you at the front of the room.

The group member each student faces while seated is their “face partner.” This way, each student can easily work with two different partners for pair work without moving their desk. You can say, “Turn to your face partner” or “Turn to your shoulder partner.”

Just because they are seated in groups does not mean they always need to be doing a group activity. Students can still work alone, listen to you talk, watch a video, and so forth, while seated in their groups.

The shorter the activity is, the likelier it is you should be using pairs. The longer the activity is, perhaps across multiple periods, the likelier it is that the foursome should be working together.

#### Pairs: benefits and when to use them

Pairs are more effective than foursomes because they take less time to get organized, they operate faster, and there is more "air time" per member. Also, the smaller the group, the more difficult it is for students to hide and not contribute, and the easier it is to identify any difficulties students have in working together. Certainly use pairs for low-level, close-ended cognitive tasks, such as the practicing of procedures, memorization, factual recall, computation accuracy, review, comprehension, and the application of new concepts.

##### Ad hoc academic pairs

Sometimes it’s good to break students away from their regular pairs and foursomes and to have them work with someone else for a short activity.

###### StandUp, HandUp, PairUp

Students stand up, put their hand up, and find a partner with whom to share or discuss.

###### Clock Buddies

Clock buddies is a way to create pairs while avoiding the problem of students always having the same partners. Each student has a sheet with a clock and the name of a different classmate on each hour's slot. Each of these other students has this one student's name in the matching hour slot on their clock sheets. When doing an ad-hoc activity, simply call out a certain hour.

You will likely have to assign clock buddies in advance and in writing so that everyone has someone different for each slot. The clock sheets are then attached to the inside cover of their notebook or workbook. You can have A.M. and P.M. for a total of 24 clock buddies.

Pair up gifted students for a slot. While it’s not wise to always have gifted students working together, do arrange for them to be clock buddies for one time slot so that they do get the occasional opportunity to be paired up.

#### Avoid groups of three

Inevitably two members like each other more than the third person and ignore this third person.

#### Foursomes: when to use them

Only have each group of four work together – as one entity as opposed to two pairs - for challenging, multi-day tasks, tasks such as those

* with more than one possible answer,
* where students analyze and integrate ideas to build new knowledge,
* requiring multiple perspectives or viewpoints,
* requiring multiple types of skills (three or more of Howard Gardner’s multiple intelligences),
* requiring investigation of a topic,
* that can benefit from group-decision making, and those
* with many higher-order and complex questions (higher on Bloom’s taxonomy).

#### When to change the groups

Keep groups of four together for a minimum of six weeks. Groups need time to gel so that they can then discuss how well they are functioning as a group and then grow from that. When you change the groups, try to create brand-new pairings within each group, but this isn’t easy if you are also trying to have one high achiever, two middle students, and a low achiever in each group.

##### A parting activity

When groups end, do a parting activity to make group re-formation a positive experience. Two ways to do this:

1. Teammates write a final group statement: "What we have learned together: \_\_\_"

2. Teammates introduce one another to the class with the idea that "One thing you will like about working with \_\_\_\_\_ is \_\_\_\_\_."

### Kagan Structures

A “structure” here is a certain sequence of what Spencer Kagan calls “elements,” which are specific individual behaviors, like turning to a partner to share one’s thoughts and to listen, thinking on one’s own, moving to a new group, raising your hand, finding a new partner, etc.

#### Think-Pair-Share

Think-Pair-Share is the most common Kagan structure. Each student thinks for a moment (“Think time”) and then turns to a partner to ask their thoughts and to share their own. Some students, particularly introverts, benefit from having time for writing (“Write time”) after think time and before they share with their partner. Also, to prevent some students from controlling the conversation, you may want to allot each student or pair a specific amount of time for talking.

##### “Scripted Cooperation”

This isn’t technically a Kagan structure, but it is best categorized under “Think-Pair-Share.” Students work in pairs, taking turns being the listener and the recaller. The recaller summarizes what the teacher or lecturer said and makes connections to their own knowledge. The listener listens for any errors, clarifies any unclear comments, and makes a prediction about what the teacher might say next. They then switch roles for the next round.

##### Write--Timed-Square--Synthesize

Going a step further, if two pairs combine to form a square and share their thoughts, have them synthesize what was shared in the group: Think—Write—Timed-Pair-Share—Timed-Square-Share—Synthesize.

#### Equalizing discussion participation

* Timed-Pair-Share
* Talking Chips for foursomes: Each student receives one “talking chip.” The chips can be any kind of token, even a slip of paper. Ideally each student’s chip has a unique color. When speaking, the student puts their chip in the center of the table. Then it is another student’s turn to add to the discussion, so they add their chip. Once a student uses the chip, he or she cannot speak until all teammates have added to the discussion and placed their chip in the center. When everyone has had a chance to speak, each student collects their chip and another round of discussion commences.

#### Mastery, accuracy, recall, and calculating

Mastery structures and activities are great for computational math, vocabulary, and memorization of science and social-studies facts.

* Flashcard Game (double-sided cards): Students first make double-sided flashcards. Partners go through three rounds as they take turns being the “Tutor” and “Tutee,” quiz each other with flashcards, and master the content. In Round 1, the Tutor shows and reads the front and back of the flashcard. The Tutor then shows the front of the card and the Tutee gives the answer for the back. If the Tutee answers correctly, the Tutor praises and gives the Tutee the card. If the Tutee answers incorrectly, he or she does not win the flashcard, and the Tutor offers a hint or shows the answer again. When they have gone through all the cards, the pair switches roles and goes through the cards again.

For Round 2, fewer cues are given. The Tutor shows the front and the Tutee tries to win back the card by giving a correct answer. When both students win back all their cards, they move on to Round 3, where even fewer cues are given. The Tutor says what’s on the front, this time without showing the card. The Tutee tries to win back the cards with the correct answer.

* + Color-Coded Co-op Cards: This is a week-long sequence to help students memorize any content. All students take a pretest on the week's memory items. Each group member, using a differently colored marker (or differently colored card), makes a set of flashcards on the items missed on the pretest. Color coding allows easy retrieval by each student of his or her items for future work. If students didn’t miss any items or just a few, they make up cards from a pool of bonus or challenge items.

Students win back cards they master through the Flashcard Game. They then take a practice test, checking on how much improvement they have made. Teammates place a star on the flashcards they answered correctly, then pool and count the starred cards for the group. The Flashcard Game is played again on all items missed on the pretest. For a few students, following the practice test there will be a need to increase their deck of flashcards; they will miss an item or two on the practice test that they did not miss on the pretest. These new items are included for the second round of practice, along with flashcards that have not yet earned a star.

Students take the final test, star all cards they answered correctly on this test, pool the starred cards, and count them to get the final improvement-score for the group.

Recognition may be given at three levels. Individuals may post their improvement scores on individual improvement-score graphs. Students who improve since last week, or at a certain level, may be asked to stand and be recognized by the class. Groups may announce the sum of their improvement scores and post them on their group-improvement graph. Groups that improved more than the prior week, or at a certain level, may be asked to stand, give a group cheer or handshake, and be recognized by the class. Lastly, the sum of improvement points of groups may be posted on a class graph. Recognize the groups not for having "beaten" other groups but for having advanced the class toward its next goal.

* Flashcard pairs for single-sided flashcards: Write the definition on one index card and the word on a separate card (not on the first card’s opposite side). First, each pair plays Mastermind. One student has the master list of definitions and words. The second student deals out the flashcards face up and pairs together the correct words and definitions, keeping all the cards on the table. The first student, the one with the master list, can only say how many errors the second student has, without correcting him or her. If worse comes to worse, the second student can look at the master list.

The pair then plays Memory. Deal all the cards face down, and each student turns two cards over at a time, trying to get a match. If no match, the cards are turned back over. Lastly, the pair plays Go Fish. Deal five cards per partner. If a student has the vocabulary word, she has to say, “Do you have (the definition of the word)?” If the other student doesn’t have the matching card, the first student takes a card from the pile.

* Inside-outside circle: Students stand in pairs in two concentric circles. The inside faces out, the outside in. They use flashcards or respond to your questions, and then the outer circle rotates to a new partner. You can also do this with two lines facing each other.
* Sage-N-Scribe: Students are seated in pairs with one worksheet. For the first problem Student A (The Sage) tells Student B (The Scribe) exactly what to write or do as the Scribe carries out the instructions given by the Sage. The Scribe may coach if the Sage needs it, and congratulates the Sage upon problem completion. The students switch roles after each problem so the Scribe becomes the Sage. Sage-N-Scribe allows guided practice before individual practice, with each student being immediately corrected by their partner. This maximizes the likelihood that students will be successful during independent work.
* RallyRobin: Students in pairs take turns to recite as many relevant terms as possible.
* RallyTable: Students in pairs take turns to write as many relevant terms as possible.
* Paired Heads Together: In pairs, students are a “1” or a “2.” When you ask a question, the pair puts their heads together to make certain that they both know it. You call a “1” or “2,” and only the person with that number in each pair may answer.
* RallyCoach / Pairs Check: Using one pencil and one sheet of paper between them, one student solves the problem while the other watches and then corrects. The pair switches after every problem. After every two problems, they check their answers with a neighboring pair.
* Stir The Class: Students stand in groups. Ask a question. Groups form their best response. Then call a student’s number and how many groups for that student to rotate: "Student ‘3,’ rotate two groups clockwise." “Student 3” in each group rotates and then shares her/his answer with the new group. Then you ask a new question.
* Also see page 131 for STAD.

#### Analyzing

Group word-webbing:

Pairs or foursomes write simultaneously on a piece of chart paper, drawing main concepts and supporting links that connect the concepts. Each group needs a large piece of paper and a felt-tipped pen with its own color. One student then draws a circle in the middle of the paper and in it writes the overarching concept or theme. Members then add concepts before distinguishing between the important and unimportant ones. Next, lines are drawn between the concepts with a reasoning label for each line. Lastly, groups discuss their word web. Because each student used a different color, each contribution is visible.

#### Synthesizing

Group Statements:

Announce the topic or question and allow at least 20 seconds of think time. Each student then writes one sentence before they share the sentences one by one, with no comments from the group. They then discuss the sentences and seek consensus on a new sentence that unifies what they wrote and that they can share with the class. They do so via a simultaneous-sharing structure such as Blackboard Share. After reading or hearing the other groups’ statements, each group discusses their statement in relation to those by the others. Lastly, they discuss the concept of synergy. Was our group smarter than any one of us alone?

#### Brainstorming

* 4S brainstorming: Each student is assigned an “S” role, but all are recorders. Record the ideas on separate slips of paper and put them on the table for all to see. This makes it easier for students to see each other's ideas and to then categorize and recategorize them. Roles:

1. Speed Captain: Puts on the time pressure and says things like, "Let's get more," "Let's hurry."
2. Super Supporter: Encourages and greatly appreciates all ideas with no evaluation of ideas.
3. Silliness Chief: Focuses on giving silly ideas, which keep the creative flow going.
4. Synergy Guru: Combines the other ideas and builds off them into something new.

* Carousel

Put students in groups of 3-4. Give each group a sheet of newsprint/chart paper. Each group's sheet has a different subtopic written on it. One student serves as the recorder and has a uniquely colored marker. Explain that the students will have a short time (say, 30 seconds) to write down on their chart paper all the terms they can think of that they associate with their topic.

They will then pass their sheet over to the next group, and a new topic will be passed to them. Make it clear which direction you'll have them pass the sheets so that this is orderly and so that each group will receive each of the subtopic sheets. At the end of the 30 seconds, tell them to cap their markers (remind them to keep their markers), but have them pass their sheets to the next group according to the pre-determined path for passing. After each passing, you will probably want to extend the writing time to 40 seconds, then 45 seconds, and perhaps up to a minute, because all the easy ideas will have been taken by previous groups, and the students will need more time to talk about and think of other terms to be added to the brainstorm list. Keep having students brainstorm, write, and pass until each group has had a chance to add ideas to each of the subtopic sheets. Let them pass it the final time to the group who had each sheet first.

Go beyond the simple brainstorm and have the group who started with the sheet look it over when it returns to them. Have them note all the other ideas that were added after it was passed around to the other groups and then circle the three terms that they think are most essential, most important, or most fundamental to that sheet’s subtopic. That way, they spend some time critically evaluating all the possible terms and subtopics and making decisions about which are most representative of or most closely associated with the given topic. Sometimes students do this quickly or almost glibly, but often the groups will spend quite awhile hashing this out.

Then have them try to write a definition for their topic, a statement that explains to someone who is unfamiliar with it what that topic is really about. Tell them that since they have already circled three terms that they consider essential or fundamental to their topic, they'll probably want to use those three terms in their definition, or be darned sure to consider them for inclusion in their definition. While this has the limitation of having students think deeply about only one of the subtopics, there is great value in the depth of thinking and conversation.

#### Decision making and evaluating

* Sum-the-Ranks: Students first discuss the options, perhaps arguing aloud for both the pro and the con side for each choice, regardless of their own attitude toward it. Then each of them ranks the options in writing. The top choice gets the highest number. Rankings for each option are summed. If it is a class decision, representatives from each group post their sums, and scores are totaled to see which option has the highest score.
* Spend-a-point: Each person gets to allot 10 points among the choices.
* Value line: This activity stresses the value of individual differences. Make a controversial statement and have some think time. Groups then take a stand on a likert-scale continuum depending on how much they agree or disagree with the statement. Encourage students to identify the points of agreement within the group. Follow this with a cross-group discussion of the issue so that students stand where they want to on the continuum and can see who else in the class agrees with their personal view.

#### Sharing project ideas with other groups

* Teams Post: Give each group a place at the whiteboard. After groups generate ideas, a group rep writes or draws their ideas. Students can see at a glance what other groups are planning.
* Team Whip: Ask each group to prepare a short statement of their project plans. In turn, one rep from each group stands to share his or her group's plans.
* If each group makes a list of ideas, they can share their ideas using Team Stand-N-Share. Groups stand with their list. The teacher calls on one student, and she shares one item from the group list. The recorders on the other groups add the item to their list if it is a new idea, or check it off if they also came up with that idea. Groups sit when all ideas have been shared.

#### In-progress sharing with other groups

* Two Stray, Two Stay: Two teammates stand up and stray to the other groups while the other two teammates stay to describe their own group’s project. The two strays view the other groups' projects and report back to their home group. This is also called Roving Reporters.

#### Sharing upon completion

* Numbered Group Presentation: Projects are put on each group's table. Teammates number off from 1 to 4. All 1's go to Group 1’s table; All 2's go to Group 2’s table, etc. The student whose group created the project presents. The group rotates to the next project, and the next group rep shares. When done, students return to their home groups to discuss what they saw and heard.
* Numbered Group Interview is the same except each representative is asked questions by the others of that number instead of presenting a visual product to them.
* Carousel Feedback (for visual projects only): Group projects are placed on the group's desk or posted around the room with a feedback form. Each group stands in front of their project and then rotates clockwise to the next group's project. For a specified time, the group discusses their reaction to the other group’s project, each member speaking for an equal amount of time (ie, Timed RoundRobin). When discussion time is up, Student 1 records the team's feedback on a form for that project’s group and leaves the form with that project. The group rotates to the next project, discusses it, and Student 2 records the group's feedback. The process is continued for each group project with the recorder role rotating. When groups go back to their own projects, they read and review the feedback from the other groups.
* Carousel Discuss (for visual projects only) works the same as Carousel Feedback except students do not leave written feedback for other groups. They discuss the project, and then when time is up, move to discuss the next project.

Carousel structures are for viewing projects that don't require explanation.

### More complex CL activities

Don’t start the school year with these activities. They are too complex.

#### Student Teams Achievement Divisions (STAD)

STAD is an activity for when the material is factual, "right answer'' information, such as vocabulary or computational math. Assign students to study groups of four, groups that will last about six weeks before being rearranged. In every week, or round, students individually take a quiz and earn bonus points depending on their teammates’ improvement since last week. A handicapping system is applied so all group members have a realistic chance of contributing to group success. (This activity might work fine with pairs, but it was designed for groups of four.)

##### Base scores

The base score is not a student’s average score, but a fixed number of points less than the average. This is similar to handicapping systems used in bowling or golf. In this way, students achieving nearly perfect scores are still able to help their groups. Bases scores can be calculated by averaging scores on a few individual quizzes that are given before beginning STAD and then deducting five points from this average.

##### Improvement points and group points

In addition to the quiz score, students receive an improvement score each week, indicating how well they are performing compared to their usual level of performance. The improvement points of group members are added together and averaged to create the number of bonus points that each member will receive on that week’s quiz.

Quiz or test score Improvement points

more than 5 points below base score 0

5 points below to 1 point below 1

base score to 10 points above base 2

more than 10 points above base 3

perfect paper (regardless of base) 3

Improvement scores motivate each student to set higher performance goals. Weak students can always contribute to the group score, and stronger students are motivated to help weaker students out of self-interest.

#### Jigsaw

The jigsaw activity can be used with any textbook. Divide the reading material into equal sections so that each expert group will have a comparable study load. The groups should be heterogeneous in ability. Divide students into home groups depending on how many sections of material are to be covered. For example, three sections of material will require home groups of three members (or multiples of three). Once in their home group, students number off. The number of people in each expert group can vary more easily.

One option is to give each home group a packet with a different worksheet for each of the sub-topics - a different one for each student in this home group. A good worksheet would have the learning objectives and questions across the levels of thinking. Before students go to their expert groups, they can preview the entire packet to get the big picture of what they will all be studying.

All students then go to expert groups where they read and discuss the material assigned to that group, complete any other tasks that you assigned, and prepare to teach their sub-topic to their home group. If the expert group has an even number of students, they can first pair up to master the content before working in the expert group as a whole. This preps them for the expert group.

If there is an expert-group worksheet, have each group follow this sequence: Students all put their pencils in a pencil cup in the center of the table. One person reads the first question aloud, and they then discuss their answers and/or turn to resources to find an answer. When they agree on the best answer, they take up their pencils and write the answer in their own words. Then another student reads the second question aloud. This sequence minimizes the tendency for expert meetings to degenerate into low-level dictation with high achievers telling low achievers exactly what to write, word for word. Other possible tasks for the expert groups: Create a two- question quiz to give, create an outline, or prepare a chart covering the sub-topic’s main points.

The experts return to their original groups and teach their teammates. Teammates have their pencils down while each expert explains the answer. Teammates then ask questions for clarification. When all questions have been answered, teammates pick up their pencils and fill in their own worksheet in their own words. That expert then teaches the next question. When the worksheet packets have all been filled out, each expert quizzes the teammates with their worksheet packets closed to make sure that they all understand and can answer the questions.

Once each expert has presented, the group may have a task or additional questions that you assigned. This component should integrate what was learned from all of the experts. Finally, all students take a quiz on all the material. Perhaps you require each group to produce a product and share it with the class. Another variation is to have each expert group present to the whole class after presenting in their home group.

As the teacher, answer unanswered follow-up questions for the whole class, then and only then.

If an expert is absent when it is time to report or if the expert was absent when the expert group met, have the group sit with another group when that expert’s topic is presented.

#### Structured Academic Controversy

Structured Academic Controversy (SAC) is a cooperative debate in which each student argues aloud for both sides at an equal intensity, and not for just one side. Peer-reviewed research by scholars shows that students learn more in SAC than a regular debate and enjoy it more as well.

Every student

* researches and then argues for one side,
* listens to the other side’s presentation and takes notes,
* rebuts the evidence of that other side and defends the rebuttal,
* switches sides and vigorously argues aloud for this second side,
* rebuts the first side’s evidence and defends this rebuttal,
* pairs up with their counterpart to integrate the two viewpoints into a consensus, and finally,
* writes their own conclusions individually in a graded report that draws evidence from both sides, or takes a test that assesses their understanding of both viewpoints.

##### SAC versus a traditional debate

SAC encourages

* active listening,
* arguing aloud from multiple perspectives by each student for the same issue,
* reformulating one's original position,
* learning the value of collaborative conflict (socio-cognitive conflict), and
* integrating information into a novel conclusion upon which all sides can agree.

Structured Academic Controversy is also known as Creative Controversy, Constructive Controversy, and simply Controversy. The primary educational scholars that did the research for it are David W. Johnson and Roger T. Johnson at the University of Minnesota.

Sample issues and positions:

* Was Columbus a courageous explorer or a ruthless land thief?
* Should the USA have dropped the atomic bombs on Japan at the end of World War II?
* Should Great Britain have partitioned Pakistan and India?

Key questions to ask students:

- What are the key issues?

- What makes them controversial?

- What are the causes and consequences of these issues?

- Who holds these views?

- Why do they have them?

- What reasons justify these views?

- What or who influences these views?

- What information do you need to find?

- What sources will you use?

- How will you justify your selection of information?

- What steps will you take to ensure your information is balanced and reliable?

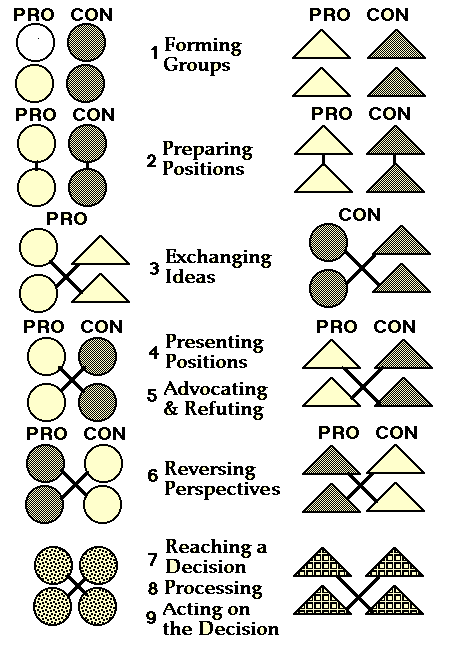
- What further research do you need to carry out?

Instructions for active listening:

* Give the speaker your full attention. Do not think about what you will say.
* Refrain from interrupting and changing the subject.
* Wait in making opinions until you have fully heard the speaker out.
* Encourage the speaker by leaning towards them, maintaining good eye contact, nodding, and saying “mm-hmm” to show that you are following what the speaker is saying.
* Check for understanding by asking, "What did you mean by …" or "Could you tell me more?" Paraphrase and summarize by restating what the speaker said in order to check for facts and meaning. For example, “Do you mean … ” or “So you’re saying that …”
* “Reflect back” the speaker’s feelings, saying things like “It sounds like you’re really proud of that,” or “You must have felt hurt when that happened.” Only when feelings are acknowledged will the speaker feel heard and understood.

##### A diagram of the steps

Display this on the overhead screen. Each shape is an individual or a pair of teammates working on the same side throughout the activity. If a student has special needs, pair them up with another student. The color represents one’s current arguing position in the activity. (The very first circle below on the left should be shaded; there’s an error in the image.)



##### Instructions for students

Prepare your initial position.

In groups of four, you will discuss a particular topic. Divide into two pairs. One pair researches Position A, and the other pair researches the opposing Position B. Use the primary and secondary sources given to you to make your arguments. I will tell you how much time you have to research and prepare arguments. As if you are a lawyer, create the best case for your position.

As you do your research, take notes and form a thesis statement. A thesis statement – also called a “claim” - is a statement that you want accepted but which you expect to be challenged. It often includes qualifiers and reservations. Qualifiers are words that show your confidence in your claim, words such as "probably," "sometimes," "never," and "always." Reservations are the circumstances under which you would not try to defend a statement or thesis, and they include words such as "unless" and "until."

List and detail the relevant facts, information, and ideas that support your thesis argument. Link the facts together in a logical structure that leads to conclusions. Check your notes with your partner and see where you differ so that you improve your notes.

In the first column of this form, write down the name of your source. In the second column, write down your notes. In the third, write your comments, questions, interpretations, and reactions.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Primary source (or secondary source) | Notes | Comments |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

Now that you have researched your position, team up with another pair who has that viewpoint. Share your ideas and notes and ensure you didn’t overlook anything. The purpose here is to reinforce your confidence and to fill in any holes in your prepared argument.

Once you become familiar with the activity, you will do the research on your own and then debate the topic with one other person, as opposed to being in a group of four. This will strengthen the individual accountability.

Now pair up with an opposing pair, one that researched the other position. The team that researched Position A starts. You have three minutes to vigorously and passionately present your argument. Position B representatives must be silent and take notes. They can only ask questions to clarify what was said.

Now it is the turn of those who researched Position B. You have three minutes to vigorously and passionately present. Position A representatives must be silent and take notes. They can only ask questions to clarify what was said.

As you listen, use this form to take notes. In the first column, write down their key points. In the second column, write down your thoughts about how you can argue against what they are saying.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Their key points | Your thoughts and possible rebuttals |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |

After both sides have presented, withdraw from your counterpart and prepare your rebuttal with your partner. Use your notes and list the weaknesses in the other side’s argument. Ensure you have a couple of good rebuttals. Then go back to your counterpart.

Representatives of Position A have one minute to give their rebuttal of the argument and evidence given by the Position B reps. Position B reps then have 30 seconds to counter the rebuttal just given by the Position A reps. Passionately defend your position, and pound the desktop with your hands to emphasize that you are determined to show that your position is correct. Next, Position B reps have one minute to give their rebuttal of the argument and evidence given earlier by the Position A reps. Position A reps then have 30 seconds to counter the rebuttal just given by the Position B reps.

Switch positions. You have one minute to prepare your arguments for what was previously the opposing position. Share your ideas with your partner and perhaps with another pair with your same position now.

Then pair up with a different group as your counterpart for Round 2, not the ones you argued with in the initial round. Switching to a new counterpart, as well as viewpoints, adds excitement.

Each side has two minutes to vigorously present this new position. The new Position A representatives get two minutes, and the new Position B reps get two minutes. Next, the new Position A reps have one minute to rebut Position B. The new Position B reps have 30 seconds to counter this. Then the new Position B reps have one minute to rebut Position A, and the new Position A reps have 30 seconds to counter that rebuttal. Passionate tones and pounding the desktop are encouraged to show your determination in defending this position.

As you listen to the other side, use this form again to take notes. In the first column, write down their key arguments. In the second column, write down how you might argue against these.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Their key points | Your thoughts and possible rebuttals |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |

At this next stage, stop arguing against the opposing pair in front of you. Work collaboratively with them and try to come to a consensus or brainstorm some creative solutions that will satisfy both sides. What do you all think really happened, or what must really be done? Synthesize the opposing viewpoints.

Using this form, note what you consider to be the key points from both sides. Then use the middle column to work towards a consensus or to brainstorm ideas for solutions.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Position A: Key points | Ideas that might work for both | Position B: Key points |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

The last stage is to prepare a report or for a test that will be done individually. If doing the report, explain the two positions, what your group’s consensus is, and any disagreements. What do you personally think is the best answer and why? There is no correct answer, but your report will be graded on how well-reasoned it is with supporting evidence.

##### SAC rubric (9 components)

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **1. Research** | **2. Arguing for Own Perspective** | | **3. Arguing for the Other Perspective** |
| 4: great | Draws 3-4 sources, both text and Internet; takes comprehensive notes and synthesizes them into coherent themes and arguments. | Demonstrates wide range of knowledge, clear understanding; presents 6 or more points, each with two or more pieces of supporting evidence. | | Fully, forcefully, and completely presents the points and arguments made by the other side; captures emotional tone and underlying needs as well as facts. |
| 3: good | Draws 2-3 sources, both text and Internet; takes substantial notes and relates them to position. | Demonstrates solid understanding of subject matter; presents 5 or more points, each with at least one piece of supporting evidence. | | Presents most of the points and arguments made by the other side; captures emotional tone and underlying needs as well as facts. |
| 2: okay | Draws from 2-3 sources; takes adequate notes and relates them to position. | Demonstrates basic familiarity with subject matter; presents 3-4 points, each with at least one piece of supporting evidence. | | Presents at least half of the points and arguments made by the other side; shows some understanding of emotional tone and underlying needs. |
| 1: not  Okay | Draws from only one source; takes sparse and sketchy notes. | Demonstrates little or no grasp of subject matter; presents 1-2 arguments with little or no supporting evidence | | Recalls and presents little or nothing of the substance or tone of the other side’s presentation. |
|  | **4. Assertive Speaking Skills** | | **5. Active Listening skills** | |
| 4: great | States ideas and opinions clearly, firmly, and respectfully; refrains from blaming, accusing, and putdowns; shares the floor. | | Shows consistent attentiveness, calm, and courtesy; never interrupts; asks clarifying questions and paraphrases extensively. | |
| 3: good | States ideas and opinions clearly, firmly, and respectfully; mostly refrains from blaming, accusing, and put-downs; shares the floor. | | Is attentive and calm most of the time; interrupts rarely; paraphrases and asks clarifying questions often. | |
| 2: okay | Usually states ideas and feelings clearly, firmly, and respectfully; mostly refrains from blaming, accusing, and put-downs; shares the floor. | | Maintains attentive demeanor most of the time; interrupts sometimes; occasionally asks clarifying questions and paraphrases. | |
| 1: not okay | Is withdrawn or hostile; uses blaming language and putdowns; monopolizes the floor or says very little. | | Interrupts often; appears inattentive; asks few or no questions; seldom or never paraphrases or reflects feelings; responds with apathy or hostility. | |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **6. Written Report: Mechanics** | **7. Written Report: Scope and Content** |
| 4: great | 2-0 grammatical, spelling and punctuation errors. Typed or written by hand neatly and legibly. | Presents full and complete analysis and description of both the process of synthesis/consensus and the details of the resolution reached; OR full and complete analysis of why group was unable to agree on a resolution. |
| 3: good | 3-4 grammatical, spelling and punctuation errors. Typed or handwritten neatly and legibly. | Presents full and complete analysis of both the process of synthesis/consensus and the details of the synthesis reached; OR full and complete analysis of why group was unable to agree on a resolution. |
| 2: okay | 5-7 grammatical, spelling and punctuation errors. Typed or written by hand neatly and legibly. | Demonstrates basic familiarity with subject matter; presents 3-4 points, each with at least one piece of supporting evidence. |
| 1: not okay | Many grammatical, spelling and punctuation errors. Handwritten very illegibly. | Presents little information, description, or analysis of the process of synthesis/consensus and any resolution reached (or why group was unable to agree on a resolution). |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **8. Written Report: Presentation** | **9. Oral Presentation (if applicable)** |
| 4:  Great | Very well organized with clearly ordered paragraphing and headings; easy to follow logic and sequence; readily comprehensible to reader. | Very well organized with easy to follow logic and sequence; presented in strong voice, with appropriate pacing, animation, and consciousness of audience; highly engaging. |
| 3:  good | Well-ordered paragraphing and headings; reader almost always follows logic and sequence. | Almost always well disorganized and easy to follow; good articulation, volume, pace, and animation, and consciousness of audience; nearly always engaging. |
| 2: okay | Well-ordered paragraphing and headings; reader almost always follows logic and sequence. | Occasionally disorganized and hard to follow; adequate articulation, volume, speed, and animation; some awareness of audience; moderately engaging. |
| 1: not okay | Rambling, disorganized, and unfocused; very difficult to follow logic and sequence. | Rambling, disorganized, and unfocused; very hard to follow logic and sequence; speech poorly articulated; flat or overexcited in tone; too fast or too slow; little audience consciousness; very boring. |

#### G.I.G. for test-taking

Whenever you give a test, groups can serve as pre-test and post-test bookends by preparing members to take the test and providing a setting in which they review the test. G.I.G. stands for “group study, individual test-taking, and group test.”

Students prepare for a test in their groups. They then take the test individually and give it to you to correct. Before you mark it, you photocopy it and return it to them the next day for a follow-up group discussion. Having them work in groups immediately following the test lets each group member discover what he or she did and did not understand.

If all members of the group score above a pre-set criterion (such as an 85% group average) on the individual tests, then each member could receive some bonus points (such as three points) on their test grade.

#### Group Investigation

Group Investigation is a research activity where the class picks the topic and divides it into sub-topics for each group to study and to present back to the class, either in the form of a presentation, a tangible product such as a poster, or both. Students make independent and joint choices about how to proceed with their work, how to divide the work among themselves, and how to integrate everyone's contributions into a group product. These choices determine the goals and scope of their inquiry, thus giving them a great deal of control over their behavior. This control is a major component of the motivation that sustains them throughout the project.

Group Investigation is a particularly good activity for when you are feeling the time crunch - too much left in the curriculum, too little time to teach it. It is also useful at the end of a semester because students can extend and integrate knowledge they have acquired over previous units. Consider having two of these projects: the first one you highly structure; the second one is less structured as students take on more responsibility for the planning.

##### Preparation and topic selection

Two weeks in advance, describe the upcoming content on the curriculum calendar and ask the class what two topics most interest them. You may need to give some suggestions. The topics should be multifaceted, open-ended, and relevant to their lives, and there should also be a fair amount of supplementary resources about the topics that you can bring into the classroom.

Once they have picked two topics, your job as the teacher is to find out what kinds of resources are available: textbooks, magazines, books, experts, film, libraries, museums, stores, industries, parks, etc. List questions that come to mind as you scan the sources, visit a site, or talk with an expert. Then bring to class the information on the two topics and put them on a table that students will see. Encourage them to browse the materials.

On the first day of the unit, plan and deliver an appealing introductory activity for each of the two topics. From here, lead a discussion about what the students want to learn and experience. Have them vote on which of the two topics the class will study.

##### Group students using ability-grouping

Ability grouping lets groups move at their own pace and reduces conflict when one member is going too fast or too slow for the other ones in the group. The sub-topic with more reading could be given to a group that has a strong conceptual-skill ability, whereas new information on a concrete level could be studied by a group that can succeed there. Both groups would thus be stimulated at their own level and be able to contribute competently to the rest of the class.

###### Class steering committee

Sometimes representatives from each group will need to meet to coordinate the presentations of the different groups and to ensure that there will be a coherent structure of information for the class to absorb.

##### Class splits topic into sub-topics

The class scans the resources, discusses their interests and priorities, proposes research questions, and brainstorms worthy subtopics. Have each group rank their interest in each sub-topic. If everyone gives the worst rank to the same sub-topic, the class brainstorms a more interesting one. Then assign the sub-topics according to the group rankings.

##### Each group makes plans

At the heart of Group Investigation are the plans that the group makes. Everyone must have a turn and all suggestions are to be heard without rejection. One person records all suggestions, and another facilitates the discussion, which includes what they will investigate within this sub-topic, how they will go about it, and how they will divide the work among themselves. They may want to split themselves into two pairs and their sub-topic into two sub-sub topics.

You facilitate, helping them plan, organize, and pace their work, and helping them develop and use effective group skills.

##### Individual research

Once the groups are in pairs with sub-sub topics, they can divide the topic further into sub-sub-sub topics for individual study. You may require that sub-sub-sub topics meet your approval because some topics may not be appropriate for the level of a given student (a student might bite off too much or too little), or because sufficient resources may not be available on a given topic. If sub-sub-sub-topics are selected properly, each student will make a unique contribution to the total group effort and work at her/his appropriate level of difficulty.

Each student is given time to collect, analyze, and organize information relevant to his or her sub-sub-sub-topic. Students each know that the group is depending on them to cover an important aspect of the group effort. The preparation may involve library research, data gathering via interviews or experimentation, creation of an individual project, introspection, or an expressive activity such as painting. Pair members are there for each other if help is needed.

##### Presentations to group members

After students complete their individual work, they present to their teammates. Each group member has a specific time and stands while presenting. Encourage roles within the groups so that one teammate takes notes, another plays critic, another supporter, and another checks for points of convergence and divergence in the information presented in the sub-sub-sub-topics. The group then integrates their information in an understandable way for the rest of the class.

##### Preparing a class presentation

Groups now merge each individual’s content with their partner’s work and then with the other pair’s work so that there is a coherent whole. They are information architects here. The discussion then shifts to how the group will present this material to the rest of the class and how each member will perform a separate role.

Panel presentations, in which each member reports on a sub-sub-sub-topic, are discouraged; that is a failure to synthesize. For example, if a group cannot come to consensus, the ideal form for their presentation would be to present a debate. Encourage non-lecture formats such as debates, videos, PowerPoint presentations, displays, demonstrations, quizzes, role-play, posters, learning centers, skits, and group-led class discussions.

Groups can rearrange furniture or make use of other available resources, such as available props, multimedia, or other class members. For example, they may want to appoint a timekeeper who is not a member of their group. The timekeeper can hold up warning cards when there is just five, one, and no minutes remaining.

Allot time at the end of each presentation for Q&A.

###### Rehearsing with another group

Group-to-group rehearsal presentations with feedback lets groups improve before presenting to the whole class.

##### Formal assessment

Include the class when determining evaluation criteria for the presentations. Perhaps you can have them make the rubric in advance and show it to you for your approval. Evaluation should include both an individual and a group component, and it should prioritize higher-level thinking processes, such as how the group integrated their individual findings.

In addition to their own presentation, every student should be assessed on the other presentations too. The assessment might be an essay, a quiz, or a test (with students getting to choose among the questions), and it should focus on tying the groups’ sub-topics into one cohesive picture, that being the overall topic that is the focus for that part of the curricular calendar.

### Observing during cooperative learning

#### 3 rounds for each group activity

Walk quickly around the classroom when students first move into their groups.

* Do the students have all the materials they need, including homework?
* Are all group members present, and have returning members been brought up to date?
* Does everyone know what needs to be done?

Once students have begun their work, go more slowly around the room.

* Do groups seem to have the necessary academic and social skills?
* Are individual members struggling academically?
* Does the group or an individual member need a greater challenge?
* Are all students involved? If not, what needs to happen?
* Do all students have access to the materials? If not, what needs to happen?
* Who is explaining?
* Who is asking questions?

Once you have done an initial walkabout and a more in-depth one, choose particular interpersonal and small-group learning skills to look for, tell the students what you will be looking for, and decide how to look - how to collect the observation data.

##### Ideally positive feedback for all

Aim to be able to give positive and authentic feedback for everyone. This may not be possible if you are observing a class, but it is very doable is if you are just observing one group.

##### Where to stand or sit

Carry a light folding chair so you can sit easily because bending down to listen in on a group, especially if students are small, may be hard on your knees or inconvenient for your attire. A best-case, but unlikely, scenario is to have an empty seat in each group for you.

