

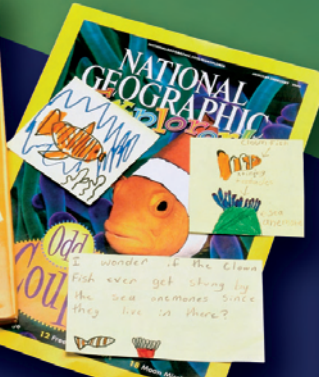
A STUDY GUIDE

Stephanie & Anne
Harvey & Goudvis

Strategies That Work

second
edition

Teaching Comprehension
for Understanding
and Engagement



Stenhouse Publishers



Strategies That Work

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Second Edition

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Using This Study Guide

This study guide, updated to reflect the new material in the second edition of *Strategies That Work: Teaching Comprehension for Understanding and Engagement*, will encourage teachers, librarians, staff developers, and administrators to talk about reading comprehension and student learning and to experiment with new ideas about instruction. Nothing enhances understanding more than sharing our thinking about teaching and learning, both with our kids and with each other. This guide presents discussion topics and activities to try out in a formal or informal professional study group and in the classroom. Educators are asked to notice their own process as readers and writers and to share that process with others. The study group also provides a forum for bringing kids' ideas and responses to the table for discussion. Students' thinking informs and extends our teaching more than anything else. If we want our strategy instruction to go beyond a series of mini-lessons, it makes sense to work together to come up with new and original approaches. The study group offers a great opportunity to go beyond the thoughts and ideas we've presented in *Strategies That Work* and generate new thinking. Study groups can be formal or informal, made up of just two colleagues or a larger group. This guide can be adapted for a variety of contexts.

Introduction to Strategies That Work

Reading comprehension is about much more than answering literal questions at the end of a passage, story, or chapter. Reading comprehension is an ongoing process of evolving thinking. When readers read, they carry on an inner conversation with the text. Readers respond with delight, wonder, even outrage. They

question the text, argue with the author, nod their heads in agreement. They make connections, ask questions, and draw inferences to better understand and learn from what they read.

The noted children's author Madeleine L'Engle says, "Readers usually grossly underestimate their own importance. If a reader cannot create a book along with the writer, the book will never come to life. . . . The author and the reader 'know' each other. They meet in the bridge of words (1995)." We want our students to recognize how important their thinking is when they read. It's our job as teachers to convince students that their thoughts, ideas, and interpretations matter. When readers engage in the text and listen to their inner conversation, they enhance their understanding, build knowledge, and develop insight. *Strategies That Work* describes the inner conversation readers have as they read and the strategies they use to understand their reading.

Organization and New Material in the Second Edition of Strategies That Work

The second edition is divided into four parts:

- **Part I, The Foundation of Meaning**, explains how research-based comprehension strategies support and enhance student learning. A new chapter in the second edition highlights the importance of active literacy instruction to increase the engagement of students in meaningful work.
- **Part II, Strategy Lessons**, describes mini-lessons where teachers and students apply the reading strategies, demonstrate response options for using the strategies, and practice meaningful assessments. New to the second edition are a new chapter, Monitoring Comprehension, which gives additional attention to the inner conversation that good readers must become aware of, and assessment commentaries that accompany new student work samples at the end of each chapter in Part II. These commentaries show how teachers can assess student learning by carefully examining various forms of student reading responses.
- **Part III, Comprehension Across the Curriculum**, is brand new. Its chapters describe how to integrate strategy instruction in the content areas and how to help students apply reading strategies to textbook reading and test reading.
- **Part IV, Resources That Support Strategy Instruction**, provides an annotated selection of picture books and other resources for comprehension instruction, including bibliographies of magazines and other periodicals and

websites for students, and professional resources for selecting children's books. These lists of resources have been thoroughly updated for the second edition.

Beginning Your Study with Strategies That Work

The following questions may be helpful for beginning a conversation about *Strategies That Work*:

How do you currently teach comprehension strategies in your classrooms?

