TEACHING AND LEARNING STRATEGIES

FOR THE THINKING CLASSROOM

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PREFACE

Many teachers realize that engaged teaching and active learning are desirable. Teaching that encourages students to ask questions and look for answers, to apply what they have learned in order to solve problems, to listen to each other and debate ideas politely and constructively—this is teaching students can use in their lives. But knowing that these things are important is not the same thing as knowing how to make them work in the classroom with a crowded curriculum, short class periods, and many students.

The staff development program **Teaching and Learning Strategies for the Thinking Classroom (The Thinking Classroom)** came about to satisfy the need in the schools for deeper learning, life-long learning—learning that students can use and that makes them not only better students but more productive members of society. And it also came about in order to teach "the small ideas," as one teacher called them. "The big ideas" are the lofty proclamations about how important active learning and critical thinking are. The "small ideas" are how to actually teach for active learning and critical thinking, in real classrooms.

The Thinking Classroom was inspired by the **Reading and Writing for Critical Thinking Project** (RWCT), and the present authors have long worked in that project. RWCT has worked with more than 75,000 teachers in 35 countries. The RWCT program was designed by Jeannie Steele, Charles Temple, Scott Walter, and Kurt Meredith, and was brought to life by 70 volunteer teacher-trainers from the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, and Australia. Their numbers were multiplied tenfold by certified trainers in the 35 participating countries. The trainers were recruited and given administrative support by the International Reading Association. George Soros' Open Society Institute provided financial support, and the many Soros Foundation offices around the world gave the project a home.

SECTION 1:

PRINCIPLES OF ACTIVE LEARNING AND CRITICAL THINKING

THE MOST PRODUCTIVE TEACHING

Many teachers are seeking to change their practices to support teaching for critical thinking. They want to challenge their students not just to memorize, but to question, examine, create, solve, interpret, and debate the material in their courses. Such teaching is now widely recognized as "best practice." Studies show that active classes, so long as they are purposeful and well organized, are often the ones in which students learn the material most fully and usefully. Learning fully and usefully means that students can think about what they learn, apply it in real situations or toward further learning, and can continue to learn independently (Gardner 1993; Marzano 2001). Learning that can be used, learning that lasts is a far better investment of the teacher's time and the community's funds than learning that leaves students passive, that tires the teacher with its routine, and that is soon forgotten because it is not practiced or built upon.

This guidebook is dedicated to the practice of lively teaching that results in teaching for critical thinking. It demonstrates and explains a well organized set of strategies for teaching that invites and supports learning. At the same time the guidebook presents a large set of teaching practices, it helps you, the reader, form judgments about teaching and learning so that you can use the right practices with the students you have, in the subject or subjects you teach.

This book will present strategies for teaching and learning that can be used from upper primary school right through secondary school. The approaches can be used with all subjects in the curriculum, including the study of cross-cutting issues (important contemporary problems that do not easily fit into any one discipline).

ORGANIZING INSTRUCTION FOR ACTIVE LEARNING

Some years ago, the Swiss psychologist Jean Piaget demonstrated that we learn by making sense of the world in terms of the concepts we already have. And in the process of making sense of the world, we change our old concepts, and thus expand our capacity for making even more sense of our future encounters with the world. For instance, before students can begin to appreciate a lesson on the Encounter of 1492, they need to have some knowledge of world geography, the importance of trade, and the culture of Europe in the late fifteenth century. Then, after they have studied the Encounter, they will have a more elaborated sense of world

geography, the importance of trade, and the changes that cultures can exert on each other. Their elaborated concepts prepare them to inquire more easily into topics related to these.

In the 1970s and 1980s, cognitive psychologists extended Piaget's thinking into a way to approach teaching (Neisser 1976; Pearson and Anderson 1984). Because students learn by using the knowledge they already have (even though some of their concepts may be flawed; they may be incomplete or be little more than superstitions), teachers should begin a lesson by drawing out students' prior concepts, and getting them ready to learn by asking questions and setting purposes for learning.

Since students learn by making sense—that is, by exploring and inquiring—teachers should encourage students to inquire. And since inquiry is an activity that one can get good at, teachers should show students *how* to inquire, question, and seek and examine information.

Finally, since the act of learning changes our old ideas and expands our capacity to learn new things, teachers should prod students to reflect on what they have learned, examine its implications, apply it in useful ways, and modify their old ways of thinking about the topic.

You will notice a pattern in the core lessons that follow in this guidebook. Each has three phases, corresponding to the activities of learning that Piaget and his followers identified.[1]

THE ANTICIPATION PHASE

First, each lesson begins with a phase of **anticipation**, in which students are directed to think and ask questions about the topic they are about to study.

The Anticipation Phase serves to:

- call up the knowledge students already have
- informally assess what they already know, including misconceptions
- set purposes for learning
- focus attention on the topic
- provide a context for understanding new ideas

THE BUILDING KNOWLEDGE PHASE

After the lesson gets started, the teaching leads students to inquire, find out, make sense of the material, answer their prior questions, and find new questions and answer those, too. We call this second or middle phase of the lesson the **building knowledge phase.**

The Building Knowledge phase serves to:

- compare expectations with what is being learned

[1] In this guidebook we call the three phases of a lesson ***Anticipation, Building Knowledge*****,** and ***Consolidation*** (in English these three terms are abbreviated as "ABC"). The Reading and Writing for Critical Thinking Project (See www.rwct.net) is based on a three-part teaching model that goes by the name of **Evocation, Realization of Meaning,** and **Reflection**, which were terms introduced by Jeannie Steele and Kurt Meredith (1997). The three-phase model was earlier called **Anticipation, Realization,** and **Contemplation** by Joseph Vaughn and Thomas Estes (1986).

- revise expectations or raise new ones
- identify the main points
- monitor personal thinking
- make inferences about the material
- make personal connections to the lesson
- question the lesson

THE CONSOLIDATION PHASE

Toward the end of the lesson, once students have come to understand the ideas of the lesson, there is still more to be done. Teachers want students to reflect on what they learned, ask what it means to them, reflect on how it changes what they thought, and ponder how they can use it. This phase of the lesson is called the **consolidation phase**.

The Consolidation Phase serves to:

- summarize the main ideas
- interpret the ideas
- share opinions
- make personal responses
- test out the ideas
- assess learning
- ask additional questions

Throughout this guidebook, we will refer again and again to these three phases of **anticipation, building knowledge,** and **consolidation.** The many teaching activities that will be presented in these pages will usually serve the purposes of one or another of these three phases of a lesson.

The ABC model is illustrated throughout the text with a simple triad of icons inspired by the different phases of the wheat plant's life cycle:

In the **anticipation phase**, a seed is planted in rich soil. The success of a lesson does not just depend on this "seed," however; it must also draw on knowledge the students already possess, just as the seed must draw on the nutrients in the soil.

The essential groundwork laid, the teacher proceeds to the **building knowledge phase**; the wheat seed sprouts roots and a plant grows.

The lesson concludes with the **consolidation phase**. The head of wheat is mature, and contains seeds of many other plants; so too the lesson can lead into many other activities.

These three icons are always shown together and in sequence, suggesting teachers build on what came before and keep in mind what may come next. The life-cycle of wheat, from seed to soil to plant and back to seed, also suggests the constant educational cycle of building on prior knowledge to move forward.

THE CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT

HOW TO MAKE THE MOST OF THIS LEARNING PROGRAM

Learning a new teaching method is like learning a new move in sports—you have to see it done, try it out in front of someone who knows how to do it, and get suggestions to improve your performance. The workshops are arranged just this way: you take part in a demonstration lesson as if you were a student, then you discuss the methods and learn how to conduct them, then you plan and teach a lesson using the method yourself. At the end of the workshop, you will design a real lesson to teach in your classroom, which you will teach after the workshop is over.

Section 2 of this guidebook contains core lessons that demonstrate teaching methods in action. Then they tell you how to carry out, step by step, the teaching methods that were demonstrated. After showing you how to teach each method used in the core lesson, the guide shows you several related teaching methods that can also be used to reach similar goals.

Section 3 outlines some general ideas about assessment and lesson planning as they apply to Reading and Writing for Critical Thinking methods. This section includes classroom management techniques and assessment rubrics, all based on the successful practices of different teachers at different grade levels and in different subjects.

Section 4, "Teaching In and Across the Disciplines," focuses on the application of RWCT methods on the teaching of literature, mathematics, science, art, and interdisciplinary, or "crosscut-ting," subjects.

Remember, you must try these methods out in order to learn to use them well. It is recommended that you use a new method many times before you decide if it works in your teaching. Not only must you get used to teaching with the method, but your students must get used to learning with it too.

Also, you should collaborate with other teachers. At least once each month, try to get together with one or more other teachers who are teaching with these new methods. Write down your questions and stories of your successes, and bring those to the meeting to discuss with others. Bring your lesson plans, and samples of the students' work. You are sure to find that you have good suggestions that will help your colleagues overcome problems they are having, and they will have suggestions that will help you too.

SECTION 2:

TEACHING METHODS AND STRATEGIES

Teaching is more than a set of methods. Teaching well means addressing a set of objectives, for a particular group of students, at a certain point in the school year, with certain resources, within a particular time frame, in a particular school and community setting. It means finding a balance between direct instruction and orchestrating the activities of individuals and groups of students. It means developing students' skills and strategies for learning, at the same time they learn the content of the curriculum.

Artful teachers approach the subject matter not as static knowledge or inert ideas, but as ways of knowing. Using ways of knowing—thinking within a discipline—means to command a set of concepts and a set of strategies for asking questions and creating knowledge. To think *across* disciplines means to identify problems, to ask the right questions, to bring the right knowledge to bear, to find the right solutions, and to apply the right measure of one's success.

Although teaching is more than a set of strategies, there are some teaching methods that should be part of every creative teacher's repertoire. Some of these are comprehensive strategies that can shape a whole lesson. Others can be combined to make a complete lesson plan.

CORE LESSONS AND HOW TO READ THEM

In the pages that follow you will find eight **core lessons** described in detail. Each of these lessons sets out activities and teaching strategies chosen for each of the three phases—**anticipation**, **building knowledge**, and **consolidation**—that was described in the previous section. These lessons are scripted, almost as if they were plays, to give you an idea what the teacher and students say and do. If you are taking part in a workshop, it is likely that you will have a chance to take part in these lessons as if you were a student.

In the text of the script, each phase of a lesson will be indicated by the following icons:


the *anticipation phase* of a lesson


the *building knowledge phase*


the *consolidation phase*

Each **Lesson** is followed by invitations for you to reflect on how they worked and what they achieved. Then the **Methods** are carefully described and their steps laid out so that you may follow them in teaching your own lessons. Finally, **Variations and Related Methods** that can be used to teach the same kind of lesson are described.

It is important to remember that some of these methods are better suited for one or more of the ABC phases. The ABC icons above are also used in the **Methods,** indicating which phase(s) the method can be used in. Some methods span several phases, or are suitable for more than one phase. For example:

(This method is suitable for the anticipation and consolidation phase.)

Every method is presented in the same format to make it easier for you to use in actual lesson planning:

Rationale—outline of the goals of the method and how it helps students learn.

Group Size—the number of students most suitable to involve in this method.

Resources—what materials are needed, if any.

Time Required

Activity—every step of the method, described in detail.

Assessment—during and after the lesson, if appropriate or desired.

Reflections—discussion of the method that will give the reader a better idea of how or why to use it.

Tips—suggestions on how to conduct the method successfully, or addressing it to specific groups with different needs.

The following core lessons were designed to be used with any level of student and with any subject. Each core lesson was chosen to illustrate teaching for different aims.

FIRST CORE LESSON Learning Information from Text

SECOND CORE LESSON Understanding Narrative Text

THIRD CORE LESSON Conducting Discussions

FOURTH CORE LESSON Drama in the Classroom

FIFTH CORE LESSON Cooperative Learning

FIRST CORE LESSON: LEARNING INFORMATION FROM TEXT

This lesson shows you ways to help students learn from reading an informational text. The lesson follows the three-part format of anticipation, building knowledge, and consolidation that was presented in the first section this guidebook. The lesson will use the **Structured Overview** (Ausubel 1968), the **Know/Want to Know/Learn (K-W-L)** procedure (Ogle 1986), **Paired Reading/Paired Summarizing** (Vaughn 1986), and the **Value Line** (Kagan 1997).

The text for this lesson is called "Elephants and Farmers," but the procedures in the lesson are meant to be used with any informational text that you have. This lesson is done here with sixth graders, but the procedures can be used with grades below that or up through the secondary level.

HOW TO READ THIS LESSON

As you read the following demonstration lesson, please bear in mind that its purpose is to demonstrate teaching methods (and not to teach you about elephants!). Think about this lesson in two ways:

1. Imagine that you are a *student* who is participating in this lesson. What is your experience? What kind of thinking are you doing? What are you learning?

2. Then think yourself into the role of the *teacher* who is leading the lesson. What are you doing? Why are you doing it? How are you handling the three phases of the lesson—anticipation, building knowledge, and consolidation?

LESSON

ANTICIPATION

The teacher begins with a **Structured Overview**, in this case a short talk about the topic—just enough to frame the students' thinking about the topic and to raise their curiosity. The talk goes like this:

Teacher: *Today we will be talking about the problems of protecting endangered species. We will focus on elephants, and consider efforts to save them from dying out. We will also look at the question a different way: We will think about problems that are caused by conservation.*

Some elephants live in Asia, but the most plentiful and largest elephants live in Africa, mostly in the eastern countries of Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda. (The teacher points to these countries on a map). Elephants live on grassy plains and in forests.

Take a minute and think of some threats to elephants. Then turn to your ***face partner****—the person sitting in front of you—and share your answers.*

After a minute, the teacher invites answers from three of the pairs.

Pair 1: "We think people shoot them."

Teacher: *True, in the past, big-game hunters shot them for sport. Many thousands of elephants have been killed that way over the years. In the 1970s many countries outlawed the hunting of elephants, but illegal hunters, or "poachers," continue to kill elephants for their ivory tusks. Ivory is rare and precious, and…*

Pair 2: "Maybe people are destroying their habitat?"

Teacher: *That is another big threat. Much of their habitat has been taken over for farming.*

On the whole, the population of elephants in the world is still shrinking, so people have taken steps to protect the elephant populations that are left. Can you think of what some of those steps are? Take a minute and think of some. Then turn to your ***elbow partner****—the person next to you—and share your answers.*

After a minute the teacher calls on another pair.

Pair 3: "Aren't there parks where elephants and other animals can live and nobody will bother them?"