When you want to observe one group inconspicuously, stand next to a nearby group. Stand or sit so that you can see and hear but so that the students you are observing do not turn to you for help or approval. This gives you a lot of unique insights.

##### Recording and tallying data

Use one form for each pair or group. At first you may wish simply to keep track of who talks. Later on you can place a tally mark in the appropriate row and column when a student engages in one of the targeted actions. Look for patterns of group behavior. Do not worry about recording everything, but observe as accurately and rapidly as possible.

Make notes on the back of the observation form with specific and positive contributions by each member to ensure that every student will receive positive feedback, if possible. Especially useful are skillful interchanges that you observe and, using objective praise, can later share with students. You can also share them with parents during conferences or telephone conversations.

##### Observation template

Observer: Grade: Date: Assignment:

Directions:

1. Write the names of the group members above each column.

2. Put a tally mark in the appropriate box each time a group member contributes.

3. Make notes on the back of the form when other interesting things happen.

4. Write down one (or more) positive contribution made by each group member.

Action Name: Name: Name: Name: Total:

-Contributes ideas

-Describes feelings

-Encourages participation

or asks for suggestions:

-Summarizes, paraphrases,

or combines knowledge aloud:

-Checks for understanding:

-Relates new learning to old:

-Explains concepts:

-Clarifies or explains the task:

-Supports or praises others:

-Other:

-Total:

#### Mystery-person observation

Inform the class that you will be focusing on one student whose name will be kept secret. Select a student randomly or select a student who will be a positive role model or who could benefit from some recognition. Then observe during the lesson without revealing whom you are observing. Describe to the whole class what the person did and at what frequency without naming the person, and ask students to guess who the mystery person is.

#### Others as observers

Observers do not comment or intervene while the group is working. You set aside a time near the end of the class period for the learning groups to review the content of the lesson with the observer. Often important changes are made during this review.

Tell the observer if they are to observe all the groups, their own group, or a single student; this last option usually occurs in a fishbowl design. Those who observe all groups will need a sampling plan to ensure that they observe all groups for an equal amount of time.

##### Visitors

Don’t let visitors sit and watch a lesson passively. When someone visits, hand them an observation form, explain the role of the observer, and put them to work. Visitors may be roving observers or they may observe one single group, depending on the purpose of their visit.

##### Students

Student observers benefit by learning how to behave more competently during group work in the future. This is certainly so with dominating students, who must be silent while observing.

To be effective, student observers must know the skills they are looking for, know how to tally what they see and hear on an observation sheet, and be willing to be silent observers for a short period of time.

Initially, just have the student observer look for one skill or behavior and mark their sheet each time they see or hear it.

If they are just observing their own group, they remove themselves slightly so they are close enough to see and hear the interaction among members but are not tempted to participate. They then rotate so that each group member is an observer for an equal amount of time, even if it is on a different day. When the student observer rejoins the group, the other members stop and summarize what they have accomplished on that lesson’s objective.

###### Training them…

with fishbowls

Circle the classroom chairs around one group of four desks. As students enter the room, assign them to either the inner group or the outer circle. Give the inner group a well-structured activity, preferably with assigned roles, and describe to those in the outer circle what this group will be doing. The inner group begins their activity.

Give each of the students in the outer circle a worksheet. Each of them silently listens to the discussion and notes the interactions of one assigned classmate, or "fish," in the inner group. Students in the outer circle tally each time their "fish" does something related to their role or greatly helps the group in any sense.

After eight minutes of the activity work by the inner group, stop and do a debriefing discussion. Have a debriefing discussion for two minutes where the observers share what they saw.

Now ask for volunteers from the outside circle to be the ones in the inner group so that these other folks can practice being observers.

with class video-footage

Film a group working and then have everyone in the class watch it and compare their observations with their classmates’ ones. This is an excellent way to train student observers. The film can be replayed and analyzed several times. You might need a parental-release form for this.

###### For very young students

For very young students you must keep the system simple, perhaps having them record only who talks. Many teachers have had success with student observers, even in kindergarten.

###### Debrief privately with observer

Take a few minutes after an observation period to chat with the student observer about what they learned. Occasionally sit side by side with them, check your counts against theirs, and discuss any discrepancies.

#### Intervening during group work

Before intervening, ask yourself: Why do I want to intervene? Is it likely that the group can solve this problem without my comment?

If you do decide to intervene, join the group and have members set aside their task. ("Pencils down, close your books.") Point out the problem. ("Here is what I observed.”) Ask how what they are doing will help them. Often just the awareness of the data (for example, showing data that indicates group members are not sharing or helping) will get them back on the right track.

If need be, ask them to create three possible solutions and to implement one of them. Give suggestions only as a last resort. Lastly, have the group role-play the situation under your guidance and then practice the new behaviors.

##### Helping those with a differentiated goal

If a student needs a differentiated academic goal, help the student and the rest of that group with a prompt. You might say something such as, "I'll be back in five minutes and, Ralph, I'm going to ask you to \_\_." Interventions of this type help prevent anxiety and frustration.

##### Praise low-status students publicly

Low-status students tend to talk less, have their ideas ignored or undervalued by others, have difficulties with access to relevant materials, may seem passive and uninvolved, and are usually under-appreciated as teammates. As a result, they tend to experience frustration and misbehave.

When you see a low-status student contribute significantly to the work of the group, give specific praise to the student in front of his peers. The praise must be honest, relevant, and skill-related.

#### Sharing observations: “heard” & “saw”

When giving feedback, be brief, descriptive, specific. Focus on correctable actions and preface what you say with "I heard" and "I saw."

### Troubleshooting CL problems

You likely will need to work with group leaders to help them deal with problem situations. For example, some members might rarely talk, one member might dominate the group, members might call each other names, some members might refuse to work, and one member might want to work alone. You can get group leaders together and get them to role-play such situations and discuss effective strategies for handling the problem situations.

#### Absences

When assigning students to groups, spread around the most frequently absent or pulled-out students so that groups of four generally don’t become less than groups of three. Also, set a norm that homework buddies will call the absentee and that teammates will explain what has been missed when the student returns to class. If there is an absence during a tournament or a quiz, divide the group's score by the number of students present to avoid penalizing the group for having an absent member.

#### An unhealthy group conflict

Have a conference with the group. It should be inconspicuous and confidential, short, and action-oriented. Begin by clarifying the problem. Students do not always know what the problem is or why the behavior is a problem, and you might not know the important details. Discuss and evaluate some strategies that will help solve the problem. Have the group commit to trying one that is agreeable to all of them. Establish a timeframe for implementation and follow up.

When following up, let the group do it on their own. Have one member observe the group work (in the role of observer) and then have the group discuss the results, ideally without you.

#### Dominating and very talkative students

In any particular activity, some students will be likely to participate more. That's okay. What's not okay is if it is always the same students who are participating more. Strategies to try:

* Reduce group size. The fewer members, the more likely all are to participate. Pairs are ideal.
* Give less talkative members a role that calls for more talking, such as the facilitator or leader.
* Put several dominant students together so they can see how difficult it is to be with them.
* Give them a role that does not let them control information, materials, or the group’s air time.
* Use a Kagan structure where each student contributes or speaks for an equal amount of time.
* Ask dominating students why they do not encourage others to participate.
* Make them the group’s silent observer or participation recorder. Each time a group member speaks, they record who spoke. Participation recorders can also record who was addressed by the speaker, whether it was all members, only one member, and so forth. Studying this record later gives everyone a picture of how balanced the participation was.

#### Passively uninvolved student

It is likely that student is not hesitant to work with others but is hesitant to work. Provide encouraging statements for teammates to use such as, “We could really use your help” or “We really appreciate your contribution.”

#### Those who want to work alone

From your observations and data, decide if a student should work alone. Don’t let the student’s complaints drive your decision. Sometimes the group that the student is moving away from - and returning to - will need to be included in decisions about desired actions, procedures, and timelines. Rules for working alone:

1. The student is still responsible for completing the work that would normally be completed in the group. Working alone should not be seen as an opportunity to avoid work, and it may not be doable to differentiate a task and make it manageable for a student who is working alone rather than in a small group.
2. The student describes, and you agree to, the actions the student will try after returning to the group. A written description is often necessary.
3. A timeline, or procedure, is established for the student to rejoin a group.

##### Anxious gifted students

Students may prefer to work alone when they are anxious about quality and believe that their work will suffer because others are less driven towards quality. These students may see themselves as smarter than other group members. For these students

* develop assignments that combine individual and group work;
* stress the cooperative context so that solo work does not have competitive undertones;
* be clear that learning to work with others is essential and not optional;
* structure assessment so that group members are not penalized for the poor work of others;
* stress individual responsibility to their group;
* assign students to work with other students who have a similar drive for quality;
* articulate clearly that high expectations are the norm for all students;
* use a K-W-H-L-S or similar strategy to help students establish personal goals that will build on and extend the context of the group work;
* assign roles that build on the strengths of the student and insure that he or she can positively affect - but not dominate - the quality of the group work; and
* increase the complexity of learning tasks so that the student needs the contributions of other members to achieve the level of success desired.

##### HSP/ Longer processing time

Some students prefer to work alone because they need more time or a quiet space to process information. They might either be very introverted or students who are sensitive to loud noises and commotion (“highly sensitive people”). To help these students,

* combine individual and group work and ensure that extra time or quietness is available,
* create a quiet area in the classroom,
* use more individual “think time” in group activities,
* use graphic organizers, and
* help these students learn what their needs are so they can explain themselves to their group.

#### LD students and struggling students

Many students with learning differences and those who are struggling in general may be anxious about working with those whom they think are intellectually stronger and more gifted. To alleviate their anxiety,

1. Use multiple-ability tasks, because these give all students a chance to be the star of the group.
2. Teach these students (during recess or after school) upcoming course content and needed social skills so that they have information or expertise other students may not have and will thus be in the position of giving help rather than always receiving it. You may need to enlist the aid of a special-education teacher.
3. Give them a structured role so they understand their responsibilities. There is always some way to help the group, no matter what the handicap. Even if a student cannot read, he or she can listen carefully and summarize orally what everyone in the group is saying, provide leadership, check to make sure every member can explain how to derive an answer, praise other group members for participation, and help keep the group's work organized. The role might have scripts that have some or all of the words or set phrases they will need to use in particular situations: for example, a card with set phrases listing the opening words students can use for a particular purpose, such as praising others or asking for reasons.
4. Put them in a group with at least one student who seems very good at helping and encouraging others. Show your appreciation to such students.
5. Explain orally and in writing the procedures for the activity.
6. Urge them to ask for explanations and urge their teammates to give these explanations and not just the answers.
7. Spend more time with them when the other groups are engaged in their own learning.

##### For their teammates

Many regular students may be concerned that the special-needs student will lower the overall performance of their group. To alleviating their concern,

1. Teach these students the helping, tutoring, and sharing skills needed to work with anyone, including special-needs students. If needed, have the special-needs teacher explain to the group how best to help this particular student. Many helpful skills, such as praise and prompting, are easily taught.

2. Make the academic requirements for the special student reasonable. Adapt lessons so that students at different achievement levels can participate in the same cooperative group:

* use a different criteria for success for each group member,
* vary the amount each group member is expected to master,
* give bonus points if the special students improve, and
* give members different assignments or problems and then use the average percentage worked correctly as the group goal (but not as a grade).

3. Give bonus points to groups that have special members. This can help regular students have an immediate reason to work with special students. Discontinue this once group success and relationships have been built.

## Hold attention: Technology in class

### Safety on the Internet

Responsible use of the Internet means not just refraining from actively seeking out inappropriate sites, but also reacting appropriately when they are happened upon.

Any teacher thinking about having students publish online should be sure to get parental approval. The best way to do this is to send a letter home to parents clearly explaining your plans and asking permission for students to participate. That letter should include a description of the technology, how it will be used, what security measures have been put in place, and what your expectations are of your students. In addition, students need to know that any content they create online will become a part of their web portfolio. They need to ask themselves “What if someone finds this piece five or ten years from now?”

Most teachers have students use just first names when publishing. Some, however, do give the option of using a pseudonym for students who may have unique first names.

Use chat and e-mail services that provide supervision. Also, emphasize e-mail or videoconferencing projects that are organized through other teachers.

One filtering program, NetNanny, offers some protection against another concern: young people revealing personal information to strangers during chat sessions. School personnel or parents can enter protected words (names, phone numbers, addresses, and credit card numbers) into a file. If a student types one of the protected words during a chat conversation, a series of Xs will be substituted. While it would not be appropriate or practical to store all of these items of information on school computers, a subset of the items might be entered.

#### Discuss Internet rules

Following are some sample rules for Internet use, worded as they might be presented to students. The wording could be adjusted depending on the age of the students.

1. I will not reveal personal information in e-mail or chat messages. This includes:
   1. My home address
   2. My home phone number
   3. The names of my parents, my teacher, and other students in my class
   4. The name and address of my school
      1. Note: Schools may also decide that students should not reveal their own names, perhaps using only a first name and last initial, such as "Cindy G."
2. If I am asked for any item of personal information, I will ask my teacher what I should do.
3. I will never agree to talk on the telephone or meet in person with anyone I met through chat or e-mail without first talking with my teacher.
4. I will tell my teacher if I find any information that I should not see or that makes me feel uncomfortable.
5. I will not share my e-mail password with anyone, including my best friends.
6. I will not make fun of other students in e-mail messages. If anyone sends me an e-mail message that makes me feel uncomfortable or angry, I will not respond. I will report e-mail messages that make me feel uncomfortable to my teacher.
7. I will not visit web sites that are inappropriate for school use. If I accidentally load this kind of site, I will leave it immediately. If I have questions about whether I should be looking at certain web sites, I will ask my teacher or librarian. I understand that viewing inappropriate sites may result in the loss of Internet privileges.

### Managing the room’s computers

Posting a computer schedule with times for each student helps keep the "Is it my turn yet?" question at bay. If a small group of students will be using computers while the rest are at their desks, make sure the computers don't become a distraction. Inexpensive headphones can help as well as rotating the monitors away from the rest of the classroom.

* + - 1. Write directions for computer activities on index cards or poster board and laminate them.
      2. Select a student to be the "Computer Expert" each week. Allow this student to complete the assignment first and then answer any questions that may arise while other students work through the activity. This helps free you from the role of task monitor while allowing your students to become mentors for one another.
      3. Agree on a signal that students can use if they need help while working on a task. Perhaps place a brightly colored plastic cup next to each computer. When students need help, they place their cup on top of their computer as a signal for assistance. Once they've gotten help, the cup is placed beside their computer again.

### Copyright and fair use guidelines

#### Printed material (short)

* Poem less than 250 words; 250-word excerpt of poem greater than 250 words
* Articles, stories, or essays less than 2,500 words
* Excerpt from a longer work (10 percent of work or 1,000 words, whichever is less)
* One chart, picture, diagram, or cartoon per book or per periodical issue
* Two pages (maximum) from an illustrated work less than 2,500 words, such as a children’s book

Restrictions

* Teachers may make multiple copies for classroom use, and incorporate into multimedia for teaching classes.
* Students may incorporate text into multimedia projects.
* Copies may be made only from legally acquired originals.
* Only one copy is allowed per student.
* Teachers may make copies in nine instances per class per term.
* Usage must be “at the instance and inspiration of a single teacher,” i.e., not a directive from the district.
* Don’t create anthologies.
* “Consumables,” such as workbooks, may not be copied.

#### Printed material (archives)

Restrictions

* A librarian may make up to three copies “solely for the purpose of replacement of a copy that is damaged, deteriorating, lost, or stolen.”
* Copies must contain copyright information.
* Archiving rights are designed to allow libraries to share with other libraries one-of-a-kind and out-of-print books.

#### Illustrations and photographs

Restrictions

* Single works may be used in their entirety, but no more than five images by a single artist or photographer may be used.
* From a collection, not more than 15 images or 10 percent (whichever is less) may be used.
* Although older illustrations may be in the public domain and don’t need permission to be used, sometimes they’re part of a copyright collection. Copyright ownership information is available at [www.loc.gov](http://www.loc.gov) or [www.mpa.org](http://www.mpa.org).

#### Video

Restrictions (for viewing)

* Teachers may use these materials in the classroom.
* Copies may be made for archival purposes or to replace lost, damaged, or stolen copies.
* The material must be legitimately acquired.
* Material must be used in a classroom or nonprofit environment “dedicated to face-to-face instruction.”
* Use should be instructional and not for entertainment or reward.
* Copying is okay only if replacements are unavailable at a fair price or in a viable format.

Restrictions (for integration into multimedia or video projects)

* Students “may use portions of lawfully acquired copyright works in their academic multimedia,” defined as 10 % or three minutes (whichever is less) of “motion media.”
* The material must be legitimately acquired (a legal copy, not bootleg or home recording).
* Copyright works in multimedia projects must give proper attribution to the copyright holder.

#### Music

* Up to 10 percent of a copyright musical composition may be reproduced, performed, and displayed as part of a multimedia program produced by an educator or students.
* A maximum of 30 seconds per musical composition may be used.
* Multimedia program must have an educational purpose.

#### Computer software

* Library may lend software to patrons.
* Software may be installed on multiple machines and distributed to users via a network.
* Software may be installed at home and at school.
* Libraries may make copies for archival use or to replace lost, damaged, or stolen copies if software is unavailable at a fair price or in a viable format.
* Only one machine at a time may use the program.
* The number of simultaneous users must not exceed the number of licenses, and the number of machines being used must never exceed the number licensed.
* A network license may be required for multiple users.
* Take aggressive action to monitor that copying is not taking place (unless for archival purposes).

#### Internet

* Images may be downloaded for student projects and teacher lessons.
* Sound files and video may be downloaded for use in multimedia projects (see portion restrictions above).
* Resources from the Internet may not be reposted onto the Internet without permission. However, links to legitimate resources can be posted.
* Any resources you download must have been legitimately acquired by the website.

#### Television

* Broadcasts or tapes made from broadcast may be used for instruction.
* Cable channel programs may be used with permission. Many programs may be retained by teachers for years.
* Schools are allowed to retain broadcast tapes for a maximum of 10 school days. (Enlightened rights holders, such as PBS’s ReadingRainbow, allow for much more.)
* Cable programs are technically not covered by the same guidelines as broadcast television.

### Copyright for students’ work

The best copyright policy is to treat student work in the same way you would treat the work of any other artist or author: that is, request signed permission work. Note that because most K-12 students are minors, certain situations may also require permission from a parent or legal guardian. Often the best option is to work out the publication arrangements at the beginning of a project, obtaining the necessary consent from both students and parents. Recognizing student work in this manner helps the student understand the concept of authorship. It also develops an appreciation for the rights accorded to those who produce intellectual and creative works.

### SMART boards

A SMART Board is a large, touch-controlled screen that works with a projector and a computer. The projector throws the computer’s desktop image onto the interactive whiteboard, which acts as both a monitor and an input device. Users can write on the interactive whiteboard in digital ink or use a finger to control computer applications by pointing, clicking and dragging, just as with a desktop mouse. Buttons launch a pop-up keyboard and a right-mouse-click menu for more input options.

The pen tools have neither electronic components nor ink: the technology is in the pen tray. When a pen tool is removed from its slot in the tray, an optical sensor recognizes its absence. SMART Board software processes the next contact with the interactive whiteboard’s surface as a pen action from the pen tool that resides in that particular slot. There are slots for black, blue, red and green pen tools, although a control panel can be used to change the color of the digital ink, or to change the pen tools to colored highlighters. Once a pen tool is removed from its slot, users can write in the selected color with that pen tool, a finger or any other object. Similarly, when the eraser is removed from its position in the pen tray, the software processes the next contact with the screen as an erasing action, whether the contact is from the eraser, the user’s finger or another object.

The interface for SMART Notebook software divides the screen into two sections: whiteboarding space and a tab column. There are three tabs: Page Sorter, for viewing and organizing thumbnails of Notebook pages; Gallery, for accessing and saving images, sounds, movies, animations and text files; and Attachments, for attaching files, shortcuts, and links that can then be accessed during presentations. Notebook software users can create multi-page interactive documents and presentations by dragging content and pages between the whiteboarding space and the tabs without leaving the application. Users can create their own content, or use content from the searchable Gallery of educational material.

### Google Search shortcuts

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| sailing **OR** boating | either the word **sailing** or the word **boating** |
| "love me tender" | the exact phrase **love me tender** |
| printer –cartridge | the word **printer** but NOT the word **cartridge** |
| ~auto | looks up the word **auto** and synonyms |
| define:serendipity | definitions of the word **serendipity** |
| How now \* cow | the words **how now cow** separated by one or more words |
| old **in** new (conversion) | **45 celsius in Fahrenheit** |
| **Site:**(only one website) | **site:websearch.about.com “invisible web”** |
| **Link:**(find linked pages) | **link:www.lifehacker.com** |
| **#...#**(within a number range) | **nokia phone $200...$300** |
| **daterange:**(within date range) | **bosnia daterange:200508-200510** |
| **safesearch:** (exclude adult content) | **safesearch: breast cancer** |
| **Info:** (find info about a page) | **info:www.websearch.about.com** |
| **related:** (related pages) | **related:www.websearch.about.com** |
| **filetype:**(search specific filetype) | **zoology filetype:ppt** |
| **allintitle:** (words in page title) | **allintitle:"nike" running** |
| **inurl:**(restrict to page URLs) | **inurl:chewbacca** |
| **Site:.edu** (specific domain search) | **site:.edu, site:.gov, site:.org, etc.** |
| **Site:country and city phone code** | **site:.br “rio de Janeiro”** |
| **intext:**(find keyword in body text) | **intext:parlor** |
| **allintext:** (pages w/words in body) | **allintext:north pole** |
| **book**(search book text) | **book The Lord of the Rings** |
| **phonebook:**(find a phone number) | **phonebook:Google CA** |
| **bphonebook:** (business phone #s) | **bphonebook:Intel OR** |
| **rphonebook:**(home phone #s) | **rphonebook:Joe Smith Seattle WA** |
| **movie:**(search for showtimes) | **movie:wallace and gromit 97110** |
| **stocks:**(get a stock quote) | **stocks:ncesa** |
| **weather:**(get local weather) | **weather:97132** |

### Visuals & image-capture tools

#### Paint versus draw programs

Paint programs store images as records of the individual dots of color, and draw programs represent what appears in an image mathematically. Paint programs are used to create and manipulate bit-mapped images. Draw programs are used to create and manipulate object-oriented images. Object-oriented programs define the elements (points, lines, circles) making up these images in terms of mathematical equations. Draw programs tend to store images much more efficiently and display images with higher quality than paint programs do. The techniques that students use to capture images from other sources, such as videotape and digital cameras, produce files in the bitmapped format. Moreover, the simple type of editing students are likely to do – for example, cutting a picture from one source to display it in another application - is easier in the bitmapped paint format than in the object-oriented draw format.

#### GIF versus JPEG

Use GIF for images containing large areas of solid color, as might be the case in logos, simple illustrations, or large decorative text. The GIF format works best when the designer can control the colors that will be used. This is easiest to do when the images are created on the computer rather than captured from some other source (e.g., video captured, scanned). GIF images must use fewer than 256 colors (fewer still if colors available on all computers are considered) and distortions occur when other hues are converted to these basic colors.

Use the GIF format when you want an image to appear as an object against the background of the rest of the page rather than in the shape of a rectangular box. GIFs allow transparency. In the creation of the GIF, it is possible to select one color (any color) and set that color to invisible. If an image consists of an object surrounded by a solid color background, setting the solid color to invisible creates the appearance that only the object is present. This technique is easiest to use with simple images created specifically for the web. With complex images, there is likely either to be no solid color background or the color of the background may also appear here and there throughout the entire image. Attempting to change such an image into a transparent GIF will have disastrous results.

The JPEG format is most appropriate for complex images such as photographs which contain many colors in complex patterns.

#### Instagram in the classroom

Create a separate, private classroom account. This account should only be used for class-related things and only followed by students and their parents. Once you get your Instagram classroom account, you can get busy searching related #hashtags and posting images right away.

1. Find ideas. Begin by searching #teachersofinstagram and follow where the hashtag leads you.

2. Show off student work and give your students some extra affirmation. Take pictures of their completed projects and post them on the classroom account. Make sure this account is private to the students and their families.

3. If the students complete a cool activity or go on a field trip, use Instagram to capture this.

4. Create unique projects. For example, you might help your students embrace literary characters by trying to imagine the character’s Instagram feed. Who would be their followers? What pictures would they post? What hashtags would they use?

5. Post homework and project reminders is another idea, as well as picture-by-picture tutorials.

6. Share photos with permission. Make sure you have permission to share student photos on social media. If there are students that don't have releases, do not violate this. It may be OK to share some of their work, but do not post their faces online. If you have permission, this means that you can post on your classroom page.

7. Reward a student once a month by featuring them and their works. This is a great way to encourage students to carry on with their good work.

#### Flickr in the classroom

The easiest place to begin experimenting with non-textual content is with digital photography. High resolution digital cameras can be had for as little as $100 these days. Even camera phones can shoot pictures that are of a high enough quality to be used in the classroom. Simple software to edit and resize these photos is available for free on the Web. More importantly, there are a growing number of ways to publish these photos to the Web easily and cheaply. In fact, some of the best photo-hosting sites offer free hosting for quite a large number of photos.

What if you could invite other people from around the globe to have discussions about those images? What if you and your students could annotate them with your own descriptions and observations? What if you could become a part of a community that contributes images of similar topics for you to consume? And what if you could consume those images via an RSS feed so anytime a new picture was added about a topic you were studying it would automatically come to you? That's the potential of Flickr. It's true social software where the contributors interact and share and learn from each other in creative and interesting ways.

Why consider posting images to the Web? From a classroom standpoint, think about the ability to capture daily events or highlights and easily share those with parents, community, and your colleagues. Field trips, speakers, visitors, and special projects could become part of a classroom's "photo stream" and could be a great way of sharing the teaching and learning experience.

Become familiar with the potentials and risks of Flickr before you bring it into your classroom, and make time to convey your expectations and teach appropriate use of the site to your students.

##### Getting started – all for free

Flickr is free as long as you don't publish more than 20MB of images a month. If you develop some basic editing and file-saving skills to manage file size, you could easily post 100 images a month without too much worry. You need to register with Flickr to publish photos or take part in discussions, and you need a valid e-mail address to do that. If you are thinking of using this with a class of students, you could create one login for all of them to share, or have them create their own accounts. Just follow the login procedures from Flickr's homepage.

Once you've set up your account, you're ready to get started. Adding images to your Flickr folder is easy; just click on the upload link, find the image you want to publish, and click "Upload." If you like, you can also upload images using an e-mail function that you set up in the "Your Account" section. Do all of your photo editing and adjusting on your computer before you upload your image to Flickr. During the upload process, you can restrict access to what you publish by selecting from three different options. If you opt to restrict viewing access to "Friends" or "Family" for instance, only those people whom you have invited as members of those groups will be able to see them. This means that you can work with your students behind closed screens, exchange photos, and have conversations that no one else can read or join. That’s one of the best features of Flickr. Or you can allow anyone to see and interact with an image by making it "Public."

##### Annotating for students

One of the most useful tools in Flickr is the annotation feature, which allows you to add notes to parts of the image by dragging a box across an area and typing text into a form. Afterwards, when you drag your mouse across the picture, the boxes and annotations pop up. So when you drag your mouse around the photo, notes pop up that identify what you are looking at.

This function is compelling. Imagine being able to annotate portions of a Civil War battlefield for students to access and review. Or as a test of their knowledge, ask them to annotate what they see. Remember, you and your students can use any digital image at your disposal - whether you have taken it or found it on the Web, as long as you attribute the source. The copyright issues of using an image already found on the Web fall under the Fair Use Doctrine.

You can move the photo to a private space in Flickr, add a link to the original, and make it a part of your curriculum. In addition, there are more than 2 million photos posted at Flickr that carry Creative Commons (CC) copyright licenses, which allow for legal reuse in any number of ways. Using CC licenses, the photographers who publish their own photos to Flickr can indicate what types of uses they will allow for those images. In most instances, these content providers simply ask that the work be attributed to them and that images not be used for commercial purposes.

##### Online chats about photos

Another great aspect of Flickr is the ability to start online discussions about the images you post by adding comments under any particular photo. And remember, these conversations can be held in private depending on the level of security you have assigned to your photos. What this means is that you can ask your students to interpret or comment further on what they see, all in the spirit of teaching them how to come to a collaboratively created understanding of a particular image's use or meaning. And, even better, you can subscribe to these discussions via the RSS feed that Flickr creates for your "Recent Comments." That way you can track what your students are writing without having to visit the photo page.

Flickr can connect your students with people from around the world. Each photo that gets uploaded can have tags or keywords associated with it by the publisher, and those tags are then searchable. Public images of similar themes or topics find each other, and in many cases, so do the people behind them. If your students are studying other countries or cultures, Flickr can be an incredible resource of images and information, and with teacher moderation, there can even be opportunities to meet and learn with other people and students from far-flung places. By leaving a comment on the photos they find, students can potentially learn more about the photographer and the photograph. And again, this can be done in a safe way without students divulging any personal information.

Organizing photos is easy because it allows you to create separate albums for different sets of pictures. It even has a slideshow function so you can create a series of moving images with just a few clicks of the mouse. Both of these tools can be found by clicking the "Organize" link. So, students can create their own personalized collections of photos that they themselves have taken or found on the Web, complete with annotations and discussion with others. Flickr could also serve as a student's online portfolio with digital images of her work that are annotated with reflective descriptions and commented on by peers and mentors. You can also use Flickr to connect students and teachers during their vacations as they post pictures of their travels and talk back and forth about what they are seeing and learning.

See [The Great Flickr Tools Collection](http://www.quickonlinetips.com/archives/2005/03/great-flickr-tools-collection/) for a list of creative Flickr apps. You might also play "Flicktion” by having students pick a random photo from Flickr and write a story about it. This works well for historical fiction classes.

### Blogs

Blogs are easily updateable websites that allow an author (or authors) to publish instantly to the Internet from any Internet connection and respond to an audience. Each new entry has its own date stamp and a comments section where visitors to the blog may leave comments for the author. Blogs can also be interactive, allowing teachers and students to begin conversations or add to the information published there. Rubrics for blogs should include a section for the comments that students leave in other students’ blogs.

Before planning your blog work, ensure that your students have Internet access at both school and home and that students, parents, and even administrators are clear about the expectations. Also make sure everyone has the proper permissions. Make publishing to the web a part of your school’s Acceptable Use Policy that parents have to sign.

Blogger ([www.blogger.com](http://www.blogger.com)) is the easiest free blogging site to use. A note about comments: Under the “Settings” tab, there is a link to configure how you want your comments to work. There are three options: only registered users of Blogger, anyone who might read your post, or only people who are registered members of your blog. For this last one, you have complete control over who those members are. This is done by clicking the “Members” link under the “Settings” tab and then going through the “Add Team Members” process. If you are thinking about a blog to collaborate with colleagues or students, this might be your best option.

With blogs, the ability for people to leave comments can be a very powerful and positive learning tool. If, however, there is unchecked access to commenting on a student site, it may open the door to inappropriate or irrelevant feedback. Have students save all posts as “drafts” until they get your go-ahead to publish. Or, the teacher could press the “publish” button himself. That way, nothing goes online without consent. Remember, however, for this to work, the teacher has to have full access to all student sites. In Blogger, go to Members under the Settings tab and make sure the teacher/member is checked as an administrator as well.

You can always edit posts that you have created, even ones that you have published to the site, though most bloggers try not to do this. All of the posts on the site can be found under the “Edit Post” link under the “Posting” tab. Under the “Publish Site Feed” drop-down list, select the “RSS” option and the “Full” option in the “Descriptions” field. This will allow people to “subscribe” to the content you write, making it easier for your ideas to spread.

If you’re going to start playing with the template, first copy and paste the current, working code into a document that you can use to repair whatever you might mess up. To create a list of links to share with others, scroll down in the template code and find a section that says <h2class=”sidebar-title”>Links</h2>. One of the links listed under that section should be <li> <a href=<http://news.google.com/>>GoogleNews</a> </li>. If you use that line as a guide, you can create as many links as you want by highlighting the entire line, copying it, pasting it, and then changing “Google News” to, say, “New York Times” and then replacing the Google News address with that of the Times. So it would look like this: <li><a href=[http://www.nytimes.com](http://www.nytimes.com/)/>New York Times</a> .

Adding pictures to a blog is easy. Just click on the image icon on the posting form. Photos should be sized and formatted before you upload them. Finally, choose a layout from the options, select the size you want the picture to be, and then click “Upload Image.” It will automatically appear in your post.

Regarding safety, you can also go to the upper right-hand corner of the Blogger template. You’ll see a link for “Next Blog.” Remove that button by first opening up the main template. Next, find the <body> tag. Just in front of it, type <noembed> and right after it type </noembed>.

When you’re ready to begin, you might want to start small by using the first few posts to just create a link to something interesting that you’ve read along with a short excerpt, nothing more. When you get comfortable with the process, annotate the links you post with a couple of sentences that highlight what you think is meaningful or important. An important role for the teacher in a blog community is to look out for student posts or other ones that can inspire.

Post a question each day that you want students to think about and discuss after school. Ask them to make a certain number of responses to the questions during the week, and model what the expectations are for those responses. Make sure the questions are sufficiently provocative, and most of your students will go far beyond the required number of responses. It will give them a great chance to experience public writing in a safe way and to get the posting process down.

If you plan to take the site(s) down at the end of the year, give students a chance to save their work or perhaps transfer it to another service if possible.

#### Potential uses of a teacher’s blog

##### For lessons with the students

* + Post day’s activities, assignments, handouts, and class grades.
  + Post photos and comment on class activities.
  + Post prompts for writing.
  + Post public answers to questions submitted by students.
  + Provide examples of class work.
  + Publish examples of good student writing done in class.
  + Provide online readings for your students to read and react to.
  + Invite students comments on other students’ work.
  + Gather and organize Internet resources for a specific course, providing links to appropriate sites and annotating the links as to what is relevant about them.
  + Invite students to work with each other outside of class through “cooperative blogging.”
  + Invite student comments or postings on current events in order to give them a writing voice.
  + Invite students to share creative ideas.
  + Showcase student art, poetry, and creative stories.
  + Create an online book club.
  + Post tasks to carry out project-based learning.
  + Build a class newsletter using student-written articles and photos they take.
  + Link your class with another class elsewhere in the world. Students can share points of view.

##### Keeping parents informed

* + Post day’s activities, assignments, rubrics, and handouts as well as the course curriculum, calendar, syllabus, and class rules. Invite parents’ comments.

#### For student use

Blogs are wonderful for engaging students in reflective journaling. Students can share their reactions to topics covered in class or in the news, post links that interest them, write reflectively, and summarize or annotate reading.

They might create their own blogs and use them as journals or as places to publish creative writing for larger audiences. Their work here can be a digital filing cabinet and a space for an online portfolio of work. Having all of their work organized in one place makes for great opportunities for student reflection. Comments are a powerful motivator of student writing in blogs, especially when those comments come from sources outside the classroom.

Students can also share feelings anonymously here and receive questions from other students. As such, blogs allow for peer and teacher feedback.

##### Appropriate use

Students using blogs are expected to treat classroom blogs as classroom spaces. Speech that is inappropriate for class is not appropriate for blogs. Because the content that students and teachers create is on the Internet, it is content that becomes a part of the wider body of knowledge that the Internet represents. Students should put their name on their work but should understand the ramifications of doing so. What you write stays with you. Each post contributes to their online portfolio that may turn up in future Google searches.

##### Evaluating outside blogs

Students should find out what kind of a reputation the blogger has by going to Technorati.com and entering the blog’s URL into the search form. The results will show how many other bloggers have linked to that particular blog. Also, they can take a look at the list of blogs that the blogger links to. Does the blogger in question have a personal agenda? Ideally, for a blog to be used as a part of a research effort, you should be able to identify who the author is, what she does for a living, what her level of expertise is, and what judgments others have made about her.

#### Videoblogging

Videoblogging is the use of a blog to post video clips of all sorts.

### PowerPoint

PowerPoint is presentation software that is a useful accompaniment to a student’s presentation.

Slideshows can be viewed on the computer screen or by using a projection system, recorded on videotape for presentation, printed to produce a series of overhead transparencies, or made available on the web. They can be either a whole class activity, in which each student is responsible for one or two slides, or an individual or small group activity, in which the individual or group is responsible for the entire presentation.

#### Do’s and Don’ts

Do…

* Sit with a blank piece of paper and draw out the layout in your mind.
* Choose high contrast colors that are easy on your viewer's eyes. Watch for colors that "vibrate" next to each other.
* Use light-colored lettering on a dark background as opposed to vice versa.
* Stay at 20 pt size or larger.
* Make images as large as they can be without compromising their quality.
* Use consistent elements (backgrounds, fonts, transitions should match).
* Use layouts or outline structures that are guided by your content.
* Project your slides if possible.
* Occasionally blank out your slideshow temporarily by pressing the "B" key on your keyboard. Press it again to bring your slides back.

Don't…

* Use too many slides. Slides should emphasize the most important points.
* Crowd too many images or too much text on one slide. 10-15 words maximum.
* Ruin the proportions of an image.
* Keep slides up on the screen when your audience should be concentrating on you.

#### Whole-class slideshows

Examples: a parents' night introduction of class members, student-created slides depicting important facts about states, memories of junior high created by current students as an orientation for future students, etc.

#### Solo or small-group shows

Examples: book reports, creative stories, historical portraits, geographic travelogues, chronology of world events, differing viewpoints on controversial issues, etc.

#### Getting started

When you enter PowerPoint you are presented with various toolbars and palettes. You can edit these and position them in a location of your choice. From the View pull-down menu, select formatting palette, standard toolbar and drawings toolbar.

When students begin, they should use the outlining tool. An outliner lets the user jot ideas down quickly and cluster and reorganize ideas efficiently. They should also use the Build option, which reveals bulleted items one at a time against a fixed background. This can be done with graphics too, in order to show the process of something changing or the parts of a whole.

##### Designing the slide templates

First prepare a master slide with all elements common to all slides. You have the option to save this as a background template. Only the text and some graphics will change from slide to slide.