- Are students challenged and excited by their reading? Do they recognize how important the reader is to the text?
- Do students understand and think critically about what they read? Why? Why not?
- Do students engage with and discuss important issues and ideas in literature? In social studies, science, and other curricular areas?
- Do you model how to think out loud for students as a means of instruction?
- Do you give students time to practice using strategies in their own reading? How much time?
- How are students reading to learn from informational text, including textbooks and other materials? Can students sustain their interest in this information over time?

How do you support students to keep track of their thinking when they read? How do you keep track of their thinking? How do you assess their understanding?

- In what ways do students recognize and discuss their thinking about reading? Do students hold inner conversations about their reading as well as share their thoughts with others?
- What evidence do you have that students are understanding and learning from their reading?
- Are there some terms you use to describe how readers think when they read? Should your school use a standardized terminology for comprehension instruction?
- How do your students use written as well as other kinds of responses to show their evolving thinking?

What resources do you have/need to support comprehension instruction?

- Do you have the necessary resources for comprehension instruction? Plenty

of books, sticky notes, clipboards, and so on? What are some ways to get these into your classrooms without breaking the bank?

- Do you teach with a wide variety of genres?
- Do you introduce and use a variety of text forms, including short stories, poetry, essays, feature articles, and so on?

How do you create a learning community that promotes thinking in your classrooms/schools?

- Do students feel free to share their ideas, opinions, and tastes in reading? Take stock of the times when you and your students share your thinking about books (i.e., read-alouds, discussions, informal sharing times, and so on) and remember to build in time daily to talk about reading.
- What implications do time, scheduling and room arrangements have for your instruction? What changes to scheduling, room arrangement, or procedures might be needed to ensure an environment that promotes thinking?
- Do you have an ongoing reader's workshop in your classroom? Effective strategy instruction requires that students have long blocks or time for reading and responding.
- How do you support students in their comprehension of content-area textbooks?
- How do you help students prepare for the reading they're required to do on standardized tests?

Chapter Descriptions and Study Group Actions and Considerations

Part I: The Foundation of Meaning

Chapter 1 Reading Is Thinking

Chapter 2 Reading Is Strategic

Chapter 1 explains how readers make meaning when they read and why it's important to teach comprehension. The chapter summarizes strategies that proficient readers use and suggests that if we want readers to use them independently, teachers need to show students how we think when we read. Chapter 2 goes

into greater detail about what it means to read strategically.

Actions and Considerations

- Start a collection of intriguing articles, short stories, excerpts, poems, or other short pieces. Copy and share these pieces in the study group and decide on one to read together, with each participant keeping track of their inner conversation with the text. Margin notes and coding the text help you record your thinking to later share those strategies you used to make sense of the piece. Consider:

What strategies proved useful for understanding this text? What did you do as a proficient reader to understand new information, ideas, or insights? Notice your questions, ideas, opinions, or interpretations and share these. What does paying attention to your own thinking during reading teach you about supporting students as they learn to use comprehension strategies?

Save one of these pieces to share with your students as a model of your ongoing writing/thinking in response to reading.

- Try a similar activity with your students. Choose an interesting or provocative piece of short text. Provide each student with a copy, read it together, and ask students to record their inner conversation on the text or on sticky notes. Then ask students to share their thoughts with a partner. The greatest way to enhance understanding is to talk about the text after reading it.
- Observe a colleague as he or she launches comprehension strategy instruction. Record the language used to model and explain the strategy. Based on the students' responses to the lesson, discuss the effectiveness of the language and overall lesson.
- Four levels of metacognitive awareness and the ways in which readers monitor their thinking about their reading are described in *Strategies That Work*:

Tacit readers. Tacit readers lack awareness of how they think when they read.

Aware readers. Aware readers may realize when meaning has broken down, but lack strategies to fix the problem or repair confusion.

Strategic readers. Strategic readers use a variety of strategies to enhance understanding and monitor and repair meaning when it is disrupted.