Teacher: *Yes. Governments have also set aside large parks or preserves—some of them are many kilometers across—where elephants can live under the protection of game wardens and where their habitat is preserved. Also, jewelers have been discouraged from selling ivory, and many people refuse to buy it, even when they find it for sale.*

But here's a question for you to think about. In Africa, elephants live in grasslands and in forests, and many of them live near people's farms. What kinds of problems might that cause? Remember, most people believe elephants should be protected. But people need to eat the food that comes from farms too.

Now the teacher asks the students to pair up and make a list of points they know about conserving the population of elephants:

Turn to the person beside you. Think of three or four things you know about the conservation of elephants—things you are fairly sure about. Don't limit yourself to the points we just mentioned.

The teacher draws the **K-W-L chart** on the chalk board:

Elephant Conservation

What do we know?	What do we want to know?	What did we learn?

Now the teacher asks pairs of students to tell some of the points they thought of about conserving the elephant population, writing them in the K-W-L chart under **What do we <u>know</u>?**

Teacher: *Let's write down the important things we already know about the conservation of elephants and the problems related to it.*

The students mention that elephants are endangered, people destroy their habitat, etc. The teacher records these.

Elephant Conservation

What do we know?	What do we want to know?	What did we learn?
Elephants are endangered. People shoot them. Poachers kill elephants for ivory. People destroy their habitat. There are laws against shooting them. There are game reserves set aside for them. Some elephants live near farms. Elephants might harm farmers' crops.		

The teacher now asks the students about the things they are unsure of, and helps them turn their uncertainties into questions, recording them on the K-W-L chart. The teacher begins by reading out loud the points in the What do we know? column.

Teacher: *We know a lot about the conservation of elephants. But what more do we need to know?*

The students wonder aloud if elephants ruin crops, how much damage elephants do, etc. The teacher writes the questions on the chart in the column labeled **What do we <u>want to know</u>?**

Elephant Conservation

What do we know?	What do we want to know?	What did we learn?
Elephants are endangered. People shoot them. Poachers kill elephants for ivory. People destroy their habitat. There are laws against shooting them. There are game reserves set aside for them. Some elephants live near farms. Elephants might harm farmers' crops. Poachers kill elephants for ivory. Elephants live in grasslands and forests.	Do elephants ruin crops? How much damage do elephants do? How do people who live near elephants feel about them? Who should decide whether to protect elephants?	

BUILDING KNOWLEDGE

The Teacher now prepares the students to read the text. The students will use the method of **Paired Reading/Paired Summarizing** to help them think about the material they are reading. Since this method is new to the students, the teacher takes time to thoroughly introduce it.

Teacher: *Now we are going to read a text that tells about the conservation of elephants, and some of the issues it raises. Before we read, let's remember the questions we had, and see if we can find answers to them as we read.*

The teacher rereads the questions from the Want to Know column. *Also, be watching for new ideas for which we did not think of questions.*

Before the students begin reading, the teacher demonstrates how they should perform Paired Reading/Paired Summarizing.

Teacher: *I want you to read the text a special way, called "Paired Reading/Paired Summarizing." Watch closely as I demonstrate what you will do. First I am going to read a paragraph, and then summarize it.*

The teacher reads:

ELEPHANTS AND FARMERS

The elephant population continues to dwindle in many African countries. In others, however, long-standing conservation measures have been so successful that elephants are more numerous than at any time in recorded history.

Teacher: *I will demonstrate what you do when you summarize a paragraph. The paragraph said that the number of elephants is mostly going down, but in some African countries there are more elephants than before. That is because efforts to conserve them have worked. Did you see? I told you the important ideas but not all of the details.*

Reading a paragraph and summarizing it is what one partner will do. The other partner will ask questions about the paragraph. I will demonstrate that too. Here is a question about the passage we just heard: "What might be some of the 'conservation measures' the passage mentioned?"

The students offer answers.

Teacher: *Those sound like good answers. And here is another question: "The article says the elephant population is larger in some places than ever before. Do you think that is a good thing or a bad thing? What is good about it? What is bad about it?"*

The students offer more answers.

Teacher: *Now that I have shown you how to summarize and how to ask questions, I want you to pair up. One of you will go first, and read the next paragraph. Then that same person will summarize it, as I have just done. The other student should ask two or three good questions about the paragraph. Both of you should try to answer each question.*

> Wildlife experts are calling this a victory, but to the struggling African farmer, it is yet one more example of how the forces of nature threaten her precarious livelihood. Elephants foraging for food that their expanding population has made scarce can destroy an entire plantation in a matter of hours. Profits on the larger farms, already under threat from rocketing seed and fertilizer prices and the effects of globalization, are plummeting. For the subsistence farmer and her family, a single act of trespass by an elephant herd can mean the loss of a season's work, the destruction of house and home, and possible destitution.

The teacher allows time for students to read the passage and summarize it. The teacher walks quietly among the pairs and listens to their summaries.

Teacher: *Stop, please. Who can do a nice job of summarizing that paragraph? There is a lot of information there, isn't there? What did it tell us?*

Student 16: "The paragraph says that some farms are ruined by the elephants."

Teacher: *That's true. But let's try to capture a few more important ideas in the summary. Let's hear someone else.*

Student 17: "When there are a lot of elephants, they have to search further and further for food. The elephants come onto big farms and do damage, so the farm doesn't make money. They ruin the small farm and leave that farmer with nothing."

Teacher: *That summary captures several important ideas nicely. Does everyone see that a summary should be shorter and simpler than the original paragraph, but it should also contain the most important ideas?*

Now, let's continue. It's time now for the other partner to ask questions about the paragraph.

The teacher passes around the room for several minutes and listens to the students' questions. When most students are finished, the teacher says, *Let's hear one of your questions.*

Student 18: "Why did the author say 'she' when he was talking about a farmer?"

Teacher: *Good question,* says the teacher. *Why don't you ask the class?*

The student does so, and students offer answers.

Teacher: *All right, I see you know how to summarize a paragraph, and how to ask questions about it. I won't stop you as you read the next two paragraphs. Remember: the one who asked the questions last time will read the next paragraph and summarize it. The other student will ask two or three questions about it, and both will try to answer the questions. Then you will switch roles when you read the next paragraph. Keep trading roles for each new paragraph as you read the rest of the article.*

The article continues:

> It is these facts which have led many farmers to call for a revival of the right to shoot elephants and to trade their meat, hides and ivory. The price of a single tusk can be equivalent to many years' income for an impoverished farmer. In a world where the livelihoods of poor people are more at risk than those of elephants, this is an increasingly persuasive argument. In addition to this, legalization would reduce the need for the expensive, military style policing currently used to control the violent behavior of ivory smugglers.
>
> However, many conservationists have reacted with horror to this proposal. Legalizing the shooting of elephants, even on a controlled basis, will, they argue, lead to a free for all which will drive the elephant back to the brink of extinction. The corruption and exploitation linked to the trade in ivory will return. And to many, the very idea of killing an animal as majestic, noble and intelligent as the elephant is every bit as abhorrent as killing a whale.

The teacher circulates among the pairs as they summarize the paragraphs and ask questions about them. If she finds they understand what they are doing, she lets them continue. If she finds a particular student needs help making a summary or thinking of probing questions, she intervenes and offers help. If she were to find that many students needed such help, she would ask for their attention and remind the whole class how to summarize and how to ask questions.

CONSOLIDATION

The consolidation phase is the part of the lesson where the students think back over what they learned, apply the ideas, and reconsider what they already knew before in light of what they have learned. In this lesson, the consolidation activity consists of the conclusion to the **Know/Want to Know/Learn Activity** and the **Value Line.**

Returning to the K-W-L chart, the teacher now asks the students to reflect on what they have learned. They will begin by recounting answers they found to their questions.

Teacher: *Now let's see what we learned from this article. First I wonder if we found answers to our questions. Please pair up, read the questions from the Want to Know column, and see if you found answers to them. I'll give you two minutes to do this.*

After two minutes, the teacher asks students to start offering answers.

Student 21: "Yes, they ruin crops, and a whole lot more."

Teacher: *Then the answer to the first question is "yes*.," and she writes that in the What Did We Learn column on the chart.

Student 22: "The article told us about a lot of damage elephants do."

Teacher: *Yes? Show us where in the text you found that information*.

Student 22: "Here, for example, the text said, 'For the subsistence farmer and her family, a single act of trespass by an elephant herd can mean the loss of a season's work, the destruction of house and home, and possible destitution.'"

Teacher: *Good. By the way, can someone tell us what destitution means?*

Student 21: "It means being completely without money."

Teacher: *Nice job. Let's go on.*

Student 23: "Anyway, before that it said, 'Profits on the larger farms, already under threat from rocketing seed and fertilizer prices and the effects of globalization, are plummeting.' In other words the big farms are losing money."

Teacher: *Good. Let's write these on the chart.*

The teacher adds these answers to the What Did We Learn column.

The students offer several more answers they encountered in the text, and the teacher records those in the What Did We Learn column.

Teacher: *How about the last question:* "Who should decide whether to protect elephants?" *Did you find an answer to that one?*

Student 26: "The text didn't say. It said some people were really against killing elephants, but it didn't say who should decide."

Teacher: *Then that's a question we may have to answer for ourselves. In the meantime, did we find out anything else from the article, something we didn't already have questions about? Turn to your face partner, and see if you can locate any new ideas you learned.*

The teacher gives them a minute to do this.

The students offer more ideas. At the end of the discussion, the K-W-L chart looks like this:

Elephant Conservation

What do we know?	What do we want to know?	What did we learn?
Elephants are endangered. People shoot them. Poachers kill elephants for ivory. People destroy their habitat. There are laws against shooting them. There are game reserves set aside for them. Some elephants live near farms. Elephants might harm farmers' crops. Poachers kill elephants for ivory. Elephants live in grasslands and forests.	Do elephants ruin crops? How much damage do elephants do? How do people who live near elephants feel about them? Who should decide whether to protect elephants?	Yes! They destroy farms and houses. They make big farms lose money. Farmers fear elephants. They also want to make money from killing them. We need to decide who should decide. That is, who should determine if some elephants are to be hunted or not?

The lesson could end at this point. But because the teacher wishes to pursue the ethical question raised by the text, she adds another activity called a **Value Line**. The Value Line is an activity that requires students to take a position on an issue and to support it with reasons. The teacher begins by posing a polarizing question:

Teacher: *One of you raised a good question that the text didn't answer. It was,* "Should farmers be allowed to kill elephants?" *I want you to discuss this question. First, please take a piece of paper and write your own answer to it. You can answer 'yes' or 'no,' but you must also explain your reasons for your position. Take two minutes and do that now.*

After two minutes, the teacher explains the next step:

Teacher: *You are about to hear two statements of positions that are the opposite of each other.*

Now the teacher walks to one end of the room and makes an extreme statement in answer to the question.

Teacher: *Elephants should not be harmed under any circumstances. If elephants want to eat a farmer's crops, they should be allowed. The farmer should just move. Elephants were on the land before people were, and they have a right to live anywhere and any way they want.*

The teacher asks for one student to volunteer and stand at the other end of the room and state the opposite view.

Student 1: *"It's people who are important, not animals. Farmers need to make food for people to eat. They shouldn't protect elephants. They should kill them and eat them and sell their tusks for ivory."*

Next, the teacher invites the rest of the class to stand somewhere between the teacher and the other student.

Teacher: *Now that you have heard these two extreme views, I want you to stand up and take your position between the two of us. If you agree that elephants should not be killed under any circumstances, come stand close to me. But if you think farmers should be completely free to kill elephants, go stand close to* ***student 1****. However, if you agree mostly but not fully with one position or the other, stand somewhere along a line between the two of us.*

After the students position themselves, the teacher asks them to talk to those around them to see if they have the same opinion—if not, they should move in one direction or the other.

Teacher: *Now that you have taken your position, you need to check and make sure you are standing with people who hold the same position you do. Take a minute now and take turns telling the people around you your position and why you believe it. If it turns out you do not agree with your neighbors after all, you should move to another place in the line. Talk to the people around you in the new place and make sure you agree on your answers.*

While they are talking, the teacher identifies a spokesperson for three or four clusters of students among those standing in the line.
Teacher: *Now please come up with a statement that represents the views of the people in each cluster. Those of you who are standing in the same place need to help your spokesperson create a short statement that represents your position.*

The spokesperson for each cluster of students shares the group's position.

Group 1 (closest to the teacher): "So what if elephants destroy farms and rip up forests? People do that all the time and call it 'development.' We are pretty sure the elephants were there first, and the farmers invaded their territory. We think the farmers should leave."

Teacher: *Okay, that's a pretty strong statement. By the way, for the rest of you, maybe you will hear something said here that will make you change your mind. If you do, it's all right to change your position, to move closer toward someone you agree with or further away from someone your disagree with. Now let's hear from the next group.*

Group 2: "We think maybe the farmers shouldn't be there either, but still, the farmers deserve help. People who love elephants should take up a fund and pay the farmers to go set up somewhere else. Then there would be more land for the elephants—but the farmers would be taken care of too."

Teacher: *That's considerate of you. Does anyone want to move?* (No one does). *No? Then I will. I'm persuaded by that position because it takes everybody's interests into account.* (The teacher moves to stand beside Group 2). *Let's hear from another group.*

Group 3: "We think the farmers should be allowed to shoot the elephants. Not shoot all of them, but only some of them. The article said there are too many elephants. OK, then the government should decide on a number of elephants that could be hunted each year, and farmers could buy licenses to hunt them. Anyone who hunted without a license would be arrested."

The teacher wishes to end the lesson by having students write down their thoughts, so she assigns a **quick-write**, a five-minute essay.

Teacher: *All right, you have now heard five positions on the question of whether farmers should be allowed to shoot elephants. Now I want you to go back to your seats and write for five minutes in your notebooks on this question. First say what you think should be done: Should farmers be allowed to shoot elephants? Second, explain why you think as you do.*

The students return to their desks and write. At the end of five minutes the teacher tells them they have one minute more to write. Then she stops them, and invites three students to share their papers.

the lesson ends here

REVIEWING THE LESSON

At the beginning of this lesson, you were invited to think about it in two ways: as *a student in the class* and as *the teacher*.

Take a moment and reflect on how it would have felt to be a student participating in this lesson. (It may help to write down your thoughts on a piece of paper).
How did you feel—interested, engaged, important, detached, controlled, or bored?

What kind of thinking did you do—memorize details, find main ideas, look below the surface at important issues, or make interpretations and support interpretations with reasons?

What will you carry away from the lesson—information, important ideas, or thinking skills?