There are two types of PowerPoint templates:

1. Design templates allow the selection of a visual theme and color scheme.
2. Page templates offer suggestions for the appearance of different types of pages – a title page, a page with a list of bulleted points, a page with a video segment and title, and so on. The idea is that the user will select a page template and then fill in the blanks with the text, image, or other multimedia elements appropriate to the presentation under development. Once inserted, the elements making up a given slide can be adjusted as needed.

Selecting the design controls slide features such as background image, text size, text location, text color, and more.

Preview each template by clicking once on the name of the design. An example of the template/design will be displayed in the right-hand window. If you would like to apply the design to all slides, then click Apply. Once you apply a design, you will always have a design on your slides. You can change the design (template), but you will always have a template. You can also turn the background graphics off by using the following operations:

Select [Format] > Select [Background] > Click on [omit background graphics from master].

When you add a design/template after you have built the slides, the text, location of text, and color of text will probably change.

##### The notes pane

This pane is for entering notes associated with the slide. These notes may be used by the presenter or distributed as part of a handout to those who will eventually watch the presentation.

##### Colors

Set or change the background color by clicking on the pull-down color menu. Perhaps you color the background with a fill pattern. You can also control the color scheme for that template by selecting [Format] ... [Slide color scheme]. The slide color scheme window will be displayed.

##### Inserting a picture

If you have a picture and you want to insert it into your project, select “Insert Picture From File...” Select your picture file from the folder.

##### Sounds

PowerPoint does include an automatic narration option.

Don’t use PowerPoint’s lousy sound effects. If you have your own sound files, you can easily incorporate them into your slides. To do this, go to the Insert menu, choose Sounds and Movies, and then choose Sound From File. A dialog box appears, prompting you to find your sound file on your computer. Find the file and click Insert. The sound file is automatically associated with this slide and appears on your slide as a blue megaphone icon. You may move the icon around; for example, you may want to put it in the corner so that it doesn't interfere with your slide.

When you have inserted the sound file, a dialog box asks whether you would like it to play automatically when you move to this slide in your presentation. The sound file will continue to play until it is completed, or until you advance to the next slide.

If you want the sound file to continue playing through many slides as if it might be background music, then right-click on the sound icon and select Custom Animation. A dialog box appears. Make sure that the Media object is chosen in the upper left, and then click on the Multimedia Settings tab in the lower half of the dialog box. Select Continue Slide Show, then select After\_\_\_Slides. Enter in the number of slides that you would like the sound file to accompany.

##### Movie clips

Incorporating movie clips is similar to sound clips. Go to the Insert menu, choose Sounds and Movies, and then choose Movie From File\_\_. A dialog box appears, prompting you to find your movie file on your computer. Find it and click Insert. The movie appears as an image on the slide. It can be resized or moved like any image. Real Media or Windows Media Player files (.avi, .mpg or .asf files) work best with PowerPoint on a PC, although sometimes Quicktime files (.mov files) will work too. On an Apple, Quicktime movies work fine as do .mpg files.

If you want to insert a Quicktime movie from a PC, and PowerPoint won't let you, display the slide you want the movie on. On the Slide Show menu, point to Action Buttons, then select the Movie action button. Draw a button on the slide. The Action Settings dialog box appears; click Run program and then click Browse. In the Browse dialog box, change Files of type to All Files. Then browse to your movie file and click OK. Click OK in the Action Settings dialog box.

##### Relevant graphs

To add a graph from an Excel spreadsheet, go to the Insert menu and choose Object. A dialog box appears, asking you to choose the kind of object you want to insert. Make sure you check the Create from file button on the left, and then the Microsoft Excel chart from the list. Find your file in the next dialog box. You can edit this chart directly in PowerPoint after it has been inserted.

To make a graph directly in PowerPoint, go to the Insert menu, then choose Object. A default graph with sample data will appear. Change the data and graph features to your needs. To change the form of the graph from a bar chart to another graph type, go to the Graph menu, then choose Graph Type. A dialog box appears, in which you can choose the graph type and design it.

##### Transitions and animations

You can create special effects on PowerPoint On-Screen Presentations. Do this by selecting Slide Show and Slide Transition. You can set the transition effect, the speed of the transition, and whether the transition is manual or automatic.

Preset animation provides a number of "quick pick' animation effects. First select the image or entity that you wish to animate. Then just pick the Preset Animation effect you wish to use.

### Hypermedia

A hypermedia product is a computer-based presentation using an interactive combination of text, pictures, sound, and video. Having students create hypermedia materials requires them to relate images, ideas, and units of meaning in a way similar to how the brain organizes long-term memory. You can then decide if you want to upload these projects to the Internet for all to see. All websites are hypermedia, but not all hypermedia are on the Internet.

#### Principles

##### Storyboarding

Before moving to the computer, students first create information nodes with sketches or brief statements entered on note cards. These note cards are then tacked to a bulletin board and linked with lengths of yarn. One variation is to use sticky notes instead of note cards. These notes can be easily positioned on a blackboard and connected with chalk lines.

A hypermedia project differs from linear multimedia in the complexity of the paths available through the information and the degree of control that users have in navigating those paths.

Focus on the elements of cards, buttons, and fields, and how to navigate through a stack. Explain the similarities to a website. Then work through the individual elements of building the two-card stack with one student. Create the first card in the stack, and the student creates the second card minus the captured picture window. After the first stack is created, this student becomes the teacher for the next student, modeling the first card and monitoring the creation of the second card. This process continues until all students have created a two-card stack.

##### Screen layout

Place and group the objects - buttons, pictures, or text fields - in a way that eases the user's activities. Teach students the importance of having a template, ideally one based on the table tool, which is invisible in most hypermedia-authoring programs. Tables offer a convenient way to create a page template.

Another way, besides relying on the table tool, is to use a grid, a pattern of lines that organizes the placement of objects and maintains consistency across similar screens. A grid does not have to be complicated to be effective; it may merely be a line dividing the screen into two main areas. The lines designating key areas of the screen do not have to appear on the screen.

Some guidelines for screen layout:

* Buttons should be on the edges of the screen. The exception is when a button affects just part of the screen, such as when it reveals hidden information like labels for a diagram. The button should then appear adjacent to the object or area it influences.
* Group buttons together that serve similar functions. Also, buttons that appear on all cards should be separated from buttons that are card specific.
* Use size to control attention. Give the most grid space to the most important elements.
* Do not abandon the grid concept just because the screen displays only text. A screen of solid text is dull and hard to read. Organizing text elements on the screen increases both readability and interest.

##### Text presenting and style

Principles for using text in hypermedia are clear communication, legibility, and motivation. The text on the screen should be easy to read. Restrict special embellishments (special fonts, bold type, size) to when you are drawing the user's attention to something unique and specific. The hypermedia product doesn’t need to have all of the writing the student has done for the project.

Teachers introducing any program that has text display (word processing, a paint program, HyperStudio) are likely to find that students will manipulate text characteristics unnecessarily at first. The student as designer needs to consider how these options can be used most productively to influence the user. Text messages should be concise. Avoid scrolling fields.

#### Software: HyperStudio

HyperStudio is the popular choice for hypermedia-authoring software for students. For product information, see [www.mackiev.com/hyperstudio/index.html](http://www.mackiev.com/hyperstudio/index.html) and <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/HyperStudio>. HyperStudio products have these elements:

* Stack (the equivalent of a website)
* Card (the equivalent of a webpage)
* Background
* Button
* Text object
* Script/NBA
* Other object

##### Cards

The card is the fundamental Hyperstudio unit. There is the surface of the card, called the background. It might be painted with color or a pattern, an image, or text. If the author wants several cards to share the same background, a new card can be created with the background of an existing card. Objects are the items layered on top of the background.

##### Stacks

A HyperStudio file is a stack, consisting of a series of cards. Imagine a stack as a pile of note cards like those you would use to give a speech or to study for a test. You can shuffle through the cards in a stack in sequential order using keyboard commands. Cards can also be linked by the author in a complex order, and the path through these links is under the control of the user. Cards in a stack do not necessarily contain exactly the same categories of information. If the author wants each card in a stack to have a unique appearance and to contain a unique combination of information types, then the stack can just as easily be put together in this format.

##### Text boxes

You can enter text directly on the card background or within a text object. The advantage of entering text in a text object is that it let the author or a later user of a stack take advantage of built-in word-processing capabilities. Text entered directly on a card is "painted" on the card, and you must remove it before you can add new text. Adding a text object to a card is easy. The command, ‘Add a Text Object’ appears under the Objects menu. When you select this command, an object appears in the middle of the card. Drag this object to the position you want it to occupy on the card and then drag it by the edges to resize it. Once you have positioned the text object, the dialog box appears when you click the area of the card outside the object. You can also return to edit a text object by selecting the Text Object Tool (Tools menu).

Use the dialog box to format the text object. You can set both the color of the text and the background, and the Draw Frame option will enclose the text in a visible frame. The Draw Scroll Bar option is useful when the amount of text to be placed in a field exceeds the card space available. Finally, setting the object using the Read Only option prevents users from altering what the author has entered in it.

##### Buttons (links)

Buttons let the author create options for the user, such as moving to other cards, revealing and hiding pictures and QuickTime movies, and playing sounds. Adding a button is similar to adding a text object. The Add a Button option from the Objects menu puts a generic button on the card. Move the button to where you want it, and open the button dialog box to set its properties. You can attach a name to the button, which is useful if you want to describe its purpose. The button name may be visible or invisible depending on whether the Show Name option is selected.

The button-style property establishes the shape and appearance of the button. A great style option is transparency. The advantage in using invisible buttons is to cover different objects or parts of an object. By clicking on the area the button covers, the user initiates any action attached to it. Often the object to be covered is a graphic or part of a graphic.

##### HyperStudio and the Internet

HyperStudio has an option that launches a web browser and a browser plug-in that will play HyperStudio stacks within the browser window. This means that students can create a project in HyperStudio and then load it on a school server. A link within a web page can request that this file, the HyperStudio stack, be sent to a browser. If the browser has the necessary plug-in, the stack appears within the browser and is fully functional. These two enhancements can be combined to produce some impressive presentations. A stack capable of card-to-card transitions, sound, animations, video, and many other interactive features - still difficult to produce over the Internet - can operate within a browser and also provide links to other web content.

#### PowerPoint (as hypermedia)

With PowerPoint, you can create interactive hypermedia products where control is given to the receiver rather than the presenter. Options are available which allow for variations in what elements of information are experienced and in what order.

When you start PowerPoint, you have the option of selecting the autocontent wizard, a template or a blank presentation. If you select "blank presentation," you are prompted to select the format for a new slide. If you select the blank slide, you now have a file consisting of one blank (white) slide. This is similar to one Hyperstudio card. Use the "Duplicate Slide" option in the Insert Menu to duplicate this blank slide several times. Taking the HyperStudio perspective, you now have a stack of blank cards.

Individual slides (cards) can be modified with shapes, images, text boxes, video segments, and sounds (see options available in the Insert Menu). Under the Slide Show menu, you might also explore "Action Buttons." Here you have options such as "Home," "Next Slide," and "Last Slide." The "Hyperlink" option in the Insert Menu allows any selected option (image, text segment, shape) to function as a link.

When an object is turned into a hyperlink, a dialog box opens allowing the object to move the user to another slide, to a web site (a browser is launched), or to some document (the program associated with the document is launched). So, it is possible to create multiple links on individual slides (cards) allowing authors to offer users options for exploring.

If you were to create the stack, it would likely operate very much like HyperStudio when you use it in Show mode. There is one problem you may not experience and might not anticipate. Try clicking on a part of a slide that is not a button, which is what your intended user might inadvertently do. PowerPoint reverts to slide show mode and advances you to the next slide.

To fix this, use the rectangle tool to cover the entire card with a rectangle. Then apply the 'No Fill" options so the rectangle has no color (it will appear transparent). Next, use the hyperlink option to link to the rectangle to the slide you are working on. Clicking on the slide will now redisplay the same slide and look as if nothing has happened. Any objects which are to be linked to other slides are added after (or on top) of this transparent rectangle. This fix works great in the newest versions of PowerPoint. In older versions, clicks in quick succession move the user ahead to the next slide. Thus, you can essentially turn PowerPoint into HyperStudio. You do not have to take the blank slide approach, but it’s a good way to experiment. Save your project as a Show, and the user automatically experiences the project in show format when the file is opened.

#### Microsoft Word (as hypermedia)

All you have to do is save the document as HTML. Select “Save As” instead of “Save”, and see if HTML is one of the options you are given. However, first save the document as a traditional word processing document. If the web page does not come out looking like you had hoped, it will be easier to make adjustments to the word processor file than to the HTML file.

When you save a Word file as HTML, the program recognizes certain features in your document and tries to duplicate these features in HTML. For example, images connected in the document will be converted and saved as JPEG files, and text that is bolded will be saved in the HTML document surrounded by the <B> </B> tags. Some important features of web pages, such as links to other pages, are not created automatically. Instead, Word will offer you a method for creating these features directly. For example, a link is usually created by selecting a phrase of text and then a web address to be associated with that phrase. When the Word file is saved as HTML, the selected phrase becomes a link.

### Podcasts

Podcasting is the creation and distribution of amateur radio.

#### Why make classroom podcasts?

* You can record important parts of what you do in the classroom that can then be archived to the class blog and used by students who may have missed the class or just want a refresher.
* You could also list key learning strategies.
* In social studies you could have students do oral histories, interviews, or reenactments.
* Students could do podcast commentaries of political events.
* Schools and districts might want to have guided "pod-tours" of the campus on back-to-school night (perhaps created by students) or a “fireside podcast” from the principal.

#### Finding other ones & listening

In iTunes, click on the "Podcasts" link from the "Source" list on the left, and then click "Podcast Directory" from the bottom of the main screen. For the education-related shows, click on "Education" in the categories link on the left-hand side. On the next page, double-click on any show to listen to it, or click the "Subscribe" button to add it to your iTunes list. To check if there are any new shows out there, click "Update" in the upper right-hand corner of the page.

Also try [www.podcastalley.com](http://www.podcastalley.com/) with its links to more than 100 education-related shows of varying content and quality. You can either listen then or save them to your computer for later.

#### Create one on your own first

Before you get your students podcasting, try it out first. See what you are asking your students to do so that you can support their technical use and understand what Web publishing feels like.

First, you need a way to record digital audio. You can do this by plugging a microphone into your computer to record, or by recording directly onto a smartphone.

Take some time to experiment, record, and listen to see what kind of quality you can get and whether or not it suits your needs. And you'll also need to learn how to get the recordings off of your player and onto your computer. Depending on what type of portable recorder you use, you can use iTunes or Windows Media Player to do this when you attach your player.

Making MP3 recordings on your computer is easy and inexpensive, and generally the quality is great. In addition, you save the step of having to transfer your recording over from your handheld device. You'll need some software to capture what you record in MP3 format; the best bet might be Audacity, [http://audacity.sourceforge.net](http://audacity.sourceforge.net/), which is free and easy to use. Download its MP3 encoder separately to translate your files into MP3s. If you use Audacity, choose "Export as MP3" under the file menu when you've finished recording and editing. You can also use Audacity to clean up the recordings you create on your MP3 players.

Skype is another way to capture audio for podcasts, especially those involving interviews. Your interviewees will need to have Skype too. You can record conference calls of up to five people. You'll need the free Skype recording add-on from PowerGramo ([www.powergramo.com](http://www.powergramo.com)), and a headset microphone would really improve the quality. Just download the software, set up your Skype account, get the Skype names of the other people, record the phone call, and use Audacity to export it as an MP3. There is huge potential for using Skype in this way in the classroom.

Once you have your "studio" ready, figure out what you want to do or say for your test run. You can share your ideas about where education is headed or what's the latest news in schools. Or perhaps you want to create an audio tour of your classroom and interview some other teachers. Think about your audience as you will be asking your students to do the same. You may even want to write out your first few podcasts beforehand, but don’t read from a prepared script.

If you're using Audacity to record onto your computer, plug your microphone in and click on the "Record" button. Don't worry about the levels and the settings to start. Just make some short recordings and play them back to see how they sound. If you have a microphone attachment and are using your MP3 player as a recorder, you'll need to go through the synching up process for whatever player you have to get the recorded files onto your hard drive.

#### Editing and adding music

When you've finished the talking part of your podcast, do a little editing. Use Audacity to edit out all of the "ums" and "ahs" and to add intro or transition music. If you have the means to create your own digital music, on Apple’s GarageBand, you don't have to worry about the copyright issues of using other people's work. If you can't do this, go to Wikimedia Commons (<http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Main_Page>) to find some free-use music that's legal to add.

After you have saved the files to your computer, use the "Import Audio" feature under the Project section in Audacity to start editing and mixing. Start with your own recording. Press the play button to start listening, use the "Selection Tool" (it looks like a 1 in the upper left-hand corner) to drag over the parts of the file you want to edit out, and hit delete. Then import your music track the same way and line up the timing between the tracks by using the "Time Shift Tool", which looks like a two-headed arrow. You can fade one track in by using the Selection Tool and then choosing "Fade In" from the Effects section.

If you play just a little, you can do some editing and production in no time. One of the charms of podcasting is its unfinished quality. So don't get worn down by production if it doesn't suit you. When you're done, just "Export as MP" from the File section, and you're ready to publish.

#### Publishing it on the Internet

The key to turning recordings into podcasts is to publish them. First, transfer the MP3 file from your computer to a server on the Internet. If your school has a Web server, that's your best bet. If for some reason you can't use that server, there are alternatives. The first is OurMedia.org, which has free storage and free bandwidth for your videos, audio files, photos, text or software. Just sign up for a free account and upload your MP3. Wherever you put it, you can use their unique URL given to the file to create a direct link to your blog or website for your audience to listen to.

The other way to get your file on the Internet is through blog software. Most of the popular blog software programs have automatic support for "enclosures" like MP3s. When you create the post describing your podcast, you can add the MP3 file automatically by attaching it. This process depends on your software . . . search for "enclosures" in the Help.

#### Creating one with your students

You need a digital recorder to create an MP3 file, some space on a server to host the file, a blog, and something to say. The shows’ content does not have to be limited to a school or community audience. Podcasting is just another way for students to be creating and contributing ideas to a larger conversation, and archiving that for future audiences. Students can also create blogs and podcasts that go together. One podcast might describe what’s new in each of the students’ blogs.

### Video productions

Video productions are made from both raw data - primary sources – and interpretive products created to explain or integrate these sources. Using primary sources, students might write a script and tape a short play. The script and the video production would be their interpretive products. Primary sources could include raw audio and video resources collected on location. Additional information might be extracted from books, newspapers, interviews, and other sources.

Video productions often include still images such as photographs and charts. This type of production would likely require that a narrative script be written to integrate and interpret the various information sources. For editing, Adobe Premiere is the best for PC computers. (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adobe_Premiere_Elements>). Apples can use Premiere or iMovie.

#### Possible class productions

* Training tapes that explaining to the next class how your class did something
* Storytelling videos with no words for students to use to write stories
* Regional, local, or school news broadcasts
* Interviews with local experts
* Portfolios with segments accumulated over the course of a year
* Documentaries with both sides examined
* Video autobiographies of students, including comments from significant people in their lives
* Public service announcements for the community on issues such as household recycling
* Video yearbook
* Extracurricular summaries of a team, a club, or a class trip

#### Recording tips

* Show students how to identify what is informative or interesting and get a tight shot of it. Students seem to capture video images that are too distant. The close views are most useful.
* Do not pan a scene and assume you will be able to capture later what is useful. Capturing still images from video works best when you have a still image to work with. Pause for ten to fifteen seconds when recording individual scenes you expect to be useful.
* For the best close-ups, set the camera to extreme wide angle and move it toward the object until they get the image they want. Most students intuitively take the wrong approach: They tend to stand at a comfortable distance from the object and then zoom in with the telephoto. Getting close to an object with a wide-angle setting will increase the amount of the image that will be in focus. The students may find themselves on their hands and knees in the dirt, with the camera two inches from the object, but the picture will be great.
* Always carry an extra battery.
* Know how to stop the camera from stamping the time and date on the recording.

#### Putting it into other multimedia

Short videos can be added to many types of multimedia projects. For example:

* An embellished Microsoft Word document
* A slideshow generated and displayed by a presentation tool, such as Microsoft PowerPoint
* A hypermedia project, such as a HyperStudio stack or a web page

### Screencasting

Screencasting is the narrated showing of actions on a computer screen that is then published on the web. You could create screencasts as support materials when teaching complex skills on the computer, training videos for peers, PowerPoint-created tours for parents, or video collections of exemplary student work. Students can use them to annotate their work in voice as they show it on screen. They could create their own Internet tours or read stories or poetry they write with visuals they have either created or found. Prepare what it is you want to show and create at least a script outline. You might want to create a storyboard that sketches out the visual and the audio together. Run through it a couple of times before creating the screencast.

### Videoconferencing

Students can use videoconferencing to interview experts and to work face-to-face on projects with students from other schools. Teachers can use videoconferencing for meetings with parents who can’t come to school and for meetings related to their professional development.

### Webcasting / webinars

A webcast is a live online broadcast in which the speaker is seen (unlike a screencast). It can be produced shortly beforehand and subsequently uploaded, but it is often time-sensitive. A chat session can be included so you can field questions from the online audience. Whoever is doing it should speak loudly and project more energy than normally as you are only two-dimensional.

Teachers and students can use webcasts to make live presentations from the classroom to parents in their own homes, to other groups that have a relationship with the class, and to the global community. You as the teacher can also use a webcast to record your lesson for absent students.

### Webquests

A webquest is an inquiry activity that critical thinking, collaborative learning, and skill-building with multimedia and the multiple intelligences. Identify an interesting and appropriate topic, define a task that requires problem solving and reflection, and then locate web resources that provide information for processing rather than preprocessed conclusions. You will likely also want to create a rubric to guide students in how you will evaluate their work.

Planning questions:

* Is the level of potential student learning worth your effort and their effort to do this?
* Is the topic worth the time and effort needed to build this webquest?
* Are you excited by the activity?
* Does the question ask something that people in the real world find important?
* Do you believe there's enough on the Web to support the roles?

#### Introduction slide

Orient the learner to the task ahead and grab their interest. A good introduction is

- relevant to the learner's past experience

- relevant to the learner's future goals

- attractive, visually interesting

- important because of its global implications

- urgent, because of the need for a timely solution

- fun, because the learner will be playing a role or making something

Write with the student as the intended audience with a short paragraph to introduce the activity. If there is a role or scenario involved (e.g., "You are a detective trying to identify the mysterious poet."), here is where you'll set the stage. If there's no motivational intro like that, use this section to provide a short advance organizer or overview. Remember that the purpose of this section is to both prepare and hook the reader. It is also in this section that you'll communicate the big question (essential question, guiding question) that the webquest is centered around.

#### Task slide

Describe what the learner will produce by the end of the exercise. The task could be a

- problem or mystery to be solved,

- position to be formulated and defended,

- product to be designed,

- personal insight to be articulated,

- summary to be created,

- persuasive message or journalistic account to be crafted,

- a creative work, or

- anything that requires the learners to process and transform the information they've gathered.

If the final product involves using some tool or software, mention it here.

#### Process slide

Suggest the steps that learners should follow in completing the task. Include strategies for dividing the task into subtasks, descriptions of roles to be played, or perspectives to be taken.

You can also advise them here on organizing the information, presenting, navigating the interpersonal process (such as group brainstorming), and so on. You might suggest using flowcharts, summary tables, concept maps, or other organizing structures. Perhaps this advice is a checklist of questions to analyze the information with, or things to notice or think about. If you have identified or prepared documents on the Web that cover specific skills needed for this lesson (e.g. how to brainstorm, how to prepare to interview an expert), link them to this section.

Include in this section the resources that students will need, such as certain webpages and other materials. Pre-select that information so that the students can focus on the topic. You may want to divide the resources so that all students read some of them while others are read by subsets of learners who play a specific role or take a particular perspective. By giving separate data sources to learners, you ensure the interdependence of the group.

Use a numbered-list format in your web editor to list the steps in order that students should take to accomplish the task. Remember that this whole document should be addressed to the student.

For example...

"1. Teams of three students will be chosen....

2. Once you've picked a role to play...."

#### Evaluation slide

Describe how their performance will be evaluated. Specify which part of the grade will be the group component and which part will be for the individual. Display the rubric here with five or six aspects of the final product and four benchmarks for each aspect.

#### Conclusion slide

Summarize what they will have accomplished or learned by the end of this activity or lesson. You might include a rhetorical question or additional links to extend their thinking into other content beyond this lesson and to reflect. One good use for this section is to have questions for the class in the debriefing afterwards.

#### Credits & references slide

List the sources of any images, music or text that you're using. Provide links back to the original source. Say thanks to anyone who provided resources or help.

### Wikis

A wiki is a web-based publishing tool that enables multiple contributors to add or edit content on the web without any software or knowledge of web page authoring. Users can add, remove, and edit available content, sometimes without the need for registration.

Everyone together in a wiki is smarter than anyone. In the process, we check facts and weed out bias and emotion from the posts so we can arrive at a neutral point of view for each article. This collaboration that wikis facilitate teach students much about how to work with others, publish content, and negotiate with others to agree on correctness, meaning, relevance, and more.

As students approach the wiki with writing ideas, they first search to see if content about that topic has already been posted. They need to read critically if they are to find the areas where information is missing or disorganized. Even though the writing is not their own, they must take it as their own because they have the ability to edit and make it better.

#### Class benefits

In schools, teachers and students have begun using password-protected wikis to create their own textbooks and resource sites. A co-constructed online text could make for a much more personalized class. Consider adding other students and other teachers who teach the same class. It could become a resource, a showcase for best practices, and an articulation tool as well. Students could add graphics, links, annotations and reflections. Just like with blogs, they could post PowerPoint presentations, video and audio files, and spreadsheets. All of those collectively assembled artifacts serve as a starting point for future classes to then edit and add to. They might also create or edit entries to books that have already been started elsewhere.

Steps:

* Introduce them to the concept of a wiki,
* show them how it works,
* have them pick an entry to edit,
* review their edits with them,
* have them share the link when their work is posted, and
* then have them track their edits to see how others might edit them.

#### Teacher’s control of a wiki

While many wikis can be edited by anyone, you can also configure them to restrict who can edit or view wiki content. One feature of a wiki is that the site administrator (the teacher) can access the previously saved versions and revert to these saved drafts if anything is inadvertently altered. The link to the page history is usually near the “edit page” link, and when you click it, you can see when changes were made, by whom, and what was changed. Monitor the posts closely via the history list. As the administrator you can view contributions of specific authors over time, increasing accountability for student work. For these reasons, wikis are powerful tools for engaging students in collaborative inquiry.

Wiki editing is much easier than coding hypertext markup language (HTML) or using Web authoring software. Each page might contain advertising, but for a nominal fee, you can upgrade to a premium account which gives you ad-free pages and a larger amount of server space.

#### Wiki groups within one class

Create one large wiki with sub-wikis for student groups. You can use a project wiki to introduce both the unit and each stage. There you can upload documents students will need for the project.

Each group’s wiki contains their resources, notes, self- and group evaluations, and journal entries. An absent student with home Internet access can continue to communicate with his or her group from home. You can comment on students’ progress directly on the wiki, keeping them focused and answering questions or solving problems they may post for you.

Be sure to assign the password, or at least record the one they give you. Instruct groups to create a sidebar listing each step of the project. At each stage, each group will add a page, including ideas and responses to assignments. Students can put their names on their group wiki site and name of their topic. Have them paste the project URL on their home page.

#### Google Docs and Google Sites

Google Docs provide collaborative writing/editing functionalities with revision control, (synchronous/asynchronous editing) . The new version of Google Sites might also be good.

#### 20 creative ways for using wikis

Readers’ guides: Have them make readers’ guides to share their favorite and most important parts of works you’ve read in class.

Solving wiki: Post difficult math problems so that the class can collaboratively solve them.

Glossary: Have your class list the terms they use and learn about in new units, along with definitions and images. Encourage students to submit words that challenged them.

Create exploratory projects: If you’re teaching a new subject, ask your class to collect and share info so you can learn together.

Peer drafting: Let students draft their papers in a wiki, and ask other students to comment on it.

Correction competition: Post a document riddled with mistakes and have students compete to see who can fix the most errors.

Peer editing: Ask students to edit each other’s work for spelling, grammar, and facts.

Share notes: Let your students share so that everyone gets a better understanding of the subject.

Group authoring: Ask groups to use central documents in a wiki so you can ensure everyone’s documentation will be uniform.

Grandma timeline: Have your students create a history timeline using Grandmas as units of time.

Organize ideas: Let group members post their ideas in a wiki, and you’ll cut down duplicate ideas and then build upon on them.

Fan clubs: Start fan clubs for your students’ favorite historical figures and ask them to insert their favorite quotes and photos.

Track projects: Students can see which tasks have been completed and which ones still need to be done.

Track participation: Assign a wiki page to a group project, and then individual pages for each student to show their participation.

Mock-debate: Pit pairs of students against each other and perform a debate on your wiki.

Multi-author story: Students can write a short story together, each writing a small amount. A twist could be a choose-your-own adventure, where each student writes out a different path.

Share reviews: Post articles for different movies, books, and TV shows, and encourage students to share what they thought.

Literature circles: Host a book club on your wiki where students are required to read the same book and then discuss it on the wiki.

Teacher collaboration: Work with colleagues to create lesson plans and track students’ success.

Local history: Document your community's history. Add students' interviews of parents and other adults in your town.

### Twelve iPad strategies

1. Customize your control center. Swipe up from the bottom and customize your options. Go to ... Settings >> Control Center >> Customize Controls. Add or remove features as you see fit.

2. Screen record (screencast). Swipe up from the bottom, and tap on the screen recording icon.

3. Take and annotate screenshots. Markup is in many iOS apps now. Press the home button and power button together for a screenshot. That puts a thumbnail of your screenshot in the screen’s corner. To annotate that image (or series of shots), tap on the thumbnail for the markup screen.

4. Make your own music in GarageBand. It’s nice to have music or sounds for background music where you don’t have to worry about where it came from. Check out ‘Live Loops.’

5. Use augmented reality (AR). Metaverse (<https://studio.gometa.io/landing>) has AR quizzes.

6. Use Apple Clips. Clips is Apple's free video-editing app.

7. Use screen mirroring. Mirroring is how you wirelessly project your device's screen to another device, normally to a projector for demonstration purposes. Mirroring turns your iPad into a visualizer with tools like the Apple Pencil and the markup options in lots of apps to live mark or annotate work on the screen to the whole class. Additionally, by handing the device to a student, or if they mirror themselves, you can create discussions around open peer feedback. Sharing student work to the screen lets them have an audience, which gives them agency and authenticity, and discussing their learning publicly aides their metacognition and self-regulation.

Use iPad's built-in ‘Airplay’ feature to mirror your screen to other devices with the help of AirServer or Reflector. Reflector includes iOS companion apps for students and teachers to make collaboration even easier. The Reflector Student app simplifies the mirroring connection process by enabling device discovery across subnets. It also lets them see all the other devices connected to Reflector, which helps boost collaboration from anywhere in the room.

Reflector Director is an app for teachers to remotely control Reflector. It lets you maintain mobility in the classroom and control what’s on the screen from your mobile device. You can quickly show, hide or emphasize devices, preview screens and change frames.

AirServer has the AirServer Connect, and like Reflector Student, it enables device discovery across subnets. AirServer does not give the option to hide or display connected devices, which means that all connected devices will be displayed. This limits control on the teacher’s end.

Reflector and AirServer both require a license for each display you want to mirror to, not for each device that will be mirroring. This generally means that only one license is required per room. If you want to use AirServer on a Mac, you must purchase a macOS license. If you want to use AirServer on Windows, you must purchase a Windows license.

8. Use Apple Classroom. Apple Classroom lets you see every student’s device and allows you to share their screens to your screen, open apps on their device, lock their screens, open web pages on their device, open books in iBooks on their device, group students together, and much more.

It’s not like Google Classroom which is a hub for setting, collecting and assessing student work. Apple Classroom is about having an efficient classroom. If need be, you can lock screens or lock students into a particular app. But more importantly, no longer do you have to wait 10 minutes while every child either scans a QR code or goes into another app to find a website address; now you can make that website, app or lots of other things just open up and appear on their devices.

9. Use the photo and video camera. Examples include making a video tutorial, having students create either a step-by-step visual guide or video tutorial, taking photos on a school trip to explore on your return, using the camera to engage with AR apps, creating 360° images to enhance VR experiences; taking pics of student work or events; and recording performances.

10. Everyone Can Create. Everyone Can Create is a free Apple curriculum that lets you blend drawing, music, filmmaking or photography into your existing lesson plans for any subject. [https://www.apple.com/education/k12/everyone-can-create](https://www.apple.com/education/k12/everyone-can-create/)

11. Use the long-press option. Long presses are available in lots of apps and tools. An example is a long press on the Files App icon. This brings up a menu showing the last four files you’ve had open, giving you quick access to those files. Another one is to long press the icon of two squares at the top right in the Safari app on iPad or the bottom right on an iPhone. From here you can close all of the tabs you have open in Safari in one go rather than doing it one at a time. Just choose the option: “Close All Tabs”. Unfortunately, the long press shortcuts aren’t easily signposted, so often it can be a case of trying things out until you find ones that work for you.

12. Use the mouse in two ways. First, do a long press on the space bar when the keyboard is up. This brings up a mouse-like trackpad which you can use to move the cursor around your text. There is also the two-finger mouse, where you press your keyboard with two fingers. However, if you hold and press for too long, you will start highlighting your text. To get the cursor movement to work, press two fingers down lightly and move the cursor to the desired location.

## w.h.E.r.e.t.o. - Engage (minds) & Equip (with communication skills)

Engage and equip students with necessary experiences, tools, knowledge, and know-how to meet performance goals. Engage students in learning experiences that let them explore the big ideas and essential questions that motivate them to pursue leads or hunches, to research and test ideas, and to try things out. Equip students for the final performances through guided instruction and coaching on needed skill and knowledge. Have them experience these ideas to make them real.

## Engage their minds: Inquiry teaching with essential questions

Engage students’ interest in the essential question and have them pose arguments about it. Then design activities in which they gather information and compare it to these propositions. As they do the comparisons, they learn to discard, add, and revise their arguments, as the facts require. Eventually, they draw conclusions.

Students might gather information (evidence, data) through reading, oral reports by classmates, field trips, guest speakers, interviews and surveys, the Internet, audio and videotapes, films, paintings, teacher read-alouds and presentations, and the like. This data gathering could take anywhere from a day to a few weeks, depending on the amount of data available and the amount you wants students to gather, organize, and analyze. This research should involve multiple information sources and, if possible, both primary and secondary sources.

Students organize and interpret the information and draw conclusions. The most efficient way to do this is to organize the information around the essential question and the students’ initial arguments. The conclusions are then published and made public. Whether in the classroom newsletter, a report to the school principal or town mayor, or a presentation to younger students, the results of the answering the essential question are always shared. The audience members can then accept or reject the conclusions presented based on their own interpretation of the evidence. This is how knowledge is constructed, corrected, and reconstructed over time.

## Equip them with … reading skills

Time blocks: DEAR, RW, & Book Club (literature circles)

### Drop Everything and Read

Drop Everything and Read is usually the first segment of the reading block. Everyone reads silently for a certain period of time (10-30 minutes). Students select their book or use this time to read their book-club book.

### Reader’s workshop

The three parts are the mini-lesson, individualized daily reading or book-club reading, and the closing, in which the class meets as a whole or in small groups to share, discuss and reflect.

In their graded notebooks discussed on pages 47-50, students take notes, tape Post-It notes about their thoughts while reading, and record other ideas. Note that in reader’s workshop, this notebook is technically called the reader’s notebook.

#### Mini-lesson

The mini-lesson lasts about 10-15 minutes. Introduce a specific reading strategy or skill, perhaps through a think-aloud you do while reading in front of the class. Explicitly model or demonstrate the skill or strategy. Students then practice it on their own or with a “turn-and-talk” partner.

Many times during the mini-lesson, you will want to model for students how to do a task that they will be have to do on their own that day. As a class, complete the task together using a blown-up (poster size) version of the recording sheet in MS Word on the overhead so that all students can easily what you are doing. They can record notes here in their graded notebook.

Assign students talking partners at the beginning of the year. These students always sit next to each other during reading mini-lessons for quick "turn and talk" sessions about whatever you ask them to discuss. Talking partners can be at different levels of reading ability. Don't change partners more than four times a year because you want them to build a level of comfort and trust with each other so that their discussions can be open and honest. Assigning talking partners saves a lot of time during a mini-lesson, and the longer your mini-lesson lasts, the less time students have to practice the strategy while reading their self-selected books.

Reader’s workshop includes sequentially organized sets of mini-lessons that focus on skills and strategies students are expected to use when reading independently.

##### Class-wide read-alouds

If you extend the mini-lesson with a class-wide read-aloud, with students reading to the class from their desks, keep each student’s reading time short. Vary the duration, and don’t say whom you are going to call on next. This keeps all students focused. Encourage students to share inferences, predictions, and observations, after you call on them of course.

#### Individualized daily reading (IDR)

Students engage with self-selected texts at their own level and practice the skills that you taught during the mini-lessons. They read in book nooks around the room while you hold individual reading conferences or meet with small groups of students for guided reading or strategy lessons.

##### Book-nook rotation chart

Let students read in different places around the room rather than at their desks. The place they pick is their "book nook." While this is great for independent reading, it can lead to arguments over who gets to sit where. Thus, post a book-nook rotation schedule. Print an image for each book nook on a vertical banner. On the left side of the banner next to the book nooks are clips with each student's name and number. The clips are rotated every day so that all students get to enjoy each book nook an equal number of times throughout the school year. Knowing where they will read each day lets them transition quickly from the mini-lesson to IDR time.

##### Selecting books

Don’t let students select books during IDR. Instead they must choose books (when necessary) during your morning work period or during recess if you are not on duty. Each student’s book box should have enough books inside to last them at least two weeks. This keeps them from visiting your room’s library on a daily basis. If a student finishes all his books during independent reading time, he must reread them on that day. Encourage them to look for new books when they have fewer than two days' worth of reading material left. This "no shopping during IDR time" rule quiets the reading environment in the classroom. Readers are not distracted by classmates chatting while browsing books in the classroom library, and small-group lessons during IDR are now much more productive without the disruption of book shopping.