Reflective readers. Reflective readers can apply strategies flexibly depending on their goals for reading. They reflect on their thinking and revise their use of strategies. You can observe this reflective stance when students comment with surprise, amazement, or wonder as they read.

Think about two or three students you work with and try to categorize their level of metacognitive knowledge and awareness. Observe and keep track of how each student monitors his or her thinking during reading. Consider the ways you support students to move through this continuum to become more strategic and reflective readers.

- Collect student work—sticky notes, response journal entries, texts with margin notes—and discuss it. What evidence is there that students are keeping track of meaning as they read? Can you observe their evolving thinking? Brainstorm some additional ways that students might keep track of their thinking.
- Explore each of the strategies defined on pages 16-19 in *Strategies That Work* in greater depth. Study group participants might work together to add to these definitions. Consider a common language for reading comprehension instruction across ages and grade levels.

Chapter 3 Effective Comprehension Instruction: Teaching, Tone, and Assessment

Chapter 3 describes some of the factors in building effective comprehension instruction, including the gradual release of responsibility model, creating an atmosphere for inquiry, collaboration, and authentic responses to reading, the role strategy instruction plays in a workshop classroom, and teaching comprehension with the end in mind by using authentic, meaningful assessment.

Actions and Considerations

- Consider how the gradual release of responsibility approach may help you differentiate instruction. How might you provide additional support to small groups who need further explanation and practice? How would you provide opportunities for independent work for students who have a clear understanding of a strategy?
- Document the assessments you use to find out if readers are understanding what they read. Do you listen to kids? Confer? Observe behaviors and expressions? What do you do with the information you glean from these assessments? Share your thoughts on these assessments with others in your study group. How could you better use the the assessments to improve instruction?
- Discuss ways that you set the tone for a literate community in your classroom. Set a goal of focusing on one of the following and then discuss how you worked toward the goal: foster passion and creativity; place value on collaborative learning and thinking; provide extended reading and writing time;

use language in respectful way; give opportunities for authentic responses by students; arrange your room to facilitate a literate community; keep resources accessible.

Chapter 4 Tools for Active Literacy: The Nuts and Bolts of Comprehension Instruction

Chapter 4 focuses on teaching the reading strategies, explicit comprehension instruction, and supporting active literacy by asking students to be participants in the instruction and to respond to what they've read in a variety of ways.

Actions and Considerations

- Consider the balance of teacher work to student work in your classroom. How much time do your students spend being actively, independently engaged in investigations, research, discussions, writing, and reading compared with the amount of time you spend instructing?
- Consider your own instructional practices. Which of these do you use on a regular basis with your students?

thinking aloud and coding the text

reading aloud

interactively guiding discussions

lifting text

reasoning through the text

providing anchor experiences

rereading for deeper meaning

sharing your own literacy by modeling with adult text

What other instructional practices do you find particularly effective in engaging and highlighting kids' thinking?

- Kids differ. Some kids are able to grasp how to use a strategy quickly, others need more time for practice. How do you differentiate strategy instruction to accommodate a wide variety of learners? Describe how you meet individual needs through whole-group instruction, flexible small groups, and conferencing with individuals.
- As a group, read the same piece of text and experiment with a variety of response options (see pages 52–58). Talk about your inner conversation and discuss the different strategies that come into play with these different options. How does sharing your thinking about your responses enhance your understanding of the text?

Chapter 5 Text Matters: Choice Makes a Difference

Chapter 5 describes the importance of selecting compelling and relevant text in a variety of genres to support students in understanding content and to encourage enthusiasm for reading in general. Chapter 5 suggests criteria for choosing text, including picture books, magazines, newspapers, and Web reading.