Now think back over this lesson as if you had been the teacher. Recall the steps to this lesson. They were:

Structured Overview: A brief lecture to set the stage for the lesson.

Know/Want to Know/Learn: A method for reminding students of what they know and drawing out their questions before they seek more understanding about a topic.

Paired Reading/Paired Summarizing: A method in which partners help each other read with understanding.

Value Line: A method in which students take and defend a position on a debatable issue.

Quick-write: A brief reflective essay that has students collect their thoughts and reasons on a topic.

STRUCTURED OVERVIEW

The **Structured Overview** (Ausubel 1968) is a brief lecture or explanation that is given at the beginning of a lesson to arouse students' curiosity, introduce key concepts, and get them ready to learn from the lesson proper.

RATIONALE: Learning theory teaches us that students learn by relating new information to what they already know. But if their prior knowledge about a topic is incomplete or incoherent, it helps to make a short presentation of background knowledge to prepare them to learn new information. The Structured Overview allows the teacher to give students just enough information to learn from the unfolding lesson.

GROUP SIZE: Six to sixty

TIME REQUIRED: The structured overview should be kept brief—usually not more than five minutes.

ACTIVITY:

Step 1: Think over the lesson and decide what ideas or issues it contains that will be familiar and interesting to the students. Think of what concepts and what vocabulary students should understand in order to learn from the lesson. Make a list of all these.

Step 2: Prepare maps or diagrams or bring in real objects that will spark students' interest.

Step 3: Make up a short talk of not more than five minutes that will present the key points.

Step 4: Make the talk engaging and interactive: ask questions and encourage comments.

Step 5: Close by saying, "We shall see." That is, create a sense of anticipation.

REFLECTIONS: Remember to keep the Structured Overview brief. It is meant to give students enough information that they can participate in an active lesson, but not to replace that active lesson.

KNOW/WANT TO KNOW/LEARN (K–W–L)

The K-W-L activity can be used to structure a whole lesson. It asks students to think of what they already know about the topic of the lesson, raise questions about it, and find answers to those questions.

RATIONALE: Learning theory tells us that active learning is better than passive learning. Students learn best when they (1) remember what they already know, (2) ask questions, (3) confirm their new knowledge. This method leads them to do all three.

GROUP SIZE: Six to sixty.

TIME REQUIRED: 45 minutes to multiple periods.

ACTIVITY:

Step 1: Begin by naming the topic, and asking students to think of what they already know about it. It helps to have students list their ideas, and to share their ideas with a partner before they answer.

Step 2: Create a K-W-L chart on the chalk board or on chart paper.

Step 3: Ask the students to call out what they know about the topic. Write their ideas in the column marked **What do we Know?** You may organize their thoughts into categories, as you receive them.

Step 4: Now ask students to think of questions they have about the topic. They may begin by reviewing what they know, and finding areas where their knowledge is incomplete. Write their questions on the chart in the column marked **What do we Want to Know?** Feel free to add some of your own.

Step 5: The students should now read the text (or listen to a lecture, or do some other kind of investigation). They are reminded to look for answers to their questions, and for any new ideas they did not anticipate.

Step 6: The students report the things they learned from the text. First they report answers they found to their questions, and then they report any other interesting or important ideas they discovered. The teacher records these on the chart in the column labeled **What did we Learn?**

ASSESSMENT: There are three ways to assess the students' learning in this lesson:

1. **The teacher can observe how well the students participated in the learning activities.** The first thing the teacher needs to know is how well the lesson worked. When new teaching methods are being introduced, it may take some repeated trials for both the students and the teacher to learn to carry them out well. The teacher can ask:

> How well did the class, and each student, carry out the roles in the paired reading and paired summarizing activity?
>
> How fully and productively did the class, and each student, participate in the value line?

2. **The teacher can assess their learning of the content—their understanding of the ideas in the text.** The teacher also will need to know if the students learned the essential information and concepts from the lesson. Through a paper-and-pencil test or a recitation, students can be asked to demonstrate their understanding of what the text said and what it meant, answering such questions as,

> Why is the question of killing elephants being raised now?

For what reasons do the farmers want to kill elephants?

For what reasons do conservationists not want them to?

3. **The teacher can assess the students' thinking—in this case their ability to take a position and support it with evidence.** The students' papers can be assessed according to criteria such as these:

Did the student clearly state a position?

Did the student support it with two or more reasons?

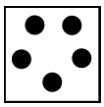
Did the student make a clear link between the stated position and the reasons offered to support it?

REFLECTIONS: The K-W-L method is a fine way to structure a lesson that covers an informational topic. It is not recommended for works of fiction. In cases where students do not possess much background knowledge about a topic, the K-W-L can be preceded by an Advance Organizer, as we did in this lesson.

PAIRED READING/PAIRED SUMMARIZING

Paired Reading/Paired Summarizing (Vaughn 1986) is a technique for having pairs of students read a text closely for understanding.

RATIONALE: Like all cooperative learning tasks, Paired Reading/Paired Summarizing allows students to take more initiative in their own and each other's learning. The method is intended to encourage different kinds of thinking, all of which encourage comprehension.



GROUP SIZE: Two to two hundred.

TIME REQUIRED: Paired Reading/Paired Summarizing takes three to four times as long as simply reading a text aloud. In order to save time, you may have students do paired reading with the first four to six paragraphs, and then read the rest of the text independently.

ACTIVITY:

Step 1: Choose an informative text of reasonable length. It should have short paragraphs (not more than three sentences each), or you should mark it into short sections.

Step 2: If the students are new to the procedure, you should demonstrate the procedure first.

a. Read a passage aloud and give a summary of it. Explain that this is one role in the activity. Explain the features of a summary: it is shorter than the original text, but it contains all of the important ideas.

b. Ask two questions about the text for the students to answer. Explain that this is the other role in the activity.

Step 3: Ask the students to pair up. Explain that one student will read the first paragraph or marked section of the text and then give a summary of it, as you have demonstrated. Allow time for everyone to do this. Then check for understanding by asking several students to share their summaries. Offer suggestions as necessary.
Now ask the other student to ask questions about the passage. After they have had a chance to do so, check for understanding by asking several students to share their questions. Again, offer suggestions for improvements if needed.

Step 4: Once the students understand the procedure, have them proceed on their own to read, summarize, and ask questions about the text, passage by passage. Remind them to switch roles after each passage has been read and discussed.

REFLECTIONS: Paired reading and paired summarizing is a good way to have students carefully read difficult text.

VALUE LINE

The **Value Line** is a cooperative learning activity that is recommended for evoking students' opinions on issues to which there can be varied responses (that is, degrees of agreement and disagreement with a statement).

RATIONALE: Recognizing and respecting differences of opinion is a useful disposition to have. It is useful for students to stand up for their beliefs even when friends disagree. The Value Line is intended to help students pay attention to an issue and decide what they think about it; recognize that there can be varying opinions about the same issue; and take a position on an issue and state their reasons for it.

GROUP SIZE: Six to sixty.

TIME REQUIRED: The Value Line may be done in 15 minutes.

ACTIVITY:

Step 1: The teacher poses a question to the whole class. It should be one on which opinions can vary from a strong "yes" to a strong "no." Such a question might be, "Which is more important: protecting the environment or meeting people's immediate needs?"

Step 2: Each student considers the question alone and may write their answers.

Step 3: The teacher and another student stand at opposite ends of the room. Each states an extreme position on the issue, and their two statements are diametrically opposed to each other.

Step 4: The students are asked to take their place along an imaginary line between the two extreme positions, according to which pole of the argument they agree with more.

Step 5: The teacher reminds the students to discuss with other students in the line their responses to the question, to make sure they are standing among people who share their position. If they do not, they should move one way or another.

Step 6: Students may continue to discuss their responses with the students on either side of them.

Step 7: The teacher asks one person from each cluster of students to state that small group's position on the issue. Any student who wants to change positions after hearing a statement is invited to do so.

REFLECTIONS:
The Value Line is enjoyable for students because they like moving around in the class and sharing their opinions with others. It is interesting to demonstrate for them physically what is meant by "having a position" and "changing one's position" on an issue.

QUICK-WRITE

The Quick-write is a brief written reflection on a topic.

RATIONALE:
Quick-writes are informal essays meant to capture thoughts. In a heated discussion many thoughts are aired in a hurry, and good ideas may be lost if they are not recorded. Quick-writes are meant to be informal—the idea is to capture thoughts and not be preoccupied with style.

GROUP SIZE: Any size.

TIME REQUIRED: The Quick-write can be done in five to ten minutes. It can be used at the beginning, in the middle, or at the end of a lesson.

ACTIVITY:
Step 1: Tell the students you want them to write very briefly about a topic you will give them. They are to write without stopping during the allotted time.
Step 2: State the topic.

Step 3: Time the students as they write. (It may help to give them an extra minute.)

Step 4: Students may keep the papers in their journals, or you may collect them to use in assessing your lesson.

VARIATIONS AND RELATED METHODS

WHAT? SO WHAT? NOW WHAT?

A method for applying ideas from a fictional or informational text.

RATIONALE:

Educators often complain that knowledge learned in school can stay disconnected from students' real lives. The influential educator Paolo Freire insisted that from every important idea some action should follow. What Freire called ***praxis*** is the link between a compelling idea and social action. The technique called *What? So What? Now What?* aims at helping students find connections between ideas learned in school and actions in the world. The method teaches students to find the main ideas of the text, think of practical implications of those ideas, and choose and carry out social action based on those ideas.

GROUP SIZE:

What? So What? Now What? is done with the whole class.

RESOURCES:

A chalk board or chart paper to write upon; otherwise the resources will vary with the activities that follow from the lesson.

TIME REQUIRED: The planning part of the procedure can be carried out in 15 minutes, but the activities that follow from it may stretch well into the future.

ACTIVITY:

It is assumed that the students will have been introduced to a topic (through reading or lecture or discussion) and will have discussed it to the point where they have a basic understanding of it.

Now the teacher explains that the class will decide what actions they might take, based on the ideas they have just considered. The teacher produces the following table on the chalk board or on chart paper, large enough for everyone to see:

What?	So What?	Now What?

What? Pointing to the *What* column, the teacher asks the students to summarize the most important ideas they have just discussed about the topic. After some discussion, the teacher writes summary ideas in the box under the heading *"What?"*

So What? Now the teacher asks the students to consider what is important about the ideas they just listed. Why do they matter? What difference do these facts or ideas make in people's lives?

After some discussion, the teacher writes the summary points in the box under the heading "*So What?*"

Now What? The teacher now asks the students what they can do about the problem or issue they have been discussing. The teacher may ask the students to ***brainstorm*** about activities they might do in order to help solve the problem they have been discussing. (*Brainstorming* is described below). The activities might be things that:

individual students can do
For example, if the problem is pollution, individual students can sign a contract promising not to throw litter on the ground.

groups of students can do
For example, a small group of students can make posters to put around the school and the community, urging others not to throw trash on the ground.

the whole class can do
For example, the whole class can spend a Saturday picking up trash in a public park or along a roadside.

REFLECTIONS: The teacher should think flexibly of a range of actions that can follow from ideas introduced in lessons. Often a solution will be a decision by individual students to change their behavior in some way. But sometimes, solutions should be group projects, in order to generate more discussion among the class about the ways their actions relate to the problems they identified. It helps to keep the *"What? So What? Now What?* chart posted, so the students can be reminded of the connections between the issues they identified and the actions they took.

BRAINSTORMING

A method for generating many ideas about a topic.

RATIONALE:
The rule of brainstorming is to think of many ideas, think of different ideas, and to suspend judgment until students have produced many different ideas. Brainstorming can help "open students' minds" so they can think of ideas that might not normally have occurred to them. Not all of the ideas they arrive at will be equally useful, but in thinking of many different ideas, they may discover some valuable ideas among the less important ones. Students who practice brainstorming often may become more prolific and less rigid thinkers.

GROUP SIZE: Brainstorming can be done by individuals, pairs, small groups, or the whole class.

RESOURCES: Brainstorming requires only pencil and paper or chalk board and chalk for recording ideas.

TIME REQUIRED: A brainstorming activity should be conducted in 10 minutes or less.

ACTIVITY:

Step 1: Introduce brainstorming to the whole class first.

Step 2: Introduce the topic or problem very clearly.

Step 3: Give students a time limit to solve the problem.

Step 4: Encourage them to share any idea, no matter how odd, that is related to the problem. Remind them not to criticize each other's ideas in any way. Encourage them to build on each other's ideas. Do not stay on any one idea for too long.

Step 5: Write down their ideas as they offer them

Step 6: Later, have students brainstorm individually or in pairs.

PAIRED BRAINSTORMING

When doing a variation of brainstorming called **Paired Brainstorming** (De Bono 1973), ask students to individually list ideas about a topic. Then, after a few minutes, ask them to form pairs, share their ideas with each other, and then keep adding to the list. You can later ask the pairs of students to share their ideas with the whole group, as you write them on the chalk board.

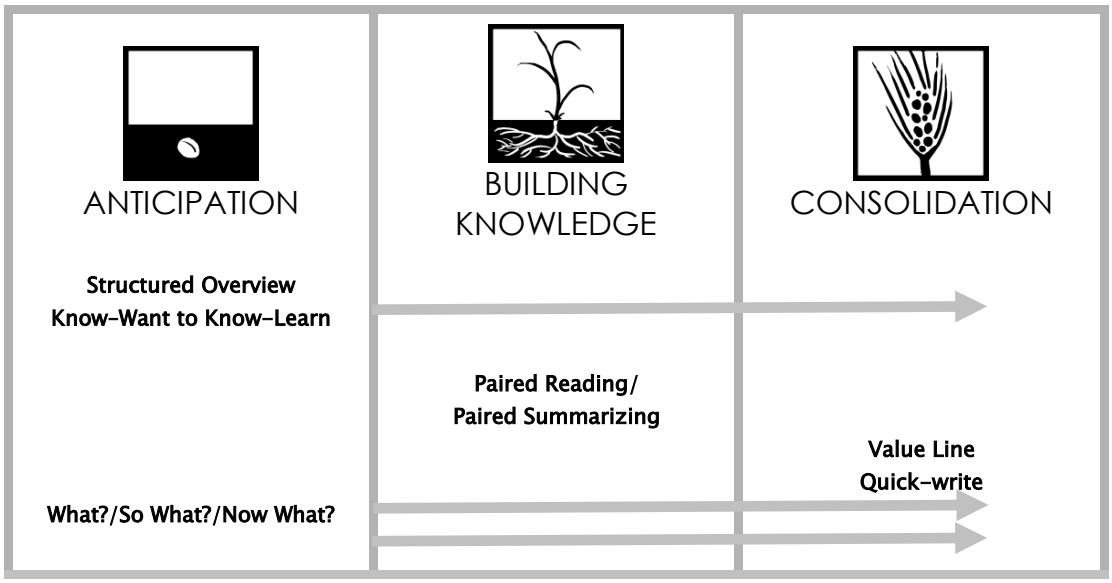
TIPS:

Practice brainstorming often in order to help students develop the idea of imaginative and flexible thinking—what is sometimes called *lateral thinking*. You can practice it with meaningless topics first, just to get them used to the idea. You can show the class an object such as a stick and ask them to think of uses for it. For example, the uses for a stick might be:

To write in the sand
For a bean plant to climb on
To beat the dust out of a jacket or a carpet
To beat the bushes to scare away snakes
To help measure the height of a building (sighting across the top of the stick to the top of the building and knowing the angle of the line of sight)
To wrap with cloth to make a doll
To make a bow or an arrow.

