

Nonfiction Reading Strategies

The traditional method of teaching content reading was assign reading, independent reading, discussion and worksheets. The strategic method of teaching reading is pre-reading strategies, guided reading, and reflection. Why should you teach strategies when you are concerned with covering all of your content?

- The entire class can practice the same strategy even if you assign different text for various reading abilities.
- Strategies are applicable to all curriculum areas.
- Teachers do not have to be reading specialists to teach comprehension strategies.
- Time spent on teaching strategies results in greater understanding of the content material.
- The Common Core standards emphasize literacy in the content areas.

Pre-Reading Strategies:

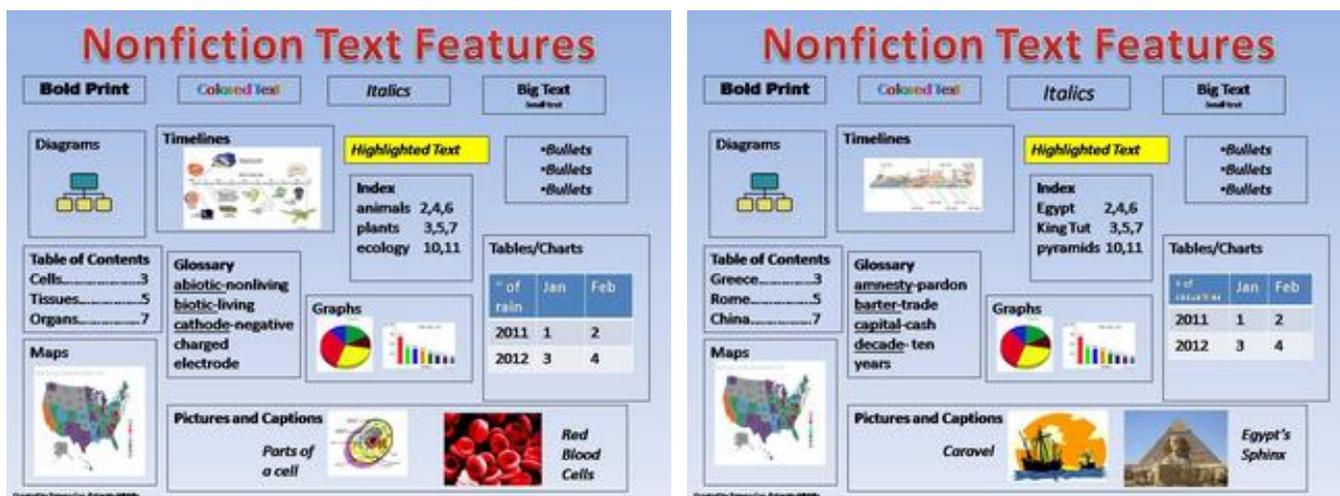
These strategies will activate prior knowledge, develop interest, introduce concepts, previews vocabulary and sets the purpose of the reading.

Textbook Walk

Early in the year preview the textbook with the class. Point out the organization of the book and explain the purpose of footnotes, time lines, visual aids, glossaries, etc. Use this [lesson and worksheet](#) from Teachinghistory.org to get started. This [lesson](#) can be used to challenge or question the authority of the textbook.

Nonfiction Text Features

Share this graphic with your students. Have them put it in their notebook or display a poster size of this in your classroom. Point out these features in your own textbooks.



Read the Pictures

Students will "read" the pictures in the text to form hypotheses about what they see. Students talk with a partner, exchanging ideas about what the pictures might suggest about the culture, time period, or events they will be studying in the unit. This can be used with a textbook, article or with photographs from the time period.

Make Connections

Jot a topic of study on the whiteboard and allow students to come up and jot down what they know about the topics while you take attendance. Create a Venn diagram showing how subjects overlap or how textbooks relate to novels.

K-W-L Chart

Create a three column chart with these headings, "What I Know", "What I Want to Learn", and "What I Learned".

Complete as a class or individually.

Anticipation Guides

An anticipation guide is a list of statements that students must check whether they agree or disagree. After reading the passage students should go back and answer these questions again. The teacher can discuss the statements with the class. This [site](#) has examples and a video of a teacher modeling this strategy.