##### Post-It notes and the graded notebook

While there are times when you can give students a handout on which to record their thinking, there are other times when you just want them to write about their reading on sticky notes as they make their way through their books. Tell your students to "talk back" to their books as they read. Whenever they talk back to their book, they leave a sticky note on that page. Ask students to refer to these sticky notes when you confer with them individually about their reading.

Since you can’t confer with each student every day, have them take the sticky notes out of their books when they are done and tape them to their graded notebook. This lets you see their thinking on a regular basis and lets you use that to guide your conversations and necessary instruction with specific students. It also gives them a birds-eye view of all their notes at once.

##### “Talking back to books” prompts

I’m wondering… I can’t believe…

I like this part because… This reminds me of…

This is confusing because… I am noticing…

I think the character is feeling \_\_\_\_\_\_ because… I’m thinking…

I think \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ will happen next because… Why…

#### Closing

This is a 5-10 minute period in which students gather to reflect on their work as readers. Reinforce your teaching point for the day and stress the importance of continuing to use the strategy that you taught whenever they read from now on. Also give students a chance to share their reading work. Since you don’t have time every day for every reader to share, vary the way you let them. Here are some options for the closing share; don’t do all each day:

* Reading-partner share

A quick way to provide time for all students to share the work or the thinking they did during IDR time is to have them turn and talk with their reading partner or book-club group to reflect on their reading work or discuss the reading task.

* Reader of the day

Sometimes you can highlight a specific reader who has done the reading task very well or who you notice is successfully using a reading strategy you have taught in previous lessons. That student will share her work or model the strategy she used for the class. You can even have a cheap little "Reader of the Day" trophy that is awarded to these students who do exceptional reading work, a trophy they get to keep at their desk for the day.

* Revisit chart from mini-lesson

Sometimes the closing is an extension of a chart or a discussion you started during the mini-lesson. As students read, they are expected to think more about the concept and then add to the chart when you return for the closing. Their ideas can be added on sticky notes they created while they read so that you don’t have to spend too much time adding all of their ideas.

#### Reader’s workshop planning sheet

It is hard to plan ahead and keep all of the components of reader’s workshop organized on a daily basis. When you first start, this sheet will help so that you know exactly what you are doing each day. Of course you don't have to meet with two groups and confer with four readers every day; you can just fill in what you are planning to do.

Reader/s Workshop Planning Sheet

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Book to be read ahead of time (if necessary): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Mini-Lesson: Procedural – Literary – Strategy – Skill

Teaching Point:

How students will practice the mini-lesson:

IDR Task:

Resources (What materials do I need for this lesson?):

Conference with:

1.

2.

3.

4.

Guided reading / strategy group:

Skill:

Students:

Materials:

Things I noticed today:

1.

2.

3.

4.

Closing/Sharing:

Graded notebooks to collect and review:

### Reading strategies: RW mini-lesson topics

#### Pre-reading: expository & narrative

##### Reviewing for previewing

Students recall the key points of a previous unit or chapter to make predictions about or connections to what they will be reading about next.

##### Structured preview

1. “Who was …….? What was his concern in life? How did he try to reach his goal in life?”

##### Vocabulary

Students are introduced to and learn unfamiliar key words before they read. For more on vocabulary, see the section below titled, “Equip them with … Vocabulary skills.”

#### Pre-reading: expository

##### Brainstorm (the KW in KWL)

1. Write all that you know about the topic.
2. Also write questions you would like answered.
   1. “What do I know about this?”
   2. “Where did I learn that”
   3. “How can I prove it?”
   4. “What do I want to know about this?
   5. “What are some questions I think I can find answers to?”

###### KW in more detail

Before introducing a concept or chapter in a text, guide a discussion of those things the students Know, Want to know, and after reading, those things they have Learned. A “KWL” is usually just with expository texts.

###### K – The ABC Brainstorm

Have students list all the letters of the alphabet down a sheet of paper, leaving room beside each letter to write out the rest of a word or phrase. Let them work individually at first, thinking of as many words as they can that could be associated with the topic you identify. The topic should be general enough that they can actually think of a lot of possible terms. Give students enough time to think of a lot of ideas, but then group or pair them up to fill in blanks for letters they had not yet completed. At the same time, record their ideas on a larger version of the worksheet on the chalkboard, chart, or overhead projector.

###### K – AlphaBlocks

Rather than brainstorm ideas for all 26 letters of the alphabet, students brainstorm ideas within groups ("blocks") of letters (ABC, DEF, GHI, and so on).

###### W

As students share ideas, areas of uncertainty or lack of knowledge will arise. Help turn these into questions. Let them glance at the topic headings, pictures, and charts that are found in the reading. What do they think they will learn? What do they want to know? As the discussion continues, students may think of other questions. Before letting them read the passage, record all questions on the group chart about what they want to know and have them record those questions in their notes. Have students then read the material, recording notes as they read.

###### KWL sub-topic carousel

Whether activating background knowledge or checking understanding after studying a topic, a carousel brainstorm allows you to have students think about multiple subtopics.

Begin by putting students in groups of 3 or 4. Give each group a sheet of newsprint/chart paper. Each group's sheet has a different subtopic on it. One student serves as the recorder and has a certain colored pen. Explain that the students will have a short time (say, 30 seconds) to write down on their chart paper all the terms they can think of that they associate with their topic.

They will then pass their sheet over to the next group with a different color, and a new sheet will be passed to them. Make it clear which direction to pass the sheets so that this is orderly and so that each group will receive each of the subtopic sheets. At the end of the 30 seconds, have them pass their sheets to the next group. After each passing, extend the writing time to 40 seconds, then 45 seconds, and perhaps up to a minute, because the easy ideas will have been taken by previous groups. Students will need more time to think of other terms to be added to the brainstorm list. Keep having students brainstorm, write, and pass until each group has had a chance with each subtopic sheet.

Go beyond the simple brainstorm and have the group who started with that sheet look it over when it returns to them, note all the other ideas that were added, and then circle the three terms that are most essential, most important, or most fundamental to their sub-topic. That way, they spend time evaluating all the possible terms and topics. Sometimes, students do this quickly or almost glibly, but often the groups will spend quite a while hashing this out.

Then, have them try to write a definition for their topic, a statement that explains to someone who is unfamiliar with it what that topic is really about. Tell them that since they have already circled three terms that they consider essential or fundamental to their topic, they'll probably want to use those three terms in their definition, or be darned sure to consider them for inclusion in their definition. While this has the limitation of having students think deeply about only one of the subtopics, there is great value in the depth of thinking and conversation.

##### Skimming

Students …

* learn these parts of the textbook: title page, table of contents, preface, chapter title, chapter headings, subsection/paragraph headings, bolded words, italicized words, underline words, pictures and graphs, captions, side bars, study questions, exercises and activities, glossary, index, and bibliography.
* read subtitles and headings and predict what the section of the text will be about. They also read the opening paragraph, the conclusion, and the chapter summary. Have them look for sentences that say, "the most important reason why..." and "in conclusion."
* ask themselves, “What is this about?”
* select the two topics they are most excited to learn about in this chapter. They might pick a picture from the chapter that they like and write a sentence explaining how it relates.

#### Pre-reading: narrative

##### Skimming

* 1. Look at the title, author, and other cover information.
  2. Look at the illustrations.
  3. Have I read other stories by this author?
  4. Do I recognize the illustrator?
  5. Read the first paragraph.
  6. Do I know already what the story is about?
  7. What do I imagine will happen?
  8. Did someone recommend the story to me? Why?

#### During reading: expository & narrative

##### Graphic organizers

Students complete graphic-organizer worksheets during and after reading. Themes might include

-cause and effect

-comparison and contrast (Venn diagrams)

-KWL

-timeline of key events

For more, see the section on graphic organizers later in this booklet on page 293. It is under “’O’ in w.h.e.r.e.t.O.: Organizing knowledge.”

##### Highlighting

Read the text first. Also, before you highlight, turn the bold heading of the section into a question. Then try to find that answer, which is what you should highlight. Other good bits to highlight: definitions, lists, headings, main ideas, and cause-and-effect explanations.

###### Reverse highlighting – for beginners

Cross out excess words. Then highlight the rest. Over time, phase out the crossing-out portion.

###### If defacing the text is not allowed

Seek out appropriate content sources, such as newspapers, that students can use for this strategy. Also consider photocopied pages of textbooks; make an overhead of that selection for modeling.

##### Inferencing

“I wonder …” “I’m thinking what would happen if…”

Write these sentences along with “Why?” questions on the post-it notes.

##### Intermittent summarizing

Read a section and turn to a partner to summarize what you have just read or to share an experience related to the text. For narrative texts, summarize the story elements so far: characters (motives, behaviors, characteristics), plot, setting, theme, and problem (and possible resolution). Are the story events unfolding the way you thought they would? How are your ideas changing as you learn more about the story?

##### Monitoring & self-questioning

Continually ask yourself, “Does this make sense?” If it does not, reread, read ahead, look up words that you don't know, or ask for help.

• “What does this word mean?”

• “Why did that happen?”

• “How does this relate to what I just read?”

• “How does this relate to me?”

• “How does this relate to what I know?”

• “How does this relate to the real world?”

• “How does this relate to another book?”

• “What is the author’s strategy here?”

##### Post-it notes

Have them write the page number on each one in case it falls off the page and then staple their post-it notes together for a formative assessment.

##### Predicting

Students read a section of the text and stop before predicting what will happen next. The class will write all the predictions on the board and will have to justify each prediction: “Why do you think so? What part of the text gave you that clue? Do people agree?”

Read the next section to confirm or refute the prediction. What predictions were correct?

##### Think alouds

Students say out loud what they are thinking while reading. Model this in class before students do it in pairs and then at home.

1. Make predictions: "From the title I predict that this section will explain how airplane pilots adjust for winds." Or, "In this next part I think we'll find out what caused these plane crashes."

2. Describe images "I have a picture of this man in my mind. He looks like a nice, well-dressed business man." Or, "I can see the horse kicking down the stable door as the flames come closer."

3. Share analogies: "This is like a time when I was late for school and it began to thunderstorm."

4. Verbalize confusing point: "I am not sure how this fits in." Or, "This is not what I expected."

5. Demonstrate fix-up strategies: "Maybe I'll reread this." Or, "Perhaps I better change my picture of what is happening"

##### Visualizing

Read the words, and make a picture in your head. Improve your picture as you get new information. Draw on paper these pictures or graphs that you see.

#### During reading: expository

##### Creating questions and answers

For expository texts, read the first paragraph. Ask yourself a "think" question and write it down. Read to find important information to answer your question. Write it down. Think about whether your question was a good "think question.” Repeat these steps with each remaining major paragraph. Once everyone finishes, share your questions and answers with the class.

##### Guide questions

Have students change the chapter title and subsequent section headings into specific questions. As they read, they look for answers to these questions. Ones that work well begin with “What,” “Why,” and “How.” Create additional titles and headings but not in question form.

#### During reading: narrative

##### Creating questions and answers

For narrative texts, write down a question about what will happen next. Predict the answer and then read to find it. Ask yourself if the question was a good one. Make another question and prediction and read to find that answer. Continue to generate questions, and read to find answers.

Were all your questions answered? Why not? Did you not understand something about the story? Was your question one that didn't really fit the story? Were there too many unfamiliar words? Were the events too different from what you know? Did the author choose to leave some things untold? How will you change the questions you ask yourself next time you read a story?

Share your questions and answers with the class.

#### Post-reading: expository

##### Self-questioning

What have I learned? What do I still need to learn?

##### Summarizing & retelling

Look for a topic sentence. If there isn’t one, make it up. Delete trivia. Also look for information that is repeated. Then group related terms or ideas, and decide what can be deleted from your summary. Share your summary with a partner, and record your notes in your graded notebook.

#### Post-reading: narrative

##### Self-questioning

a. “Were my predictions confirmed or changed?”

b. "Would I recommend this to a friend?”

c. “What have I learned about this kind of story?”

d. “What have I learned about how stories are told?”

##### Summarizing & retelling

Retell the story to someone (a summary of the characters, the setting, the sequence of events, the primary conflict, and the outcome).

### Graded notebook for reading (reader’s notebook)

#### Reading prompts

Structure the first entry in the first session, and then in each subsequent class, give a prompt, a lead-in, or a procedure for an entry. Examples of daily prompts or lead-ins:

* A connection (personal experience, knowledge, previous book, class discussion, etc.) is . . .
* An interesting part is . . .
* Three important ideas are . .
* I want to know more about . . .
* I predict . . .
* I wonder . . .
* I need to work more on . . .
* I am excited about . . .
* I believe . . .
* Questions for class or the teacher:
* (or any post-it notes)

#### Assigning point values to criteria

Points Criteria Points Criteria

20 Completeness of entries

10 Entries recorded on time

15 Originality of entries

15 Higher-level reasoning demonstrated

15 Connections with other subject areas

25 Personal reflection

100 Total

### Discussion … pairs: Scripted cooperation

Students work in pairs, taking turns being the listener and the recaller. The recaller summarizes the reading passage and makes connections to their own knowledge while the listener listens for any errors, clarifies any unclear comments, and makes a prediction about the next passage. Both students elaborate on the material until they arrive at a common understanding of what they have been reading and discussing. They then switch roles for the next section.

Each pair engages their metacognition when, as the listener, they monitor their partner’s recall for accuracy and understanding, and as the recaller when they reorganize and restructure their thoughts in order to explain them to the listener.

### … foursomes: Book clubs / reciprocal teaching / literature circles

Book clubs, reciprocal teaching, and literature circles are reading groups of four students in which the group follows certain guidelines. There is a heavy overlap between the definitions of these three phrases. Groups of 3-4 perform better than pairs because they get more room for discussing a paragraph and exchanging their ideas.

Students sit in groups of four, each having the role as summarizer, questioner, clarifier, or predictor. The predictor predicts what will happen in the next section of the book, and then the group reads that section quietly. Sometimes they can read it aloud, and this is usually done by the predictor. The summarizer then summarizes at the end of the section, the questioner asks questions, the clarifier clarifies any misunderstandings and difficult words, and the predictor discusses whether his or her predictions were correct or not. Then the roles rotate to the right, and the next section is read.

Ensure the students are familiar with the four strategies. If not, teach and model them in this order: summarizing, questioning, clarifying, and predicting. Spend a week on each reading strategy before teaching one of these other ones. Use a fish-bowl method for the class.

When you introduce a role, give a card to the group member with that role. Then when the students rotate, they hand that card to the right so the next student can have it.

Have students read a few paragraphs of the assigned text selection. Encourage them to use note-taking strategies such as highlighting or sticky notes to help them prepare for the discussion.

It's best for groups to meet twice a week for 20-30 minutes. Aim for three to six weeks per book, but keep the groups together for the time it takes to read the book. Groups read the same book initially. Eventually, each group can choose between 4-5 books.

If a reading is long, specify which parts are to be read by when and when groups will meet. If someone is sick, cut the clarifier role. If there are five students, assign one of the secondary roles listed below, such as the connector.

The group puts their notes or final book product into their notebooks, a blog or wiki, or shares it online with students at another school who are also reading that book. If your groups read different books, they share with the class their thoughts on the book after finishing it.

#### Roles

##### The Summarizer

At the given stopping point, highlight the key ideas. Initially, the length of the reading passage might be sentences or paragraphs, but later it should focus on larger units of text. For narrative texts, include the characters (motives, behaviors, characteristics), plot (five important events), setting, theme, and problem (and possible resolution).

What big idea was the author trying to convey? What was one question that was answered?

If you are the summarizer for homework, create a graphic organizer and add more details to your summary, particularly to the plot. Then draw a picture or two about this part of the story. You might draw a scene, a character, the problem, a surprise, a feeling that the reading has evoked in you, or anything else that you find important. Include as many of the five senses as you can.

When there is two minutes left in the group discussion, the summarizer has 90 seconds to summarize for the group what was discussed.

##### The Questioner

Think of open-ended questions to ask the others (Why-How questions). Ask each person an equal number of them. You can answer the questions if no one else can. They could be at the word or phrase level, sentence level, passage level, or book level, or be about any of the these:

* possible solutions for a character’s problems,
* feelings or thoughts that the passage aroused including images,
* a particular reading strategy a member used to comprehend the passage,
* unclear parts,
* puzzling information,
* themes,
* the setting,
* characters’ motives,
* cause and effect,
* compare and contrast,
* the main ideas, or
* surprises.

The questioner for homework writes ten “Why…” or “How (helping verb) …” questions and answers five of them. Maybe give them a handout of the questions and question-stems on pages 98-100.

##### The Clarifier

Clarify confusing parts of the reading and try to answer the questioner’s questions. If others are confused, clarify their questions or misunderstanding. Also identify difficult words and concepts that the group might not understand and try to define them for the group. Only then can you ask for help from the other members.

If you are the clarifier for homework, create a way to teach the difficult words and concepts to the other members at the next meeting – the more creative, the better. Perhaps you want to draw pictures to explain the words, act them out, or write a short poem about these words. In addition for homework, list a few words in the story that helped create vivid mental images.

##### The Predictor

Look at the next section’s title, any headings, and any pictures, and also consider the previous passage. Predict to the group what this section will be about, and share your reasons. Ask others for their predictions. After the group then reads the section, discuss whether the predictions came true and why. If you were right, how did you know? If you were wrong, what fooled you?

If you are the predictor for homework, write out your predictions and your reasons, and then once you have finished the reading, explain whether or not your predictions were correct or not and why. Also list your predictions for the next passage that will be read in class.

In class, you as the predictor will lead the discussion and tell the group what reading strategy to apply next. Discuss the parts of the story that you think are great, and parts you would do over if you were the author. Also, discuss the theme of this section. Make sure everyone participates.

#### Setting cooperative norms for discussions

Discussion skills have three parts:  Knowing what you're aiming for (what makes a good discussion), experiencing it either directly or vicariously, and developing some guidelines.

Students need to practice, practice, and practice. They will grow in their ability to discuss gradually -- it will take time. Be patient and realistic with your hopes. One of the fastest ways for students to improve in the quality of their discussions is to build in regular debriefing sessions. Draw students together afterward and review what went well and what is still challenging.  Through this cycle of practice and debriefing, you will begin to see growth.

##### Keep the debriefing short and focused

A debriefing session does not need to take a lot of time in order to be effective. Whole-class debriefings could last for five to ten minutes after the groups have discussed.

##### Start simply

Ask your students a couple of simple questions:  "What worked well today?" and "What do we still need to work on?"  Do this while standing in front of a guidelines chart.  If an issue comes up that seems to be important, add that guideline to the list.

##### Guide students' self-reflection

Begin with reflections in the graded notebooks.  Useful prompts include, "What went well in your discussion today?" "What was something that you did to help the discussion go smoothly?"  "What will you work on for next time?"

Reflections give you helpful assessment information about your students’ ability to identify and articulate the elements of effective discussion.

##### Identify elements of a good discussion

Ask your students to brainstorm and then make a chart of what they say. This can be the beginning of your guidelines for discussion. It could be a “looks like, sounds like” chart.

##### Experience discussion

Actual experience with discussion helps students internalize what works.  There are two ways to begin:  Direct experience (immersion) and vicarious experience ("fish bowl").

Immersion: Before students can make effective guidelines for discussion, they need to experience it first-hand.  Have students carry on a brief discussion even before you've talked about what makes a good discussion. After they have met in their groups for about ten minutes, gather everyone in the front of the room.  Writing their responses on a large piece of chart paper, ask them what they liked about meeting in groups. Then make another column on the chart, "How can we improve?" Next, explain that it is time for them to develop guidelines. 

Fish Bowl: Use your discussion veterans as models. Present a discussion model after students have experienced one role cycle. Invite five students with strong discussion skills to be in the demonstration.  Ask them to re-read the last chapter, and give them the prompt, "Look for something to talk about that stood out for you." Gather the group in a circle at the front of the room and begin to talk. Although understandably self-conscious at first, the students will quickly forget the audience and engage in an interesting discussion of the book.

Afterwards, ask the class, "What did you notice as you watched this discussion?"  This generates a flood of responses.  Because the discussion takes place right in front of them, students will see what worked.  The responses will form the guidelines list that can be used the rest of the year.

##### Develop guidelines jointly with students

Brainstorm with them from experience:  "What went well and what do we need to work on?" Word the guidelines as positive statements, and keep the number of items limited to those you feel are most important. Three possible charts include

1) “What went well? What do we need to work on?”

2) “Rules and guidelines"

3) “Looks like, Sounds like”

##### “Looks like, sounds like”

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Discussion elements** | **Looks like** | **Sounds like** |
| Active listening | - Eyes on speaker  - Hands empty  - Sit up  - Mind is focused  - Face speaker | - Speaker’s voice only   - Paying attention   - Appropriate responses   - Voices low   - One voice at a time |
| Active participation  (respond to ideas and share feelings) | - Eyes on speaker  - Hands to yourself  - Hands empty  - Talking one at a time  - Head nodding | - Appropriate responses   - Follow off of others’ ideas   - Nice comments   - Positive attitudes |
| Asking questions for clarification | - Listening  - Hands empty | - Positive, nice answers  - Polite answers |
| Piggybacking off others’ ideas | - Listening  - Paying attention | - Positive, nice talking  - Wait for people to finish |
| Disagreeing constructively | - Nice face  - Nice looks | - Polite responses  - Quiet voices  - No putdowns |
| Focused on discussion (body posture and eye contact) | - Eyes on speaker  - Hands empty  - Sit up  - Face speaker  - Mind is focused | - Speaker’s voice only  - Appropriate responses  - Voices low |
| Supporting opinions with evidence | - One person is talking  - Attention on the speaker | - One voice |
| Encouraging others | - Prompt people to share  - Ask probing questions | - Positive responses |

#### A 5th role if needed: Connector and Descriptive Encourager

If you have a group of five, a good fifth role is that of the connector and descriptive encourager. These are two roles in one.

The job of the connector is to find connections with the book. Connections may connect the text to something else (text to another text *(t-t)*, text to self *(t-s)*, or text to the world *(t-w)*), or to something within the book (character vs character, character vs nature, character vs society, etc.).

What did the reading remind you of? Why? Include several types of connections and write out your thoughts so that you can bring it your next circle meeting. When you meet with your group, lead the discussion about connections. “When I read about…., it reminded me…..” In addition, ask what connections your fellow group members saw.

As the connector you are also the descriptive encourager. Get from the teacher a “Looks like, sound like” chart to use a guide for your in-class responsibilities. Then watch everyone in the group, especially those who aren’t speaking, and give positive and sincere praise when it is deserved. Encourage all group members to participate in the discussion and assist one another. Evaluate how well the group worked together, and with 30 seconds left in the discussion, it will be your turn to give suggestions for improvement.

*Two things I saw the group do really well were \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_. One thing I saw \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ do especially well was \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. I would give the group a (grade: A-F) because \_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Is there anything that would help us to do even better next time?*

#### 

#### Self-assessment

After each discussion, evaluate your performance using the rubric found below. For each category, write down the level you achieved and how you can improve for next time.

Name: Date:

Meeting #: Pages read:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Categories** | **Level 1** | **Level 2** | **Level 3** | **Level 4** |
| **Reading** | I did not read the book. | I did some of the assigned reading. | I read all of the assigned reading. | I read all of the assigned reading. |
| **Writing** | I did not do the assigned writing. | I did some of the assigned writing. | I did all of the assigned writing with good detail and a few examples from the book. | I did all of the assigned writing using lots of details and lots of examples from the book. |
| **Discussion** | I did not participate. | I participated in the discussion some of the time and sometimes forgot to wait for my turn to speak. | I participated in the discussion and waited for my turn each time. I helped all group members participate. I responded to someone else's comment in a positive way. | I was eager to share and I helped to keep the discussion going. I made sure that all members of the group had time to participate. I often responded to someone else's comment in a positive way. |
| **Listening** | I did not listen to others. | I listened to others some of the time. | I listened to others. | I listened to others at all times in an attentive way. |
| **Preparation** | I was not prepared. I did not bring my novel or my work. | I forgot either my novel or my notes. | I was prepared and remembered to bring my novel and my notes. | I brought my novel and notes. I read over my notes the night before meeting with my group. I marked important parts to share with sticky notes or bookmarks. |

Goal for next meeting: Other comments or ideas:

#### Possible wikis for each foursome

• The Home Page: Students design their home page in a manner consistent with their book. Considering dominant images/symbols, colors, characters, themes, etc., they pretend they are trying to sell their book to someone who is unfamiliar with it. They also include a brief summary of the book as well as an explanation/justification of the design: Why did you design it the way you did? What were you hoping to convey or express?

• Page 1: Daily Assignment: Post a copy of this assignment for their reference.

• Page 2: Reading Schedule: Each group creates a personalized reading schedule to follow.

• Page 3: Vocabulary: Three unknown words from each day’s reading (base quizzes on these)

• Page 4: Setting description

• Page 5: Summarizer

• Page 6: Questioner

• Page 7: Clarifier

• Page 8: Questioner

• Page 9: Scanned images or photographs of any visual art done by the group about the book

• Page 10: Author page

• Page 11: A thematic analysis given by you, such as how the protagonist “comes of age”

### Other classroom reading activities

#### Pre-reading: expository and narrative

##### Analogies

Students can respond to prompts that encourage them to explore a situation in their lives that is analogous to a circumstance or event they will be studying.

##### Comparing their life with key concepts

Students answer questions that are relevant to both their life and the lesson’s themes.

##### "You Are There" scenarios

Students respond to a "You Are There" scenario that reveals a key theme of the new content.

#### Pre-reading: expository

##### Reflect on current events

##### Provocative propositions

Students respond to a proposition that introduces a key theme or concept in the reading.

##### Responding to visual images

Students respond to an image that is related to the reading. They might quickly sketch the image, record impressions of it, or predict what they believe is happening.

##### Responding to music

Students record their initial responses to music related to the activity or lesson. They might describe the tone, connect the lyrics to content themes, or record their sensory responses.

##### "What if" sketch

Given a particular situation, students draw a sketch showing what might happen next, or what would happen if some key event did not happen, or if some fundamental idea did not exist.

#### Pre-reading: narrative

##### Questioning the character

If your class is about to read a story or see a film about an event, tell them in advance that you will ask one of them to act as one of the main figures in the story or film once it is over. The rest of the class will interview that student. All students write out at least three questions to ask.

Or, for the next day’s discussion have them form questions. Ask them to:

* write three comparison questions about the story they are reading;
* find the most interesting question left unanswered by the reading;
* identify the question the author was trying to answer;
* write a question that will demand at least ten minutes of thought to answer; or
* find a question which has no answer, or an infinite number of answers.

#### During or post-reading: expository and narrative

##### Graphic organizers

See the graphic-organizers section on page 293.

##### Semantic feature analysis

Use a grid to explore the similarities and differences among events, people, objects or ideas.

##### Think-pair-share

Students think about a question or prompt, pair up with a classmate to discuss, and share their thinking with the rest of class.

##### For more ideas here

For more ideas, see the “Tasks & projects sorted by Bloom’s Taxonomy” and “Tasks & projects sorted by the multiple intelligences” in the summative assessments section.

#### During or post: expository

##### Definition Frame

1. What is being defined?
2. To which general category does the item belong?
3. What characteristics separate the item from the other items in the general category?
4. What are some types or classes of the item being defined?

##### Argumentation Frame

1. Evidence: What information does the author present that leads to a claim?
2. Claim: What does the author assert? What statement or claim is the information’s focus?
3. Support: What examples or explanations support the claim?
4. Qualifier: What restrictions on the claim, or evidence counter to the claim, are presented?

##### The L in “KWL”

What have you learned? Write it down so you can see which questions you still need to answer. What questions were answered, and what new ones emerged?

#### During or post: narrative

##### Narrative frame

1. Who are the main characters? What distinguishes them from the other characters?
2. When and where did the story take place? What were the circumstances?
3. How did the story begin?
4. How did the characters express their feelings?
5. What did the main characters decide to do? Did they set a goal? What was it?
6. How did the main characters accomplish their goals?
7. What was the result of the characters’ actions? What were the consequences?
8. What is the moral of the story? How does this story relate to your own life?

##### Conversation Frame

1. How did the characters in the conversation greet each other?
2. What questions or topics were insinuated, revealed, or referred to?
3. Did either person…
   1. state facts?
   2. make a request of the other?
   3. make a promise to perform a certain action?
   4. demand a specific action of the other?
   5. threaten specific consequences if a demand was not met?
   6. indicate that he values something the other did?
4. How did the conversation conclude?

##### Storyboards

Students fold a regular-sized sheet of paper into eight rectangles.

1. Title and students’ name

2. Main character and two other characters

3. Setting (time and place)

4. Conditions before the problem

5. The problem / antagonist

6. Conflict

7. Resolution

8. Ending

### Link to home reading

Ask students to read at least 15 minutes at home every day and to use the new strategy or concept that you just taught. On some days, ask them to continue at home the IDR task if there was one. On these days, they will bring home their graded notebook so that they can record their thinking as they read their required 15 minutes outside of school.

### Ask for family help with reading

• Encourage your child to read regularly at home. Setting aside a certain time is helpful.

• Talk with your child about the books being read.

• Read with and to your child.

• Help your child create a place in the bedroom to keep personal books.

• Read where your child can see you.

• Periodically tell your child about what you are reading.

• Volunteer to come to the classroom and assist children with their reading.

• Buy books for birthdays and holidays, and let your child buy from school-sponsored book clubs when possible.

#### The Take-Home Journal

The Take-Home Journal is a bag with a short story and a notebook with these directions: “Your child has brought home a short story. Read the short story with your child and talk about it. Then use one page in the journal to write what you all talked about. The Take-Home Journal comes back and then goes home to someone else. The teacher shares the family journal entries in class.”

## Equip them with … vocabulary skills

### Choosing a strategy

Think about the words in relation to students’ needs. Hard words may require direct instruction Decide when to teach them (before, during, or after reading) and what vocabulary strategy to use.

Then help students relate the word to other concepts and words they know.

#### Concept attainment

Tell students the word and then its critical attributes. Give examples that fit all of the attributes and non-examples that are missing just one attribute. Have the students decide which is which. Ask students to correct the non-examples.

#### Concept cards

On the front of the index card, students write the word, and on the back, the definition, examples from the text or personal connections to the word, and a self-generated sentence. They may also want to draw a picture of the word.

The cards can then be used for an activity called word sorts. Word sorts are either closed or open. A closed word sort classifies words according to a predetermined sort. For example, a social studies teacher may ask that the words be sorted according to how they are associated with types of government. Open sorts require students to develop their own categories for sorting. These activities are great for cooperative groups since they promote discussion among students.

#### Concept induction

Ask students to figure out why the examples have been placed in the different boxes and to identify the concept represented by each box. They then create new examples for each box.

Draw two (or three) boxes on the chalkboard. Label them Box 1, Box 2, or Box 3. Put one item in each box. Students think of an answer. Place another item in each box and have students guess. Tell them not to say it out loud. Once a student has it, she makes a definition for each box. They then create new examples that can be placed in the boxes.

#### Dictionary

Teach students the format of a dictionary entry and how to choose the best definition for a word based on its context. To do this, people have to know the word's part of speech in that context. For some entries, the most historical usage is listed first. In others, the most widely used definition is listed first. Also, word origin can give insight into the meaning of the word.

#### Mastery activities

See pages 125-127 for flashcards and for Kagan mastery structures, and page 131 for STAD.

#### Photographed vocabulary

A student chooses one of the vocabulary words and creates a frozen representation of the word which you take a picture of with a camera. For example, a student would strike a pose to convey the word "timid." The physical, photographed word representations are put on the overhead.

#### Previewing words in context

Pre-read the text and identify hard words. Pare the list to those that are essential to understanding the text. Then "think aloud" in class to show how the words can be defined. Word order in the sentence and the word’s structure help do this. Identify prefixes, root words, and similar words, and connect them to the new word. Doing these things will help students define the new word.

#### Semantic feature analysis

This strategy uses a grid with the words listed on one axis and characteristics or major features listed on the other axis. Students consider each of the words and the characteristics. If the characteristic represents the vocabulary word, the box is marked with a + sign. If not, it is left blank. Students can find both the shared and unique characteristics of the words. This strategy can be used in geometry, art, social studies, literature with characters, et cetera.

#### Semantic impressions (pre-reading)

Choose between 5 and 20 words that are central to a narrative’s plot (story, chapter book). List these words in the order they appear in the story, on a chalkboard, or overhead.

Tell students that as a group they will compose a sensible story based on these words. Advise them that the story should have a beginning, middle, and end (or problem and resolution). Briefly go over the meaning of each word on the list, encouraging student contributions.

Discuss three rules: Words must be used in order; once a word is used, it can be reused; and the form of words (plurals, tenses, etc.) can be changed. As students speak up, write their semantic-impressions story on the chalkboard or overhead. Note that the word list, as well as the story, is displayed. As you write, help students form a cohesive narrative with a sensible flow. Student sentences may be combined. When the story is finished, the class edits it and reads it aloud.

#### Venn diagrams

The Venn diagram is only useful when students – and not you - determine what the relevant similarities and differences are between two or three concepts, people, places, or ideas. See pages 296-297 for graphic organizers showing Venn diagrams.

#### Word expert cards

Identify a master list of 50 to 100 words. Before the novel or unit, give each student 2-3 words from the list. Give students the page number from the novel or text where they can locate their words and then make flashcards. One side of the card should be an illustration, and on the other side is a sample sentence thought of by the student, the sentence from the text, and the definition.

Students work in pairs. One teaches his or her word to a partner by showing the outside of the card and asking the partner to figure out the meaning from the illustration. The word expert next gives the information on the other side, asking the partner to try to guess the meaning, first from the expert's own sentence, next from the sentence from the book, and finally from the definition. This lets students practice using contextual clues. Then the students reverse their roles.

After the pairs have completed their teaching, generally in 7 to l0 minutes, students rotate to another partner and repeat the process. After one day of peer teaching, start the novel or unit of study. Then for several days, students do about 10 minutes of paired vocabulary learning. Each student gradually learns each word from a peer and then sees the words in their novels or texts.

Making the cards:

1. Use the page number to locate the word in the story.
2. Copy the sentence containing the word inside the card.
3. Use a dictionary to look up the definition for each word; you may discuss it with others.
4. On scratch paper, write the part of speech and the definition in your own words that matches the use of the word in the story.
5. On scratch paper, write your own sentence using the word.
6. Get the definition and sentence approved for accuracy by the teacher.
7. Copy onto the inside of your card the approved definition, part of speech, and sentence.
8. Write the vocabulary word on the front outside of the card in big bold letters.
9. On the front of the card, illustrate the vocabulary word neatly and creatively. Get your illustration approved.
10. Write your name, word, and class period on the back side of the card.
11. Completed cards must be turned in by (date).

#### Word map

The new term goes in the middle of the map. Students fill in the rest of the map with a definition, synonyms, antonyms, and a picture to help illustrate the new concept.

Definition in your own words: Synonyms:

Vocabulary Word:

Use it meaningfully in a sentence: Draw a picture of it:

What are some examples?

#### Word walls

Hang large poster paper on the wall to create a "word wall," which becomes an expanded glossary. While reading, students can go to this poster to write down words or phrases that they don't understand. They then use a dictionary to write definitions on the poster.

#### Word-webbing by groups

Pairs or foursomes write simultaneously on a piece of chart paper, drawing main concepts, supporting elements, and bridges that connect the ideas of a concept. Each group needs a large piece of paper and a felt-tipped pen with its own color. One student then draws a circle in the middle of the paper and in it writes the vocabulary word. Members then take turns adding concepts to it. Afterwards a distinction can be made between the more and the less important concepts. Students then take turns drawing connecting lines between the concepts.

Eventually have a group discussion about the word web. Because each pupil used a different colored felt-tipped pen, each contribution has been made visible during the process.

## Equip them with … writing skills

### Five stages of Writers’ Workshop

When you are conferencing with a student, other students write their problems for you on a post-it note and put it on the whiteboard.

#### Prewriting / brainstorming

##### Brainstorming prompts

###### RAFT – role, audience, format, topic

* Role of the writer: Who are you as the writer? Are you Abraham Lincoln? A warrior? A homeless person? An auto mechanic? The endangered snail darter?
* Audience: To whom are you writing? Is your audience the American people? A friend? Your teacher? Readers of a newspaper? A local bank?
* Format: What form will the writing take? Is it a letter? A classified ad? A speech? A poem?
* Topic: What's the subject or the point of this piece? Is it to persuade a goddess to spare your life? Is it to plead for a re-test? Is it to call for stricter regulations on logging?

###### General pre-writing prompts

First round of questions

Who: Does: What: To: With: Where:

When: How: Why?

Second round of questions

And? If? But? What next?

(Perhaps then loop back to the first round of questions for even more ideas.)

##### Pre-writing with a partner

The writer shares his or her ideas with the helper, and the two discuss the writer’s answers to the brainstorming prompts listed above. Anytime the writer adds input, the helper makes one-word rough notes. The two then draw a “thought web” to visually show the ideas. The writer then creates an outline and shares it with the helper, who offers suggestions for improvement.

If research is involved, each student looks for information on the other’s topic too.

#### Drafting

If students are writing on lined paper, have then write on every other line. Encourage them to write freely and non-judgingly. The pen should keep moving. The ideas can be changed later.

#### Peer conferencing and revisions

Peers focus on organization and mechanics, not proofreading.

##### Peer conferences vs editing vs response

The term used to describe the process of grouping students to discuss writing affects their views about writing conferences. Subtle shifts reveal what it means to share writing. Peer editing involves an editing checklist, a worksheet for students to follow. If you want them to have a meaningful discussion, don't ask them to search for sentence-level errors. Peer response connotes a "have-to," a requirement to respond and, thus, evaluate each other's writing. A "peer conference" is preferable. It is a meeting that may or may not include evaluative feedback, but here students really read the paper, analyze it, and discuss it in order to make it better.

##### Anonymous peer read-arounds

This is similar to peer-editing with a key difference: Here students only look for good writing. By letting students read each other's work and identify qualities of strong writing, you give them a chance to reflect on their own writing and to make revisions. Peer read-arounds have 13 steps.