ABC CHART

Let's see how the preceding methods, variations, and related methods fit into the Anticipation/Building Knowledge/Consolidation rubric. This chart will help you use the methods in this guide to make your own lesson plans using the ABC rubric. The chart will grow as we add more methods.



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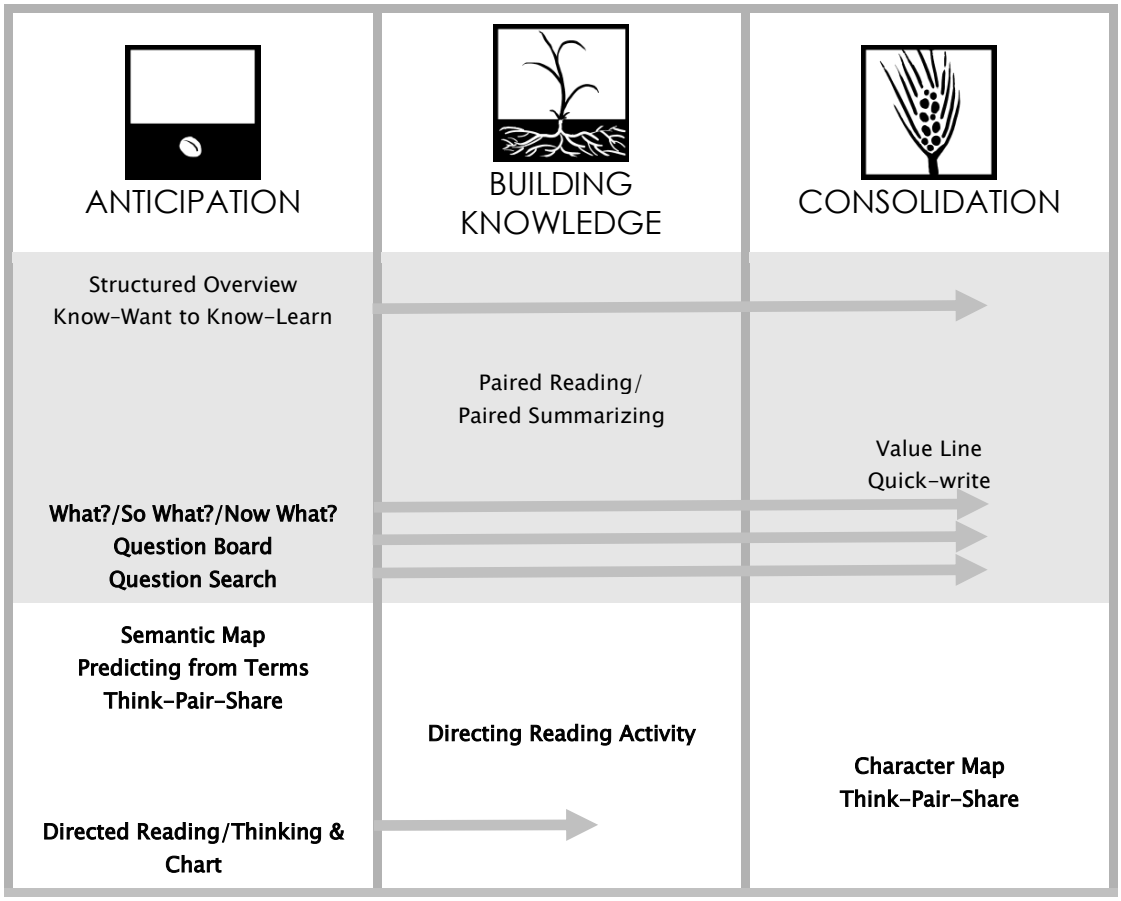


“The Family”
A Story from Senegal

Tom Gilroy

One day, in the small village of Bikole, Modou and his older brother, Babou, were helping their father harvest the peanuts. It was October, and the rains had stopped. The leaves on the peanut plants were turning brown, and the air was getting cooler.

Modou could see his mother and his little sister, Hadi, coming down the road from the village. They were carrying lunch to the men and boys in the fields. The women carried everything on their heads.

As the whole family sat under a tree to eat the porridge made from millet, a young man walked up.

"Good afternoon," he said.

"Welcome," said Modou's father to the stranger.

"Come sit in the shade and eat lunch with us."

"Thank you, old one," said the young man politely, "but I must hurry. I was watching my father's cows last night, and I fell asleep. When I woke up, three calves were gone. If I don't find them, or the man who stole them, my father will be very angry."

Modou's father looked unhappy. This was the third person to lose cows in a week. He knew the young man would not find his cows. By now they were dead, and the meat from them was already sold.

"We have not seen your cows, friend," said the old man. "Good luck."

"Thank you," said the stranger, who hurried off. Modou's father returned to the bowl to finish his lunch.

Modou, who heard the stranger's story, stopped eating. "Father," he said softly with his eyes down, "when I was milking our cows early this morning, before the sun was up, I saw Uncle N'Gor running through the trees. He was pulling three calves."

Modou's uncle was his father's younger brother. He had gone to school in the big city for a few years, but failed the final exams. He came back to the village with many new clothes, but no money. He shared a hut with Modou, but Modou did not like him very much. He never worked in the fields like the rest of the men and was always telling Modou's mother to do something for him. He ate meals with the family, but that was all. Afterward, he always put on his new clothes and left the household.

When Modou's father heard his son's story, he stopped eating too. He looked at Modou,

who was still looking at the ground.

"How do you know it was N'Gor?" he asked. "Usually, when I leave to milk the cows, Uncle N'Gor is still asleep," Modou began. "Today his bed was empty. When I saw him with the three calves, I called to him, but he didn't answer.

"Father," Modou added, looking at the old man for the first time, "he was wearing his red pants."

Modou's father looked across the bowl at his wife. She was younger than he. He knew that she did not like his brother, but would never say anything. He did not blame her. N'Gor was not a good man. He was lazy, and he was not polite to the old people of the village. But he was his brother. They had the same mother and father.

Two weeks ago, N'Gor asked Modou's father to lend him some money. He wanted to get married. This was not the first time he had asked for money. Modou's father told him that if he would work with them in the fields, he would give his younger brother the money. But N'Gor got angry.

"I do not want to work in the fields," he said. "Soon I will go to the city and find a job in a bureau. Then I will have lots of money."

Modou's father shook his head. Twice before he had loaned N'Gor money to go to the city to find work. Twice he had come back with new clothes, but no job and no money. Modou's father refused to lend him any more money until he helped in the fields.

The old man rose from the lunch bowl. He did not think his brother would steal to get money, but he was the only man in the village who owned a pair of pants. All the rest of the men and boys wore cloths that tied around the waist. N'Gor was proud of his brightly colored pants.

Modou watched his father hurry off. "He is getting old, and should not run," thought the boy. "If Uncle N'Gor worked in the fields, Father could rest,"

Modou and his brother and the two women finished their lunch, then went back to pulling the peanuts out of the ground with a hoelike tool. Modou's mother and sister stayed and helped until the sun was going down.

As they were stopping for the day, Modou saw the young man who had lost the cows walking home. He had three cows on a rope.

"Mother!" Modou called. "Look! He has found his cows. Hello, my friend," he shouted to the young man, "Yallah was with you." The young man did not say anything, but kept on walking.

"Hello, my friend," repeated Modou, thinking the man did not hear him.

"Hush, Modou," scolded his mother. "They are not his cows; they are ours."

THIRD CORE LESSON: CONDUCTING A DISCUSSION

Previous lessons have presented ways to get students to inquire into the meaning of a text or a lesson. This lesson presents more methods for conducting discussions with groups of students. Discussions strategies, along with the kinds of questions teachers ask, are very important in teaching, because they orchestrate the kind of *thinking* that students do. Interesting questions inspire interesting answers. Of course, getting 40, 50, or 60 students participating in discussions requires not only good questions but good management frameworks and teaching strategies. This core lesson and the methods that follow present all of these areas.

This core lesson will highlight the **Shared Inquiry Method** and the **Discussion Web**, and will also employ the **Predicting from Terms** technique and the **Directed Listening-Thinking Activity.**

HOW TO READ THIS LESSON

As you read the following demonstration lesson, please bear in mind that its purpose is to demonstrate teaching methods (and not to teach you about Scotland or seals!). Think about this lesson in two ways:

> 1. Imagine that you are *a student* who is participating in this lesson. What is your experience? What kind of thinking are you doing? What are you learning?
>
> 2. Then think yourself into the role of *the teacher* who is leading the lesson. What are you doing? Why are you doing it? How are you handling the three phases of the lesson—anticipation, building knowledge, and consolidation?

LESSON

ANTICIPATION

The anticipation phase is the part of the lesson that arouses students' curiosity and sets purposes for learning. Here we use the **Predicting from Terms** technique.

The teacher lists several terms from the story the students are about to hear, and invites student to use them to invent their own story.

Teacher: *Today you are going to hear a story from Scotland. It will be a folktale. That means it will tell about someone who wants something and strives to get it. Maybe the actions are right or maybe they're*

wrong—either way, the actions are sure to have consequences. Maybe the story will suggest something about how we should live our lives. Strange things will happen in the story—maybe it will have magic in it, maybe not. Anyway, that much makes it a folktale. Also, I can tell you this: the people who originally told this story—they were fisher folk from the north coast of Scotland—believed that it was true.

I am going to write five terms on the chalk board. These terms will appear in the story I will tell you. The terms are:

seal skin,
marriage,
locked trunk,
sea coast,
a transformation (that is, a mysterious change).

I want you to turn to your face partner. The pair of you should try to imagine your own folktale that will have those five elements in it. That is, let those terms suggest a story to you. Let your imaginations go, and make up a story. You have three minutes to do so.

After three minutes pass, the teacher invites three pairs to share their imagined stories.

Pair 1: "We said there is a man who wants to marry a woman, but she doesn't want to marry *him*. But one day he is walking on the shore feeling bad about the woman and he finds a locked trunk washed up on the beach. He breaks it open and finds a seal skin. He gives it to the woman. She is so happy she has a transformation and decides to marry him."

Student 1: "But where's the magic?"

Pair 1: "OK, so after a while, the seal skin magically disappears, but the woman doesn't mind because by now they're happily married."

Teacher: *Hmmm. OK. Thanks for that. Who else?*

Pair 2: "Ours is sort of a mermaid story. One day a man and woman are walking on the beach. They say they want to get married. But secretly the woman is very curious, and she's not quite able to settle down to the idea of getting married. While they're walking on the shore, they find a locked trunk. They find a key beside it and open it up and find a seal skin inside. The woman holds it up. It's just her size, so she puts it on. Suddenly she is transformed into a seal. What can she do? She can't marry him now. Anyway, he's terrified at the change in her and stands staring in amazement. She goes into the sea. The end."

Student 2: "But every year at that time…"

Pair 2: "Yes, that's right. Every summer at just that time she comes back, looking for her husband that might have been."

Teacher: *That one certainly sounds like a folktale.*

Pair 3: "Here is ours. It's a little bit like the one we just heard. Except in ours there are creatures who sometimes live in the sea as seals, and sometimes live on land as people. Somehow one of their skins got into a locked trunk that was stored away for years and years in these people's attic. A boy is exploring in the attic and finds the trunk. He opens it and pulls out the skin. Suddenly a beautiful young woman is standing in front of him…."

Student 4: "Wearing a fur coat!"

Pair 3: "Sure. Why not?"

Student 5: "What about the sea coast?"

Pair 3: "We didn't get that far."

Teacher: *Well, now we have heard three stories. In one, a man finds the seal skin on the shore, and gives it to his beloved to coax her into marrying him. In another, a restless woman finds the skin, puts it on, and is transformed into a seal. And in the third, a young man finds a long-forgotten skin, and it turns into a young woman—presumably his mate. Listen to the story I am about to tell, and see how it compares to your own story. I will be stopping from time to time to ask for predictions.*

BUILDING KNOWLEDGE

The building knowledge phase is the one in which students are encouraged to explore and make meaning. In this lesson the **Directed Listening-Thinking Activity** will be used.

Teacher: *I will begin reading now. Listen and picture the scenes in your minds as I read to you.*

IVAN AND THE SEAL SKIN
Retold by Bucksnort Trout

Along the north coast of Scotland, the winter wind howls through dark nights and gray days, and towering seas smash against black rocks. But in summer, the sea calms, and the days grow long, until the daylight lasts through twenty-four hours. Then the few fishermen who live on that remote coast row their nets out into the sea, to catch their livelihood. Even in summer, a sudden storm may overtake them; or a silent fog may creep upon them and make them lose their way. Then their loved ones go down to the shore, and gaze for some sign at the mute waves, perhaps to see a seal stare back with big sad eyes. The people see the seals, and they wonder…

On a little cove by the sea lived a fisherman and his wife, and their one son, Ivan Ivanson. It was the longest day of the year: Midsummer's Eve. Close to midnight, with the sky still a radiant orange, young Ivan, barely seven years old, was exploring the rocks by the shore, searching for shells and bits of net and whatever else the waves might have washed up.

Suddenly a strange sound drifted to him on the wind. It was like the singing of unearthly voices, blended in beautiful harmony. No, perhaps it was the song of shore birds. No, it was voices. He looked up. Away down the shore to his right he could see a tendril of smoke rising from a hole at the base of the rocks, near the point. Was it mist from the breaking waves, perhaps? No, it was smoke.

First stop

Teacher: *Can you picture the scene? What do you think is going to happen now? What do you think this story will be about? Think for a minute. Then tell us.*

Student 6: "I think he's going to go down the shore."
Teacher: *Do you think so? Then what will happen if he does?*

Student 7: "I think he will go down the shore and find mermaids singing around a campfire."