Actions and Considerations

- Choose several compelling pieces of short text (one page max) that you think would interest your kids. You can select a poem, a story, a feature article, and so on. Introduce each piece and sell the kids on the text to fire them up to start reading. Students can choose the piece that most interests them, read it, grab a partner who's read the same text, and start talking. Ask each of them to share their inner conversations. Wander around the room and listen in on their discussion, taking notes of what they say. Once in a while, ask them to share their thoughts with the whole class. Bring your notes to the study group and talk about their comprehension process. What impact did the students' choice of text—or the fact that they had a choice—have on their engagement with reading and discussions?
- Start a collection of picture books for teaching different comprehension strategies. See Appendix A for lots of book recommendations. Think about children's literature you already have in your classroom that would be helpful in teaching particular strategies. Share these ideas with the study group.
- As you read the picture books, jot down your responses on sticky notes or in a response journal, focusing especially on how a given strategy or strategies helped to enhance your understanding of the book. With a partner, brainstorm how you might use one of the instructional approaches described in Chapter 4 with one of the books (thinking aloud and coding the text, lifting the text, reasoning through the text, and so on). Some schools keep lists of selected books for strategy instruction in the library so teachers can quickly access them. (One school attaches short lesson suggestions to each book in a "strategy text set" located on a shelf just for teachers and the librarian to use in mini-lessons.) The study group might design some lessons for specific books they've chosen.
- Discuss the idea that particular titles should not be pegged to teaching a particular reading strategy. What are the advantages and drawbacks of identifying certain texts as "good for teaching questioning," "good for inferring," and so on?
- To begin a text set, think about a topic you or your students are passionate or curious about. Or think about how you might breathe new life into a time-worn (but well-loved) topic by searching for poems, essays, or new picture books related to it. Begin with text you know and love. Remember to include student contributions—picture books, short stories, articles, poems, newspa-

per excerpts, essays, and so on. Don't forget to think about audience, purpose, and quality of writing as you make your selections.

Part II: Strategy Lessons

Chapters 6 through 11 are the nuts and bolts of *Strategies That Work*. These chapters include lessons organized by comprehension strategy. The lessons move from less to more sophisticated—the initial lessons are introductory, those that follow build on the foundation of the earlier lessons. There are twenty new lessons in the second edition of *Strategies That Work*.

Chapter 6 Monitoring Comprehension: The Inner Conversation

This chapter, new to the second edition, brings focus to the importance of becoming aware of thinking as one reads. Students need to tune in to their inner conversations as they read in order to build understanding. It's important that students become comfortable monitoring their comprehension so they can learn how and when to apply specific strategies to aid their understanding and learning from reading.

Actions and Considerations

- Bring some challenging text to the study group. Read it individually and monitor how you deal with difficulties while reading. Discuss the fix-up strategies that each of you uses. Are there certain kinds of fix-ups that work best for you for certain kinds of challenging text? Discuss what you learn about your own reading process.
- Practice a read, write, and talk session in the study group. Observe and discuss what you glean about the value of talking about your reading through this experience.

Chapter 7 Activating and Connecting to Background Knowledge: A Bridge from the New to the Known

Readers naturally bring their prior knowledge and experience to reading, but they comprehend better when they think about the connections they make between the text, their lives, and the world at large. Readers also make other kinds of connections: to literary elements and features, to different genres, to different authors, and so on.

Actions and Considerations

- Experiment with different ways of asking kids to keep track of their own connections: a class chart, sticky notes, a response journal, and so on. Keeping track of your thinking allows you, as well as your students, to look back and

examine your thought process over time. You might ask: Are students' connections becoming more meaningful over time? That is, are the connections furthering their understanding of the text, issue, or topic? Do students make a variety of content connections (text to self, text to text, text to world)? Do students connect to literary elements and features as well as to the content? Do students' responses illustrate new and original ways of thinking about their reading?