During Reading Strategies:

During reading strategies ensure fluent reading, identify main ideas, organize ideas and details, and enhance meaning.

Graphic Organizers

Graphic organizers are an excellent way to organize the details and main ideas of a reading passage. Many examples of graphic organizers can be found [here](#) .

Marking Text

Marking text with sticky notes and highlights helps readers pay attention and remember what they read. Assign codes to the types of thinking in which you would like students to engage. As they read they are to mark these codes next to the passages in the text that trigger those connections. Examples: BK denotes connections like "This reminds me of...", ? denotes a question like "I wonder...", I denotes an inference like "I think...". Model the coding process and be careful not to assign too many codes at once. This is one [teacher's method](#) for using colored post it notes.

Highlighters

Students can use different colors of highlighters to mark passages. Yellow for text they don't understand and pink for text they understand. Use this with a short piece of text and sparingly.

Double Entry Journals

Students divide a piece of notebook paper in half lengthwise. In the left-hand column, students copy sentences or words directly from the text. In the right-hand column, students write their response. Some options are "This reminds me of", "I wonder", "I infer", "This is important because", "I am confused because", "I will help myself by", "I think this means".

Make Connections

Create a chart of connections with columns for text-to-self, text-to-world, and text-to-text. Model making connections and discuss connections with the class.

Guided Questioning

Give each student a copy of an article and project it on the board. Tell the students you found this article and you have a lot of questions about it. Ask them to record their questions in the margins as they read the article. Discuss the questions as a group and illustrate that while some questions are answered in your mind or in subsequent text, other questions are never answered. This activity is a model for what good readers do automatically.

Say Something

Students get into groups of two or three and take turns reading a portion of a text aloud. As they read, they occasionally pause to "say something" about what was read. The partners respond, then a different student continues the reading until they pause to say something.

Custom Bookmarks

Allow students to create bookmarks that assist in reading. Mark My Words: A bookmark for recording interesting or unusual words. Every few days, spend ten minutes reviewing the words students recorded and place them on a chart in the room. Marking Time: Use these to mark how setting changes or the changes in a historical time period.

Question Mark: Students can record their questions as they read and include the page number so they can revisit that part of the text. Mark Who? Students can record information about characters or historical figures. Mark the Bold: Students record each bold work they encounter as they read and write the definition in their own words on the back. Once a week, have students review the terms and study with a partner.

Logograph Cards

Have students write a vocabulary word on one side of the card and write the definition and draw a picture depicting the word on the other side of the card.

History Events Chart

As students read about a particular event, they wrote down answers to the questions of “who, what, where, when, why, and how” in order to summarize the event. They did this for each event they read about. Then, they were asked to determine the relationship *between* events. Drawing connections between events on a chart, and writing down their explanations demanded that students draw their own cause-effect relations. It also demonstrated that these relationships can be hidden in a text and must be uncovered.

Historical Thinking

Guide your students through analyzing primary sources. Teachinghistory.org has excellent examples of how to do this.

View these [example](#) s of historical thinking to get you started.

Post Reading Strategies

Post reading strategies will help your students clarify, summarize and reflect on the material.

Exit Slips

Ask students to complete a set of questions or respond to a prompt at the end of lesson to check for understanding. Visit this site for more [examples](#) .

Twitter Summaries

Students must summarize the text in 140 characters or less.

RAFT

RAFT writing assignments ask students to respond in a certain Role, to a certain Audience, in various Formats, and address a certain Topic. Visit [this site to see examples](#) .

Resources:

[Reading Rocket Strategies](#)

Beers, Kylene. *When Kids Can't Read: What Teachers Can Do*. [S.I.]: Bt Bound, 2003. Print.

Schoenbach, Ruth. *Reading for Understanding: A Guide to Improving Reading in Middle and High School Classrooms*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1999. Print.

Tovani, Cris. *I Read It, but I Don't Get It: Comprehension Strategies for Adolescent Readers*. Portland, Me.: Stenhouse, 2000. Print.