Student 8: "I think he might go eventually, but I don't think he will go yet. The story has to build up more suspense first."

Teacher: *Does anyone agree? How many of you think he will go down the shore now? Raise your hands. (*Most of the hands are raised.). *How many think he will not go now?* (A few hands are raised.) *Those of you who think he will go, what do you think he will find if he does?*

Student 9: "Mermaids."

Student 10: "Seal hunters. They have captured a seal who will turn into a woman. She's really a mermaid."

Student 11: "An old sailor sitting on a locked trunk, by a campfire."

Teacher: *Come on, press yourself. What do you think is in the trunk?*

Student 10: "A seal skin. And the sailor has a fascinating story to tell, but I haven't thought what it is yet."

Teacher: *Very well. You have heard many good predictions. Choose one that you think is most likely to happen—it can be your own prediction or someone else's. Go ahead and choose that prediction now. And listen and see if it comes true. I will continue reading.*

> Ivan would have explored, but his short legs wouldn't carry him over the large boulders, so when his mother called, he returned to the family cottage without investigating further.
>
> Seven years went by. Ivan, now fourteen, found himself once again down on the shore, right at midnight, on Midsummer's Eve. Once again he thought he heard strange singing, and again he saw smoke rising from a hole at the base of the rocks, down by the point. I don't know why he didn't go to the source this time. Perhaps some emergency called him back to his parents' cottage. His father's health, like as not. For both his parents were growing old.

Second stop

Student 8: "See? I was right!"

Teacher: *You were right. Were any other of our predictions borne out yet?*

Student 10: "No. We don't know what's making the sounds or the smoke. It could be mermaids. We don't know."

Student 11: "We're hearing a lot about the singing. I think it's mermaids."

Student 12: "It's got to be something like that. It couldn't be people, really, because Ivan would know about them. It's a mystery."

Student 13: "I think it's a teenager with a very loud CD player."
Student 14: "Come on! We're talking about a folktale!"

Student 15: "Somebody said something about a woman who turned into a seal. I've heard legends about that. I think it might be seals that come out of the ocean on Midsummer night and turn into people."

Student 16: "It's true that Ivan only heard them on Midsummer's night. And every seven years. It's got to be something like that."

Teacher: *Go on with your prediction then. What do you see happening in this story?*

Student 15: "I think Ivan is going to go down there and meet them."

Student 17: "Maybe he'll join up with them."

Student 18: "Maybe he'll marry one of them. We know there is going to be a marriage in this story."

Student 16: "No, he's not old enough to get married yet."

Student 19: "I don't think anything's going to happen yet."

Teacher: *What do you mean?*

Student 19: "Because he's not old enough to get married yet, but eventually he will. And do you know how things in folktales happen in threes? I don't think he will go yet."

Teacher: *Who thinks he won't go explore yet?* (Half the hands go up.) *And who thinks he will go now?* (The other half go up, though some look tentative.) *OK. We have a lot of predictions to listen for. It might be a person with a CD player.* (Students laugh.) *No, keep an open mind. It could turn out to be mermaids. Or it could turn out to be seals who have come ashore and become people. It's been predicted that Ivan will join them. That he will marry one. Or that he won't go yet. Choose a prediction that you think is most likely to happen. Listen and see if it comes true. I will continue reading.*

> Seven more years went by. His father had worn out from fishing the cold brine, so his parents had retired to town, leaving their cottage to Ivan. Ivan lived all alone, with only the cries of the shore birds for company. He fished long days, and warmed himself at night by the little peat fire. I imagine he was lonely.
>
> When Midsummer's Eve came again, Ivan remembered the singing, and the smoke. At the dimmest part of the day, which was really midnight, he walked down to the shore. The same strange singing reached his ears, woven into unearthly and beautiful harmonies.

Third stop

Teacher: *Now what?*

Student 18: "We were right. He didn't go. But this time he will."

Teacher: *And if he does, do you have the same predictions as before?*
Students: "Yes. Please keep reading. We want to hear what happens."

Teacher: *OK. Here goes:*

> This time, no boulders would stop him, and there was no one to call him back. Ivan made his way down the shore toward the point. As he drew closer, he could hear the crackle of a fire, and could see its reflection against the rocks. Beautiful singing came from inside the cave. And there at the cave's mouth lay a pile of sleek and beautiful gray furs: seal skins.
>
> Ivan chose the one he thought the most beautiful one and slowly, carefully, he pulled it from the pile. He rolled the seal skin into a ball and made straight off for home with it. Once there, he locked the seal skin in a wooden trunk, slipped the key onto a leather thong tied around his neck, and went to bed.
>
> In the morning he took the blanket from his bed and returned to the cave. There he found…

Fourth stop

Teacher: *Yes?*

Student 9: "A woman. A beautiful woman."

Teacher: *Does anyone think differently?*

Student 10: "It will be a woman. Please read."

Teacher: *OK, I'll continue.*

> There he found a sad and beautiful young woman, huddled and shivering, covering her nakedness with her arms and long hair. Without a word, Ivan wrapped the young woman in his blanket and led her home to his cottage.
>
> Ivan treated the woman kindly, and in time they fell in love. They had one son, then another. Ivan was happy enough, and the woman was a good mother. But often Ivan saw his wife staring off at the sea with big, sad eyes. He never told her what was in the wooden box, and he forbade her to open it.

Fifth stop

Teacher: *We need to stop and see where we are. Have any predictions come true so far?*

Student 21: "That's amazing. It turned out to be seal people after all."

Teacher: *Are you sure?*

Student 22: "That's the only explanation. They were seals who came ashore every seven years on Midsummer's night and became people. Then they had some kind of ritual."

Student 23: "And we predicted that he would hold off going until he was old enough to marry. And then he would find a seal woman and marry her."

Teacher: *Those are amazing predictions. But let's talk about the story now. What are you noticing in the story? What are you thinking will turn out to be important?*

Student 24: "I don't understand why he doesn't tell her about the seal skin."

Student 25: "Yes, that's mean. And the story says Ivan is happy, but the woman is not. I have a bad feeling about what is going to happen."

Teacher: *And what is that?*

Student 25: "Well, it can't come to a good end if she isn't happy. And besides, she's cut off from her own people."

Student 18: "But she's with her own people. She has a family now. A human family."

Student 26: "But that's the trouble. She's divided between two families, between two worlds. I agree: something has to change. This has to be resolved.

Teacher: *It's time for predictions, then. What do you think will happen?*

Student 27: "I think she'll leave."

Teacher: *For good?*

Student 27: "No, I think she'll come back, but only every seven years."

Teacher: *Why do you think so?*

Student 27: "Because the seal people came every seven years at Midsummer's night.

Teacher: *Anyone else?*

Student 28: "I think she'll leave for good."

Student 29: "I think the husband will show her the seal skin, and she'll make up her mind then to stay."

Teacher: *Why do you think so?*

Student 29: "Because that's what I want to happen!"

Student 30: "Or she'll go away part of the time and come back part of the time."

Teacher: *OK, choose predictions. I'll read on.*

> More years passed. One Christmas Eve Ivan readied his family to go to church. The wife said she was feeling poorly, though, and asked Ivan and the boys to go on alone.
>
> Perhaps Ivan was angry at this. In his haste to dress, Ivan left the thong with the key hanging on his bed stead, and went off to church without it.
>
> Ivan and the boys returned from church after midnight. They saw the open door before they reached the cottage. They found the wooden box lying open, and the key still in the lock. The wife was gone.

Sixth stop

Teacher: *Quickly, now. We're almost at the end. How do you think the story will turn out?*

Student 5: "She'll come back."

Student 13: "She'll come back every seven years."

Student 28: "No, she's gone for good."

Teacher: *Choose a prediction. I'll finish the story now.*

> They say that sometimes when the boys picked their way along the shore, a beautiful seal with large sad eyes would follow along close by in the cold, dark water. And they say sometimes when Ivan was fishing, the same sad and beautiful seal would come and chase the herring fish into his nets. Perhaps the seal was Ivan's wife. No one knows. All we know is that Ivan never saw his wife on this earth again.

Student 28: "Aw, I knew she wouldn't come back."

Student 13: "But why didn't she? She left her family behind after all."

Student 29: "Yes, but don't you see? He was never honest with her, so he never knew what she wanted. It serves him right for not showing her the seal skin."

Student 30: "But he was good to her. She had no right to leave her family like that."

Student 29: "If you want to talk about rights, he didn't respect her rights, either."

Teacher: *Nice job, everybody. You made some really good predictions. But do you remember the stories you made up in the beginning? Did any of them come close to the story I just read you?*

Student 1: "There were two stories about humans turning into seals."

Teacher: *That's true. Where did those ideas come from?*

Student from pair 2: "I don't know. I've read other stories about people turning into animals. I read a Japanese story about a woman who turned into a crane. And the way you introduced us to the story—when you talked about magic and mystery—gave me that thought of something really mysterious happening."

Student from pair 3: "And we saw a movie once about people who turned into seals."

CONSOLIDATION

Now that the students have a basic understanding of the story, it is time to see what they can do with the meaning. What are the implications of the ideas they have just constructed? How do these ideas play out in their lives? This is the consolidation phase of the lesson, and here the teacher will first use the **Shared Inquiry Approach** and then the **Discussion Web.**

Teacher: *One of you said that the story seemed mysterious. I'd like to probe some of those mysteries now. I've got a question to ask you. I'll write it on the chalk board, and each of you will have two minutes to write your own answer to it. Then we'll discuss what you think.*

The teacher writes: Why did the author have Ivan hear the sounds and see the smoke on two earlier occasions, but only go to the cave when he was 21?

After two minutes, the teach invites a student to respond.

Student 1: "I think it was because things in folktales always come in threes."

Teacher: *Thanks. Let me write that down.* [The teacher writes the student's name on a chart, and briefly notes her comment underneath.] *OK, but why is that? What is the effect of having the two times he didn't go before the one time that he did?*

Student 1: "Well, once he didn't go the first time, and then he didn't go the second time, you *knew* he would go the third time…"

Student 2: "… and you were prepared for something really important. The pattern of three built up the suspense, and made you expect something really significant."

Teacher: *Thanks.* [The teacher writes down the new response on the seating chart.] *We'll come back to that. Did anyone think about the question a different way?*

Student 3: "Yes. He wasn't ready the first time. He was too young. He was too young the second time too."

Student 4: "Right. Suppose he *had* gone on those earlier occasions. He might have come running home to his parents to tell them what he had seen. Or they might have taken him away with them back to the sea. But we wouldn't have had this story about the marriage.

Teacher: *That's interesting* [Writes down the student's response on the seating chart.] *OK, we have two different ideas on the table. Some people say it took three times, because in folktales, events come*

in patterns of threes. Others of you think he had to be ready for the real story, and he had to grow up first. [Indicates student 4.] *Which idea do you agree with, or do you have a different idea?*

Student 4: "My idea combines the two other ideas. I think the author had him not go those two times to build suspense, and to make it clear that he had waited all his life for this. The seal woman was somehow his destiny, and when the time was right, he would find her."

Student 5: "But how can that be? If she was the woman he was destined to marry, why did he basically kidnap her?"
Teacher: *What do you mean, 'kidnap her'?"*

Student 5: "Well, he kept her seal skin away from her, and basically kept her imprisoned in human form."

Teacher: [Writing down these comments, then reading back.] *Let's follow that question, but first let's review what we've said. Some said he went three times because folktales use patterns of threes. Others said he had to grow up first. Someone else said the pattern of three showed that marrying the seal woman had always been his destiny. Now it's just been said that marrying the seal woman may have seemed to Ivan to have been his destiny, but from the woman's point of view it amounted to kidnapping. Good discussion so far.*

Let's stay with this question of 'fisherman's destiny' versus 'woman's imprisonment.' Are we talking about good events here, or bad ones?

Teacher: *Several of you have already expressed some disquiet over the way this story turned out. I want to ask you now to debate a question about this story: Should this never have happened? Would it have been better if Ivan had never taken the seal skin?*

Each pair of you should draw a full page chart that looks like this:

DISCUSSION WEB:

Ivan should never have taken the seal skin.

I agree! (It would have been better if he hadn't.)	**I disagree!** (On balance, it's still better that he did.)
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Conclusion:

Teacher: *First, I want pairs to discuss this question, as follows: pairs, think of two or three reasons why you could agree with the statement, "Ivan should never have taken the seal skin," and two or three reasons why you could disagree. I'll give you five minutes to do that. Please start now.*

After five minutes, the teacher says, *Now let's hear a couple of your reasons why you would agree with that statement.*

Pair 1: "He shouldn't have taken it because it didn't belong to him. The skin didn't belong to him, so the woman's loyalty didn't belong to him either."

Pair 2: "And by taking it, he made a real mess. Now the children don't have a mother, he doesn't have a wife, and the woman is separated from her human family."

Teacher: *Those are powerful reasons. Now let's hear some reasons why you would disagree with the statement. That is, you're saying that when everything is considered, it was still better that he took the seal skin.*

Pair 3: "Because look: Ivan was lonely. That was his problem. He took the seal skin, and he had a wife. And now he has children. He solved his problem."

Pair 2: "But that's a selfish way of looking at it. What about the woman's feelings?"

Teacher: *Hold off on the debate for a minute. I just want to hear your reasons now. Who has another reason why it was better that he took the skin, than not taking it at all?*

Pair 4: "We said that at least those two children were brought into the world. It's possible to think of your parents getting together for reasons that weren't so great, but you're still happy to be alive, right?" (Other students laugh.)

Teacher: *All right. It sounds like you have reasons on both sides of the argument. Now let's move to the next part of the activity. Now pairs should join other pairs and make groups of four. Then do this. First, share your lists of reasons with each other. Second, debate the issue. Each person should argue for one position or another. Third, reach a conclusion to which everyone can agree. Write that conclusion—both what you believe and your reasons for believing it—on the bottom of your sheets of paper where it says "Conclusion." You have eight minutes in which to do this.*

The teacher walks around from group to group as they debate the issue. At the end of seven minutes, the teacher warns the groups that they have one minute left. After eight minutes, the teacher invites students to share their conclusions.

Group 1: "We decided that he should have taken the seal skin after all. It was his destiny. He had wondered about the singing and the smoke all his life. He was meant to investigate, to take the blanket, to marry the woman, and to have that family.

Group 2: "That's not the way we saw it at all. The seal-woman was minding her own business when this man came and trapped her in her human form and wouldn't let her go. From her point of view, she was as good as kidnapped. He should never have taken the skin. And once he had taken it, he should not have kept it hidden from her."

Group 3: "We also took the position that it was better on balance that he took the seal skin, because he made a family. He still has the two children, and he had years of joy with the wife.