- Gather samples of students' reading responses. Examine the samples in your study group, assessing if and how students' connections are leading to a greater understanding of what they read. Consider ways to nudge children further during conferences, just as Steph did in her conference with Allison on page 104.
- Teachers often ask about connections kids make that just don't seem to enhance textual understanding, those "connections in common" and tangential connections discussed on pages 102 to 104 that come fast and frequently. It is your responsibility to check with kids about how their connections help them better understand the text. A form that is helpful is the two-column form headed *My Connection/How It Helps Me Understand*. Bring a piece of text to your study group and try this form with your own reading. This form is also helpful for questioning and inferring.

Chapter 8 Questioning: The Strategy That Propels Readers Forward

Questioning is the strategy that keeps readers engaged. When readers ask questions, they clarify understanding and forge ahead to make meaning.

Actions and Considerations

- Once your students have had practice asking questions with lots of different kinds of texts, try brainstorming questions with them about a puzzling piece of text, as Anne did with Langston Hughes' poem "Dreams" on page 119. After you have charted the kids' questions, encourage their independence by asking each student to respond in writing to a question of their own choosing. As a class, come back together to share these responses, discussing how each person's thinking contributes to an understanding of the text. Share these responses with the study group.
- Keep track of the questions you ask for a day or two and bring a list of these to your study group. Track the kinds of questions you found yourself asking, sorting these into authentic question vs. assessment question categories. Discuss situations and circumstances that encourage each of these kinds of questions.
- As students begin a new topic study in social studies or science, keep a large chart with their questions. Periodically review this chart to sort through answers to the questions and to assess if the kinds of questions children ask

are changing. Next to the questions, you might keep a list of “Ways our schema is changing as we learn more about _____.”

Chapter 9 Visualizing and Inferring: Making What’s Implicit Explicit

Inferring is at the intersection of taking what is known by garnering clues from the text and thinking ahead to make a judgment to discern a theme or speculate about what is to come. Visualizing strengthens our inferential thinking. When we visualize, we are in fact inferring, but with mental images rather than words and thoughts.

Actions and Considerations

- The bravest among you can invite a small group of students from your class to share their thinking with the study group. Model your thinking on either visualizing or inferring and then involve the students in guided practice on that strategy. Study group participants can script the various conversations between the teacher and kids and the kids with each other. After the demonstration is complete, study group members can question the kids about their thinking and learning. Allow time to debrief this lesson after the kids depart. Discuss how this observation can help you plan your own instruction. Don’t hesitate to try this technique with any of the strategies discussed in the book.
- When readers ask a question, an inference is never far behind. Human beings are driven to answer questions and most often do so with an inference. A powerful scaffold to link questioning and inferring is the two-column I Wonder/I Think form. Try this in the study group with a piece of text that lends itself to a wide range of interpretations, such as a contemporary poem, and then talk about how your questions and inferences help you understand it.
- Visualizing expands the possibilities for response beyond talking and writing. The artist in every kid needs opportunities to respond through drawing as well. Choose a piece of text that spurs strong images and try to sketch a response that you visualize. If you are feeling particularly adventurous, you could dramatize a response or sing a song!

Chapter 10 Determining Importance in Text: The Nonfiction Connection

Thoughtful readers grasp essential ideas and important information when reading. Readers must differentiate between less important information and key ideas that are central to the meaning of the text.

Actions and Considerations

- Using nonfiction texts and excerpts, begin your own class chart of features

that help your students navigate dense text. Bring these charts to your study group and examine ways to develop a common language across grade levels for teaching these conventions and features. Consider ways that different features help students determine important information.

- We are big fans of the Facts/Questions/Response (F/Q/R) form. Using the suggestions described in the Chapter 10 lessons, try several of the two- and three-column note forms with students. Share student work samples and examine how these forms scaffold student learning. For instance, do some forms lead to further questioning and research topics?
- As your students become more adept at strategic reading and thinking, encourage them to apply the strategy for determining importance to their use of other strategies. For instance, as kids learn about connections and questions, they may make lots of tangential ones. Encourage them to look at which connections and/or questions are the most important and help them better understand what they read. A connection that the reader makes may be important to him or her but less important to a deeper understanding of the text. A good response form for this might be titled Connections, with columns below headed: Important to Me, Important to Understanding the Text, and Both. In this way you honor all of the readers' connections but help them decide which ones are truly important to understanding. A similar form for questioning has also proved useful. You want to teach your students to evaluate the importance of their questions and connections in relation to understanding the text. Try this in your own reading with your study group.