1. Create balanced groups. At the beginning of the school year or semester, set up groups. Ask students to write a paragraph in response to a prompt, such as, “What is your favorite subject at school and why?” Read through the paragraphs to determine the strongest writers. Then create groups of four, placing one of the stronger writers in each group. Balance the groups with students of various writing skills. Make a transparency showing group assignments. Keep the same peer read-around groups all semester so that students become accustomed to the process and have time to build trust as a group.
2. After reviewing the requirements for a particular writing assignment, ask the class to brainstorm qualities that would be found in an effective piece for this assignment. List these qualities on a transparency and have students copy the list into their graded notebooks. Expect that most of the items that students suggest will mirror your requirements for the assignment, but encourage them to think beyond as well.
3. When it is time for the peer read-around, tell students to bring in their rough drafts without their names on their papers so that their work will remain anonymous during the exercise. You may want to give each student’s writing to a group that doesn’t have that student. As students enter the classroom, collect their papers, write a number on each, and tell students what their number is. Use a black marker to block out any names. Keep a record of which number you assign to each student, and tell them not to let on when their writing is read.
4. Assign a leader for each group. Project a transparency with group assignments and the expected classroom arrangement. Have students sit with their groups, and assign a student leader for each one. Explain that the leader will pass out and collect papers as well as take notes on which papers the group liked and why. You may want to rotate the role of leader after each group has read a full set of papers.
5. Remind students of the purpose of the peer read-around: to identify concrete examples of strong writing in each other's papers. Before students begin, review the list of qualities of an effective writing assignment they generated in step 2. Encourage students to look for these qualities in the papers they read. You may select just a few qualities for students to concentrate on, but let them comment on any other good qualities they see.
6. Model how to mark papers. Place on a transparency the first paragraph of a paper from another class or a sample rough draft you have written yourself. Only one paragraph is necessary. Project the sample and have students read the paragraph silently. Then have students point out its effective qualities. Underline these examples on the transparency and write the name of the quality in the margin. For example, if someone notices the vivid language used in the second sentence, underline those words and in the margin write “vivid.” Explain that if students find further examples of the same quality later in the paper, they should underline these and put check marks beside the original margin note.
7. Pass out rough drafts to groups and have students read and mark each paper. Give each leader a paper for each person in that group. When the papers have been distributed, tell students how many minutes they will have to read and mark the paper they have, and then signal them to begin reading. After the allotted time, tell students to stop reading and pass the paper to the right. Continue this process until all group members have read all papers.
8. Have groups choose the paper they like best and record its effective qualities. As groups discuss which paper they liked best, have the group leader list specific examples telling why the group liked that one. For example, if the group agrees that they liked paper 6 because of the concrete evidence the writer gave to support his or her opinion, make sure the leader notes examples of that concrete evidence. The group can also identify and note specific qualities they liked in some of the other papers they read.
9. After students have discussed the papers for a few minutes, the groups pass their papers to another group. Ask group leaders to distribute the new set and repeat steps 7 and 8. Students should read at least two sets of papers; you can repeat the passing of papers as time allows.
10. Make a class list of outstanding papers and their qualities. After each rough draft has been read by at least two groups, have group leaders report to the class the number of the paper their group liked best and the specific qualities they found effective in that paper. Push groups to give concrete examples, and keep track of group responses on a transparency. After each group has reported on the paper they liked the best, allow them to mention one or two qualities of effective writing, with accompanying examples, found in any of the other papers. If any group selects the same paper as another group, simply put a check next to that paper and add any qualities that the previous group did not mention.
11. Using information from the class notes, add to the list of effective writing qualities that the class made during step 2. Have students add these qualities to the list in their graded notebook as well. Encourage them to find ways to add these qualities in their final drafts.
12. Return rough drafts, and have students write final drafts. Give students time in class or at home to review the comments on their papers and to revise their rough drafts by using examples of the qualities of effective writing generated in the peer read-around activity.
13. Don't expect groups to produce significant results initially. Evaluating and revising are the most demanding stages of writing.

##### Begin the year with "Thank you" sharing

For at least the first two weeks, ask students to respond only with “thank you” when others share their writing. This "plain sharing" helps students to become better listeners because they don't have to worry about how to respond, and it helps writers become more comfortable reading their writing out loud. You could then move on to sharing with a suggestive tone by stressing modal verbs, such as "you may want to" or "you could possibly"...

##### Role-play ineffective peer conferences

Ask students to share their previous experiences with peer conferences. What comments and behaviors did they find inappropriate, useless, or vague? Using their answers, perform a role-play with some of the students to illustrate how conferences could work poorly.

##### Maybe have peers read aloud

Sometimes students can benefit from hearing their writing read aloud by their partner, who reads with as much expression and attention to punctuation as possible while the writer follows along.

##### Guidelines for both writer and peer editor

As the writer, make a list of questions or concerns to share and maintain an open attitude. Use the comments rather than being defensive. Others are only trying to help you.

If you are the peer editor in a group, use different colored pens than the other editors. Read with a focus on content and organization, not on spelling or punctuation errors. Point out the strengths, and only then do you identify the areas that need to be improved. Name specific things that can be done to improve the writing. If the writer is sensitive to criticism, avoid saying “you,” and instead say, “the writer…” You can also use the "I heard, I noticed, I wondered" method where you can provide useful feedback face-to-face without being too biting in your criticism.

##### "I heard, I noticed, I wondered" method

*I heard...*

First summarize what the piece was about. Say what you saw as the story or the main idea. As the author, listen to this section, and try to hear whether or not you communicated your intention.

*I noticed...*

Tell the author about some of the things that caught your attention. What worked well? What details were vivid or striking? What will you remember about this paper? As the author, think about why the reviewer noticed these things and how you can make all your writing as effective.

*I wondered...*

Did you have any questions when you finished reading? Did you not understand what something meant, or why it was included? Did something bother or disturb you? Did you suspect something might have worked better another way? Now is the time to ask these questions. As the author, try to answer them. Look at your writing, and see if you can make those points clearer to a reader.

##### Tasks and questions for peer editors

Peer editors don’t have to address all of these each time. Pick a couple for each assignment.

Meaning (most important category):

* Does the title fit?
* Is the piece of writing suitable for its purpose and for the reader?
* Are thoughts or feelings described clearly?
* Is there a good description of the context (place, people, events)?
* Do the descriptions help the reader to feel what it’s like?

Organization (second-most important):

* Are ideas linked together to show why the writer thinks or feels as he or she does?
* Are ideas put together in a sentence with linking words (e.g., and, but, so, because)?
* Are there arguments not supported with details or examples? If so, suggest alternatives.
* Is each sentence a complete thought? Mark the ones that are hard to read and offer alternatives.
* Are paragraphs used to separate ideas?
* Is there enough supporting evidence?
* Is there a beginning, a middle, and an ending?

##### Another possibility: Silent peer-editing

Peer editor gives all feedback in writing.

##### If you have another editing round

Switch the pairs so students are matched with a partner who will see the writing for the first time.

#### Proofreading and corrections

After reviewing for meaning and organizing, editors now focus on spelling, punctuation, and grammatical errors. If you have a second round of proofreading, assign a different proofreader.

##### Bonus points for peer editors/proofreaders

If a student’s paper scores above a certain mark for a certain criterion in your grading, consider giving bonus points to the editor who reviewed the paper for that variable and pointed out errors.

#### Publishing

How will students to share their final draft? Will it go in a portfolio? Will it be shared publicly?

### Composing poetry in pairs

Partners create and present a poem they recite using one voice, the other’s voice, or both. Assign each pair a topic. They write the poem and label each line A, B, or AB, based on who will read it. They then practice their reading, on their own and to another pair, and recite it to the class.

### Self-assessments for their writing

#### Simple reflection

Student's name: Grade: Date:

1. The best aspects of my skills in writing (and why):

2. Things I learned from editing my partner's writing:

3. Aspects of writing on which I could be more skilled:

4. My next step(s) in improving my writing:

#### In-depth

(Based on the Pennsylvania Writing Assessment Domain Scoring Guide)

Focus: Did I stay on track to develop my topic and follow the directions for the mode or type of writing - informational, narrative, or persuasive?

4 - I followed the focus exactly, sticking to the topic throughout the mode or type of writing.

3 - I followed the focus most of the time. I used the mode or type of writing required.

2 - I stayed on the topic but didn’t really make a point.

1 - I did not develop the topic at all.

Content: Did I use a variety of sources - facts, examples, anecdotes, details, opinions, statistics, reasons, and/or explanations?

4 - I used many sources to add details and explained a great deal about my topic. I created a story with vivid details and descriptions.

3 - I used adequate sources to add detail about my topic. I developed the content with many details, facts, and examples.

2 - I used a limited number of facts, details, and examples. I only explained a few of my ideas.

1 - I used very few facts and examples. I have very little content.

Organizations: Did I develop the paragraphs with a sequence and show evidence of a beginning, middle, and end?

4 - I used a strong introduction, a body with supporting details, and a conclusion. I wrote in logical order using transition words to begin new paragraphs.

3 - My ideas are in a logical order, with a beginning, middle, and end. I used some transition words to begin new paragraphs.

2 - I am missing a beginning, middle, or end. My ideas are confused or out of sequence. I did not use transition words.

1 - I have no evidence of paragraphs. I did not put my ideas in a good sequence.

Style: Did I use a variety of sentence types? Did I use a variety of descriptive words (adjectives and action verbs)? Does my writing match the audience?

4 - I effectively used a variety of sentence types and words. My writing has many descriptive words and powerful verbs. My writing matches the audience.

3 - I used an acceptable variety of sentence types and words. My writing has some descriptive words and some powerful verbs. My writing attempted to match the audience.

2 - I used a limited amount of sentence types and words. My writing is not very interesting or exciting.

1 - I used simple incomplete sentences. My writing lacks descriptive words.

Conventions: Did I spell correctly, use proper punctuation, capitalization, and use correct forms of grammar? Did I use complete sentences? (Edit to find your own mistakes.)

4 - I made only a few minor mistakes in grammar, spelling, and punctuation. I wrote in complete sentences.

3 - I made some mistakes in grammar, spelling, and punctuation. I mostly wrote in complete sentences.

2 - I made many mistakes in grammar, spelling, and punctuation. I often did not write in complete sentences.

1 - I made so many grammar, punctuation, and spelling mistakes that my paper is hard to understand.

### Evaluating students’ writing

1. To manage your paper load, stagger your due dates for major writing assignments among your classes. Allot ample time between due dates, and don't set a due date immediately before the end of a grading period.
2. Use a commonly accepted rubric and share it with the students in advance so that they can assess their own work during the writing process.
3. Use peer feedback groups. Try having students blindly assess others’ work. You can tell them that you will not count the grades they pick but that this exercise of playing the role of the evaluator will strengthen their own writing.
4. Ask students to submit prewriting and rough draft materials including all revisions with their final draft.
5. Grade only final drafts. When students write both a rough draft and a final draft, you might give them some feedback on the rough draft, but actually grade only the final draft.
6. Read the writing once while asking whether the response is appropriate for the assignment. Look for a beginning, a middle, and an end (a summary or conclusion).
7. Do not use a red pen for corrections.
8. Use focused grading. Grade for only one or two parts of the assignment other than content. You don’t score every trait every time; score only those traits you have taught. Try to use the actual language of the scoring guide rather than numbers to evaluate student performance.
9. Consider using a portfolio system.
10. Write comments in the margin using supportive language. Both praise and constructive criticism should be specific and concise. Do not swamp a paper with ink.
11. For long papers, edit only two pages for spelling and mechanics while reading the whole paper for organization and content. Switch your choice of the two pages so that the student tries on every page.
12. Use numerical ids and nameless papers, and change the ids often. This will prevent you from being biased by past performances. Exceptional students might occasionally submit a weak paper, and weak students might occasionally submit an exceptional paper.
13. For more than one essay question, grade all the answers for the first question first, and then all the answers for the second question second. Thus, if you see a good response on the first essay question, you won’t automatically give a higher grade on the second question.
14. Watch for fatigue. Give yourself breaks so that your mood is not affecting how you mark.

#### Rubrics for their writing

##### Pennsylvania Writing Assessment Domain Scoring Guide

Focus: The single controlling point made with an awareness of task (mode) about a specific topic

4 - Sharp, distinct controlling point made about the topic with evident awareness of task (mode)

3 – Apparent point made about a single topic with sufficient awareness of task (mode)

2 - No apparent point but evidence of a specific topic

1 – Minimal evidence of a topic

Content: The presence of ideas developed through facts, examples, anecdotes, details, opinions, statistics, reasons, and/or explanations

4 - Substantial, specific, and/or illustrative content showing strong development and sophisticated ideas

3 – Sufficiently developed content with adequate elaboration or explanation

2 - Limited content with inadequate elaboration or explanation

1 - Superficial and/or minimal content

Organization: The order developed and sustained within and across paragraphs using transitional devices and including an introduction and a conclusion

4 – Sophisticated arrangement of content with evident and/or subtle transitions

3 – Functional arrangement of content with a logical order and some evidence of transitions

2 - Confused or inconsistent arrangement of content with or without attempts at transition

1 - Minimal control of content arrangement

Style: The choice, use and arrangement of words and sentence structures that create tone and voice

4 - Precise, illustrative use of a variety of words and sentence structures to create consistent writer's voice and tone appropriate to audience

3 - Generic use of a variety of words and sentence structures that may or may not create writer's voice and tone appropriate to the audience

2 - Limited word choice and control of sentence structures that inhibit voice and tone

1 - Minimal variety in word choice and minimal control of sentence structures

Conventions: Grammar, mechanics, spelling, usage and sentence formation

4 - Evident control of grammar, mechanics, spelling, usage and sentence formation

3 - Sufficient control of grammar, mechanics, spelling, usage and sentence formation

2 - Limited control of grammar, mechanics, spelling, usage and sentence formation

1 - Minimal control of grammar, mechanics, spelling, usage and sentence formation

Non-scoreable:

* Is illegible; i.e. includes so many indecipherable words that no sense can be made of it
* Is incoherent; i.e. words are legible but syntax is so garbled that it makes no sense
* Is insufficient; i.e. does not include enough to assess domains adequately
* Is a blank paper

Off-Prompt:

* Is readable but did not respond to prompt

##### 6*+1 Trait Scoring Continuum*

* Ideas: the content, the heart of the message
* Organization: the logical pattern of the ideas
* Voice: soul; the writer’s feelings and convictions
* Word Choice: the use of rich and precise language that moves and enlightens the reader
* Sentence Fluency: the flow of the language and the sound of word patterns
* Conventions: correct grammar
* Presentation: the form and the layout – how the writing looks on the page

Ideas and content:

5 points

This paper is clear and focused. It holds the reader's attention. Relevant anecdotes and details enrich the central theme.

A. The topic is narrow and manageable.

B. Relevant, telling, quality details give the reader important information that goes beyond the obvious or predictable.

C. Reasonably accurate details are present to support the main ideas.

D. The writer seems to be writing from knowledge or experience; the ideas are fresh and original.

E. The reader’s questions are anticipated and answered.

F. Insight —an understanding of life and a knack for picking out what is significant—is an indicator of high level performance, though not required.

3 points

The writer is beginning to define the topic, even though development is still basic or general.

A. The topic is fairly broad; however, you can see where the writer is headed.

B. Support is attempted, but doesn't go far enough yet in fleshing out the key issues or story line.

C. Ideas are reasonably clear, though they may not be detailed, personalized, accurate, or expanded enough to show in-depth understanding or a strong sense of purpose.

D. The writer seems to be drawing on knowledge or experience but has difficulty going from general observations to specifics.

E. The reader is left with questions. More information is needed to "fill in the blanks."

F. The writer generally stays on the topic but does not develop a clear theme. The writer has not yet focused the topic past the obvious.

1 point

As yet, the paper has no clear sense of purpose or central theme. To extract meaning from the text, the reader must make inferences based on sketchy or missing details. The writing reflects more than one of these problems:

A. The writer is still in search of a topic, brainstorming, or has not yet decided what the main idea of the piece will be.

B. Information is limited or unclear or the length is not adequate for development.

C. The idea is a simple restatement of the topic or an answer to the question with little or no attention to detail.

D. The writer has not begun to define the topic in a meaningful, personal way.

E. Everything seems as important as everything else; the reader has a hard time sifting out what is important.

F. The text may be repetitious, or may read like a collection of disconnected, random thoughts with no discernable point.

Organization:

5 points

The organization enhances and showcases the central idea or theme. The order, structure, or presentation of information is compelling and moves the reader through the text.

A. An inviting introduction draws the reader in; a satisfying conclusion leaves the reader with a sense of closure and resolution.

B. Thoughtful transitions clearly show how ideas connect.

C. Details seem to fit where they're placed; sequencing is logical and effective.

D. Pacing is well controlled; the writer knows when to slow down and elaborate, and when to pick up the pace and move on.

E. The title, if desired, is original and captures the central theme of the piece.

F. The choice of structure matches the purpose and audience, with effective paragraph breaks.

3 points

The organizational structure is strong enough to move the reader through the text without too much confusion.

A. The paper has a recognizable introduction and conclusion. The introduction may not create a strong sense of anticipation; the conclusion may not tie-up all loose ends.

B. Transitions sometimes work; at other times, connections between ideas are unclear.

C. Sequencing shows some logic, but not under control enough that it consistently supports the development of ideas. The structure may be predictable and taking attention away from the content.

D. Pacing is fairly well controlled, though the writer sometimes lunges ahead too quickly or spends too much time on details that do not matter.

E. A title (if desired) is present, although it may be uninspired or an obvious restatement of the prompt or topic.

F. The organization sometimes supports the main point or story line, with an attempt at paragraphing.

1 point

The writing lacks a clear sense of direction. Ideas, details, or events seem strung together in a loose or random fashion; there is no identifiable internal structure. The writing reflects more than one of these problems:

A. There is no real lead to set up what follows, no real conclusion to wrap things up.

B. Connections between ideas are confusing or absent.

C. Sequencing is random and needs lots of work.

D. Pacing feels awkward; writer slows to a crawl when reader wants to move on, and vice versa.

E. No title is present (if requested) or, if present, does not reflect the content.

F. Problems with organization make it hard for the reader to understand the main point or story line, with little or no attempt at paragraph breaks.

Voice:

5 points

The writer speaks directly to the reader in a way that is individual, compelling, and engaging. The writer crafts the writing with an awareness and respect for the audience and the purpose for writing.

A. The writer connects strongly with the audience through the intriguing focus of the topic, selection of relevant details, and the use of natural, engaging language.

B. The purpose of the writing is accurately reflected in the writer’s choice of individual and compelling content, and the arrangement of ideas.

C. The writer takes a risk by including personal details that reveal the person behind the words.

D. Expository or persuasive writing reflects a strong commitment to the topic by the careful selection of ideas that show why the reader needs to know this.

E. Narrative writing is personal and engaging, and makes you think about the author’s ideas or point of view.

3 points

The writer seems sincere, but not fully engaged or involved. The writing has discernable purpose, but is not compelling.

A. The writer tries to connect with the audience in an earnest, pleasing, but impersonal manner.

B. The writer seems aware of a purpose, and tries to select content and structures that reflect it.

C. The writer occasionally reveals personal details, but primarily avoids risk.

D. Expository or persuasive writing lacks consistent engagement with the topic, and fails to use ideas to build credibility.

E. Narrative writing is sincere, but doesn’t reflect a unique or individual perspective on the topic.

1 point

The writer seems indifferent to the topic and the content. The writing lacks purpose and audience engagement.

A. The writer’s ideas and language fail to connect with the audience.

B. The writer has no clear purpose, and the chosen style does not match the content or ideas.

C. The writing is risk-free and reveals nothing about the author.

D. Expository or persuasive writing is lifeless and mechanical, or lacks accurate information.

E. Narrative: The development of the topic is so limited that no point of view is discernable.

Word choice:

5 points

Words convey the intended message in a precise, interesting, and natural way. The words are powerful and engaging.

A. Words are specific and accurate. It is easy to understand just what the writer means.

B. Striking words and phrases often catch the reader's eye and linger in the reader's mind.

C. Language and phrasing are natural, effective, and appropriate for the audience.

D. Lively verbs add energy while specific nouns and modifiers add depth.

E. Choices in language enhance the meaning and clarify understanding.

F. Precision is obvious. The writer has taken care to put just the right word or phrase in just the right spot.

3 points

The language is functional, even if it lacks much energy. It is easy to figure out the writer's meaning on a general level.

A. Words are adequate and correct in a general sense, and they support the meaning by not getting in the way.

B. Familiar words and phrases communicate but rarely capture the reader's imagination.

C. Attempts at colorful language show a willingness to stretch and grow but sometimes reach beyond the audience (thesaurus overload!).

D. Despite a few successes, the writing is marked by passive verbs, everyday nouns, and mundane modifiers.

E. The words and phrases are functional with only one or two fine moments.

F. The words may be refined in a couple of places, but the language looks more like the first thing that popped into the writer’s mind.

1 point

The writer demonstrates a limited vocabulary or has not searched for words to convey specific meaning.

A. Words are so non-specific and distracting that only a very limited meaning comes through.

B. Problems with language leave the reader wondering. Many of the words just don’t work in this piece.

C. Audience has not been considered. Language is used incorrectly making the message secondary to the misfires with the words.

D. Limited vocabulary and/or misused parts of speech seriously impair understanding.

E. Words and phrases are so unimaginative and lifeless that they detract from the meaning.

F. Jargon or clichés distract or mislead. Redundancy may distract the reader.

Sentence fluency:

5 points

The writing has an easy flow, rhythm, and cadence. Sentences are well built, with strong and varied structure that invites expressive oral reading.

A. Sentences are constructed in a way that underscores and enhances the meaning.

B. Sentences vary in length as well as structure. Fragments, if used, add style. Dialogue, if present, sounds natural.

C. Purposeful and varied sentence beginnings add variety and energy.

D. The use of creative and appropriate connectives between sentences and thoughts shows how each relates to, and builds upon, the one before it.

E. The writing has cadence; the writer has thought about the sound of the words as well as the meaning.

3 points

The first time you read it aloud is a breeze. The text hums along with a steady beat, but tends to be more pleasant or businesslike than musical, more mechanical than fluid.

A. Although sentences may not seem artfully crafted or musical, they get the job done in a routine fashion.

B. Sentences are usually constructed correctly; they hang together; they are sound.

C. Sentence beginnings are not ALL alike; some variety is attempted.

D. The reader sometimes has to hunt for clues [such as connecting words and phrases like (however, therefore, naturally, after a while, on the other hand, to be specific, for example, next, first of all, later, but as it turned out, although, etc.)] that show how sentences interrelate.

E. Parts of the text invite expressive oral reading; others may be stiff, awkward, choppy, or gangly.

1 point

The reader has to practice quite a bit in order to give this paper a fair interpretive reading. The writing reflects more than one of the following problems:

A. Sentences are choppy, incomplete, rambling or awkward; they need work. Phrasing does not sound natural. The patterns may create a sing-song rhythm, or a chop-chop cadence that lulls the reader to sleep.

B. There is little to no “sentence sense” present. Even if this piece was flawlessly edited, the sentences would not hang together.

C. Many sentences begin the same way—and may follow the same patterns (e.g., subject-verb-object) in a monotonous pattern.

D. Endless connectives (and, and so, but then, because, and then, etc.) or a complete lack of connectives create a massive jumble of language.

E. The text does not invite expressive oral reading.

Conventions:

5 points

The writer demonstrates a good grasp of standard writing conventions (e.g., spelling, punctuation, capitalization, grammar, usage, paragraphing) and uses conventions effectively to enhance readability. Errors tend to be so few that just minor touch-ups would get this piece ready to publish.

A. Spelling is generally correct, even on more difficult words.

B. The punctuation is accurate, even creative, and guides the reader through the text.

C. A thorough understanding and consistent application of capitalization skills are present.

D. Grammar and usage are correct and contribute to clarity and style.

E. Paragraphing tends to be sound and reinforces the organizational structure.

F. The writer may manipulate conventions for stylistic effect—and it works! The piece is very close to being ready to publish.

3 points

The writer shows reasonable control over a limited range of standard writing conventions. Conventions are sometimes handled well and enhance readability; at other times, errors are distracting and impair readability.

A. Spelling is usually correct or reasonably phonetic on common words, but more difficult words are problematic.

B. End punctuation is usually correct; internal punctuation (commas, apostrophes, semicolons, dashes, colons, parentheses) is sometimes missing/wrong.

C. Most words are capitalized correctly; sophisticated capitalization skills may be spotty.

D. Problems with grammar or usage are not serious enough to distort meaning but may not be correct or accurately applied all of the time.

E. Paragraphing is attempted but may run together or begin in the wrong places.

F. Moderate editing would be required to polish the text for publication.

1 point

Errors in spelling, punctuation, capitalization, usage, and grammar and/or paragraphing repeatedly distract the reader and make the text difficult to read. The writing reflects more than one of these problems:

A. Spelling errors are frequent, even on common words.

B. Punctuation (including terminal punctuation) is often missing or incorrect.

C. Capitalization is random and only the easiest rules show awareness of correct use.

D. Errors in grammar or usage are very noticeable, frequent, and affect meaning.

E. Paragraphing is missing, irregular, or so frequent (every sentence) that it has no relationship to the organizational structure of the text.

F. The reader must read once to decode, then again for meaning. Extensive editing (virtually every line) would be required to polish the text for publication.

Presentation:

(Optional) 5 points

The form and presentation of the text enhances the ability for the reader to understand and connect with the message. It is pleasing to the eye.

A. If handwritten (either cursive or printed), the slant is consistent, letters are clearly formed, spacing is uniform between words, and the text is easy to read.

B. If typed, there is a good use of fonts and font sizes that invites the reader into the text.

C. The use of white space on the page (spacing, margins, etc.) allows the intended audience to easily focus on the text and message without distractions. There is just the right amount of balance of white space and text on the page. The formatting suits the purpose for writing.

D. The use of a title, side heads, page numbering, bullets, and evidence of correct use of a style sheet (when appropriate) makes it easy for the reader to access the desired information and text. These markers allow the hierarchy of information to be clear to the reader.

E. When appropriate to the purpose and audience, there is effective integration of text and illustrations, charts, graphs, maps, tables, etc. There is clear alignment between the text and visuals. The visuals support and clarify important information or key points made in the text.

3 points

The writer’s message is understandable in this format.

A. Handwriting is readable, although there may be discrepancies in letter shape and form, slant, and spacing that may make some words or passages easier to read than others.

B. Experimentation with fonts and font sizes is successful in some places, but begins to get fussy and cluttered in others. The effect is not consistent throughout the text.

C. While margins may be present, some text may crowd the edges. Consistent spacing is applied, although a different choice may make text more accessible (e.g., double or triple spacing).

D. Although some markers are present (titles, numbering, bullets, side heads, etc.), they are not used to their fullest potential as a guide for the reader to get the greatest meaning from the text.

E. An attempt is made to integrate visuals and the text although the connections may be limited.

1 point

The reader receives a garbled message due to problems relating to the presentation of the text.

A. Because the letters are irregularly slanted, formed inconsistently, or incorrectly, and the spacing is unbalanced or not even present, it is very difficult to read and understand the text.

B. The writer has used multiple fonts and font sizes. It is a major distraction to the reader.

C. The spacing is random and confusing. There may be little or no white space on the page.

D. Lack of markers (title, page numbering, bullets, side heads, etc.) leave the reader wondering how one section connects to another and why the text is organized in this manner on the page.

E. The visuals do not support or further illustrate key ideas presented in the text. They may be misleading, indecipherable, or too complex to be understood.

##### A simplified rubric for writing

* Good: Stays on the topic (is focused) from beginning to end.
* Fair: Stays on the topic (is focused) for most of the piece, but parts could be modified.
* Poor: Gets off the topic or includes details that are not related to the topic.
* Good: Has a strong introduction that interests the reader.
* Fair: Has an introduction.
* Poor: Does not have a clear introduction.
* Good: Is developed enough to cover the topic.
* Fair: Covers the topic but could be more developed to include more details or information.
* Poor: Does not give the reader enough details or information.
* Good: Has a strong concluding paragraph.
* Fair: Has a concluding paragraph.
* Poor: Does not have a clearly written conclusion.
* Good: Uses descriptive language in a way that makes the piece more interesting.
* Fair: Uses some descriptive language.
* Poor: Does not use descriptive language.
* Good: Has sentences that start in a variety of ways.
* Fair: Has a few sentences that start in an interesting way.
* Poor: Has sentences that mostly start in the same way.
* Good: Has few mechanical or grammatical errors (spelling, punctuation, capital letters, etc.).
* Fair: Has some mechanical and grammatical errors.
* Poor: Has many mechanical and grammatical errors.
* Good: Is neatly presented with legible handwriting.
* Fair: Is mostly neat and easy to read.
* Poor: Is hard to read.

## 

## Equip them with … problem-solving skills

### Brainstorming

#### The four principles

* accept all contributions without judgment, even judgment that is positive;
* strive for a large number of ideas or questions;
* build on other people's ideas; and
* enthusiastically encourage far-out, unusual ideas.

#### “4S brainstorming” activity (CL)

Put students in groups of four. Each student is assigned an “S” role, but all are recorders. Record the ideas on separate slips of paper and put them on the table for all to see. This makes it easier to build on each other's ideas and to then categorize and recategorize them. Assign these roles:

1. Speed Captain: Puts on the time pressure and says things like, "Let's get more," "Let's hurry."
2. Super Supporter: Encourages and greatly appreciates all ideas with no evaluation of ideas.
3. Silliness Chief: Focuses on silly ideas, which are helpful in keeping the creative flow going.
4. Synergy Guru: Combines the other ideas and builds them into something new.

### Specific problem-solving strategies

* Decompose the problem. Break a complex problem into smaller “sub” problems, and solve each sub problem to solve the big problem.
* Work backwards. Start from a final goal and move backwards. Try going from B back to A.
* Consider analogous problem: Find a solution to an analogous but easier problem.
* Use the “s.c.a.m.p.e.r.” acronym: Students can change a product, item or idea by substituting, combining, adding, modifying/magnifying/minifying, putting to other uses, eliminating, and reversing. This is a great tool for when we need to see something in a new way. For example, we can look at "Thoreau wrote Walden" and ask

S "Who else could have written it?'

C "If Thoreau had had a co-author, who could it have been?"

A "What would Thoreau have written in the 21st century?"

M "What could we modify in the work to intensify the theme?"

P "How does this work apply to the lives of suburbanites?'

E "What would be the effect of eliminating this work?"

R "What would be the antithesis of Thoreau's view?"

One of the benefits of using “s.c.a.m.p.e.r.” is that students both ask and answer the questions.

### Avoid positive evaluations

When students give answers to open-ended problems, avoid positive evaluations such as "right," "great," or "very good." Instead, try, “"Thanks, (student)…. How did some of you others respond?" or “Does anyone have another way to solve this?”

## Equip them with … note-taking skills

Notes should not be word for word. Have them close their books shut and take notes. They should be consciously asking themselves, “What do I want to remember two years from now?”

When teaching note-taking on the overhead, use one color for deleting, one for highlighting, and one for substituting. Have students put the subject, date, and page number on each page, and encourage them to read their notes nightly.

### Column notes during reading assignments

The number of columns depends on the type of content.

* main ideas or headings in the left column … and details or explanations on the right;
* key vocabulary … and definitions, examples, or sentences;
* picture or drawing … and an explanation
* key ideas … and answers to the question, “What does it mean to me?”;
* information gleaned from a source … and the citation;
* cause … effect;
* K, W, … and L;
* notes …and questions; and
* opinion … and proof

Folding the sheet can be a great study aide for the students. They can quiz themselves or each other with the answers safely hidden on the other side of the folded sheet, but they can also check back and forth between questions and answers. This would show the organization of information more clearly, more dramatically, and certainly in a more useful manner.

You can start instruction about two-column notes with a sheet where you have written the notes and left out words or phrases. Fill out the sheets together in class. Once the students have mastered this, generate a sheet where you have left out complete main ideas and/or details. Finally, have students complete the column notes independently.

### Allowing study cards for tests

Give students the option of creating a 3”x5” study card that they can have for a test. Students can be very creative in organizing information on one little card. By creating the card, they have learned a lot of the content. Invite students to create questions and problems for tests.

### Other note-taking options

* a partially filled outline that students complete during a presentation;
* Venn diagram (or classification map such as a differences and similarities);
* a three-sentence summary paragraph (what will be most important in two years); and
* an outline on the left side, an outline on the right side, and a summary on the bottom.

## Equip them with … media and library-research skills

### The Big 6 for researching a topic

1. Task definition
   1. Define the problem. What do I need to do? What does my teacher want me to do?
   2. Identify information resources needed to solve it. What information do I need? What questions do I want to answer?
2. Information-seeking strategies
   1. Determine all possible sources. What can I use to find what I need? What are the best sources for finding information about my topic?
3. Location and access
   1. Where is each source? Who can help me? Where is the information in each source?
4. Use of information
   1. Engage the source (read, listen, view, touch). How can I best use each source?
   2. Extract the relevant information from the source.
      1. What information in each source is useful?
      2. How might the information be biased, invalid, or useless?
      3. How can I best take notes?
      4. How should I give proper citations of others’ work?
         1. Copyright portion of original
            1. Video-up to 10% or 3 minutes (whichever is less)
            2. Text-up to 10% or 1000 words of prose (whichever is less)
            3. Music-up to 10% or 30 seconds (whichever is less)
            4. Images - no more than 5 from an artist or 10 from a collection
      5. Do my classmates agree with the meaning of this passage or website?
5. Synthesis
   1. Organize information from multiple sources. How can I organize all the information?
   2. Present the information. How can I best present it? What do I need to do to finish it?
6. Evaluation
   1. Judge the effectiveness. Did I complete all the parts?  Am I proud of my work?
   2. Judge the efficiency. What did I do well?  What should I have done differently?

### Critical evaluation strategies

#### C.A.C.A.O

1. Current

Is the work’s content up-to-date? Is the publication date indicated? When did the news story occur, and when was it reported? Dates are not always included on Web pages. If it is included, it may have various meanings: when it was first created, placed on Web, or last revised.

1. Accuracy

How reliable and free from error is the information? Are there editors and fact checkers? Is it possible to verify the information elsewhere? What are the sources of the author’s report?

1. Coverage

What topics are included in the work? To what depth are topics explored?

1. Authority

Who is the author? What are the author’s qualifications for writing on the subject? How reputable is the publisher? It is often difficult to determine the authorship of Web resources. If the author’s name is listed, his or her qualifications are frequently absent.

1. Objectivity
   1. Is the information presented with a minimum of bias?
   2. If the document takes a position, does it state other positions evenhandedly?
   3. To what extent and direction is the information trying to sway the reader’s opinion?
   4. What creative techniques are used to attract the reader’s attention?
   5. How might different people understand this message differently?
   6. What is the individual’s motive for publishing this information?
   7. If the article is an editorial, does the author acknowledge that it expresses an opinion?
   8. Can the author’s name be found on the Internet?
   9. Does the author’s organization advertise products related to the information given?

#### M.A.R.K.E.R.

M.A.R.K.E.R. can be used to critically examine a written argument.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Main point | What is the main point? Look up words identifying parts of the argument. |
| Assumptions | What assumptions does the author make? What values and value judgments are visible? |
| Reasoning | What type of reasoning does the author use? Consider comparisons, inference, cause and effect. |
| Key questions | What are some questions about this? How well does the author answer them? |
| Evidence | What’s the author’s evidence for an argument? Is it factual? Is there a source? |
| Relevant information | What relevant information do you already know and what experiences do you have? Does it match what the author claims? |

#### For websites, including blogs

Evaluate each webpage. Information on the home page or on the original document may indicate the author's affiliation with an organization. This affiliation may reveal something about their bias. Authors with a body of work in a variety of sources, particularly sources requiring editorial approval, are regarded as greater authorities than those who have published more narrowly. Also, look for a connection to a webmaster who may be able to provide additional information.

For blogs, students should look into the blogger’s reputation. Go to Technorati.com and enter the blog’s URL into the search form. The results will show how many other bloggers have linked to it. Students can also look at the list of blogs the blogger links to. Does the blogger have a personal agenda? If a blog is to be for your research, identify who the author is, what she does for a living, what her level of expertise is, and what judgments others have made about her.

### Note card format

Use white index cards. Have students take notes in their own words by having them close the reference book before they write down any information.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Sequence (in pencil)** | **Author(s)/Editor(s) “Title of Article” (if applicable)**  or Title of Book  (last name, first initial) (Abbreviate – be consistent) |
| Page # | One fact/idea |
| Useful illustration, graph, map, or photo;  Page number |  |
| * Supporting detail |
|  |
| * Supporting detail |
|  |
|  |

Things for students to remember when taking notes:

* Put one idea or fact on each card along with one or two supporting details or examples.
* Use MLA or APA format for citations.
* Include the author’s name, abbreviated title of the source, and the number(s) of the page(s) on which you found the information.
* Summarize, paraphrase, or quote. Summarizing means putting the main idea(s) in your own words and only including the main point(s). Paraphrasing means rephrasing or rewriting the ideas, words, phrases, and sentence structures of an author in your own words without changing the author’s meaning. Quotations are the exact words of an author. When quoting from a source, use quotation marks and copy directly from the text word for word.
* Use more cards rather than fill up a few. Leave the “sequence box” blank at first; later, you will fill this in when grouping and ordering your note cards for your presentation or outline.

#### Bibliography card format (general)

Use colored index cards as bibliography cards – one card per source.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Library Call #** | **Bibliography** |
|  | Author(s)/editor(s) {last name, first name} |
| Put useful info here like page  numbers  of photos, maps, etc. | Title of article {if applicable; quotation marks} |
| Title of book {underlined} |
| Place of publication {city} |
| Publisher {use shortened form, if known} |
| Date of publication {year} |

## Equip them with … presentation skills

### Outlining

#### Brainstorming with a partner

Each student can describe to their partner what they are planning to present. The one who is listening probes with a set of questions and outlines their presentation, giving them the sheet afterwards. The pair then switches roles for brainstorming and outlining the other one’s presentation. Partners can teach each other what they know about how to construct an outline.

#### Title

Pick a title that takes a strong position. With an ambitious one, the work shifts to possible points that just might support what the title is promising.

#### Your opening

Open with a memorable bang to grab your audience’s attention. A good introduction includes what you are going to talk about, what you hope the audience will do afterwards, and the order of the presentation’s main points.