He may be sad now, but he was happy for years. That was worth something. And you can't say the seal-woman completely hated her life as a human being. Remember, she still followed the children, and she helped Ivan catch fish."

Group 4: "The test of whether the woman was happy as a human being was what she did when she finally had the chance to choose. She chose to go back to being a seal. And not to become a human again. (We figure she could have done that if she wanted two, because the story says the seals became people every seven years.) Since she didn't want to live as a woman on earth, it was wrong for Ivan to keep in that state against her will."

Group 3: "But that wasn't the question. Sure, maybe Ivan was wrong to take the seal skin. Taking things that don't belong to you is wrong. But because he did take it, he had a marriage, and years of happiness, and those children were born. Like somebody said before: 'We don't get to choose our parents, but we're still happy we were born.'"

Group 2: "You said he had years of happy marriage. But what kind of marriage can that be, based on a lie? He was never honest with the woman he lived with—never honest about something that was really important to her. How can that be a happy marriage?"

Group 1: "Why are we making such a big deal about happiness? (Students laugh.) Really. Happiness isn't the only thing in life. For instance, maybe you move to a new town. At first you are unhappy. Of course you are—everything is strange and you miss your old friends. But in time you come to appreciate the new place. Maybe it has more to offer than the old place did. Maybe it has a lyceum, and the old place only had a primary school. It would have been short-sighted not to try out the new place, just because you wanted to be happy all the time."

Teacher: *We have to stop soon. But first, let's see if we can summarize what has been said. Some groups consider that it would have been better if he hadn't taken the skin. You said that is because he trapped the woman in human form against her will, and was never honest with her. She wasn't really happy—the evidence for that is that she turned back into a seal when she had the choice.*

Other groups said that, on balance, it was better that he did take the seal skin. A family was created, children were brought into the world, and Ivan and the woman had years of companionship—whether or not you could say they were really happy. And besides, as we just heard, happiness may not be the only factor in deciding if something was a good decision or not.

We might say that those of you who took the first view put most of your emphasis on the woman's rights. The woman was treated unfairly, not just in the beginning, but the whole time she and Ivan lived together, and nothing could justify that. And those of you who took the second view focused on the consequences of the action. Stealing the blanket, even if it mean treating the woman unfairly, led to the creation of that family and those children, and that benefit outweighed the harm that was done to the woman.

Student 1: "But who is right?"

Teacher: *Who do <u>you</u> think is right*

Student 1: "I think in a way, both sides are. At least until we argue this a lot further, we can't say that one position is really better than the other."

<u>The lesson ends here</u>

REVIEWING THE LESSON

At the beginning of this lesson, you were invited to think about it in two ways: as *a student in the class*, and as *the teacher*.

Take a moment and reflect on how it would have felt to be a student participating in this lesson. (It may help to write down your thoughts on a piece of paper.)

How did you feel—interested, engaged, important, detached, controlled, or bored?
What kind of thinking did you do—memorize details, find main ideas, look below the surface at important issues, or make interpretations and support interpretations with reasons?

What will you carry away from the lesson—information, important ideas, or thinking skills?

Now think back over this lesson as if you had been the teacher. Recall the steps to this lesson. They were:

Predicting from Terms: A technique for having students try to anticipate the story they are about to read from a half dozen terms from the story.

Directed Listening-Thinking Activity: A method of telling or reading a story to the whole class, stopping to ask for predictions, and later for confirmations of those predictions.

Shared Inquiry Method: A method of discussion guided by the teacher, in which the teacher puts a series of open-ended questions to the class, asks students to write their individual responses, and encourages discussion among the students.

Discussion Web: An activity that employed a graphic organizer, in which pairs working with other pairs first listed reasons for and against a proposition, then joined a discussion with another pair and reached a conclusion.

Here follows a review of the methods that were used in this lesson.

METHODS

PREDICTING FROM TERMS

The **Predicting from Terms** procedure is used in the anticipation phase of a lesson to encourage the students to think along the lines of a text they are about to hear or read.

RATIONALE: Predicting what a text will contain from knowing terms from the text raises students' curiosity and readiness to learn. It may also reduce some of the distance students feel from written works. For example, they are about to hear a story by a professional author, but the students have demonstrated that they are capable of producing stories too. Predicting from Terms teaches students to listen or read actively, consider

important vocabulary, use their awareness of the genre of a text to know what to expect from it, and to collaborate with others to solve a problem.

GROUP SIZE: Predicting from Terms is carried out in pairs. There can be an unlimited number of pairs within a classroom.

RESOURCES: Predicting from Terms requires a chalk board on which to write the terms.

TIME REQUIRED: It should be done quickly: five or six minutes at the most.

ACTIVITY:
Step 1: Before the class begins, the teacher chooses five or six terms from the text that point to key concepts, important events, or main characters.

Step 2: The teacher writes the terms on the chalk board and tells the students these terms will appear in the story or the text. The teacher names the genre or style of writing they are about to hear, and may explain how the genre will constrain the kind of events or information they should expect.

Step 3: The teacher asks pairs of students to try to imagine—as the case may be—a story, an explanation, an argumentative essay that will have all of those terms in it. They have four minutes to do so.

Step 4: After three or four minutes, the teacher invites just a few pairs to share their imagined stories or other texts. The teacher accepts these with encouragement, but doesn't say if they are similar or dissimilar to what they are about to hear.

Step 5: The students are told to listen carefully to what the teacher is about to tell or read, and see how it compares with what they imagined.

Step 6: After they have heard or read the text, students are asked to compare the version they imagined with the actual version. What led them to be more or less successful?

TIPS: Remember that this is an anticipation activity, and there is much more to do in the lesson. So keep it brief. Try to finish up in five minutes. That means usually only two pairs will have time to share what they imagined. Explain to the others that their turn to share will come another time.

DIRECTED LISTENING–THINKING ACTIVITY

The **Directed Listening-Thinking Activity** is used in the building knowledge phase of a lesson, the part of a lesson in which students are inquiring to make meaning. In this activity, students listen to a story that is told or read to them and make predictions about what will come next. They are asked to confirm their predictions from time to time with information from the text, and to make new predictions.

RATIONALE: The Directed Listening-Thinking Activity is used when the teacher has only one copy of a text, or wants to engage the students in understanding a story without their having to read it. The activity may be used to teach students to comprehend better, or it may be a means of having students listen attentively to a text that will be discussed in depth later. The Directed Listening-Thinking Activity teaches students to listen or read actively, develop skill in comprehension of narratives, and use their awareness of genre and their understanding of plot structures to guide predictions.

GROUP SIZE: The Directed Listening Thinking Activity may be done with groups ranging from about six students to thirty. More than that excessively limits their participation.

RESOURCES: The Directed Listening Thinking Activity requires only that the teacher know a good story to tell or have a written version to read. Those stories work best that are predictable: where there is a problem and a sequence of actions toward a conclusion.

TIME REQUIRED: The time needed for the activity depends on the length of the story and how closely the teacher decides to have students consider it. It should not be longer than about 30 minutes.

ACTIVITY:

Step 1: The teacher chooses a predicable story for sharing with the class.

Step 2: The teacher chooses stopping points—places where something is about to happen or a question is about to be answered. There should be around five of these—more will break up the flow of the story, and momentum (and interest) will be reduced.

Step 3: The teacher may share just the title, and explain the genre of the story (folktale, realistic fiction, fable, myth, etc.) and ask students what things they think might happen in it. The teacher presses the students to make the most specific predictions they can. After the predictions have been made, the teacher challenges students to decide which predictions they think will come through (even if someone else made them), and then listen carefully to see what will happen.

Step 4: The teacher reads or tells the next section of the story up to the next stopping place, asks which predictions are coming true, and what makes students think so. Then students are asked to make more predictions, and the prediction and confirmation cycle continues until the story is finished.

Step 5: After the story is finished, students are asked to reflect on their predictions. Which predictions turned out to be accurate? How were they able to make them? How did their awareness of the genre, plot, or theme of the story help them predict what would come next? What advice would they give other students for making accurate predictions?

SHARED INQUIRY APPROACH

The **Shared Inquiry Approach** is one way for a teacher to lead a deep discussion into a work of literature. It is best done with a group of eight to ten students, to maximize participation, but allow for a diversity of ideas.

RATIONALE: The Shared Inquiry technique can motivate really inspired discussions in classrooms. When students read a provocative text, are asked real questions (questions to which the teacher does not already have a "right" answer in mind), are invited to offer different answers and to debate each other—then deep thinking often ensues. Even when the teacher does not use all of the steps to the methods as outlined below, aspects of the Shared Inquiry approach can improve classroom discussions.

GROUP SIZE: The Shared Inquiry Approach works very well with groups of students from six up to twenty. Groups of fewer students may not offer the best variety of ideas, and larger groups may not afford sufficient opportunities for participation. If there are more than 20 students in the classroom, the other students can be given another task to carry out while the first group carries on a Shared Inquiry discussion.

RESOURCES: Every student will need access to the text that will be discussed. The text may be read aloud or told to them, or they may be given copies to read.

TIME REQUIRED: A Shared Inquiry discussion should take at least 25 minutes. It can run for up to 45 minutes without the students losing interest.

ACTIVITY:

Step 1: Choose a work that encourages discussion. Before the discussion takes place, the teacher has chosen a work or part of a work that encourages discussion. Such a work should lend itself to more than one interpretation (not all works do this well) and raise interesting issues. Folk stories often meet these criteria surprisingly well.

Step 2: Have the students read the material. The teacher makes sure that all of the students have read the material carefully. It is preferable if the students read the material twice before discussing it—or that they read it using the Directed Reading Activity of Directed Reading-Thinking Activity described earlier.

Step 3: Prepare questions for discussion. The teacher prepares four or five discussion questions. These should be what Great Books calls **Interpretive Questions**, and they have three criteria:

1. They are real questions: the sort of question one might ask a friend, as you walk together, about a provocative movie.

2. They have more than one defensible answer. (This criterion invites debate. If it is not met, the discussion won't be a discussion, but a read-my-mind exercise).

3. They must lead the discussion into the text. A question like, "Why was the giant's wife kinder to Jack than his own mother was?" leads the students to talk about what is in the text

first, even though they may then comment on what they know from experience. A question like, "Have you ever done anything as brave as Jack?" leads the discussion away from the text and out into twenty-five different directions.

Step 4: Share a Question. The teacher writes the first question on the chalk board for all of the students to answer.

Step 5: The students consider the question and write down their answers. The teacher asks the students to think about the question, and then briefly write down their answers. (If the students are so young that writing answers is laborious, the teacher can say he will count to 60 before he calls on anyone, so they should be thinking about their answers for all of that time).

Step 6: The teacher elicits answers from the students. As the teacher invites students to answer she may encourage reluctant speakers to read what they wrote. She provokes debate between students, pointing out differences in what they say and asking those and other students to expand on the differences. She may press students to support their ideas with references to the text or to restate ideas more clearly. She does not, however, correct a student or in any way suggest that any one answer is right or wrong. Finally, the teacher does not offer her own answer to the question.

Step 7: The teacher keeps a *seating chart.* A seating chart is a list of the students' names with a brief version of each student's answer. The teacher uses the seating chart to convey respect for the students' thoughts, to slow down the conversation, to keep a record of what has been said, to make note of who has participated and who has not.

Step 8: The teacher summarizes the discussion. When discussion of a question seems to have run its course, the teacher reads aloud her summaries of the students' comments. Then the teacher or one of the students makes a summary of the discussion of that question.

Step 9: The teacher asks more questions. The teacher may write another question on the chalk board and proceed as before. But at the teacher's option, once the discussion gets going, she follows the students' lead and continues to discuss the issues and questions they raise.

ASSESSMENT: It is a challenge to assess students' performance in a Shared Inquiry discussion, because the students are not expected to reach a correct answer. Nonetheless, the teacher can observe each student as she or he participates, and assess the quality of her participation by means of a **rubric**. The teacher may wish to know:

- How willing is each student to participate?
- Does the student reach an insightful answer?
- Can the student support her answer with evidence from the text?

The teacher can construct a rubric for assessing the students' participation in the activity that may look like the following:

TIPS: Even when they don't use the whole approach, many teachers use aspects of the Shared Inquiry Approach in conducting book discussions. For example, they may ask students to write down ideas to bring to a discussion, or they may take notes during

the discussion, or they are careful to draw out the students' ideas and not dominate the discussion themselves.

RUBRIC TO ASSESS PARTICIPATION IN DISCUSSION	TO A SMALL EXTENT	TO A MODERATE EXTENT	TO A GREAT EXTENT
HOW WILLING IS EACH STUDENT TO PARTICIPATE?			
DOES THE STUDENT REACH AN INSIGHTFUL ANSWER?			
CAN THE STUDENT SUPPORT HER ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE FROM THE TEXT?			

Another way to assess the students' performance is to ask them to write an essay following the discussion, in which they set out an interpretation and support it with reasons from the text. The essay can be evaluated using the last two criteria in the above rubric, plus others specific to writing:

RUBRIC TO EVALUATE A WRITTEN ESSAY	TO A SMALL EXTENT	TO A MODERATE EXTENT	TO A GREAT EXTENT
DOES THE STUDENT REACH AN INSIGHTFUL ANSWER?			
CAN THE STUDENT SUPPORT HER ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE FROM THE TEXT?			
IS THE PAPER OF ADEQUATE LENGTH?			
IS THE PAPER WELL ORGANIZED?			
DOES THE PAPER MAKE ITS POINTS CLEARLY, AND STICK TO THE TOPIC AT HAND?			
DOES THE WRITER USE WORDS PRECISELY AND CLEARLY?			

For more information about rubrics, please see the discussion on assessment in Section 3.

DISCUSSION WEB

The **Discussion Web** combines the dynamics of a good discussion with cooperative learning techniques. Because the interaction in the activity takes place in pairs and within groups of four students, the activity can be successfully done in classes of any size. For older students, the Discussion Web can serve as a sound preparation for writing an argumentative essay. The Discussion Web is used in the consolidation phase of the lesson, the part in which students reflect back on what they have learned, and think further about the implication of the meaning they have made.

RATIONALE: Taking a position on a controversial issue and supporting it with reasons is an aspect of critical thinking. It is useful preparation for participation in an open society. The Discussion Web teaches students to play an active role in the discussion, take a position on a debatable or controversial issue, support their position with reasons, and collaborate with others to promote a point of view.

GROUP SIZE: The Discussion Web is done with at least eight students in groups of four, and there can be any number of these groups.