Chapter 11 Summarizing and Synthesizing Information: The Evolution of Thought

Summarizing something we read involves pulling out the important information and putting it into our own words so we can remember it. Synthesizing involves combining new information with existing knowledge to form an original idea or interpretation. Synthesizing lies on a continuum. Rudimentary synthesizing involves merely stopping and thinking about what we are reading. Taking stock of meaning and reading for the gist is a step further down that line. Sometimes readers have a true synthesis, an “Aha” of sorts where they achieve new insight and change their thinking. This is the ultimate form of synthesis.

Actions and Considerations

- Bring the texts kids are reading to the study group. Look at their sticky notes together and notice their evolving thinking. Do they seem to be getting the gist? Does their thinking change as they read? Their sticky notes provide you with a wealth of information and warrant close examination. Take a look at the assessment commentaries at the end of each strategy chapter in the second edition of *Strategies That Work* as models for the kinds of assessment

you can do simply by examining your kids' notes.

- How does summarizing differ from synthesizing? Summarizing is one aspect of synthesizing. Summarizing is recording events, information, and ideas in a few sentences. Synthesizing is a more sophisticated process that involves original thinking. Ask students to summarize their thinking and jot down new thoughts or ideas that occur to them as they read. For instance, a two-column form headed Getting the Gist/My New Thinking can prove useful. You might try this response option with your reading in the study group as well.
- Synthesizing is the strategy that allows readers to change their thinking if they are willing. Because of their age, young readers are actually better at revising their thinking than adults. It is difficult for adults to read editorials they don't agree with. Sometimes we notice that an op-ed writer with whom we rarely agree says something that actually hits the mark. The tendency, however, is to skip right over it rather than take it seriously and revise our thinking. Kids are far less set in their ways and more willing to allow reading to change thinking. Bring in some articles or editorials. Read a variety in the study group and see if you can break through your existing paradigm and use reading to change your thinking. Talk about this process with your colleagues and then share this experience with your students.

Assessment Actions and Considerations

All of the lessons, discussions, and responses in *Strategies That Work* have one purpose: to move kids toward independence as readers. We confer with our students to assess which strategies our students actively use to help make meaning and which strategies lag behind. Here's a list of things you could apply with any of the strategies in Part II. These actions and considerations deal with assessment, and your study group discussions around them would be enhanced by further examining the assessment commentaries, new to the second edition of *Strategies That Work*, at the end of each strategy chapter.

- With your students, brainstorm a list of strategies they might use to make sense of a piece of short text. These might include the following:
 - stopping and thinking when the text doesn't make sense
 - rereading
 - asking questions to clarify confusion
 - making an inference when more information is needed
 - thinking about the two or three big ideas in a piece
 - paying special attention to charts, picture captions, or tables

Ask students to tally which of these strategies they used and discuss when and why students used each strategy.

- Keep ongoing anecdotal notes of your reading conferences with your students. Bring the conference notes of at least three different students to the study group. Using the conference notes as evidence, discuss if and how these students are using strategies to better understand what they read. Discuss which evidence is most helpful in determining how effectively students are using the strategies.
- When teaching a particular strategy and asking students to use that strategy in their own reading, review your conference notes for that strategy. Note those children who are using the strategy independently in their own reading and those who seem to need more support and scaffolding to use the strategy effectively. How might you plan additional instruction for those who need it while also accommodating students who are ready to use the strategy independently with more challenging text? Share ideas for differentiated instruction with your study group, considering small flexible groups as well as individual instruction.
- When books are bursting with sticky notes, kids can remove them and place them on a strategy chart to share their thinking. The chart might be titled Our Questions about _____ (a topic, a book, an article, and so on). This chart can reflect ongoing learning about any strategy.
- We know students truly understand how to use comprehension strategies in their reading when they can articulate why a strategy enhanced their understanding. Share the double-entry form, Strategy I Used as I Read/How This Strategy Helped Me Understand the Text and model your own thinking about a piece of text before turning them loose with it.