#### Making the outline

Build an outline with sequential points. Ask yourself,

* What results do I want?
* Do they know this fact or lesson already?
* Do they need me to explain this point in a different way?
* Are they saturated with information and need a break or a laugh?

When you create it, only include the key words or phrases. Use first and second person voices to imply that this is about me and you and no one else. You can use this outline in your slides, showing your audience your plan as you go.

#### Signposting

Use signposting to show where one part ends and a new one starts. “Now we come to \_\_\_\_, my third of my five points,” etc. Perhaps you want to give a short summary after each point.

#### Your points and supporting arguments

Make a list of five strong, specific points. Every point should be compressed into a single, interesting sentence. Show the list of your points to a classmate. Ask them how to make the list better. If you're not sure what the point is, or whether it’s relevant, cut it out of your material. If you have a list of points that is visual, present important items at the beginning; if the list is auditory, present important items at the end.

Subdivide each point into supporting arguments. The arguments might be long, but no one should ever be confused as to what your point is while you are arguing for it. Top-ten lists and frequently asked questions are easy formats for arguments.

Explain the weaknesses and benefits of the alternatives, as well as the weaknesses of your points. Imagine someone asking, "So what?" Include examples in your answer; rhetorical questions give speeches the appearance of a dialogue with the audience. Then describe the solution that your points compel, and appeal for action.

#### Summaries and closing

Before you give your final conclusions, review or restate your key points to reinforce them. Then make a forceful and memorable conclusion. What do you hope the audience will do after they heard your speech? What’s the point? Be explicit about that. What is said last is likely to be remembered longest.

At the end of each part you might also want to give a brief summary or even a Q&A portion.

### Presenting

If you are going to have individual students present to the class, first have them rehearse in pairs. Perhaps the partner can get bonus points if the first person’s presentation goes really well.

Presenters should hand in the work ahead of time so you can give feedback. This prevents them from preparing and not listening when others are presenting.

Have presenters create questions to ask the audience. These questions can be asked before, during, or after the presentation. The rest of the class can give feedback afterwards or do a post-presentation task to measure how successfully the presenters got their ideas across.

You also might want to have students present to an authentic audience, such as students from a lower grade level or a group of parents. A more authentic audience raises the stakes for creating a meaningful product or performance for both the audience and performers.

## Equip them with … social studies skills

### Best practices of teaching social studies

Development of chronological thinking:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *Examples of chronological-thinking strategies* | |
| Calendar time | People and events in time |
| Time lines | Sequential order |
| Continuity and change | Context for events |
| Difference between past, present, and future | Cause and effect |

Utilization of historical sources:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *Examples of historical sources and uses* | |
| Data in historical/contemporary maps | Different historical perspectives |
| Visual data from maps/tables | Mathematical data from graphs/tables |
| Author or historical source | Literal meaning of historical passage |
| Analysis and interpretation (ex. music diaries, film, art, cartoons, etc.) | |

Critical examination of historical interpretations:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *Examples of strategies for critical analysis of historical interpretations* | |
| Fact versus opinion | Multiple points of view |
| Illustrations in historical stories documents | Reasons/causes for multiple POV |
| Author or source of historical narrative | Causes and results |
| Impact of opinions on the perception of facts | Recognition of bias |
| Central issues or problems in the past and present |  |

Employment of historical research skills:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *Research skills used to enhance understanding of historical events* | |
| Historical events (time and place) | Credibility of evidence |
| Facts, folklore, and fiction | Historical questions |
| Primary sources | Secondary sources |
| Create interpretation: (ex. Storytelling, role playing, diorama, simulation, group projects, skits and plays, History Day projects, mock trials, speeches, research paper, debates, etc.) | |
| Awareness of plagiarism and works cited | Conclusion |

Decision making and evaluation:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *Evaluating issues, controversies, problems, and developments related to social studies* | |
| Identify issue or problem | Formulate position or course of action |
| Identify relevant developments of issue/problem | Evaluate alternative courses of action |

### Icebreaker - family world maps

Put a large map of the world on the wall and have each student push-pin their name to the wall and attach strings to the push pin that go to the different countries their ancestors came from. This will lead naturally into asking for oral histories from older (over 50) members of the family.

### Sample enduring understandings

#### U.S. History

* Important political, economic, and social changes have had an impact on the United States.
* Dramatic shifts occurred in U.S. demographic patterns in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries as a result of migration within and immigration to the United States.
* Individuals can have a significant effect on history.

#### World Geography

* Political, economic, social, and environmental factors contribute to the growth, distribution, movement, and characteristics of world population.
* Some aspects of cultures change while other aspects maintain continuity.

#### World History

* Individuals, groups, and societies have the opportunity to make significant political choices and decisions that have consequences.

#### U.S. Government

* Several important reasons contributed to the growth of representative government in the United States.
* The U.S. Constitution created a national government composed of three branches, each of which has a unique structure and function.
* Citizens of the United States have both rights and responsibilities.

#### Economics

* Economic ideas and decisions made in the past have influenced the present.
* Scientific discoveries and technological innovations have had a significant economic impact on households, businesses, and governments.

### Sample essential questions

#### Government and politics

* What are the various forms of government and how did they affect ancient civilizations?
* Who should govern or rule?
* Should the majority always rule?
* Why do we have rule and laws?
* Who should make the rules and laws?
* Is it ever OK to break the law?
* To what extent should society control individuals?
* How do governments balance the rights of individuals with the common good?
* What are "inalienable rights"?
* Should \_\_\_ be restricted or regulated? When? Who decides?
* How do the structures and functions of government interrelate?
* How do different political systems vary in their toleration and encouragement of change?
* How do politics and economics interrelate?
* How do personal responsibilities and civic responsibilities differ?
* Can an individual really make a difference?
* What are the roles and responsibilities of citizens in a democracy?
* What is a good citizen?
* How do citizens (both individually and collectively) influence government policy?
* What is power? What forms does it take?
* How is power gained, used, and justified?
* How can abuse of power be avoided?
* Is a two-party system best?
* What constitutes a great leader?
* Are great leaders made or born (nature or nurture)?
* How do individuals make a difference?
* How have government policies sustained social inequalities in the United States?
* What are the responsibilities and roles of citizens in a democratic nation?
* How has the struggle between states’ rights and federal power played out over time?
* How has the government’s commitment to “establish justice” changed over time?
* How has the definition of “justice” changed historically to become more inclusive?
* Should commitment to the ideals in the Constitution extend beyond our borders?
* What is the government’s responsibility to promote the general welfare?
* Should the government be more hands-on or hands-off with regard to the economy?
* Historically, why is there a struggle between security and liberty?

#### Historical analysis and interpretation

* Why study history?
* What can we learn from the past?
* How have historians and archaeologists learned about the ancient past?
* How am I connected to people in the past?
* To what extent is history different from the past?
* How do we know what happened in the past?
* What can we legitimately infer from artifacts?
* What should we do when primary sources disagree?
* Who do we believe and why?
* Whose “story” is it?
* Is history inevitable biased?
* Is history the story told by the “winners”?
* What causes change? What remains the same?
* How do patterns of cause and effect manifest themselves in the chronology of history?
* How credible is the source?
* Is it always true that those who do not learn from history are doomed to repeat it?
* From whose point of view is this being told? What voices are we hearing and not hearing?

#### World history

* Early humans: What makes us human?
* Ancient Mesopotamia: What does it mean to be civilized?
* Ancient Egypt: "Contrary to popular belief, Egypt was actually not among the most important ancient civilizations." Do you agree or disagree?
* The roots of Western civilization: Hebrews, Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans: What is the best set of rules for people to live by?
* The fall of the Roman Empire: Is the United States now in the position that the Roman Empire was in during its final years?
* Imperial China and feudal Japan: Was imperial China really more advanced than feudal Japan and Europe?
* Empires and kingdoms of Sub-Saharan Africa: Did contact with non-African civilizations (Europe and the Middle East) help or hurt the kingdoms and empires of sub-Saharan Africa?
* Civilizations of the Americas: "The Spanish conquest marked the beginning of a dark age in the history of the Americas." Do you agree or disagree?
* The rise of democracy in Western Europe: Can people be trusted to govern themselves?
* The rise and fall of the Soviet Union: Did Communism improve life?
* Modern Africa: What unifies modern Africans?
* The modern Middle East: What is the best way to achieve peace in the Middle East?
* How has the world changed, and how might it change in the future?

#### United States history

* Review of the early United States: "The period between 1760 and 1865 was created by the elite, for the elite." Do you agree or disagree?
* The Constitution: Can people be trusted to govern themselves?
* Manifest Destiny: Was Manifest Destiny just?
* The Civil War: Should the North and the South have reconciled their marriage or divorced?
* Did the Civil War create a more perfect union?
* The Industrial Revolution and the Progressives: Do you agree or disagree with Calvin Coolidge's quote, "What's good for business is good for America?"
* Is progress good?
* Immigration: Is immigration a benefit or a detriment to the United States?
* The 1920s and the Great Depression:
* Were the 1920s really "roaring" and the 1930s really "depressing"?
* “The 1920s were to the 1930s like a wild party is to the day after." Agree or disagree?
* World War II: Was World War II really a "good war" for the United States?
* The Cold War: Should the U.S. be praised or condemned for its efforts in the Cold War?
* The Civil Rights Movement: Was the civil rights movement a "smashing" success?
* Should Americans use nonviolence or "any means necessary" to rectify social injustice?
* Women's rights: "Since the 1800s, women have not made significant progress in obtaining equality with men." Do you agree or disagree?
* How have global relationships with other nations changed for the U.S. throughout its history?
* What problems do countries confront during expansion?
* What were the causes, events, and outcomes of the U.S. Civil War and what was its impact on the United States?
* Are we becoming the nation we set out to be?
* How did the United States become the world power?
* What issues determine our involvement in foreign affairs?
* Why did the United States abandon its traditionalist isolationist foreign policy?
* Who is an American? Says who?
* Who is a terrorist? Says who?

#### Geography

* Why is “where” important?
* Why is/was \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ located there?
* Why did people settle there? Why did people leave there?
* What makes places unique and different?
* What defines a region?
* How do a region’s geography, climate, and natural resources affect the way people live and work?
* How does where I live influence how I live?
* Why do people move?
* What story do maps and globes tell?
* How and why do maps and globes change?
* How do maps and globes reflect history?
* How does geography influence history?
* How do geographic factors influence the rise of civilizations?

#### Economics

* Why do we have money?
* What price progress?
* What is the difference between needs and wants?
* How does something acquire value?
* How much should things cost? Who decides?
* Who should produce goods and services?
* How does the free market system affect my life? Our community? Our society? The world?
* Should government regulate business and economy?
* What goods and services should the government provide?
* Who should pay? Who should benefit?
* Should everyone be expected to work?
* What does it mean lo "make a living"?
* How does technological change influence people’s lives? Society?
* What social, political, and economic opportunities and problems arise from changes in technology?

#### Culture

* What role has technology played in the rise of ancient civilizations?
* How did cities emerge?
* How did early people eventually create a stable food supply?
* What caused specialization of labor?
* How did social levels evolve?
* How does a culture become highly developed?
* How are the 5 characteristics of a civilization found in ancient Mesopotamia, Egypt, India, China, Greece, and Rome?
* What does it mean to be “civilized”?
* Are modern civilizations more civilized than ancient ones?
* Why should we study other cultures?
* Who are the “heroes” in a culture and what do they reveal about the culture?
* How and why do we celebrate holidays?
* What are the significant symbols and icons of civilizations and cultures?
* Who and what do we memorialize?
* What happens when cultures collide?
* How are all religions the same?
* How and why do beliefs change?
* Why do people fight? Is conflict inevitable?
* What is worth fighting for?
* Is there a “just” war?
* What is revolution? Are revolutions inevitable?
* How has the cultural identity of America changed over time?
* In what ways is the United States both geographically and culturally diverse?

### Possible categories in a history rubric

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| *Scoring Categories:* | *Highest Score* | *Lowest Score* |
| Point of View | Very Clear | Erratic |
| Organization of Information | Skillful | Erratic |
| Historical Knowledge | Detailed | Little/often tangential |
| Degree of significance of issues | Most significant | Little/often tangential |
| Reasons, evidence | Appropriate | Generalizations |
| Examples | Relevant | Limited |
| Primary source materials | Well-represented | Rarely |
| Cause & Effect | Complex analysis | May sequence |
| Compare/contrast events, people | Thoughtful | May name a few |
| Various other points of view | Carefully considered and incorporated | Rarely considered |
| Links to the present | Accurately and insightfully | Not attempted |
| Geographic knowledge | Detailed and accurate | No mention of places |
| Historical / factual | Few or no errors | Extreme errors |
| Communication | Clear and effective | Mostly incomprehensible |

### Learning with projected images

The best images

* are clearly tied to your content standards and teaching objectives;
* illustrate key events or concepts;
* graphically show human emotion, drama, suspense, or interaction;
* have the potential for students to step into the scene and bring it to life; and
* are interesting or unusual.

#### Project images that are large and clear

Identify the best wall on which to project images. The wall should be located in an area of the room that you can make fairly dark. With too much light, the image will be difficult to see, and students will have trouble locating fine details. If your room is too dark with the lights off, use a table lamp to add soft, unobtrusive lighting. When you project a transparency on the wall, make the image as large as possible. The larger the image, the more interaction and excitement it will generate. You can easily create a large screen by covering the wall with butcher paper.

Carefully sequence your questions. First, ask students to record in their graded notebooks their responses to a question. You can circulate and review (or check off) students' responses, and then ask volunteers to share their ideas. Then assign half the class one question, such as, “Where is this happening?” while the other half works on another question, such as, “When is this happening?” Have the students on each side mutually agree on a response and present it, along with evidence from the image that supports their response, to the other half of the class.

Finally, ask the students to write a short caption that explains what is happening. Or, have them write a newspaper headline to summarize the pictured event. Have students share their captions or headlines with a neighbor, or ask volunteers to read them aloud to the entire class. Be sure to link each successive question to the questions preceding it.

#### Best sequence of learning with images

Step 1: Gathering Evidence

Start by telling students to think of themselves as detectives, and to regard the projected image as a scene from a time or a place that they need to investigate. At this level, their task is to look for evidence-details that may reveal something about the scene. Explain that the evidence should be things they could actually touch if they were able to step into the scene.

* What do you see in this image?
* What are some key details, or pieces of evidence, that you see?
* How would you describe the scene and the people?
* What do you hear or smell in this scene?

Step 2: Interpreting evidence

Have your students interpret the details or evidence they gathered in the scene. Have them formulate ideas or make inferences based on the existing evidence, such as the time period, place, or people in the scene. As they share their ideas, encourage them to state their interpretation, then follow up with a "because" statement that cites their supporting evidence. Typically, questions at this level are what, when, why, here, and who questions.

* What is the approximate date of this scene? Give a piece of evidence to support your answer.
* Where might this have taken place? Give two pieces of evidence to support your answer.
* What do you think is happening here? Support your opinion with two pieces of evidence.

Step 3: Making hypotheses from evidence

Now the students must use the evidence and their own critical thinking skills to determine the "motives" behind the scene they are investigating. Have them make hypotheses about what is happening and why. Typically, questions at this level are why and how questions that require higher-order thinking skills such as justifying, synthesizing, predicting, and evaluating.

* How do you think these people were feeling at this time and place?

Step 4: Challenging students to read about the image and apply what they learn

Once students have analyzed the image, they are ready to read something about it in order to answer questions, fill in content gaps, further their knowledge, and enrich their understanding.

When students, especially those without strong linguistic skills, experience success at interpreting visuals, they are more motivated to read. You may want to invite these students to come up to the projected image, touch a detail they found interesting, and interpret it based on what they see and read.

#### For historical paintings in particular

When the class is analyzing a historical painting, use an approach termed "Behind the Paintbrush" to raise the level of thinking and enrich the discussion. Ask students to step into the artist's shoes. As the artist, what are you thinking as you create this picture? Why are you painting this scene in this way? What are you trying to show? What are your opinions about the event or the people you are depicting? This type of question asks students to hypothesize about the artist's motivations, a step beyond analyzing the painting from the perspective of a viewer.

### Analyzing primary sources

Primary source documents include maps, documents, reports, photographs, letters, diaries, posters, and recordings created by those who participated in or witnessed the events of the past. Their use in all subjects enable students to touch the living past, to occupy the role of historian within that subject area. Perhaps most importantly, the use of primary sources allows students to see that textbooks and other contemporary writings about past events - or even the present - is merely an interpretation that is shaped by the era, biases, and values of those who write them.

#### When selecting one for a lesson

Consider

* Language
* Design and structure
* Materials
* Form and function
* Size
* Voice, tone, style

#### Questions for students about it

* In what context was this document created?
* Why did the individual choose this form or medium?
* What do the visual components of the text convey in terms of its meaning or status?
* Who authored/created it?
* For what purpose?
* Under what circumstances?
* Where did this document---e.g., article, art work, cartoon---originally appear?
* What alternative interpretations might you offer based on this same document?
* For whom did they create it?
* What biases or other cultural factors might have shaped the message of this document?
* Why are you looking at it now?
* What question are you using this document to answer?
* Is this document consistent with what we now know of the historical record from that time?
* Whose point of view is this document representing?
* What other perspectives are represented through other documents from this time or event? How does this story compare with that of the others?
* What limitations---self-imposed or otherwise---might affect the validity of or ability to generalize beyond this information?
* How can I verify the information in this document?
* Is the account believable? Is the account backed by other sources?
* Are there perspectives (e.g., slaves, the poor, immigrants) which are not represented through these or other primary source documents? If so, who represents their story/experience---and why should I believe them?
* How is one supposed to feel about the topic being presented?
* How is this document interpreted today---and if differently than in the past, why?
* What are the facts?
* What are the opinions (if comparing the primary source document against a textbook or article written later)?
* What criteria are most useful and appropriate to consider when evaluating the perspective or veracity of a primary source document?

#### Primary vs secondary sources: a lesson

Objective: Students will be able to form an initial concept of what historians call primary and secondary sources and learn how to interpret conflicting primary sources. (one class period)

Send a group of students on an errand to the school library or multimedia center (e.g., to borrow the "best" dictionary). White they are gone, stage an event to which the students remaining in the classroom will be eyewitnesses. It should surprise students but not upset or disturb them. Two that have been used successfully rely on an unexpected classroom visit: (a) Ask the principal to come into your class unexpectedly, sneak up behind you, and say, "Boo!" Surprised, you spill a cup of water. (b) Ask a colleague to come into your classroom unexpectedly and recite a poem very dramatically while you look on in surprise. Then, the unexpected visitor leaves.

Ask students immediately to write down legibly an eyewitness account of exactly what happened. Tell them not to talk with one another, but to rely only on their memory. They should record all the details: the time when the person came into the room, what he or she was wearing, saying, and doing; what you did in response, the expression on your face, any words that were spoken, and any physical movements.

Congratulate students on having just written what historians call a primary source. Explain to them that this was a pretend event for the purpose of teaching an important idea about history. When the committee returns with the dictionary, ask one of them to open it and read aloud the definition of primary (e.g., "first in time or order of development"). Explain that a primary source is one that is written at the time the event occurred by someone who was there.

Explain that secondary sources are accounts of an event written by a person or persons not present but who use primary sources as the basis for interpreting what happened. The group that had been out of the room now is welcomed back and given the task of composing a brief written account of what happened. They have nothing to rely on but their classmates' primary accounts. Have each student read aloud his or her primary account and instruct the committee to listen carefully. After each eyewitness has spoken (and inevitably there are differences), the group members confer with one another and write a secondary source, which is read to the class.

Ask the eyewitnesses to judge the secondary account. This will create a lively discussion. Lead a discussion: How and why did our primary sources differ from one another? Then, review the difference between primary and secondary sources. Ask students to write down the definition of primary and secondary sources and to contrast the two. Ask several students to read their definitions aloud. Collect them to read later.

#### Documentaries

Students can combine video editing and a narrative to produce documentaries. The best ones identify an unresolved question and adopt a certain point of view. Written analysis about the topic can be added by the students. One can use iMovie or PowerPoint to do it. The four steps are to research the topic, construct meaning with available multimedia, craft a written story to accompany the movie, and present. Through digital documentaries, you can have students do oral histories, interviews or reenactments of historical events.

#### Rubric for analyzing primary sources

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Exemplary | Adequate | Minimal | Attempted |
| Analysis of  Document | In-depth analysis and interpretation of  the document; distinguishes between fact and opinion; explores reliability of  author; compares and contrasts author's point of view with views of others | Offers accurate analysis  of the document | Demonstrates only a  minimal understanding  of the document | Reiterates one or two facts from the document but does not offer any analysis or interpretation  of the document |
| Knowledge of  Historical Context | Shows evidence of  thorough  knowledge of  period in which source was written; relates primary source to specific historical context in which it was written | Uses previous general historical knowledge to examine issues included in document | Limited use of previous  historical knowledge  without complete  accuracy | Barely indicates any  previous historical  knowledge |
| Identification of Key Issues / Main Points | Identifies the key issues and main points included in the primary source;  Shows understanding of author's goal(s) | Identifies most but not all of the key issues and main points in the primary source | Describes in general  terms one issue or concept included in the primary source | Deals only briefly and vaguely with the key issues and main points in the document |
| Resources | Uses several outside resources in addition to primary source | Uses 1–2 outside  resources in addition to primary source | Relies heavily on the  material/information  provided | Relies solely on the material /information  provided; no evidence of  outside resources |
| Identification of Literary Devices | Analyzes author's use of literary devices such as repetition, irony, analogy, and sarcasm | Mentions author's use of literary devices but does not develop fully | Does not discuss author's use of literary devices | Does not discuss author's  use of literary devices |
| Understanding of Audience | Shows strong  understanding of  author's audience | Shows some  understanding of author's audience | Shows little  understanding of author's audience | Shows no understanding  of author's audience |

#### Worksheets for analyzing primary sources

##### Documents

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1. | Type of document (Check one):   |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | \_\_ Newspaper  \_\_ Letter  \_\_ Patent  \_\_ Memorandum |  | \_\_\_ Map \_\_\_ Telegram  \_\_\_ Press release  \_\_\_ Report |  | \_\_\_ Advertisement  \_\_\_ Congressional record  \_\_\_ Census report  \_\_\_ Other | |
| 2. | Unique physical qualities of the document (Check one or more):   |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | \_\_ Interesting letterhead \_\_ Handwritten \_\_ Typed \_\_ Seals |  | \_\_\_ Notations \_\_\_ "RECEIVED" stamp \_\_\_ Other | |
| 3. | Date(s) of document:  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| 4. | Author (or creator) of the document:  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Position (Title):  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| 5. | For what audience was the document written? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| 6. | Document information (There are many possible ways to answer A-E.)   A. List three things the author said that you think are important:  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  B. Why do you think this document was written? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  C. What evidence in the document helps you know why it was written? Quote from the document. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  D. List two things the document tells you about life at the time it was written: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  E. Write a question to the author that is left unanswered by the document: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |

##### Photographs

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| A. | Study the photograph for 2 minutes. Form an overall impression of the photograph and then examine individual items. Next, divide the photo into quadrants and study each section to see what new details become visible.  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| B. | Use the chart below to list people, objects, and activities in the photograph.     |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | People | Objects | Activities | |  |  |  | |  |  |  | |  |  |  | |  |  |  | |  |  |  | |
|  | Based on what you have observed above, list three things you might infer from this photograph.  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| C. | What questions does this photograph raise in your mind?  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| D. | Where could you find answers to them?   \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |

##### Political Cartoons

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Level 1 | |
| Visuals | Words (not all cartoons include words) |
| List the objects or people you see in the cartoon. | Identify the cartoon caption and/or title.  Locate three words or phrases the cartoonist uses to identify objects or people within the cartoon.  Record any important dates or numbers that appear in the cartoon. |
| Level 2 | |
| Visuals | Words |
| Which of the objects on your list are symbols?  What do you think each symbol means? | Which words or phrases in the cartoon appear to be the most significant? Why do you think so?  List adjectives that describe the emotions portrayed in the cartoon. |
| Level 3 | |
| Describe the action taking place in the cartoon.  Explain how the words in the cartoon clarify the symbols.  Explain the message of the cartoon.  What special interest groups would agree/disagree with the cartoon's message? Why? | |

##### Posters

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. | What are the main colors used in the poster? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| 2. | What symbols (if any) are used in the poster? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| 3. | If a symbol is used, is it  clear (easy to interpret)? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  memorable? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  dramatic? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| 4. | Are the messages in the poster primarily visual, verbal, or both? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| 5. | Who do you think is the intended audience for the poster? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| 6. | What does the Government hope the audience will do? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| 7. | What Government purpose(s) is served by the poster? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| 8. | The most effective posters use symbols that are unusual, simple, and direct. Is this an effective poster? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |

##### Maps

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. | Type of Map (Check one): \_\_\_\_ Raised relief map \_\_\_\_ Topographic map \_\_\_\_ Political map \_\_\_\_ Contour-line map \_\_\_\_ Natural resource map \_\_\_\_ Military map \_\_\_\_ Bird's-eye view \_\_\_\_ Artifact map  \_\_\_\_ Satellite photograph/mosaic \_\_\_\_ Pictograph \_\_\_\_ Weather map \_\_\_\_ Other ( ) |
| 2. | Unique physical qualities of the map (Check one or more): \_\_\_\_ Compass \_\_\_\_ Handwritten \_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_ Notations \_\_\_\_ Scale \_\_\_\_ Name of mapmaker \_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_ Legend (key) \_\_\_\_ Other |
| 3. | Date of map:  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| 4. | Creator of the map:  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| 5. | Where was the map produced?  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| 6. | Map information  A. List three things in this map that you think are important:  1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  2. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  3. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  B. Why do you think this map was drawn? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  C. What evidence in the map suggests why is was drawn? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  D. What information does the map add to the textbook's account of this event? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  E. Does the information in this map support or contradict information that you have read about this event? Explain. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  F. Write a question to the mapmaker that is left unanswered by this map. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |

##### Artifacts

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. | Type of artifact  Describe the material from which it was made: bone, pottery, metal, wood, stone, leather, glass, paper, cardboard, cotton, wood, plastic, other material. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| 2. | Special qualities of the artifact  Describe how it looks and feels: shape, color, texture, size, weight, movable parts, anything printed, stamped or written on it. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| 3. | Uses of the artifact  A. What might it have been used for? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  B. Who might have used it? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  C. Where might it have been used? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  D. When might it have been used? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| 4. | What does the artifact tell us?  A. What does it tell us about technology of the time in which it was made and used? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  B. What does it tell us about the life and times of the people who made it and used it? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  C. Can you name a similar item today? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| 5. | Bring a sketch, a photograph, or the artifact listed in 4c above to class. |

##### Motion Pictures

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Step 1. Pre-viewing | | | |
| A | Title of film: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Record Group source: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | | |
| B | What do you think you will see in this motion picture? List three concepts or ideas that you might expect to see based on its title. List some people you expect to see based on its title. | | |
| Concepts/Ideas | People | |
| 1.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 2.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 3.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | 1.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 2.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 3.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | |
| Step 2. Viewing | | | |
| A | Type of motion picture (check where applicable)  \_\_\_\_ Animated cartoon \_\_\_\_ Documentary film \_\_\_\_ Newsreel \_\_\_\_ Propaganda film \_\_\_\_ Theatrical short subject \_\_\_\_ Training film \_\_\_\_ Combat film \_\_\_\_ Other | |  |
| B | Physical qualities of the motion picture (check where applicable)  \_\_\_\_ Music \_\_\_\_ Narration \_\_\_\_ Special effects \_\_\_\_ Color \_\_\_\_ Live action \_\_\_\_ Background noise \_\_\_\_ Animation \_\_\_\_ Dramatizations | |  |
| C | Note how camera angles, lighting, music, narration, and/or editing contribute to creating an atmosphere in this film. What is the mood or tone of the film? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | |  |
| Step 3. Post-viewing (or repeated viewing) | | | |
| A | Circle what you listed in the previewing activity that did occur in the motion picture. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | |  |
| B | What is the central message(s) of this motion picture? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | |  |
| C | Consider the effectiveness of the film in communicating its message. As a tool of communication, what are its strengths and weaknesses? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | |  |
| D | How do you think the filmmakers wanted the audience to respond? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | |  |
| E | Does this film appeal to the viewer's reason or emotion? How does it make you feel?  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | |  |
| F | List two things this motion picture tells you about life at the time it was made:  1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  2. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | |  |
| G | Write a question to the filmmaker that is left unanswered by the motion picture. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | |  |
| H | What information do you gain about this event that would not be conveyed by a written source? Be specific. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | |  |

##### Sound Recordings

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Step 1. Pre-listening | |
| A. | Whose voices will you hear on this recording? |
| B. | What is the date of this recording? |
| C. | Where was this recording made? |
| Step 2. Listening | |
| A. | Type of sound recording (check one):  \_\_\_\_ Policy speech \_\_\_\_ Congressional testimony \_\_\_\_ News report \_\_\_\_ Interview \_\_\_\_ Entertainment broadcast \_\_\_\_ Press conference \_\_\_\_ Convention proceedings \_\_\_\_ Campaign speech \_\_\_\_ Arguments before a court \_\_\_\_ Panel discussion \_\_\_\_ Other |
| B. | Unique physical qualities of the recording  \_\_\_\_ Music \_\_\_\_ Live broadcast \_\_\_\_ Narrated \_\_\_\_ Special sound effects \_\_\_\_ Background sound |
| C. | What is the tone or mood of this recording? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| Step 3. Post-listening (or repeated listening) | |
| A. | List three things in this sound recording that you think are important:  1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  2. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  3. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| B. | Why do you think the original broadcast was made and for what audience? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| C. | What evidence in the recording helps you to know why it was made? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| D. | List two things this sound recording tells you about life at the time it was made:  1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  2. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| E. | Write a question to the broadcaster that is left unanswered by this sound recording. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| F. | What information do you gain about this event that would not be conveyed by a written transcript? Be specific. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |

### Response activities to instructional stimuli

#### “Act-it-outs” with images: Kinesthetic & visual learning combined

Students' experience with this activity, as well as the image, will determine which form of act-it-out would be most effective. To ensure in-depth participation, you (or a student) will have to assume the role of an on-scene reporter and interview each of the characters about his or her role.

##### Types of act-it-outs

###### Scripted

For each main character in the scene, prepare a simple script that the actor can read to enliven the image, especially if the image shows two figures engaged in conversation. You might include blank lines in the scripts, where actors must insert appropriate information from their notes.

Use this approach early in the year. With a script, your actors will feel successful while honing their presentation skills, such as speaking in a loud, clear voice and facing the audience. The first few times, you may want to choose the actors, selecting the ones who will feel comfortable in front of the class. Later you can either ask for volunteers or continue to select students yourself.

###### With role cards

Rather than using complete scripts, you might sometimes provide each student actor with a role card that simply tells his or her name (when it is unknown, use an appropriate fictional name) and a brief explanation of who this character is. The cards should provide actors with some cues, ideas, key phrases, or questions to help them prepare for their roles and accurately represent their characters. Give actors their role cards before you begin asking spiral questions about an image. This way, they can be thinking in terms of their character as their understanding of the image grows. During the act-it-out, take the role of an on-scene reporter and interview the characters.

This kind of act-it-out works after students have succeeded in a few scripted act-it-outs. Again, pick the actors the first few times, selecting those who will feel comfortable in front of the class and do a good job. After students have some experience with this form of act-it-out, you can ask for volunteers. Later in the year, you can have students prepare the role cards themselves.

###### Become inanimate objects

Ask students to take the role of an inanimate object in the image and to think what they have seen from that point of view. For example, as the Statue of Liberty, what have they seen pass by? Or as the castle that Joan of Arc attacked, what do they see inside the walls? Outside the walls? Have students move around the classroom and share their responses with one another.

###### Talking statues

For images that include a large number of characters or that represent especially poignant moments in time, ask everyone to pretend to be one of the figures or objects in the image. Tell students to imagine what their character is thinking or feeling at that precise moment. Then ask a group of volunteers to come forward, and have them "freeze" into the precise body positions of the different figures. One by one, touch each character on the shoulder. That figure "comes to life" long enough to state what he or she is thinking or feeling and then freezes back into position. Each "talking statue" statement should be brief, ideally no more than one sentence. Use this form of act-it-out toward the beginning of the year or semester when you want to give many students the experience of being on stage but in a limited and highly structured way.

###### Group presentation

For images with several figures, put students into groups of four or five and assign one character to each group. On an overhead transparency or a handout, give each group some questions to discuss and to answer from the perspective of their character. Once groups have prepared their responses, ask a volunteer from each group to step into the image and take on the assigned role. During the act-it-out, you will assume the role of the on-scene reporter and interview the characters, asking questions similar to those discussed in the groups. This act-it-out works better when students are familiar with the act-it-out format and are ready to take on more responsibility.

###### Impromptu

Call for impromptu act-it-outs whenever you have an image showing dramatic interaction. First the class analyzes an image, completes any related reading, and records their notes. Then have volunteers step into the image with their notes, if needed, and take the roles of the figures. Either you or students in the audience can then act as on-scene reporters to do interviews. For images that are "read" easily, use the impromptu act-it-out before students do the reading to further pique their interest in the text. Impromptu act-it-outs are most successful later in the year when students are confident about dramatizing images and they need less structure, or when they are already familiar with the historical content of the image and can react to it spontaneously.

###### Guest panels

Have a list of steps for them to follow: review your role, learn about your historical figure, prepare your actor, prepare questions for the other characters, and prepare materials for the panel (costume, introductory statement, props, mask, group nameplate with illustration, and rehearse).

##### Involving the entire class

###### Audience as reporters

After several act-it-outs in which you model the questions an on-the-scene reporter should ask, have students take the role of reporters and prepare questions to ask the actors. Have reporters follow this procedure for asking questions: they stand up, identify the newspaper they represent, and direct their questions to a specific character. Remind reporters that their job is not to trick or stump the figures, but to get information from them. Disallow questions that are inappropriate or that the actors cannot answer based on the information that has been covered on the subject.

###### Assigning melodrama

You might assign members of the audience as either supporters or opponents of the event or figure depicted in the image. Then, when you are interviewing student actors during the act-it-out, have the rest of the class respond melodramatically to their comments, calling out things such as “Boo!,” “Hiss!,” “Ahhh!,” or “Hurrah!” For example, during an act-it-out on Shays's Rebellion, half the class would represent the government and the other half would represent the rebellious farmers. When the student representing the farmers speaks, half the class will boo and half the class will cheer, recreating the tense and divided atmosphere that existed during that era.

###### Chanting slogans

Suggest historically appropriate slogans for the audience to chant during an act-it-out. For example, during an act-it-out for an image showing Lenin addressing a crowd during the Russian Revolution, the watching class can chant, "Land, Bread, and Peace!" After you have suggested slogans for several act-it-outs, let students come up with an appropriate slogan to enhance an image. Also, have the audience hum at appropriate times. For example, during an act-it-out of a lunch counter sit-in in the civil rights era, students could hum "We Shall Overcome."

###### The participating crowd

For some events have the entire class come to the front, surround the actors in the act-it-out, and serve as a crowd around the scene shown in the image. For example, the class might pretend to be a group of students watching the Red Guard parade through the streets of Communist China, workers in a strike, or bank clients in front of a closed bank during the Great Depression.

###### As the sound effects

Have the audience contribute sound effects at appropriate times during an act-it-out. For example, during an act-it-out of an image showing European emigrants leaving on a ship and waving good-bye to their families, students at their desks might make the sound of the ship's horn or of family members on the dock shouting their farewells. Later, during an act-it-out of an image of European immigrants going through medical inspections at Ellis Island, have the audience make sounds that the medical inspector might hear through his stethoscope: clear, healthy breathing from some immigrants; labored, congested coughing from others. Give students clear directions about which sound effects are appropriate and when to make them.

###### As fact-checkers

Alert the audience to watch act-it-outs critically, listening for accuracies and inaccuracies in the presentations. Tell them to keep two lists: statements they hear that are accurate those that are inaccurate. After the act-it-out, ask students to share one accurate and one inaccurate fact. Encourage them to acknowledge the actors' efforts and to be sensitive to their feelings.

###### As actor-award bestowers

As members of the American Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences (AMPAS), they must pay careful attention during the act-it-out and then vote on the actors who deserve the Oscars for best performance. Academy members must vote using these criteria: the accuracy of the performance, how well they could hear and understand, and the humor or emotion shown.

#### Advertisements

Students can make ads that show migration, settlement, or the significance of a site. Example: Design a real estate ad to encourage people to move to Constantinople in the sixth century.

#### Annotated images

Make copies of an image related to the experience and have students annotate it. For example, after the assembly-line activity that helps students understand workers' grievances during the Industrial Revolution, they might annotate an image about it.



#### Caricatures

Students could draw a caricature to represent the main characteristics of a group, or to convey how an individual or group is or was perceived by another group.

#### Commemorative markers

Students can design and create plaques or markers to commemorate and summarize the significance of important places and events

#### Composing cooperative biographies

Composing biographies is an authentic way to infuse language arts into the history curriculum. Students first read biographies of a historical figure and then compose with teammates an original biography of this same figure.

*Procedure*

You will need to plan the several phases of the biography project:

l. Decide on the learning objectives.

2. Select the person about whom students will write their biographies.

3. Introduce the project to students, clarifying the objectives, rationale, and audience.

4. Help the students learn about the person and keep track of what they are learning.

5. Help them reflect on the person's life and times and identify key events in the person's life.

6. Orchestrate the cooperative production of biographies in small groups.

7. Conclude the project.

*Selecting a subject*

A criterion for selecting a good subject for biographical study is the likelihood that students will be captivated by the person's life. Students might become more interested in the person if information is available on his or her childhood. Another criterion is the availability of materials. If the subject is obscure, chances are good that neither the textbook nor the school library will have ample books, primary documents, narrative biographies, or other materials.

*Reflection and setting priorities*

After several days of reading, writing, and mapping their biographical subject's life, children are ready to reflect on this life and its times and places and to select key events. A few of these events will become the focal points of the chapters in the book students will write together.