RESOURCES: The Discussion Web requires that each pair of students have a piece of paper on which to write the Discussion Web graphic organizer (see next page). Students will need pencils or pens for recording their ideas.

TIME REQUIRED: The activity can be conducted in 20 to 30 minutes.

ACTIVITY:

Step 1: The teacher prepares a thoughtful *binary* question. A binary question is one that has two possible answers. It might be answered "yes" or "no" with support. For example, if discussing the story "Ivan and the Seal Skin," a binary discussion question might be, "Was Ivan right to steal the seal skin?"

Step 2: The teacher asks pairs of students to prepare a Discussion Web chart. The chart looks like the one on the next page. Each of those pairs of students take four or five minutes to think up and list three reasons that support **both** sides of the argument. They list those argument on one Discussion Web sheet.

Step 3: Each pair of students joins another pair. They review the answers they had on both sides of the issue, and add to each other's list.

Step 4: The four students argue the issue through until they reach a conclusion**.** That is, the four students reach a position they agree upon, with a list of reasons that support it. They enter their position in the box labeled **conclusion** on the Discussion Web sheet.

Step 5: The teacher calls on several groups of four to give brief reports of their position and the reasons that support it. The teacher can invite the groups to debate each other, if they took different sides of the argument.

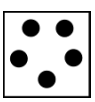
TIPS: It is a good idea for the teacher to decide in advance how much "closure," or agreement, you want the students to reach on a question. Those we call "higher order" questions (see below) often have more than one answer that can be justified with good reasons. It would be a mistake to try to force the students to reach one answer to such questions. For example, in the discussion of "Ivan and the Seal Skin," the question of whether it would have been better if Ivan had not taken the skin has no final answer. As teachers, we want to see students take a position on this question and justify it with reasons. On the other hand, where certainty is possible, we should not shrink from it. Suppose, for example, the question were this: "Would it have been better if Ivan had been honest with his wife, given her back her skin, and let her decide whether to stay or go?" Then it would be reasonable for students to agree that, yes, that would have been better.

VARIATIONS AND RELATED METHODS

ENVISIONING DETAILS

Envisioning details means to call up in "the mind's eye" the images, sounds, feelings, and aromas that are suggested by the words in a story or other piece of writing or narration.

RATIONALE: When learning experts describe the components of comprehension, of understanding a text, "imaging" or summoning up details in the mind's eye are important among those components.



GROUP SIZE: The envisioning activity can be done with a group of any size.

RESOURCES: A story or other text to read or to tell is all that is needed—preferably one that is rich in descriptive language.

TIME REQUIRED: The activity should last long enough for the participants to "get into it—" suspend their physical sensations and concerns and give over their imaginations to creating the images that are suggested by the text.

ACTIVITY:
Step 1: After you have read or told the first part of the tale or text, explain to the class that you want them to help bring the text to life with their imaginations.

Step 2: Tell the students to close their eyes. Share a phrase from the text, and ask evocative questions, such as the ones that follow. (These are based on the story, "Jack and the Beanstalk."

a. (After reading that the family is poor, and the cow has gone dry, ask "Look at that old cow, Milky White. Now run your hand down her side. What do you feel? So many bones—lump, lump, lump!—through her thin skin. Feel her stomach rumbling inside underneath your hand. Poor thing—she's hungry. Watch out for her feet—don't let her step on you."
b. (When Jack is climbing up the beanstalk). "Can you feel that stalk start to swaaaayyy in the breeze? Do you think you should dare to go higher? Can you feel the leaf stem under your hand? Do you dare let go and reach for another? Can you see Jack's cottage, waaaaayyyy down below? Are you feeling dizzy? Hang on tight. Here comes a cloud—do you feel that cool dampness on your cheek? Do you dare go any higher?"

Step 3: As you read more sections, you can offer fewer suggestions, and ask the students to close their eyes and say what they see, hear, and feel.

Step 4: After you finish reading or telling the story or other text, you can ask the students to write about one scene. They should picture it first in their mind's eye, and then describe it with written words just as vividly as they did under the teacher's guidance.

TIPS: Practice the skill of envisioning any chance you get. Whether you are telling a story or talking about a historical event or a scientific discovery, learning about it can be made richer by envisioning the sights, sounds, smells, tastes, and feelings associated with it.

REFLECTIONS: The writers, poets, painters, dancers, and actors among us are constantly warning about the dangers of taking life for granted, of thinking too abstractly, of generalizing, and of missing the uniqueness of each new thing. The practice if envisioning details promotes an understanding of meaning in its particulars, which is a respect for the creation.

DEBATES

With students in third grade and up, it is often useful to follow the Discussion Web activity with a **Debate**. The purpose of the debate is not to declare winners and losers, but to help the students practice making claims and defending them with reasons, even when others defend different claims. Working with claims, reasons, and arguments; debating ideas without attacking people—these are key elements in critical thinking.

RATIONALE: Learning to debate issues often requires thorough comprehension of the topic. The Debate method also teaches students to take a position on a debatable or

controversial issue, support their position with reasons, defend a position against counter-arguments, and focus on ideas without attacking people.

GROUP SIZE: Debates are done with the whole class.

RESOURCES: The debate requires no resources.

TIME REQUIRED: The activity can be conducted in 20 to 30 minutes.

ACTIVITY:

Step 1: Prepare a binary question. To have a Debate, you need a *binary question*—that is, a question that has a yes/no answer. (Since the Discussion Web we saw above also uses binary questions, we often follow the Discussion Web with a Debate.) The teacher thinks of a question that will truly divide the students' opinions, and puts the question on the chalk board for all to see. (If you are not sure the question will divide the students roughly equally, ask for a show of hands on each side of the issue before proceeding with the debate.)

Step 2: The students think about the question and discuss it freely. They may first jot down their response on a piece of paper, and after two minutes share their answer with a partner in order to stimulate more ideas.

Step 3: The teacher asks students to divide up. Those who believe one answer to the question is right should go stand along the wall on one side of the room; those who think the other is right should stand along the wall on the other side. Those who are truly undecided (that is, after thinking about it, they believe both sides are partially right or neither side is right) should stand along the middle wall.

Step 4: The teacher explains the two ground rules:

a. Students must not be rude to each other. (The teacher may have to explain and demonstrate what this means.)
b. If students hear an argument that makes them want to change their minds, they should walk to the other side (or to the middle).

Step 5: The students on each side have three or four minutes to decide *why* they are on that side. Then the teacher asks them with a sentence that states their position. The teacher asks the students on each side to appoint someone to say that sentence.

Step 6: One person from each side (including the undecided group) states that group's position.

Step 7: Now anyone on any team may say things (counter-arguments or rebuttals) in response to what the other team has said, or more reasons in support of their own side.

Step 8: The teacher monitors the activity to make sure the tone stays away from negative attacks. The teacher asks for clarification. He offers an idea or two as necessary from the devil's advocate position. He changes sides. He encourages the students to change sides if they are persuaded to.

Step 9: When the debate has proceeded 10 or 15 minutes, the teacher asks each side to summarize what they have said.

Step 10: The teacher "debriefs" the debate by reviewing the ideas and arguments that came to light. Or she may ask each student to write an argumentative essay, writing down what she believes about the issue and why.

TIPS: As the debate proceeds, you can model the behavior of changing sides with a pantomime: by looking thoughtful for a moment after someone offers a good argument, and moving to the other side.

REFLECTIONS: Debates can be a useful and energizing way of exploring ideas. But the teacher must be careful to see that competitive spirits don't take over the activity and push past nuanced ideas.

SAVE THE LAST WORD FOR ME

Save the Last Word for Me provides a framework for class discussion of a text, either narrative or expository. This strategy is particularly helpful in getting the quieter and more reluctant students to participate in class discussions

RATIONALE: Teachers are usually the ones who have "the last word" on a topic during a class discussion. Giving students the opportunity to have "the last word" on a topic can be motivating and can give their ideas a sense of read importance. The Save the Last Word for Me method teaches students to identify issues of interest to themselves in a text they read and to take responsibility for a whole-class discussion

GROUP SIZE: Save the Last Word for Me is done with the whole class.

RESOURCES: "Save the last word for me" requires small slips of paper for students to write their comments on. It also requires a text to read or a topic to consider.

TIME REQUIRED: The activity can be conducted in 20 to 40 minutes.

ACTIVITY:
Step 1: The teacher tells the students before they read a text to find passages that intrigue them, perplex them, excite them, or enrage them.

Step 2: The students write those passages on one side of a small piece of paper. They should be sure to note the number of the page it came from.

Step 3: The students should write a comment on the other side of the piece of paper. That is, they should say what it was that intrigued them, perplexed them, excited them, or enraged them.

Step 4: During the next class period, the teacher calls upon one student at a time to read her quotation (but not her comment). Then that student has control of the class, as he invites other students to comment on that quotation. The teacher may comment too, but should do so only after several other students have had their say, and while more comments are forthcoming.

Step 5: When the class has had their chance to comment, the student who chose the quotation turns over her piece of paper and reads her comment. That is the last word. No other student and not even the teacher should comment on the quotation after that.

Step 6: The teacher calls on other students to share their quotations and lead the class discussion. The teacher may also take a turn. It is not necessary to call on every student to share a quotation. Half a dozen may suffice for a single class session.

REFLECTIONS: If a teacher is used to lecturing, she or he may be surprised to see how many points students raise in the course of the Save the Last Word for Me activity that would have been in the lecture notes!

SOCRATIC SEMINAR

With students in middle and secondary school, nearly any topic to be interpreted or explored from different points of view can be used in the **Socratic Seminar**. The purpose of the Socratic Seminar is to empower students to conduct discussions on their own. The teacher provides a structure that usually leads to successful discussions, but the students ask the questions and conduct the discussion. A Socratic Seminar is not a debate. The ideas offered do not compete with each other. Rather, they often build on each other to reach a mutually constructed and deeper understanding of an issue.

RATIONALE: Asking good questions and developing ideas in concert with others is good practice in active learning and critical thinking. Taking responsibility for preparing the questions and conducting the discussion intensifies the experience for the students.

GROUP SIZE: Socratic Seminars are done with the whole class. If the group is larger than twelve (and it usually is) a **fishbowl** arrangement is used. That is, between eight and twelve students sit in a circle conducting the discussion, and the other students array themselves around, so they can hear the discussion.

RESOURCES: The Socratic Seminar requires no particular resources other than a text or a topic that students can discuss. It helps if the seating is treated flexibly: that is, either the chairs are moved into a circle, or students sit so they can face each other in a circle.

TIME REQUIRED: The seminar itself usually takes 40 minutes. Twenty minutes or more will be needed to introduce the idea, and then students will need time to prepare for the seminar.

ACTIVITY:

Step 1: Immerse students in an interesting topic. The topic can come from literature, social studies, art, science, or any topic of which there are layers of understanding, different interpretations, or diverse implications.

Step 2: Prepare the students to formulate questions for discussion. The Socratic Seminar requires that everyone discuss good questions. Eventually, students may formulate the questions, but for the first couple of sessions the teacher may prepare them, and use his or her questions to model for the students the kinds of questions that are preferred. A suggested approach to formulating questions worthy of deep discussion is Ted Sizer and Grant Wiggins' concept of **essential questions.** Essential questions usually:

- Point to the heart of a topic and its controversies
- Generate multiple answers and perspectives
- Cast old knowledge in a new light
- Lead to discovery and "uncoverage" vs. "coverage"
- Encourage deeper interest in the subject
- Are framed in a provocative and enticing style.

[Source: Literacy Junction. http://www.ncsu.edu/literacyjunction/html/tutorialsocratic.html]

In practical terms, you may use the set of suggestions listed in the box below:

A Socratic Seminar is a time to have a good discussion. To have a good discussion, you bring up things you are curious about, things you think are important. To have an even better discussion, you ask your classmates questions—but real questions—questions you don't know the answer to. Those can serve as guidelines. To prepare for a Socratic Seminar, you should plan some real questions—that ask about things you are interested in, that you think are important. And the questions should be real in the sense that you don't already know the answers ("Read my mind" questions are not allowed!

Often these questions point in either of two directions:

Questions that focus in (on the article)	**Questions that focus out (to the world outside the text)**
If the question is about a story, you can ask about: • A character's motives ("Why did she agree to do that?")	If the question is about a story, you can ask about: • Whether the characters made good choices? ("Would you have done what he did?

• The relationships between characters ("Do you think he is a good influence on her?") • What is going to happen (if we haven't finished reading it yet) • Why the author wrote the story ("What did this author want us to see or to understand?") • What the action had to do with the setting ("Can you picture this story happening anywhere else? Why not?") • Why the author used certain words, or a certain style of writing ("Why do you think the author said it that way?") • Something the author has done particularly well ("What do you think is the best feature of this story?") If it is a work of non-fiction, you might ask • What are we learning from this that we didn't know before? • Is this argument convincing? • Is there more to be said about this topic?	What is another way to solve that problem?") • Whether the behavior pictured in this story should serve as a model for us in real life ("Is that the way boys should really behave with girls? Suppose she was your sister?") • The consequences of the actions ("What do you supposed happened to each one of those characters after the story was over?") • About connections to other stories and to real life ("What other stories does this remind us of? Who or what does this remind us of in real life?") If it is a work of non-fiction, you might ask • Do we think this is true? How do we know? • What is the most important idea here? • If we believe what this text says, what should we do?

Step 3: The teacher explains the ground rules for the seminar. One set of suggestions are these:

- Be prepared to participate
- Don't raise hands
- Invite others into the discussion
- Refer to the text
- Comments must be appropriate/respectful/focused
- Listen to and build on one another's comments

Ground rules can be introduced at the beginning of a seminar. It is best if the group returns to them often. If a student does an excellent job of adhering to a ground rule, the teacher may point that out (Positive reinforcement will make students feel more responsible and "adult" than criticisms will).

Step 4: Participating students (between eight and twelve of them) sit in a circle. The other students gather around what is called the "**fishbowl**" (so called because their discussion will be observed by the others—see the next section for instructions).

Step 5: The teacher (or first student) asks a question for the whole group. The other students share their thoughts about the question, and also refer both to each other's answers and to the material being discussed.

Step 6: After the teacher gives the signal (usually after five minutes) students who are observing from outside the group may "tap into" the group. That is, one student at a time approaches a student in the circle, and taps that student gently on the elbow. Then the new student takes that student's place in the discussion group. The new student should respond first to what the group has been talking about before introducing a new question.

Step 7: From time to time the teacher can invite a student to sum up the positions that have been heard, and ask if there are more ideas.