Part III Comprehension Across the Curriculum

This new section in the second edition of *Strategies That Work* reflects the importance of using comprehension strategies in content areas such as social studies and science, the strategies needed for textbook reading in the content areas, and the genre of test reading—a genre our students are encountering more and more often.

Chapter 12 Content Literacy: Reading for Understanding in Social Studies and Science

Chapter 13 Topic Studies: A Framework for Research and Exploration

Students encounter complex ideas and a wealth of new learning in the content areas, and they need to rely on the tools that will help them understand and make meaning of all this new learning.

Actions and Considerations

- Consider your classroom practices and the work you typically ask your students to do. Compare your classroom practices to the list titled *Hallmarks for Creating an Environment for Thoughtful Content Literacy Instruction* (adapted from Ritchart 2002) on pages 207 and 208. In addition, compare your list to the list titled *Literacy Practices for Social Studies and History* on page 209. In your study group, discuss your responses to these questions: What commonalities do you see between your classroom practice and the suggestions in the lists? What challenges do you see in implementing the suggestions? What are ways to overcome some of these challenges?
- Collect and peruse resources (picture books, news articles, pieces of short text, artifacts) on a science or social studies topic you'll be studying in the near future. With the study group, brainstorm ways to launch the topic study. Do the texts you've gathered lend themselves to teaching a particular strategy? Is there a particular book or piece of text that provokes your thinking or captures your imagination? Is there a way to involve children and their imaginations in an observation, exploration, or experience?
- Work together with your study group to plan strategy instruction within a content area. Use the study group meeting time to map out the topic study. Consider those strategies and responses that best meet both your students' learning needs and the demands of the topic.
- Plan a topic study using the framework described in Chapter 13. As you implement the topic study over the subsequent weeks, discuss in your study group meetings the challenges you encounter and how you deal with them, the differences you notice in kids' engagement with the topic using this framework, and adaptations you might use in the future with a similar topic study.
- The more kids know about a topic, the deeper their questions. Keep track of students' questions throughout the topic study on large charts posted in the classroom or library. Students should keep their own list of lingering questions in their journals. These lingering questions are often the ones students are most interested in when it comes time to decide on research topics.

Chapter 14 **Reading to Understand Textbooks**

Textbook reading can be difficult. It is essential that students apply comprehension strategies to textbook reading and interact with the reading. The more dense the textbook reading is, the more need there is for kids to interact with it, talk about it, and leave tracks of their thinking about it.

Actions and Considerations

- Bring a selection of textbooks you use in your school to your study group. Together, examine the textbooks using the considerations listed on page 234.

Discuss particular textbooks or particular parts of the textbooks that present special challenges in terms of their density, organization, writing quality, and so on. Brainstorm how to scaffold this reading with your students so that they are actively engaged in building their understanding while reading the textbook content.

- Bring a higher level textbook to your study group—perhaps one from a college or graduate school course on a topic that’s somewhat unfamiliar. Read a section “cold,” and then read it again, this time applying active literacy techniques discussed in Chapter 14 and reading strategies you’ve built into your repertoire. Discuss the differences between the two readings. What strategies came in particularly useful? What similarities can you see between this experience and the experience of your students with textbooks? Choose some strategies to focus on in your next textbook reading with students.
- After trying out with your students some of the ideas for active reading with textbooks (page 236), discuss how it went with other members of your study group. What additional strategies will you try out next? What went well and what needs more scaffolding?

Chapter 15 The Genre of Test Reading

Our students these days encounter test reading more and more often. It’s not a genre that we encounter much in life outside of school, but it is one that our students will continue to see from year to year. It’s important to build their confidence in dealing with this genre.