*Brainstorming*

Ask students to brainstorm all the events in the subject's life that they found interesting, all the pivotal events, all the events they figure made the subject the most and least proud, and so on. The point here is to get a long list of varied events in the subject's life. When the brainstorming slows, have students take a break and do something physically active. When they return, they open their journals and search for other events to add to the list.

*Selecting events from the subject’s life*

Ask the class to select four or five of the key events brainstormed earlier. Or, you might have them choose one event in each of several categories that make sense with the person being studied. Still another criterion would have students select events that are turning points. They must make selections and set priorities. This is what every historian has to do. "No historian tries to write a 'complete' account and no one would have time to read one."

Once the key events have been selected, students go into groups of four members. Direct each group to divide the events among themselves, each choosing one event. Dividing the events and thus the labor is crucial to the upcoming task: producing an original biography.

*Writing and illustrating*

The students are now ready to write and illustrate. Each group will produce a biography on the same subject. Some teachers have each group use the same biography title.

Each person in the group is responsible for a chapter. The chapter's topic is the event selected before. If you wish, use the Jigsaw method. One member of each group is working on the same key event as one student in each of the other groups; these students can meet together to work on their chapter - discussing, sharing, and revising one another's drafts.

Whether you use jigsaw or not, the students’ work has two parts: they write a description of their event and draw an accompanying illustration. The least experienced writers may produce only a couple of paragraphs. Press more experienced writers to produce a longer description. The illustration is embedded in the text somewhere, as in published biographies. Each group thus produces the rudiments of a biography: a title page and four chapters.

*Additional parts of the book*

* Title
* Foreword: This is written by someone other than the four authors: a parent, another teacher, the mayor, a school board member, or the bus driver. Instruct the Foreword writer to write no more than one page and to first tell readers how you can relate to the subject of the biography was written and secondly, tell readers something about the book.
* Introduction with Time Line and Map: This is written by the group and contains a brief message telling readers about the person. Who is it? Where and when did he or she live? What did he or she do? Why? It is also considerate to share the topic of each chapter by sketching a time line of the subject's life. Illustrate the “where” with a map and a legend.
* Chapters 1-4: Each chapter needs a title and author name.
* About the Authors' Page: Ask the students to write a paragraph about themselves. They can decide how long this should be. Students can be prompted to tell readers their full name, the name of the city or town where they live, their age, and something they like to do.
* Bibliography: Students list the resources they used to develop their section of the biography.

*Dealing with bias*

Students must learn how to sift through competing accounts and compose a fair-minded one. They will have to read several accounts, and this is a great chance to compare how different biographers portray the same person and events. Help students do this by creating a chart listing the multiple biographies they have read down the left and dimensions for comparison across the top: Evidence: What facts does the author share? Focus: What is the author attending to and ignoring? Goal: Is the biography more an inquiry or an admiration - a paean?

*Concluding the project*

Copy the biographies so there is one for each student. Have students complete a self-assessment checklist and clip it to their copy. Details about the delivery of the books to the audience named at the project’s beginning need to be discussed. A concluding discussion should follow:

1. What have you learned about how history shaped this person’s life, and about how her life shaped the history into which the next generation was born?

2. What have you learned about writing?

3. What is a biography? Whom would you like to read about next?

4. At which cooperative skill do you excel?

5. What have you learned about locating resources in the library?

6. What was difficult about writing a fair-minded account?

7. How would you describe a time line to a younger student?

#### Dialogues

Have students write a dialogue that highlights the opposing viewpoints of two figures. Dialogues should be written in a conversational tone and include the salient points for each speaker.

#### Eulogies

Students can write eulogies that extol the virtues of a prominent historical figure or civilization. Eulogies should be written in formal language: They include a brief summary of the person (or civilization), an elaboration of that person's legacy, and a conclusion about how the achievements of that person affect the world today. A eulogy to the Roman Empire, for example, would summarize its accomplishments and list how these are still seen in the world today.

#### Facial expressions

By drawing heads with pertinent facial expressions and related thought bubbles, students can summarize the feelings of groups who have different perspectives on a single topic. Example: Draw heads and show facial expressions for the feelings of the Mongols, the Chinese government, and the Chinese peasants after the Mongol invasion. Make thought bubbles above the heads to show what each group might be thinking.

#### Flow charts

Students can draw flow charts to represent causal relationships or to show steps in a sequence. Example: Create a flow chart that chronicles how the Cold War intensified from 1945 to 1949.

#### Human bar graphs

This is a kinesthetic activity in which students themselves are the bars of the graph.

#### Illustrated dictionary entries

Students explain key terms in a lesson by making their illustrated dictionary entries. They define them in their own words, give a synonym and an antonym, and illustrate that represents the term.

#### Illustrated proverbs

Students choose a familiar proverb that helps explain complex concepts, and then illustrate the proverb to show how it pertains to the situation they are studying.

#### Invitations

Students can design invitations that highlight the goals and key facts of big events. Example: Design an invitation for prospective delegates to the Constitutional Convention. Include information about when the convention will begin and end, where it will be, who has been invited, and what will be done at the meeting. Invitations must include a bold title, a catchy statement to entice delegates to attend, and other creative touches common in formal invitations.

#### Newspaper editorial

Help students understand bias by assigning them to write an editorial about an event. Editorials state their position on the issue, use language reflecting the bias of the newspaper, and contain supporting evidence. For example, students might assume the role of an Islamic editorial writer commenting on the Crusades as a holy war, a military invasion of Islamic territory, and a genocide against the Muslims.

#### Oral-history projects with real people

Encourage students to interview real people and to write oral histories. Prepare them by doing a mock interview in class and asking well-conceived questions. Then have them make a list of 20-30 questions to ask their interviewee. Afterwards, their write-ups should include an introduction to the interviewee, direct quotes and paraphrasing from the interview, and an analysis of the interviewee's perspective. One great oral history topic for today's students is the Vietnam War. Require them to identify someone affected by the war, such as a protestor, a conscientious objector, a soldier, a parent of a soldier, a local politician, and then ask questions like “what do you remember about the war,” how did it affect you,” and “how did the war change our nation?”

##### Questions to consider first

Some planning will ensure that your students get as much as possible out of the activity. Because a large oral history project require a commitment of time from teachers and students, take the time in advance to consider issues that can arise and how you will deal with them.

What are your goals?

Thinking about the project goals early on can help you choose an appropriate scope, a timeframe for its completion, and the readings, guest speakers, and in-class activities that will make it a success. Spend your time and energy achieving these goals instead of trying to "do everything.”

How will you manage the time involved?

Oral history projects are time-consuming. In addition to your planning time, your class may need to learn about these topics or time periods, conduct background research, find interviewees, learn oral history techniques, practice interview skills, conduct interviews, listen to the recordings and transcribe pieces of them, discuss their findings, and produce a final project. Create a timeline to help you fit these steps into the curriculum. An in-depth project could involve class time and homework assignments spread out over several weeks from start to finish, but the rewards in terms of both historical understanding and student confidence are immeasurable.

On the other hand, a teacher with little time for an involved project could plan other options such as using pre-recorded tapes to supplement written sources or inviting a guest speaker to be interviewed by the class. These kinds of activities can be easily worked into existing lessons and still enrich student’s understanding of and connection to the past in significant ways. Decide about the time you can commit and then plan ahead to manage the steps accordingly.

How will you teach your students about interviewing?

Many students will love to use a recorder and interview an adult. But even in a group setting some students can be intimidated. They might worry that the interviewee will dislike them, that they won't think of good questions, or that the interview will be plagued with awkward silences. Train them ahead of time to give them the confidence and skills that they will need.

During an interview, students can ask follow-up questions but they should not challenge the interviewee’s truthfulness or disagree with their opinion. The work of sifting out lies from accuracy and opinion from fact can come later in class with your guidance. Besides, it is good to record an interesting folktale or a legend told by an elder as long as we then think critically.

Will your students work alone or in groups?

Let students work together and share the burdens of research, question-writing, and interviewing. Consider whether you want each student to interview someone individually and then complete a group project about all of their interviews or whether you will allow students to conduct their interviews as a group. Will you permit any students to opt out of conducting their own interviews and, instead, read an interview or take on added responsibilities for their group’s final paper? Set fair and consistent group work policies right from the start.

Will students choose their own interviewees?

Elementary school students should interview people you handpick or whom they already know such as their parents, grandparents, neighbors and other trusted adults. Interviewing family members and family friends is a valuable experience for students; they can learn a great deal of history from their relatives. Moreover, connecting historical events to someone they know well can bring those events vividly to life. Students will also likely not be intimidated by them.

If you want students to conduct interviews on specific topics, however, especially topics for which they may not know appropriate people to interview, you will need to handpick interviewees for them. It would be most appropriate for interviewees to come to the school so that students could conduct interviews during school hours. Whether you or the students choose the interviewees, you'll want to define the criteria for interviewees in the project:

Does the person need to be over a certain age? Does s/he need to remember particular events? Can s/he be related to the student?

Use a letter to inform interviewees about the project, including the possible uses of their recorded interview (such as playing tapes in class, creating a mural or play from their stories, the teachers saving tapes from year to year, etc.). Give each interviewee a copy of the letter they can sign to give their informed consent for the recording and for the subsequent use of the interviews. A sample release form is on the next page; ask your principal if anything should be added to it.

What will students do with the raw material?

Ask students to transcribe just one interesting section from each interview, or ask them to create a 'tape log" in which they listen to their tapes while jotting down the topics covered. Students could be asked to create one or two illustrations, with short captions, that bring out the key ideas. These activities can be fun for students and give them a taste of transcription.

What will happen to the tapes after they are collected?

Consider ways of preserving your students' work by creating an archive in your school library or donating the recordings to an organization that can preserve them and make them available to others. If you plan to make the files available to outside researchers, you will need the students and their interviewees to sign a legal release form, giving you permission to make the recordings available. If you decide to archive the original tapes in your classroom, you may want to create 'working' copies for students to use in crafting their papers or other projects, as well as copies to offer to interviewees as a "thank you" for participating in the class project.

What will be the final product?

Will students just record the interview or will the tape be used for other lessons and activities? Can students in your class work well collaboratively? Be creative in thinking about possible related assignments. Students could produce exhibits that use photos, research documents, and excerpts from their interviews; write and perform a play based on their interview stories; or develop a slideshow or presentation in which they play some excerpts and discuss them with the class. Artistic students could create a art project about the interview’s themes. Older students could make a documentary film or a website to share their research with a broader audience. You might create a long list of possible "end projects" and allow each student or group to choose.

How will your class give something back to the community?

Interviewees give us a tremendous gift when they invite us into their lives and share their stories with us. It’s important to acknowledge that gift, treat it with respect and give something back. Will your students write thank you notes, send copies of the files to the interviewees, invite them to hear and see their final projects, or attend a class performance or slideshow in the community? Model appropriate behavior for researchers while also building good will in the community.

##### 

##### Template of interviewee permission letter

In view of the historical value of this oral history interview, I (name of elder interviewee) knowingly and voluntarily permit theses students, (name of student interviewers), of (name of class and school) the full use of this information for educational purposes. This tape may become part of a classroom collection of oral history tapes, to be used this year and in the future.

Signed:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

##### Students’ process

*(as worded to them)*

With guidance from me, read about the historical topic at hand. Plan the questions you want to ask. Write out three questions your group could ask the person whom you will interview. Think of things they might want to tell you. Ask for first-hand experiences.

Write questions that will need more than a yes/no answer, such as why/how questions. Then test your questions with a partner. Play the role of the interviewer and then the interviewee. Are the questions clear and easy to understand? Are they worded in a way that is easy for you to say?

Sound-recording checklist:

* Label the file tape with the date and topic of your interview, and the name of the adult.
* Set the microphone as close as possible to the adult or use a "clip-on" microphone.
* Be away from other noises, such as a humming refrigerator or traffic noise from the street.
* Speak directly to the adult and listen carefully.
* Leave the recorder on to make an uninterrupted recording of the session.

Practicing good manners:

* Be on time.
* Be prepared. Have your questions and recording device ready.
* Be polite. Say please and thank you and address people formally (using Mr., Ms., etc.)
* Introduce yourselves and explain what the interview is for.
* Don’t rush. Ask your questions one at a time. Be patient when answers take a long time.
* Do not argue. Oral histories are not always accurate. Be happy with what you get.
* Avoid using expressions such as “I see” or “uh-huh,” which distract future listeners.
* End your interview by thanking the person being interviewed.
* After the interview, send a thank you letter.

Conducting the interview:

Introduce yourself, and thank him or her for agreeing to speak with you. Ask if you can record the conversation and have him or her sign a Release Form so you can share the information you collect with others. Briefly describe the research project your group has chosen.

Now it is time to start recording. Give your name, age, the class and school you attend, and its location. Then ask for the interviewee’s name and where and when they were born. If the speaker strays from the topic, refocus them by asking one of your prepared questions. Ask follow-up questions. End early if you have asked all your questions, but do not run overtime.

Listen carefully while the adult is talking. Often, what a person says may suggest a follow-up question for you. Jot it down quickly. That way you can ask the follow-up questions at a pause in the interview, without interrupting them. Be sure to say thank you" at the end of the interview.

#### Perspective pieces

Students can make drawings or write newspaper articles to show different perspectives on controversial figures, events, and concepts. For example, they might draw a pioneer and a Native American and list their different perspectives on the advantages and disadvantages of westward expansion by white settlers.

#### Political cartoons and comic strips

Students create these to give social and political commentary on important events.



#### Postcards

Students design and write messages on postcards to summarize info about places or events.

#### Posters

Students draw posters to show political ideas, a figure’s point of view, or the reason behind big events. For example, they might design a Wanted poster for King John. The poster would list grievances the English have against him and the benefit of forcing him to sign the Magna Carta.

#### Report cards

Graded evaluations are a way for students to assess the policies of leaders or governments. Example: Evaluate Hatshepsut's performance as pharaoh. Give a letter grade (A+, A, A-, B+. and so on) and a corresponding written explanation on each of these topics: expanding the empire, fostering trade with other peoples, and balancing the power among different groups in Egypt.

#### Sales pitch

Have students discuss a question that requires them to synthesize or evaluate information from the activity. Then ask pairs to write a short (20-second) sales pitch or design a mini advertising billboard that will convince others to reach the same conclusion. Have pairs mingle around the room, selling their idea or perspective to other pairs. Afterward, ask the class whose sales pitch or billboard they found most convincing and why. For example, after students have analyzed a series of political cartoons representing different American attitudes toward immigrants around 1900, have them discuss which cartoon they most agree with and why.

#### Sensory figures

Students make a simple drawing of a prominent figure and label it with descriptions of what that person might be seeing, hearing, saying, feeling, or doing - to convey significant thoughts, feelings, and experiences. Example: Create a sensory figure for Lady Surasaki Shiki that represents daily life in Japan's Imperial Court during the 11th century.



#### Spectrums

By placing information on a spectrum, students can show their understanding of multiple perspectives on a topic or express an opinion about it. Use a 10- to l5-foot piece of masking tape to create a spectrum at the front of your room. Have pairs discuss a question that forces them to synthesize or evaluate information from the activity. Then have each pair choose one student to stand along the spectrum to represent their response to the question. Facilitate a discussion in which the students who remain seated justify the position of their partner along the spectrum.

#### Timeline

Classroom timeline: Make a laundry line with index cards.

#### Two-sided Hero/Wanted! poster

For controversial figures, have students create a Hero/Wanted! poster that both praises and criticizes them. Each poster should have an illustration, background info, and lists of the person's accomplishments and "crimes." Students will think critically as they explore dual perspectives. For example, a poster of Hernando Cortes would list his accomplishments in one place (expanded the Spanish empire; was courageous in battle) and his alleged crimes in another (he was a traitor and marauder; he killed many Aztecs and destroyed most Aztec cultural traditions).

### Teaching current events

#### Criteria for selecting events

* Interest – It should address an issue that captures the attention of students.
* Authenticity – It should address a problem that is important to the students’ families lives.
* Value conflict – It should have competing values that students with some help can identify.
* Pluralism – It should be open to interpretation from different cultural and political perspectives and enable students to see these perspectives on a personal and societal level.
* Perennial – The event should be central to one or more enduring public issues.
* Curriculum match and materials – The issues should be related to the curriculum and students should be able to find suitable resources for studying them.

#### Using the newspaper (online or print)

* Help students read and comprehend a newspaper article about an event they can study.
* Have students identify the facts of the case.
* Have them identify the controversial issues in the case.
* Select one of the issues with students, one requiring a decision.
* Identify alternatives.
* Predict consequences of choosing each alternative.
* Discuss.
* Decide.
* Publish the decision and the reasons for it in a report to the classroom, the school newsletter, or in a letter to the city council.

#### Using Flickr to teach current events

Flickr ([http://www.flickr.com](http://www.flickr.com/)) is a valuable tool here. Many times photos appear on Flickr (or Instagram) before large news organization websites post them. Amateur journalists use their phones to e-mail photos right to their Flickr pages, posting images almost as they happen. (Of course, this is something that you and your students can do as well. There are many ways in which teachers and students can learn about news and photojournalism in this way.

It's also easy to send images from Flickr to your aggregator, blog, or webpage. Stream to the class homepage all of the photos your students publish. This way they are collected in an easily accessible space. If students have their own blogs, they can add their own photo streams as well. Those pictures could be brought right to the blog via the RSS feed for that tag, or via the "blog this" feature that appears with every photo you can view on the site.

##### Or for world geography

Flickr can also be used for "photo field trips," in which students search for images from a certain part of the world from at least three different users. They then put the images together in a PowerPoint presentation with a reflection on what they found. This site is a great place to start:

<http://www.quickonlinetips.com/archives/2005/03/great-flickr-tools-collection/>

### Field studies (Field trips)

Field studies are only conducted when the experiences cannot be conducted in the classroom.

1. Delve into informative resources on the subject. This will be valuable in your preparations and in initiating follow-up and study activities.
2. Get administrative permission and make transportation arrangements. It is best to use a public conveyance or a school bus.
3. Make arrangements with the place of the visit. This should include the group’s arrival time, where the students are to go, who will guide them, and so forth. Make the excursion yourself prior to visiting with the students. This will alert you to potentially bad situations. Make arrangements for snacks and for lunch and restroom facilities, and make sure that the guide is aware of the purposes of the field study. Also, are there any special rules or regulations that must be followed at the site? What about accommodations for students with special needs?
4. Have an alternative plan in case of bad weather or something else.
5. Make plans for chaperones. A 8:1 child-adult ratio is the maximum. Inform them of your expectations of both them and the students and also the purpose of the study.
6. Introduce the topic and its purpose with pictures of the destination. Read from books, share brochures or posters, and talk about what to expect at the site.
7. Ask them in groups do a KWL beforehand and during the field study. Give each student a specific responsibility (recorder, photographer or illustrator, organizer, and so on). Have them develop an overarching research question as well as questions for the guide. Each group researches data about the topic. When they return, each group will report to the class:
   1. facts they thought they knew about but then found were incorrect;
   2. new things they learned that went beyond what they thought they knew;
   3. questions they had that were answered as a result of the field study; and
   4. questions that were not answered that they would be willing to investigate.
8. Discuss how to record information. If they are to take notes, teach note-taking skills. Will each of them have a worksheet or a clipboard? Clipboards aid both note taking and question asking, and they show the hosts that the students are serious about learning.
9. Have them discuss their expectations in terms of both interaction and content knowledge.
10. Ensure the students understand the expected standards of conduct. Let them have a voice in determining these. Responsibility for a good trip rests personally with each member of the group. Time spent on this part of the preparation for the excursion will pay dividends.
11. Obtain written permission from each parent or guardian. Do not take students who do not return signed permission slips. Ensure that parents understand the appropriate clothing.
12. Laminate colorful cards with the school name and phone number on them. Have students wear them as well as a whistle. Also take a phone with you in case of an emergency.
13. Take a first-aid kit or nurse. Wash rugs will be needed if a child gets sick on the bus.
14. Prepare nametags (including the school name and your name), and assign students a buddy.
15. Take roll before leaving the school grounds and "count noses" frequently during the trip to make sure no one has gotten lost or left in some restroom along the way.
16. Arrive on time, have students ready for the guide, and introduce the guide to the class.
17. Keep the students who will need your attention close to you.
18. Make sure that time is allowed for answering students' questions and make sure that each one can see and hear adequately.
19. Before leaving, summarize with students the visit. Check to ensure that all are with you.
20. Upon returning, have the class write a thank-you note to the place and to the adults who accompanied the class. Students can also draw pictures to express their appreciation.
21. Evaluate with the students the extent to which the trip purpose has been achieved. “Did we accomplish what we set out to do? Did we get the answers to our questions? What did we learn that we didn’t know before? What are some things we will want to find out?”
22. Evaluate class conduct in terms of the standards set before the trip. This evaluation should always include something positive as well as ways in which the group can improve in the future. Save this list of these suggestions for review before the next trip.
23. Discuss enrichment projects in which students may engage for further study, such as construction activities, original stories, poems, plays, and diaries. Students might want to download audio-visual materials that both further their understanding of concepts and serve as tools for research reports. They might also want to video-conference with real people.
24. Draw on information and experiences from the trip for other subjects taught in class.

#### Possible places

Every community has places that can be visited by classes and thereby assist with the enrichment of history, geography, and all of social studies. Any of the following could be used:

* Historical societies and sites, monuments, dams, hospitals, airports, aquariums, libraries, fish hatcheries, museums, local stores, a razing of a building, and legislative bodies in session

#### Or through service learning

Service learning engages students in service to their community and gives them the chance to learn by reflecting on the experience. Reflecting about the learning is critically important to the success of the program and is what differentiates service learning from community service.

#### Virtual field studies

Have the class research far away places they want to visit, and get them to share images and info.

### Maps

For map projections, use the metaphor of peeling an orange. It’s like peeling the globe.

### Suggested music by historical period

#### Prehistoric

Prehistoric humans sang music and played instruments such as the drum (hollow log), whistle (hollow reed), and harp (stretched animal intestines), but we do not know what prehistoric music sounded like. Encourage students to experiment and produce sounds that might have sounded like those of this era. Perhaps the best example of what early harp music sounded like is *The Art of Harp* from the International Harp Festival, Volume One (Earth Beat CD R272496) available from Earth Beat, P.O. Box 1460, Redway, California 95560. This CD is an awesome collection of harp music from such distant locations as Ireland, Germany, and Uganda.

#### Ancient

Written music does not appear until the Middle Ages, but we do know what instruments were played from descriptions on wall paintings of the ancient Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans. Following these models and ancient instruments still used in the Middle East, Ali Jihad Racy has produced an interesting CD entitled *Ancient Egypt* [ILYRCD 7347] produced by Lyrichord Discs, 141 Perry St., New York, NY 10014. We really do not know how ancient Egyptian music sounded, but Racy's CD is likely to be as close as we can get to the way it might have sounded.

For ancient Greece, a CD from France is entitled *Musique de la Grece Antique* by the Atrium Musicae de Madrid under the leadership of Gregorio Paniagua [Harmonia Mundi HMA1901015]. The CD gives a fascinating glimpse of the music of ancient Greece based on the rare fragments of papyrus and marble containing music hymns or comments concerning music. Examples include the "Premier Hymn to Apollo" found on a marble slab at Delphi in 1893 and a "Hymn to the Sun" based on a Byzantine papyrus preserved by Galileo in Venice in 1581.

#### Medieval

The four-CD set entitled *The Medieval Experience* [Archiv Production 449 082 2 by Deutsche Grammophon] contains Gregorian chants, songs of troubadours, motets, and masses from the Middle Ages, and is sung by groups such as the Early Music Consort of London and the choir of the monks of the abbey of Notre Dame de Fontgombault. Also impressive are recent CDs celebrating the Jewish, Christian, and Muslim multicultural contributions to the medieval music of Spain. *Iberian Garden* [Dorian Discovery DIS 80151] by the Altramar Medieval Music Ensemble contains fascinating medieval selections from all three religious groups. More specific is *Musique Arabo-Andalouse* [Harmonia Mundi CD 90389] by the Atrium Muisicae de Madrid. The sheer elegance and beauty of Muslim culture in Andalucia [Al Andalus] is captured musically in this recreation of the music of Muslim Spain during the Middle Ages.

#### Renaissance

*Canzoni e Danze* [Deutsche Grammophon Archiv Production D111360] by Piffaro the Renaissance Band creates a delightful wind ensemble of canzoni and dances played on such archaic instruments as bagpipes, shawns, sagbuts, recorders, crumhorns, and harps. *A Song of David: the Music of the Sephardim and Renaissance Spain* [Dorian Discovery DIS 80130] played by La Rondinella reconstructs Jewish Ladino Sephardic music of Spain before their expulsion in 1492. *1492 - Music from the Age of Discovery* [EMI Classics D115591] by the Waverly Consort presents a fascinating selection of songs such as a praise to Fernando [King Ferdinand] for conquering the Moors, a sad love song of three Moorish girls, an Arabic Andalusian instrumental piece, and selections from the palace songbook of the Duke of Alba.

#### Enlightenment

A sampling of these magnificent sounds of this baroque period includes the following:

* Johann S. Bach, *Brandenburg Concertos* (Philharmonia Slavonia, PMG CD. 160 407).
* Antonio Vivaldi, *The Four Seasons* (Musici de San Marco, PMG CD. 160 109).
* Mozart, *Symphonies 21, 30, and 33* (Mozart Festival Orchestra PMG CD. 160 114).
* Canadian Brass, *High, Bright, Light and Clear-The Glory of Baroque* Brass (CD RCD 14574).

Another great addition is the beautiful Spanish baroque composition *Luz y Norte* of 1611 by Spanish composer Ruiz de Ribayaz. This piece is recreated by the Harp Consort under the direction of Andrew L. King (Deutsche Harmonia Mundi CD. 05412-77340-2, through BMG).

#### 19th Century

The power of the early 19th century can be felt especially through Beethoven's Fifth Symphony. The best way to listen and study this is through a CD-ROM entitled *Beethoven's 5th-The Multimedia Symphony* (Future Vision Multimedia, l-800-472-8777). Listen to it straight through.

Project the written music on a screen as the symphony is playing. Analyze its composition section by section. Listen to each instrument separately. This is a magnificent introduction to the master musician of the early nineteenth century. Although just a CD without the ROM, the late 19th century can well be heard in Wagner's powerful *Der "Ring" Ohne Worte* (The "Ring" without Words), by Lorin Maazel and the Berliner Philharmoniker (TELARC CD-80154).

#### 20th Century

A single music idiom did not exist for the 20th century. Dynamically new musical genres emerged, primarily blues, jazz, rock, and their offshoots. Listed are representative samples by decade, which should give excellent background music to the study of these time periods.

* Claude Debussy (from France, 1900s) *Le Mer, L'Apres and Midi d'un Faune*. Leonard Bernstein and the New York Philharmonic. Sony CD. SMK47546.
* Jelly Roll Morton (US, 1910s) *Blues & Stomps from Rare Piano Rolls*. Biograph Records. CD 8000003HLL.
* G. Gershwin (from the United States, 1920s) *An American in Paris, Cuban Overture, and Porgy and Bess*. Eduardo Mata and the Dallas Symphony Orchestra RCA. CD 7726-2-RV.
* B. Goodman (US, 1930s) *Benny Goodman-Live at Carnegie Hall*. Columbia CD. G2K 40244
* Aaron Copland (US, 1940s) *The Copland Collection: Orchestral & Ballet Works* 1936-1948. Sony CD. SM3K 46559.
* Elvis Presley (US, 1950s) *Elvis-The King of Rock & Roll: The Complete 50s Masters*. RCA CD. 07863 66050 2.
* The Beatles (England, 1960s) *The Beatles-Past Masters Volume One*. EMI Records CD. COP I 90043 2.
* Miles Davis (US, 1960s) *Kind of Blue*. Columbia CD. CK64935.
* Bob Marley (Jamaica, 1970s). Bob Marley & The Wailers-Uprising. Tuff Gong Island Records CD.422 846 2ll 2.
* Isaac Hayes (US, 1970s). *Isaac Hayes-Greatest Hit Singles*. Stax Records SCD-85l5-2.
* CCR (US, 1970s) *Credence Clearwater Revival-Chronicle*. Fantasy FCD 623 CCR.2.
* Madonna (US, 1980s) *The Immaculate Collection*. Warner Brothers CD. B000002LND.
* U2 (from Ireland, 1980s).*U2-War*. Island Records CD 90067-2.

### Mnemonics and related conceptual organizers

#### PERSIAN for cultures and civilizations

*Definitions and guiding questions*

Political

Who is in charge? What is power based on? Who gives that person or group power? Is there a contract? What's the government structure? Are there significant wars, treaties, courts, or laws?

Economic

How do people earn their food? Is it based on agriculture, commerce, small trades or professions, or industry, like manufacturing or technology? Where's the money? What are the valued and traded commodities? What technologies or industries define culture?

Religious

What is the meaning of life? Where did the group come from? What happens when they die? How do they spend their lives? Who talks to god(s)? What are basic beliefs? Are there leaders or documents that define religion? Are there conversations? If so how?

Social

How does the group relate to one another? How do people communicate? What do people do together? How is the group organized? What are the family and gender relations? Are there social classes? How they live? Are there inequalities?

Intellectual

Who are the thinkers? What groups are given the chance to learn? How do people learn? Where does knowledge come from? Also look at philosophy, math, science, and education.

Artistic

How do they express themselves? What commitment to self- expression do they have? What technology or resources are given to art? Also look at art, music, writing, literature.

Near

In what geographic region is this located? What geographic landscape makes up the region? How are the people/events effected by the geography? How do the people interact with their environment? How does the environment define the culture/civilization?

*Chart*

* Political
* Leaders, elites:
* State structure:
* War:
* Diplomacy, treaties:
* Courts, laws:
* Economic
* Type of system:
* Technology, industry:
* Trade, commerce:
* Capital/money:
* Types of businesses:
* Religious
* Holy books:
* Beliefs, teachings:
* Conversion:
* Sin/salvation;
* Deities:
* Social
* Family:
* Gender relations:
* Social classes:
* Inequalities:
* Lifestyles:
* Intellectual, Artistic
* Art, music:
* Writing, literature:
* Philosophy:
* Math & science:
* Education:
* Near (Geography)
* Location:
* Physical:
* Movement:
* Human/environment:
* Region:

#### RARE CREGS for individuals (neither Greg nor Craig, but “rare cregs”)

Race:

Age:

Religion:

Ethnicity:

Class (social class):

Region: (The South? Etc.)

Economic (rich, poor, etc.):

Gender:

Sexual orientation:

#### “Mr. Help” for geography

Movement:

Regions:

Human-Environment interactions:

Location:

Place

#### Story-line organizer for history

1. Title of event:
2. Main characters and words that describe them:
3. Main events:
4. Where? When?
5. Problem, conflict, or goal:
6. Outcome:

7. What is the big idea to be learned from this historical event?

### Role plays and simulations

The best way to use simulations is at the beginning of a unit when students have little prior knowledge of the historical outcome of a particular conflict. After the simulation is completed, the teacher can lead a very interesting discussion of why things happened the way they did and how they might have turned out differently in other countries. This debriefing period is the most valuable portion of the activity. Students will be eager to participate because they were active stakeholders in the decisions made. Follow-up activities might include an essay comparing the game to what actually occurred in history or a visit to the internet forum on alternative history where the students’ questions can be bounced off a group of history professors.

#### Role playing and its five stages

Students love playing roles. They enjoy taking on the identity of others. In this, they learn key social studies skills such as empathizing and seeing situations from multiple perspectives.

Stage 1: Initiation and Direction

Identify a topic that asks students to look at many sides of a difficult issue, requires them to develop an opinion, or includes key players with interesting personalities. A role play is not the way to teach a procedure or process, but it is an excellent way to explore an event, situation, or narrative with a crucial, decision-making component.

Stage 2: Describing the Context

Set the context and ensure students do not fall into the trap of “presentism” - role playing with hindsight. The situation must be set up and all perspectives explained clearly.

Step 3: Roles

In a successful role-playing activity everyone has a role. There may only be five or six key roles, but the entire class should be engaged in some way, perhaps as jurors, interested citizens, or newspaper reporters. Everyone has a role assignment, and they will need time to understand their role, to practice, and to “try on” their new identity. They must try to think like Thomas Jefferson or a land developer or whomever they have been assigned to become.

Stage 4: Enactment

Make sure students stay in role.

Stage 5: Debriefing

Depending on the role playing activity, students complete the action with a written reflection followed by a debriefing, which is the most important part of a role play; it is your chance to ask students to discuss, to reason, to draw conclusions, and to pull everything together.

Encourage students to identify and articulate their feelings. Some students, particularly those with weak intrapersonal intelligence, have difficulty identifying, describing, and sometimes dealing with their feelings. Focusing the initial portion of the discussion on the “affect” of an experiential exercise helps all students better understand how they reacted. If you neglect to encourage this sharing, students’ emotions may spill out in other classes or even at home.

Letting students discuss their feelings without judgment sends them the powerful message that it’s okay to have and share powerful emotions. This validation sets the foundation for the rest of the debriefing. Once students have discussed their feelings, they are ready to find the connections between the experiential exercise and the corresponding social studies concepts.

#### Simulation software

Simulation software can be used for instruction, guidance, extended practice, and assessment. The extent to which a simulation mimics reality is called fidelity. Simulations can be used before the formal presentation of new material to pique students' interest, activate what students already know about the topic, and provide a concrete example to relate to the more general discussion that follows. Simulations can also be used after students have been exposed to a new topic. This type of simulation lets students transfer what they have learned to an actual application and perhaps to reveal any misconceptions they may have.

The Oregon Trail:

Have students keep notes as they play the game and then write diary entries compatible with these notes. The Oregon Trail is so popular that websites have been developed and sites located to accompany the game. Such sites may provide scenes along the route of the trail, related historical information, or perspectives of Native Americans from the region.

The Carmen San Diego Series:

The game acquaints students with aspects of geography (location and countries, facts about specific places), requires the use of reference materials, and encourages note taking.

SimCity / SimEarth:

A player can set as a goal the development of any type of community that can be imagined - industrial center, metropolis, or rural town. At the level of general skill development, accepting the challenge of being mayor involves the player in both critical thinking and problem solving. The game provides a complex environment in which there are embedded data and problems and no perfect solutions. The way to survive is to establish priorities and then manipulate what can be manipulated in response to these priorities. If environmental sensitivity is a priority, one will find that it may not be feasible to expand the population beyond a certain point. At the level of specific skills and knowledge, the game provides insight into how cities and city government function. SimCity has a utility that converts contour maps published by the USGS into terrain maps for SimCity. You can locate an area familiar to you and attempt to populate it with Sims.

### Guest speakers

Get recommendations from other teachers, involved parents, and other school personnel. In this way, you can select speakers who will appropriately inform and motivate your students.

Genres:

retirees; arts/craft specialists; armed forces personnel; exchange students; members of the local historical society; newspaper reporters, editors, and staff writers; members of service organizations; environmental and conservation groups; 4-H and other club leaders; rabbis, pastors, and imams; doctors; lawyers; software developers; bankers; shop owners; union officials or representatives of local industries; recent immigrants or other newcomers to the community; artists who work on public murals or public sculptures; pilots; firefighters, police officers, and EMS personnel; librarians; government officials representing the three branches - judges (municipal court, federal court), legislators (city council members, state legislators), and executives (the mayor, the county commissioner, etc.), etc.

Beforehand:

You and your students will benefit the most if you send your visitor a list similar to this:

1. Remember that you are speaking to students, so please be careful of your vocabulary.
2. Bring something. Real, touchable objects that relate to your area of expertise help students understand your life and work.
3. As you speak, try to move so the students will feel personally involved in a while, too.
4. Share personal stories. Is there something that happened during your childhood that motivated you to do what you're now doing?
5. Allow time for questions. When students ask one, please repeat it to the class so all can hear.

Before the guest arrives, you and the students need to prepare. Practice interviewing and planning the interview questions. The Welcome Committee who meets the guest at the main office is appointed and plans what they will say.

During the visit:

Help students show courtesy and curiosity while enacting the interview or other planned activity.

Afterwards:

After the visit, review and organize the information and experiences, and publish a full report. This might be prepared in groups and published in the classroom newspaper or written individually and put in portfolios. A follow-up committee writes a thank-you note and mentions the class's plan to publish a report on the visit and promises to send a copy when it’s completed.

### Doing historical inquiry activities

A historical inquiry instills in students an understanding of the nature of history and how it is constructed in various historical texts (e.g., textbooks, films, or journal articles). Students learn how to find information, assess the sources and the author’s bias, assess the event’s significance, reconcile conflicting accounts, and create an interpretive account. Students develop critical researching skills and articulate a well-warranted argument or historical account.

#### The steps of historical inquiry

Historical investigation involves defensible scenarios for a past event for which there is no agreement. To engage in historical investigation, students must use their understanding of the past situation and key players in the event to create a hypothesis. Testing the hypothesis requires collecting and analyzing information to determine if the evidence supports it. Steps:

* Clearly describe the historical event to be examined.
* Identify what people know or agree about and what people do not know or disagree about.
* Develop a possible explanation or a resolution of the disagreement.
* Seek out and analyze evidence to determine if your explanation or resolution is plausible.

#### The GATHER model

1. (G) Get an overview.

2. (A) Ask a probing question.

3. (T) Triangulate the data.

4. (H) Hypothesize a tentative answer.

5. (E) Explore and interpret the data.

6. (R) Record and support your conclusions.

(G) Get an overview. Historical understanding requires a basic knowledge of the content and the historical context. Students cannot ask good questions without some understanding of the facts, people, events, and ideas within which the answer exists. Furthermore, students need contextual knowledge and perspective of time and place in order to construct sound historical arguments.

(A) Ask a probing question. Historical inquiry requires that students ask one or more good questions, those that launch an investigation into the data and ask students to analyze the data in order to find an answer. Good questions are therefore probing questions. For example, students' questions might indicate what they want to learn more about, verbalize a problem they are having trouble with, identify an issue to resolve, or explore cause and effect over time.

(T) Triangulate the data. Historical research requires that students obtain data from multiple sources. At least three types of information can be used: primary sources, secondary sources, and expert opinion (personal consultation). These sources form three points of a triangle and the process is a "triangulation." Embedded in the idea of triangulation is that of searching out information from multiple sources and using information from different types of sources.

(H) Hypothesize a tentative answer. A good working hypothesis is an educated guess that holds the basis for further investigation. When students hypothesize answers to their questions, they are making explicit a possible explanation for the facts as they understand them at the moment. A working hypothesis might be an unproved theory, a proposition, a supposition, a tentative explanation for a set of "facts", or a logical sequence for a disputed set of events.

(E) Explore and interpret the data. Once a working hypothesis has been generated, the students look to verify whether the hypothesis holds up under scrutiny. They must analyze and synthesize the new information gathered and relate that information back to the hypothesis (interpretation). If the data supports it, the students move on to writing and sharing their conclusions (next step). If the data does not support the hypothesis, students must revise the hypothesis, construct another tentative answer (previous step), which in turn must be subjected to further scrutiny (this step).

(R) Record and support your conclusions. Real historical inquiry requires that students have an opportunity to create historical narratives and arguments of their own. These narratives and arguments can take many forms (e.g. reports, essays, debates, editorials, hypermedia presentations), but the underlying purpose is share the conclusions students have drawn from the data they examined and provide evidence that these conclusions have validity.

#### The CLUES model

* Consider the source and the audience.
* Lay out the argument and the underlying values and assumptions.
* Uncover the evidence.
* Evaluate the conclusion.
* Sort out the political implications.

#### Wikinquiries

##### What is a wikinquiry?

In a Wikinquiry, students use a wiki to collaborate, communicate, and construct knowledge. The wiki allows greater collaboration during the inquiry between students within and across classes in addition to easy access to media sources. The students do not construct a new historical account but do edit the existing one within their textbooks and sometimes within Wikipedia too.

##### A wikinquiry’s objectives

To teach how to reconcile conflicting accounts of the past with primary and secondary sources;

To utilize the collaborative nature of a wiki by having students reconstruct textbook accounts into more detailed, comprehensive, nuanced, and often accurate historical accounts; and

To help students understand the nature of historical work and the ways in which history is encapsulated in media such as textbooks, digital documents, and video.

##### The five steps

1. Posing the problem

Questions should have several key attributes:

* They are questions that have multiple and competing legitimate answers or perspectives;
* They have readily available primary and secondary artifacts and accounts to draw on;
* They relate to events or topics traditionally included in textbooks in a narrow or neutral way.

The actual inquiry could be structured in a variety of ways. Try placing students in the roles of "expert" historians hired to make the textbook more interesting, in-depth, and more accurate. Have a site that has a front page that poses the inquiry question and provides some instructions, a page for the textbook passage, and links for the different "history departments." The links for each team of student historians should lead to a second page which has the same information as above with the addition of detailed instructions on how to edit the textbook section and annotated links. Group students into teams of historians and use a short video clip as the hook to engage the students in the inquiry and to provide some context for the lesson.

2. Exploring sources

Once the problem or question is established, students read through the textbook account. They then engage in reading, interpreting, and analyzing the selected primary and secondary sources. Outside of establishing a good question, the selection of sources is the most difficult part as many available sources are at too difficult of a reading level. These sources should prompt students to question the textbook account or provide more depth of information.

The new information should also be from a variety of sources (e.g., first person, secondary) and perspectives. Try to use at least three to five sources that have competing hypotheses. This depends on the time allowed for the lesson, the depth or length of the source, and the number of legitimate competing hypotheses for the particular question. The annotated links to the sources can be used as scaffolding, depending on the needs of the students.

3. Analysis and reconstruction

Before students begin the analysis of the sources, introduce the students to the particulars of the wiki and how to edit the textbook excerpt. They should make the excerpt more engaging, detailed, and rich, and should use data from the sources. They should also cite the sources they use in some way, either directly into the narrative or in the format of citation used in the class or school (e.g., Chicago, MLA, APA).

Groups decide how they want to proceed with the analysis of sources and re-construction of the text. Some groups may decide to split up the sources and then come back together as a group to do the synthesis while others may prefer to work together for the duration of the project. How students choose to proceed may be limited either by the number of computers available or by how you choose to structure their work. Ideally, each group would have access to a computer. If there is only one computer, rotate the groups as part of a stations activity or have them collaborate on incorporating different sources into one common classroom textbook account.

As the groups read, go from group to group encouraging them to contextualize the sources and to contrast the accounts with one another and with the textbook account. Give time reminders so that they don’t become too enthralled in one source. Critical thinking and inquiry occur while students discuss the sources within their groups and compare them to the textbook account.

The students will need to decide what should be included in their revised text and which sources should be most trusted most. This kind of group discussion should be encouraged or modeled since most students will focus on the rewriting of the text and not on analyzing the documents’ accuracy and authenticity. Have them deliberate over which of the opposing accounts has more validity. Also have them discuss the prominence of hypotheses and the data supporting them. Because only one student in a group can add to the wiki textbook entry at a time, it forces students to discuss and negotiate the text’s editing.

4. Debrief and comparison of accounts

After students complete their revisions of the textbook account, ask them to read other groups' revisions and discuss as a class why they came to different conclusions. This lets you discuss why groups might have differences in their accounts based on the same evidence, highlighting the subjective nature of historical work and limitations of space and style in textbooks.

If class time is an issue or the purpose is to encourage deliberation and individual accountability, students could contribute to the revised wiki entry over time, adding to, or refining, each other's work. As long as each student in a group has an identifiable username, you can track specific contributions from each student during the project. While this limits the collaborative analysis described above, it does encourage each student to contribute in substantive ways and provides more time for students to let ideas germinate before contributing them to the wiki.

In another variation, groups within the same period or groups from different periods could be provided with different sources, adding an additional layer to the debriefing. In this variation, students discuss both the difference in accounts and gain a sense of why different historical accounts might diverge depending on the sources that are available. This variation would take more time, both in teacher preparation and in the activity and debrief, but could be especially powerful for upper level middle or high school students.

5. Assessment

Assessment should focus on the collaboration of the group members (through self and group evaluations) and the ability to construct a warranted account, including the interpretation and use of sources to enrich and enliven the textbook passage. Use a rubric structured around the larger goals listed above, along with some aspects of writing conventions. Provide students with the rubric at the onset of the project. In addition, the wiki site should allow for peer assessment if you would like groups to assess and provide feedback on others' wiki pages.

#### Teaching opposite perspectives (SAC)

The best way to teach a topic that has two bitterly opposing perspectives is a Structured Academic Controversy (SAC). For more on see this, see page 132.

### Good activities for the end of a lesson

Debriefing the lesson helps students make connections to key concepts. Students should arrange their knowledge in some type of significant order - perhaps along a continuum, in categories, or according to geographic relationships.

#### Political Spectrum

Draw a line on the board or put masking tape on the floor to show a spectrum. Label the two ends with opposing terms, such as Conservative and Liberal, or Totalitarian and Democrat. Students then stand to show where particular figures or ideas best fit. For example, consider a foreign policy activity for which pairs review scenarios and decide whether they represent isolationism or imperialism. Students position themselves physically on the spectrum where a particular scenario would fall, and the class discusses the appropriateness of each placement.

#### Values-Orientation Spectrum

Students stand on a spectrum representing value judgments between poles such as Community Interest and Individual Interest. Challenge them to put various ideas or opinions on the spectrum. For example, suppose that students have been exploring Kennedy-era programs (such as the Peace Corps and VISTA) by analyzing a series of promotional posters. During the debriefing session, you would ask them to place the posters along a spectrum between “Values Our Government Emphasizes Today” and “Values Our Government Does Not Emphasize Today.”

#### Moral Continuum

Another variation is to challenge students to place the actions of individuals, groups, or nations along a moral continuum between such poles as Ethical and Unethical, or Expedient and Principled. For example, suppose an activity asks students to analyze a series of placards with a photograph and written information that indicates how a group in America responded to the Holocaust: the Roosevelt administration, the general public, Congress, youth, Jews, the media, the military, and the State Department. During the debriefing, you would ask students to physically stand with their placards between two poles labeled Just and Unjust.

#### Chronology

Students could order a series of events or trends chronologically. For example, after analyzing placards that show paintings from the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, students could put the placards in order. As they trace the evolution of artistic styles, they discover how a common theme, such as the Madonna or the crucifixion of Christ, changes as it is interpreted over time.

#### Logical Categorization

Debrief some activities by having students use their logical intelligence to sort placards by category: attributing a series of quotes to their correct authors, classifying art by its historical period, or assigning a group of governmental programs to their correct administrations. For example, an activity might have them matching Cold War terms - socialism, totalitarianism, democracy, freedom, communism, and equality – with placards of political cartoons.

## w.h.e.R.e.t.o. – Rethink, Revise, and Reflect

Give students many opportunities to rethink big ideas, reflect on progress, and revise their work. Guide them in self-assessment and self-adjustment.

## Rethink and Revise (self-editing and peer editing)

See the “Peer conferencing and revisions” section on page 209.

## Reflect: Student self-assessments

See the self-assessments throughout this document.

### For overall self-assessments

#### Weekly feedback form

1. What was the most interesting thing we did in class this week? What made it so interesting?

2. What was the most boring thing we did in class this week? What made it so boring?

3. What worked best for you this week in this class? In other words, what specific activity, lesson, technique, or tool helped you learn the most? Why?

4. What didn't work for you? What activity was the most confusing or unhelpful? Why?

5. Please answer Yes or No to the statements below. Please explain any “No” response.

|  |
| --- |
| The work was focused on big ideas, not just unconnected little facts and skills. We were learning important things. |
| I found the work thought-provoking and interesting. |
| It was very clear what the goals of the unit were. We were shown what was important, what high-quality work was, what our job was, and what the purpose of the unit was. |
| We were given enough choice or freedom in how to go about achieving the goal. |
| The assessments were just right. What we were asked to do was a "fair test" of our learning. |

#### Progress self-assessments for projects

Using a “Progress Report” form with start and end dates, students rate themselves each Friday, for six Fridays, according to one of the following: (1) “I am doing well, am on schedule, have no problems;” (2) “I am making progress, but need to discuss;” (3) “I have real problems and may have to shift projects;” (4) “I have nearly finished my project;” or (5) “Other (describe).

#### Monthly confidential reports

Three times during the term, have students send you an e-mail that addresses four topics:

1. Their own learning: What are their goals? Are they learning what they hoped? Are they having any problems that I can fix?
2. Their group’s learning: How is their group functioning? Are there problems I can help fix?
3. The class’s learning: How is the class functioning overall? Are there changes I should make?
4. Other suggestions for improvement:

Sometimes students will ask that their reports be shared with the class. In these cases, they may have a question or suggestion that they would like the class to discuss and resolve as a group.

#### At unit’s end

* What questions and uncertainties do you have about \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* How difficult was \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ for you? Why?
* What would you do differently next time?
* How does what you've learned connect to other learning?
* How has what you've learned changed your thinking?
* What follow-up work is needed?

#### End-of-the-year assignment

At the end of the school year students write a letter to next year’s teacher describing themselves as a learner. They will describe their academic strengths, needs, interests, and learning styles, and set goals based on their self-assessment of their performance during this academic year.

## w.h.e.r.E.t.o. - Evaluate

## Principles of good feedback and praise

### What is quality feedback?

Students need to know how well they are doing with their learning target, the specific skill they’re supposed to master. This feedback is given immediately. It is not advice, praise, nor evaluation. When students receive a grade as part of their feedback, they are likely to read only as far as the grade.

The feedback students give you is even more powerful than the feedback you give your students. Their feedback to us might be about what they have mastered or not mastered, or it might be about how we as their teacher can more easily explain something to them.

### When praising

If praising, praise an aspect of their learning process. Emphasize something they did or are doing, not what they “are.”

Reward them when they struggle with something and then start to figure it out, or when they take on a new challenge, any challenge.

### Grit / growth mindset: what to say to them

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Undermines it** | **Promotes it** |
| “You’re a natural. I love that.” | “You’re a learner! I love that.” |
| “Well, at least you tried.” | “That didn’t work. Let’s talk about how you approached it and what might work better.” |
| “Great job! You’re so talented!” | “Great job! What is one thing that could have been even better?” |
| “This is hard. Don’t feel bad if you can’t do it.” | “This is hard. Don’t feel bad if you can’t do it ***yet***.” |
| “Maybe this just isn’t your strength. Don’t worry: You have other things to contribute.” | “I am holding you to high standards because I know we can reach them together.” |

### Have students evaluate their response to every evaluation

Have your students evaluate how they handled receiving an evaluation of any kind. This is the “second evaluation.” Even when they get an F, they can earn an A+ for how they respond to it.

This second evaluation is always in their control and no one else’s. And in the long run, it is far more important than the first one. Make getting a good score on this evaluation from their higher self a core part of their identity: “I don’t always succeed, but I take an honest shot at figuring out what there is to learn from the failure. I’m actually pretty good at that.”

## w.h.e.r.e.T.o. – Tailor your lessons with differentiated instruction

Instruction should vary and be adapted for diverse students. Three factors underpin instructional design: learning profiles (how the student learns and the multiple intelligences), abilities (exceptionalities, ESL students, and the typical student), and interests (what intrigues each one).

"Fairness" has to be discussed upfront in any class with a differentiated-instruction curriculum. Stress that all students bring unique qualities, strengths, and needs.

## Tailoring for reaching disruptive students

1. Don't take disruptions personally.
2. Use hand signals, voice changes, and musical sounds to get their attention.
3. Recognize that some students can't sit still.
4. Reduce test anxiety by making the first question easy, increasing the font size, and going over directions with the students before they begin. Grade with a green pen, not a red pen.
5. Give those who tap their pencils a mouse pad to muffle the tapping. Give antsy students errands to run. Let students get up and change seats every once in a while during class.

## Tailoring for I.D.E.A.: The least-restrictive environment possible

Know which of your students

* are ELL students and may need additional language support,
* can benefit from extra challenges that push their higher-order thinking,
* are reading and writing below grade level and need support or different reading supplements,
* are easily distracted,
* have difficulty communicating,
* may be socially uncomfortable,
* have behavioral issues,
* have physical disabilities that might inhibit their participation in certain types of activities, or
* are sensitive to bright light, sound, touch, and strong fragrances.

### Addressing special needs

#### Encouraging full participation

* For act-it-outs, assign roles the day before so some can rehearse what their character will say.
* For role playing, assign mixed-ability pairs to split a complex role and to help each other out.
* Assign reluctant students a "buddy" for help with preparation and for support and encouragement. Peer mentors, or helpers, can help with nearly any part of a lesson. They can explain unknown vocabulary, provide guidance with directions, answer questions about aspects of a game-like activity, help with organizational tasks, and so forth.
* For any mini-drama, offer some non-speaking roles, allowing students to participate with movements or gestures. Or, adapt speaking roles by letting students use scripts or cue cards.
* Use manipulatives to add a tactile component. These might be vocabulary cards that have visual content or cards with icons to aid in the placement of ideas or events along a spectrum.
* During a discussion, have students talk in pairs before you ask for a whole-group response. You can spend as little as 30-60 seconds on this, yet it gives students the chance to formulate their thoughts, to test their ideas, and to get the confidence to raise their hands. It also gives them a chance to revisit and reinforce the content, which is important for all students.

#### Giving reading support

Students who struggle with reading will benefit from a pre-reading experience. For example, provide focus questions, section by section, to give all students a purpose for reading and to help them discover the essential concepts. In addition, consider the following:

* Whenever possible, give directions in both written and oral form. For example, while explaining what students are to do, simultaneously show the directions on an overhead transparency. Or, ask one person in each small group to read the directions aloud.
* When directions are posted at stations, give copies to students who need assistance. Highlight key words: Read... Examine... List...Discuss... Record... Draw a symbol next to each direction word, as a cue to its meaning: for examine, draw an eye; for record, draw a pencil.
* Have students create a set of vocabulary cards before reading a chapter. Give a list of key terms or difficult vocabulary they will encounter. On an index card, students can write a word and its definition, and then draw a simple illustration to help them recall the meaning.
* As a pre-reading activity, have mixed-ability pairs scan the reading to develop vocabulary posters on letter-size paper. Each poster should display a single key term, an understandable definition, and a symbol representing the term. Hang these posters around the classroom as a reference for students as they read the chapter.
* Hang large poster paper on the wall to create a "word wall," which becomes an expanded glossary. While reading, students can go to this poster to write down words or phrases that they don't understand. You then write definitions directly on the poster, helping the student who had the question as well as anyone else who is struggling with the text.
* Make an audiotape recording of either the textbook or a series of placards or handouts, offering additional clarification of important terms and vocabulary.
* Offer help with the reading notes. Give cloze exercises (fill-in-the-blank sentences or paragraphs) to structure the students' note taking. Or, omit (or white-out) key words and phrases, leaving blanks for students to fill in. After each question, provide sentence starters. Also give students photocopies of the text pages they are reading. On these sheets, they circle or highlight words, phrases, and sentences that will help them complete their notes.

#### Modifying written work

* Do “cloze” exercises.
* Supply a list of criteria for students' writing, and tell them precisely what they must include.
* Have them write three paragraphs instead of five, or write fewer terms or characteristics.
* Have them do two illustrations instead of four, or one cartoon rather than a four-panel strip.
* Break longer writing assignments into smaller segments with intermediate due dates. Give students feedback after each segment which will help them with subsequent work.
* Consider having them
  + list bulleted words and phrases instead of writing a paragraph.
  + orally discuss their response with you, a peer, or an aide.
  + illustrate a response and label the drawing, rather than writing about it.
  + use word-processing programs to type papers and find images for their illustration.

#### For struggling visual-oriented learners

Have them color-code what they learn as well as draw symbols to recall more easily.

#### For those physically challenged

If the lesson involves students rotating from one station to another to examine placards, you could instead have the sets of placards passed from group to group.

#### Supporting cultural diversity

Watch for idioms or cultural references that might be unfamiliar to some students. At the same time, be aware of situations when you can draw on students' knowledge of other cultures.

#### Modifying the assessment

* In a multiple-choice test, reduce the choices for each item from four to two.
* Have a peer or aide read the items aloud.
* Allow the student to respond orally with either a tape recorder or an aide helper.
* Send home copies of test questions ahead of time, in random order, for use as a study guide.
* Make the test "open book," letting students refer to their reading notes or the textbook.
* Provide a word bank or list of phrases in order to give additional support for open-ended responses, or to turn fill-in questions into a matching exercise.

#### Gifted students

Have enrichment activities in personalized folders in the desks, learning stations, or at centers around the room. Gear these activities toward the students’ developmental and academic goals and abilities. Also, match the students with appropriate mentors online or in the community and create webquests so that the students can deeply explore a topic independently. Send students to the Internet to do additional research to extend and enrich any lesson.

#### Other accommodation ideas

* a study guide covering the objectives, key concepts, questions, and chapter requirements;
* a study sheet with terms or facts needed for tests and quizzes;
* a list of keywords, concepts, etc., for the daily lesson;
* a daily summarization of lesson's key points, both oral and visual;
* assistance in highlighting work sheets to indicate the most critical information;
* posted due dates for assignments and projects;
* easily legible worksheets and tests;
* seats in the best place for those with limited-listening skills;
* assistance with organizational skills in class;
* provision of both verbal and visual input;
* oral directions for the group that are then repeated;
* a buddy who is a good note-taker (a student) who can make copies of lecture notes, etc.;
* fewer questions or problems to be completed for homework, but still a passing grade;
* ample think time for response to oral questions;
* a variety of projects or activities that have a reduced amount of writing;
* class assignments that can be met through models, drawing, or a demonstration;
* a taping of parts or all of the class;
* more time to complete written assignments and tests;
* tests to be taken in a separate room;
* tests to be read to the student;
* accepting printed or cursive writing;
* a spelling dictionary or spell checker;
* a pass/fail instead of a letter grade;
* access to a computer for essay tests; or
* a calculator when calculation is not the goal of the assignment.

## w.h.e.r.e.t.O. – Organizing knowledge …

Be organized so that you can optimize deep understanding as opposed to superficial coverage. Sequence the learning for maximal engagement and effectiveness.

## … with graphic organizers

Model how to use a graphic organizer, and then use guided practice and independent practice. Many introverts prefer working with graphic organizers before going into pairs or groups.

### KWL

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| K – What do I know? | W --What do I want to know? | --How might I find out about it? | L – What have I learned? |
|  |  |  |  |

### Sequence chart / Timeline

List steps or events in time order:

Topic:

First:

Next:

Next:

Next:

Next:

Next:

Next:

Next:

### Compare and contrast organizer

Topic / Concept A:

Topic / Concept B:

How are they alike?

How are they different?

### Venn diagram and summary paragraph

Summary paragraph:

### Three-way Venn diagram

Summary paragraph:

### Two-story map

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Literary element | Title: | Title: |
| Characters: |  |  |
| Setting: |  |  |
| Plot events: |  |  |
| Theme: |  |  |

Conclusions that can be made in comparing these two stories:

### Character map

What others think about the character:

How the character looks and feels:

Character’s name:

What the character says and does:

How I feel about the character:

### What-who-why-when-where chart

Fill in each row with details that answer the question.

|  |
| --- |
| What happened: |
| Who was there? |
| Why did it happen? |
| When did it happen? |
| Where did it happen? |

### Prediction chart

What I predict will happen… What actually happened…

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |

### Problem / solution chart

Questions Answers

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| What is the problem? |  |
| What are the effects? |  |
| What are the causes? |  |
| What are the solutions? |  |

### Fact / opinion chart

Topic:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Fact | Opinion |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |

### Opinion / proof chart

Topic:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Opinion: | Proof: |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |

### Persuasion map

Goal:

Reason 1:

Fact/example:

Fact/example:

Fact/example:

Reason 2:

Fact/example:

Fact/example:

Fact/example:

Reason 3:

Fact/example:

Fact/example:

Fact/example:

### A-Z Brainstorm

Topic:

A N

B O

C P

D Q

E R

F S

G T

H U

I V

J W

K X

L Y

M Z

Summary paragraph:

### Cluster word web

Write details about your topic in the circles.

Topic:

### Sandwich chart

1. Topic (top bun):

2. Detail (tomato slices):

3. Detail (lettuce):

4. Detail (hamburger patty):

5. Conclusion (bottom bun):

### Vocabulary Word Map

Definition in your own words: Synonyms:

Vocabulary Word:

Use it meaningfully in a sentence: Draw a picture of it:

What are some examples?

## … for the lesson plan

### Multiple intelligence questions

* Linguistic: How can I use the spoken or written word?
* Naturalist: How can I incorporate living things, natural phenomena, or ecological awareness?
* Intrapersonal: How can I evoke personal feelings or memories, or give students choices?
* Bodily-Kinesthetic: How can I involve the whole body or use hands-on experiences?
* Spatial: How can I use visual aids, visualization, color, art, or metaphor?
* Interpersonal: How can I use peer sharing, cooperative learning, or large-group simulation?
* Musical: How can I use music, rhythms, melody or environmental sounds?
* Logical-Mathematical: How can I bring in numbers, calculations, logic, classifications, or critical thinking skills?

### The lesson objective

#### Its verb and direct object

The verb in the objective – and in the standard - is the essential skill that students are expected to do. The direct object in the objective – as well as in the standard – is the essential content that students need to know, the essential concepts and classifications.

Listing the verbs and direct objects in the standards is an excellent way to develop activities and assessments that connect to the standards and enduring understandings.

##### 

##### Verbs by Bloom level

###### Knowledge and information-based verbs (IBQs)

|  |
| --- |
| Knowledge: Students will be able to (SWBAT) choose, cite, describe, define, distinguish, fill in the blank, give examples of, group, identify, label, list, locate, match, memorize, name, outline, quote, recall, recite, record, relate, repeat, reproduce, select, show, sort, spell, state, tell, underline |
| Comprehension: Students will be able to (SWBAT) account for, annotate, calculate, convert, describe, discuss, explain, expand upon, express, give examples of, give main idea, identify, interpret, list, locate, observe, outline, paraphrase, put in order, recognize, report, research, restate, retell in your own words, review, rewrite, summarize, trace, translate |

###### Thinking and document-based verbs (DBQs)

|  |
| --- |
| Application: Students will be able to (SWBAT) adapt, apply, calculate, change, collect, compute, conclude, construct, determine, demonstrate, dramatize, draw, employ, exhibit, experiment, find out, give an example, illustrate, interpret, interview, list, make, manipulate, operate, paint, practice, prepare, produce, record, relate, schedule, sequence, show, sketch, solve, state a rule or principle, teach, translate, use |
| Analysis: Students will be able to (SWBAT) analyze, appraise, arrange, calculate, categorize, classify, compare, contrast, debate, deduce, deduct, determine the factors, detect, diagnose, diagram, differentiate, discover, discriminate, discuss, dissect, distinguish, examine, experiment, group, infer, inquire, inspect, interpret, inventory, investigate, list, order, organize, point out, probe, question, relate, research, separate, sequence, sift, solve, sort, specify, scrutinize, survey, test, uncovers |

###### Attitudinal and perception-based verbs (PBQs)

|  |
| --- |
| Synthesis: Students will be able to (SWBAT) act, arrange, assemble, blend, change, collect, combine, compile, compose, concoct, construct, create, design, develop, devise, find an unusual way, forecast, formulate, generalize, generate, hypothesize, imagine, improve, infer, invent, manage, modify, organize, originate, plan, predict, prepare, pretend, produce, propose, rearrange, reconstruct, reorganize, revise, role play, set up, show, suggest, suppose, systematize, visualize, write |
| Evaluation: Students will be able to (SWBAT) appraise, argue, assess, award, choose, compare, conclude, criticize, debate, decide, deduce, defend, determine, discriminate, estimate, evaluate, give your opinion, infer, judge, justify, measure, predict, prioritize, probe, rank, rank, rate, recommend, referee, reject, revise, score, select, support, tell why, use criteria, validate, value |

### Giving good instructions

1. Write the lesson objective on the board.
2. Give instructions a bit at a time. If students ask for clarification, you have given too much.
3. Stand still. It will be easier for them to fully understand you.
4. Ask for a choral reply to gauge understanding. Have them speak in unison when finishing your sentence or answering a question. You: "The first thing we're going to do is...." Students: “\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .”
5. If oral directions include steps, have a different student repeat a step to the class, their partner, or their group. If there are many steps, write them on the board or use the overhead.
6. “On ‘Go’ and not before..." - The students are more likely to wait and hear all of the instructions before starting prematurely.
7. For pairs or groups, make sure they know the positive interdependence and how they will be individually accountable.

### Teaching a new skill

1. Relay it. Define the skill in concrete terms and model it step by step while thinking aloud.

2. Repeat it. Have a student verbally repeat the skill once you have explained it. You may want to have a student, a pair, or a group model it too.

3. Rehearse it. Have students practice it until they can do it automatically without you.

4. Reinforce it. Each time the students do the skill correctly, praise them. When they fail to do it correctly, have them do it again the proper way.

#### Have students write down the steps

Have students write down the steps as you write them on a poster, flipchart, or a graphic organizer on the overhead projector, or in a PowerPoint presentation. Keep the display of the steps public during guided and independent practice.

#### “Think alouds”

"Think aloud" and verbalize your thoughts as you model skills or processes. You might do this for making predictions, describing images, sharing analogies, verbalizing confusing points, or demonstrating fix-up strategies.

#### Use a T-chart

A T-chart is a great way to give students examples of how a specific skill might look or sound. Create it with the students and use their language. List the skill (e.g., encouraging participation) and then ask the class, "What would this skill look like [nonverbal behaviors]?" After students share several ideas, ask them, "What would this skill sound like [phrases]?" Students list several ideas, including the think-aloud strategy. Next, demonstrate and model the skill in front of the class using their suggestions for what it should look like and sound like. Lastly, display the chart prominently so they can easily refer to it.

#### Use a fishbowl

Have one group of students model the skill during a 4-minute activity while the rest of the class sits or stands in a circle around them and observes. After the four minutes are up, ask the other students about what they saw and ask the small group if these perceptions were correct.

#### Guided practice

Have the students practice the skill in pairs. Walk around and observe. Students correct their partner if the partner is doing it wrong, and you do the same.

### At the end of each lesson

#### Students summarizing their learning

##### Recap with a partner

Have students explain to a partner the major points in the lesson and how they will use this information in the future. Also have them identify their final questions for you.

##### Group statements

First allow at least 20 seconds of think time. Each student then writes one sentence before they share the sentences one by one, with no comments from the group. They then discuss the sentences and seek consensus on a new sentence that unifies what they wrote and that they can share with the class. They do so via a simultaneous-sharing structure such as Blackboard Share.

After reading or hearing the other groups’ statements, each group discusses their statement in relation to those by the others. Lastly, they discuss the concept of synergy. Was our group smarter than any one of us alone?

##### Do the L on their KWL form

##### Lesson closure handout

Name:

Today’s lesson was about…

One key idea was …

This is important because….

Another key idea was…

This matters because…

In sum, today’s lesson was ….

#### If time is running out

When there isn't time for every student to visit all the stations or work with all the placards, you can use one of these methods to ensure that students are exposed to all the content in the activity.

##### Do the handout on a transparency

Call on different pairs to come up to the overhead and fill in one section of the handout until all sections have been completed. To save time when working with matrices, you can make a transparency of the matrix, cut it into strips, and give each pair a strip to complete. Then, call pairs to the overhead one at a time to place their transparency strip on top of a blank matrix.

##### Gallery walks

Have students transfer their answers onto a piece of butcher paper placed next to each placard or station. This creates a written "gallery" of their responses. After at least one response has been recorded for every station or placard, have pairs go to the stations or placards for which they need more information. They can refer to the responses on the butcher paper to complete their handout. Students who have already completed their handout should circulate among the stations or placards as well, referring to the butcher paper to check, clarify, and modify their answers.

### Reflect before I teach it

#### Before I teach a unit

Do the assessments provide fair, valid, and reliable measures of the desired results?

Are…

* students asked to exhibit their understanding through authentic performance tasks?
* appropriate criterion-based scoring tools used to evaluate student products and performances?
* students being asked to tell me what the message is, or am I just giving them the skills to determine what they think the message(s) might be?
* a variety of assessment formats being used to provide additional evidence of learning?
* the assessments being used as feedback for students and teachers, as well as for evaluation?
* students being encouraged to self-assess?

#### Other points to remember

* Never say, “We won’t have a test on this.”
* Use the weekly-view plan book to record where you leave off with each section.

### Lesson plan template

1. Topic: Identify area or topic to be addressed.
2. Essential-understanding target:
3. Standards: National and state standards (turn these into the essential questions)
4. Essential question(s):
5. Objective (to be written on board):
6. Content: Detailed outline of the information or concepts essential to mastering the objectives.
7. Materials:
   1. Textbooks? Handouts? Websites, software, or hardware?
8. Duration of lesson:
9. Graded notebook entry:
10. Homework for tonight:
11. Upcoming summative assessment:
12. Important instructions that need to be written out for students to see, if any:
13. Any certain reading strategies of focus, if any:
14. Any vocabulary strategies of focus, if any:
15. Any graphic organizers used, if any:
16. Note-taking strategies taught, if any:
17. Number of multiple intelligences in the lesson:
18. Cooperative learning strategy:
    1. What positive interdependence type:
    2. What individual accountability:
    3. Grouping of students?
    4. Group assignments written on board or an overhead transparency?
19. Adaptations for those needing differentiated instruction:
20. Extension activities/sponge activity for those who finish early:
21. Teaching procedures
    1. Opening focus (daily question, quick write, bell work, record homework assignment)
       1. Time allotment:
       2. During this time take attendance
       3. Stimulate recall of previous learning from yesterday’s lesson.
       4. Share objectives, purpose, and assessment of the lesson.
          1. Ask for someone to repeat these aloud.
    2. Input: Essential content and skills
       1. Time allotment:
       2. Provision for examples, models, demonstrations, and problems in direct instruction.
       3. Explanations that make sense (visual as well as auditory)
       4. Check for general understanding
          1. Pose key questions. Question/question stems asked:
          2. Ask students to explain definition or attributes in their own words.
          3. Have students discriminate between examples and non-examples.
    3. Guided practice
       1. Time allotment:
       2. Encourage students to generate their own examples.
       3. Opportunity for independent practice that can be evaluated (homework).
       4. Provide feedback on results.
    4. Closure
       1. Time allotment:
       2. Have students summarize what they have learned and make connections to themselves and to other topics
       3. Reinforce major objectives
       4. Have students reflect on how well they met expectations, either by asking them to self-assess their work in writing or to ask the class for highs and lows.
          1. The self-assessment could also be done on a weekly basis.
       5. Connect with what will be learned tomorrow.
    5. Evaluation
       1. Assess students’ performance and mastery in terms of each stated objective.
       2. Write a general self-evaluation including explanation for success or lack of it. What changes might have produced better results and could be used in subsequent lessons?

# Growing as a teacher

## Possible evaluation by students

Rate the teacher from 1 to 5: 1= Always, 2= Usually, 3= Sometimes, 4= Seldom, and 5=Never.

1. The teacher has good knowledge of the subject.
2. The teacher listens to my ideas.
3. The teacher is enthusiastic about the subject.
4. The goals of the course are clear.
5. The teacher is organized and well prepared for class.
6. I feel like I can share my opinions in this class.
7. The teacher explains the material clearly.
8. Class time is flexible enough to allow for unplanned questions that come up.
9. The teacher is on time for classes.
10. The teacher maintains order and a classroom that encourages learning.
11. Deadlines are enforced fairly.
12. The workload (tests, papers, homework) is distributed evenly throughout the marking period.
13. Tests and papers are returned to the student within a reasonable amount of time.
14. Tests and papers are marked and commented on helpfully.
15. The teacher respects the students.
16. The teacher is available when students need help.
17. The teacher shows an interest in students’ progress and success in the course.
18. The homework helps the students learn the subject.
19. The teacher is respected.
20. The students respect one another.
21. The students are on time to class.
22. The students come to class prepared.
23. The students participate in class.
24. The teacher treats the students fairly.

Please list any strong points about the class. The more specific you are, the more it will help me.

List any course material you feel should be modified and replaced.

List any weak points about the course and suggestions for improvement.

## Mentoring

Seek a willing mentor in your department. Ask them for advice and help. Most teachers are willing to share materials and ideas, but a lot feel they must be asked. If you seek someone who will be your advocate at performance and promotion reviews, look for someone at least two levels above you (or with 4+years of experience at the school).

A mentorship is a relationship, and relationships are built on frequent, informal contact. Mentors possess the essential traits of availability, discretion, experience, and connections. A good mentor not only helps you out in a pinch, but also encourages and teaches you. Good sources are administrators, whether you report to the person directly or not (there are advantages and disadvantages to both) and administrations from other schools. You might find that gathering multiple perspectives is preferable.

Find ways to form relationships with people you have identified as potential mentors. Observe them - how they interact with others, how well they think and act under pressure, how well they listen and communicate, etc. Assess their trustworthiness in whatever context you know them. Develop a relationship to test the chemistry between you. When you feel comfortable, ask them for a mentoring relationship. While most people gladly accept, not everyone is enthusiastic. So, if someone denies your request, thank him or her graciously and underscore the fact that you still want to maintain a strong working relationship with him or her.

Once you have mentors, be open to their advice – they have nothing to gain in giving it to you. Report back to them on your successes and setbacks. Establish trust. Everything you discuss is between the two of you. If you later move on from that school, stay in touch.

## Danielson’s domains for improvement

### Category I: Planning and preparation

Teacher demonstrates thorough knowledge of content and pedagogical skills in planning and preparation. Teacher makes plans and sets goals based on the content to be taught/learned, their knowledge of assigned students, and the instructional context.

Teacher's performance appropriately demonstrates

* knowledge of content,
* knowledge of pedagogy,
* knowledge of the state standards,
* knowledge of students and how to use this knowledge to impart instruction,
* use of resources, materials, or technology available through the school or district,
* instructional goals that have a recognizable sequence with adaptations for students’ needs,
* assessments of student learning aligned to the goals and adapted for student needs, and
* use of educational psychological principles and theories in the construction of lesson plans and setting instructional goals.

### Category II: Classroom environment

Teacher establishes and maintains a purposeful and equitable environment for learning where students feel safe, valued, and respected, by instituting routines and setting clear expectations for student behavior.

Teacher's performance appropriately demonstrates

* expectations for student achievement with value placed on the quality of student work,
* attention to equitable learning opportunities for students,
* appropriate interactions between teacher and students and among students,
* effective classroom routines and procedures resulting in little loss of instructional time,
* clear standards of conduct and effective management of student behavior,
* attention given to safety in the classroom to the extent that the teacher has control, and
* ability to establish and maintain rapport with students.

### Category III - Instructional delivery

Teacher, through knowledge of content, pedagogy, and skill in delivering instruction, engages students in learning by using a variety of instructional strategies.

Teacher's performance appropriately demonstrates

* use of knowledge of content and pedagogical theory through their instructional delivery,
* instructional goals reflecting the state standards,
* communication of procedures and clear explanations of content,
* use of instructional goals that show a recognizable sequence, clear student expectations, and adaptations for individual student needs,
* use of questioning and discussion strategies that encourage many students to participate,
* engagement of students in learning and adequate pacing of instruction,
* feedback to students on their learning,
* use of informal and formal assessments to meet learning goals and to monitor learning,
* flexibility and responsiveness in meeting the learning needs of students, and
* integration of disciplines within the educational curriculum.

### Category IV – Professionalism

Teacher is a professional in and beyond the classroom or building. Teacher’s performance appropriately demonstrates

* knowledge of school and district procedures and regulations related to attendance, punctuality and the like,
* knowledge of school or district requirements for maintaining accurate records and communicating with families,
* knowledge of school and/or district events,
* knowledge of district or college's professional growth and development opportunities,
* integrity, ethical behavior, and professional conduct,
* effective communication, both oral and written, with students, and colleagues,
* ability to cultivate professional relationships with school colleagues, and
* knowledge of state requirements for continuing professional development and licensure.

**Start a Kagan Structure-A-Month Club**

One of the most powerful components of staff development in the Kagan structural approach is the Structure-A-Month Club or SAM Club. You and your club members (colleagues) all concentrate on adding the same new structure to your repertoire each month. Many of you might use far more than one structure that month, but each teacher makes a commitment to practice the same structure each month and to problem-solve, share successes, model for each other, and develop and share variations on the same structure. Because all of you are adopting the same structure, it gives you a common experience and language, contributing to the culture of the school as a cooperatively-oriented school.

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