Actions and Considerations

- Bring to your study group a selection of released test items. Try to include some that you might encounter as adults—perhaps from teacher licensing exams or graduate school entrance exams. Examine the items for some of the signal words listed on page 242. Which seem to be used more frequently than others? Which are trickier than others?
- Find sample test items that seem to fit in some of the categories on pages 247 to 249 (vocabulary, literal, summarizing and synthesizing, and inferential). Track your thinking as you answer these sample items and discuss how you used thinking strategies successfully. Discuss tough spots and brainstorm possible helpful approaches.
- Using an adult test item (for example, from a licensing exam or graduate school entrance exam) model the kind of “thinking through a test” described on pages 251 to 252 for the rest of your study group. Take turns modeling the process and discuss how your process changed and improved as you learned to apply thinking strategies to test items successfully.

Part IV: Resources That Support Strategy Instruction

The appendixes in Part IV, thoroughly updated for the second edition, make up nearly one third of the content in *Strategies That Work*. The appendixes are separated into five sections, including lists of great books for teaching content, a list of recommended magazines newspapers, and websites, and a list of professional journals for selecting children's books. The assessment interview in Appendix D shows how we assess ongoing comprehension in authentic situations. Appendix E contains sample anchor charts for classroom use.

Actions and Considerations

- **Appendix A: Great Books for Teaching Content in History, Social Studies, Science, Music, Art, and Literacy.** Expand the text sets for teaching content into areas that you are particularly interested in teaching. This list covers many curricular topics common to American education, but not all. The choices are so vast and the number of books so enormous that your lists need to be constantly updated. Study groups are a great place to discover additional titles. Meet in the school or public library and search the stacks. Perhaps you might hold one session at your favorite children's bookstore.
- **Appendix B: Magazines, Newspapers, and Websites.** Check to see if your library has a good selection of kids' magazines and newspapers and encourage the school to order any from the list or others you like. Search for and copy articles that are relevant to topics under study and add them to curricular text sets. Browse some of the suggested websites and discuss how they might be of value in your curriculum. Share ideas for other valuable websites you know of.
- **Appendix C: Professional Journals for Selection of Children's Books.** We all need to read professionally, but the sheer number of literacy journals is mind-boggling. No one can read everything that's out there. Have each person or grade level team in the study group select a journal that they will follow throughout the year. To ensure that everyone gets a chance to see them, bring to the study group sample articles of particular interest, especially those with bibliographies, such as outstanding science trade books, picture books for teaching global understanding, and so on.
- **Appendix D: Assessment Interview with Fourth Graders.** The assessment interview provides an opportunity for students to show us how they think about and reason through a short piece of text or picture book. Gather two or three students together and select short text that will stimulate use of the strategy (or strategies) you would like to assess. Let the students know you're really interested in their thinking and that while they're doing the talking you'll be writing down what they're saying.

- Bring to the study group notes and scripting from assessment interviews you've conducted in the classroom. Discuss how this information about children's thinking guides your future instruction.
- Consider bringing in a small group of children and conducting an assessment interview with the study group observing. Participants might focus on individual students to record thinking over time and then discuss evidence for how well students have internalized using particular strategies.
- Don't forget to bring daily response journals and children's work to the study group. Examining and discussing kids' ongoing thinking is the best way to keep track of our teaching and their learning.
- **Appendix E: Anchor Charts for the Comprehension Strategies.** These anchor charts are authentic summaries of lessons and conversations from classrooms. In every chart we include an explanation of our thinking about a particular strategy as well as examples of student thinking. The charts are anchors for subsequent instruction linking what we've already done to future strategy teaching and learning. Construct a new anchor chart with your kids and then share it with the study group. What better way to discover what's going on in colleagues' classrooms?

Reference

L'Engle, Madeleine. 1995. *Walking on Water: Reflections on Faith and Art*. New York: North Point Press.

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