Step 8: Following the Socratic Seminar students are asked to evaluate their participation. They can be asked to write responses to questions such as:

- What did you learn from this seminar?
- How did you feel about this seminar?
- How would you evaluate your own participation in this seminar?
- What can improve your participation in the next seminar?

Step 9: The teacher "debriefs" the debate by reviewing the ideas and arguments that came to light. Or she may ask each student to write a journal entry or an argumentative essay, writing down what she believes about the issue and why.

TIPS: In future Socratic Seminars, students can be asked to bring "Entry Sheets" to the seminar, on which they have written at least three questions for the others to answer, as well as their own thoughts on those questions. Another devices for structuring the seminar will be to pass out small pieces of paper to each student, have them write their name and their class period on it, and having them write a short entry each time they offer a question or a response to one. These can be given to the teacher at the end of the class period to keep track of the students' participation.

REFLECTIONS: The teacher's role in a Socratic Seminar is a tricky one. The teacher wants to offer just enough structure and guidance for all of the students to participate meaningfully, but not so much to keep the students from taking responsibility for the discussion.

ASSESSMENT: Students' performance in the Socratic Seminar can be done using a **rubric.** Rubrics will be explained later in this workshop, but for now it can be said that rubrics contain (1) a set of criteria or aspects of the performance to be evaluated and (2) descriptions of inadequate, adequate, and superior performance on each criterion.

	Inadequate	Adequate	Superior
Seem prepared?	*The student did not appear to have studied the assignment.*	*The student seemed to have only a modest understanding of the assignment.*	*The student appeared to have understood the assignment and to have thought about it deeply.*
Cite reasons and evidence for their statements?	*The student asserted beliefs without evidence.*	*The student supported some positions, but without much use of the text.*	The student consistently used the text to support points. The student paraphrased accurately.
Stick with the subject?	*The student seemed unaware of the topic.*	*The student sometimes addressed the topic but often digressed*	*The student stayed with the topic and advanced the discussion*
Ask for help to clear up confusion?	*The student did not ask questions even though she or he participated little.*	*The student asked questions but not very relevant ones.*	*The student asked good questions, and often helped clarify the group's understanding of the issue.*
Listen to others respectfully? Talk to each other, not just to the leader?	*The student seemed disengaged, or only interested in her or his contribution.*	*The student seemed out to defer to the teacher.*	*The student talked to others as if in a genuine discussion.*

CREATIVE DIALOGUE

Based on the work of Paolo Freire, Alma Flor Ada and Isabel Campoy (1998) developed the Creative Dialogue as a way of having students investigate issues in a story, and relate them to their own lives. "Creative" is used in the sense of "constructive," emphasizing the student's activity of constructing meaning from a story. Creative Dialogue can be used with first grade children up through middle school and beyond.

RATIONALE: Many works of fiction have implications for ways students should understand and live their own lives. Teachers need means of exploring the implications of the stories, and how students' might use the meanings.

GROUP SIZE: Creative Dialogue can be done with a whole class, but a group size of no more than 12-15 can allow for better participation by each student.

RESOURCES: Creative Dialogue needs a told or written story to discuss. The story should have relevance for the children's lives, and directly or indirectly raise issues that will be important to them.

TIME REQUIRED: The activity usually takes 20 to 30 minutes or longer.

ACTIVITY:

Step 1: Find a text that raises an issue that is relevant to the children's lives. The story may be contemporary or classical—it may be a folktale. The important thing is that it should raise an issue or a theme that can lead to a lively discussion.

Step 2: Prepare questions for discussion. Questions for the Creative Dialogue are asked on four levels. The authors of this method insist that it need each level of questions be used one after another, even though there is a natural progression to them followed The four levels of questions are presented in the table below:

Level	Purpose	Typical questions include--
Descriptive Level	The purpose here is to describe what happened in the text—not with obvious recall questions, but with questions that require reflection	• What do you like or not like about the story? • How would you describe _____? (one of the main characters in the story) • Why do you think that _____ (main character) made that decision? • What do you think is the major difficulty that _____ (main character) faces? Why is that so hard for him or her? • Why do you think that _____ (main character) changed during the course of the story? • What do you think that this story is about, and why? • What do you see as the moral or teaching of this story?
Personal Interpretive Level	Here the students are allowed to relate the story to their own experiences, thoughts, and feelings. This is a chance to connect reading to their lives, and to make a classroom a welcoming place for all the persons in it.	• Do you know of (have you seen, felt, or experienced) something like this in your own life? • Have you ever seen (done, felt, thought, wanted) something similar? • How is what you saw (did, felt, thought, wanted) different from what happened in the story? • What would you have done (said, thought) if you were in that person's place? • How might someone in your family responded?
Critical Level	Here the students return to the story, and analyze it more deeply, to explore alternatives, and to make judgments based on our own values.	• Why do you think this decision is or is not fair? • Why do you think this was or was not a good decision? • Why would this be a fair decision in all circumstances? • In what circumstances might it not be a fair decision? • Who benefits by this decision, and how do they benefit? • What do you think will be the results of this decision? • What alternatives do you see to this decision? • What might have been the consequences if the character had chosen an alternative course of action?

Creative, Transformative Level	Here, say the authors, "…our goal is to develop children's critical awareness so that they are able to make decisions that will enrich their own lives and improve the world around them." "[T]he purpose of the dialogue is to help children think about the aspects of their lives that they can improve, and to encourage them to make decisions with that purpose in mind."	• What kinds of problems in your own life do you want to solve, like _____ (main character) in the story? • What can you do to make your dreams and wishes come true, like _____ (main character) did in the story? • In what ways do you want to cooperate with others, just like _____ (main characters) worked together to reach their goals? • What kind of help from others do you want to ask for in your own life, like _____ (main character) asked for help? • What do you want to do in your own life when you have feelings like _____ (main character) did? • In what ways can you help others, the way that _____ (main character) helped others in the story?

Step 3: The teacher leads the discussion. The discussion may follow other formats described in this section, such as Shared Inquiry or Socratic Seminar.

Step 4: As a follow up to the Creative Dialogue discussion, students may write in their journals about their own goals and resolutions. The class may have further discussions and instruction to help the students act on the ideas that arise during the Creative Dialogue.

TIPS: Creative Dialogue may be extended over more than one class session. One way to sustain the conversation is to discuss several stories on a related theme (See the Story Chart activity below).

REFLECTIONS: The teacher's role in the Creative Dialogue is to encourage participation. This is a time for personal storytelling, reflection, and decision-making on the student's part. The teacher's role is to be a friendly and respectful host and facilitator.

THE STORY CHART

The Story Chart is a means of having students follow the same questions and themes across several stories of other texts. It can be used to call attention to similarities and differences in the structure or style of stories. It can also be used with informational works or essays, to compare different authors' or groups' answers to the same questions. The story Chart can be used in first grade through secondary school.

RATIONALE: Many stories of the same genre follow the same form, and it can be educative for students to note them. Different stories imply similar or different solutions to similar problems, and it can be educative to note that, too.

GROUP SIZE: The Story Chart can be used with a whole class, but a group size of no more than 6-10 allows for more participation.

RESOURCES: The Story Chart requires a group of two to four stories or other texts that can be shared with students over several days or weeks. It also requires a large piece of chart paper (a sheet of newspaper that has been left in bright sunshine to bleach out the ink will do) or a dedicated part of the chalkboard on which to record answers.

TIME REQUIRED: The activity is cumulative. It is returned to over several days or weeks. Each part of the discussion, and recording of the answers, may take 15-20 minutes—although later discussion may take longer as more stories and texts are compared.

ACTIVITY:

Step 1: Find a group of two to four stories or other texts that have one or more themes, questions, or other features in common. A typical theme might be *friends*, *heroes*, or *boys and girls*. A typical shared feature might be *the folktale*.

Step 2: Prepare a Story Chart. It should be large enough to contain writing that can be seen by the whole group. It should also be able to remain visible over the length of the unit—several days or weeks. The **rows** on the chart should be labeled with the names of the stories or texts that are being considered. The **columns** should be labeled with questions or features to be discussed about all of the stories or texts. See the example below:

	Who got to go on an adventure?	**Who got to stay home?**	**What does the story say to boys?**	**What does the story say to girls?**
"Jack and the Beanstalk"				
"The Sleeping Beauty"				
"East of the Sun, West of the Moon"				

Think of questions that compare and contrast the way the different stories or texts treat the same issue. For example, in the chart shown above, the questions are generally about heroism, but more specifically they call attention to the roles of boys and girls in traditional stories.

Step 3: The stories or texts are shared one at a time. They may be read, told, or presented in lecture form.

Step 4: After each story or text has been shared, the teacher or students discuss it. They may use any of the formats in this section for the general discussion.

Step 5: After they have had whatever discussion the teacher had in mind, the teacher calls the students' attention to the Story Chart. For the story or text they are discussing that day, they are asked to consider each question or feature listed in the columns of the chart. As a class, they decide on the answers that will be entered in each cell.

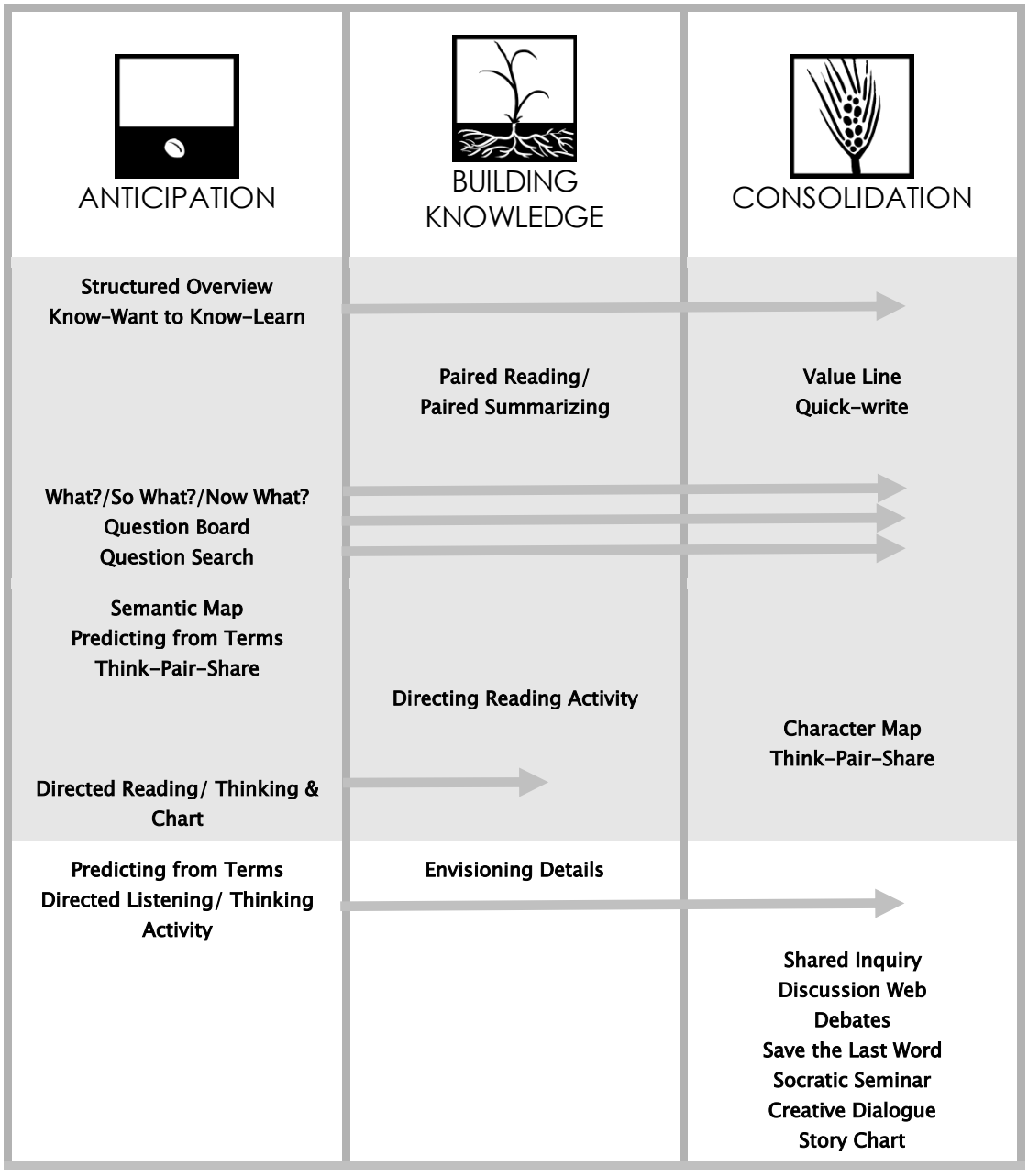
Step 6: After the students have discussed the questions and filled in the cells for all of the stories or texts, the are asked to compare them. What do they learn from the comparison? Do they agree with one story or text more than the other? What can they do with the insights they have gained from this discussion?

TIPS:
Older students can keep Story Charts in their notebooks, and use them to structure comparative essays that they will then write.

REFLECTIONS: Sometimes the written word seems to have an authority all its own. When they compare two or more stories or texts that have contradictory messages, students realize that everything written need not be believed.

ABC CHART

Let's see how the preceding methods, variations, and related methods fit into the Anticipation/Building Knowledge/Consolidation rubric. This chart will help you use the methods in this guide to make your own lesson plans using the ABC rubric.



FOURTH CORE LESSON: DRAMA IN THE CLASSROOM

Drama is useful as a tool for teaching social behavior. Skills such as conflict resolution, team-building, and empathetic interaction can be acted out and examined so they may be understood. Then they may be practiced, and internalized—made into lasting ways of behaving. Drama is also a way of considering ideas deeply. Drama lets a class take a slice of life, play it through in real time, and look at it from all sides so that it can be understood in all its nuances. A thoughtful educator named James Moffett wrote that essays (including most textbooks) tell us *what happens,* stories tell us *what happened*, and drama tell us *what is happening*. He is referring to the levels of abstraction on which we understand events.

This core lesson will begin with an **advance organizer,** a brief discussion to introduce a topic and key concepts about it. It then uses a **role play,** an activity that dramatizes a scene that illustrates the topic in action. It culminates in the use of a **graphic organizer**, a way of capturing key points from the lesson in schematic form**.**

HOW TO READ THIS LESSON

As you read the following demonstration lesson, please bear in mind that its purpose is to demonstrate teaching methods. Think about this lesson in two ways:

1. Imagine that you are *a student* who is participating in this lesson. What is your experience? What kind of thinking are you doing? What are you learning?

2. Then think yourself into the role of *the teacher* who is leading the lesson. What are you doing? Why are you doing it? How are you handling the three phases of the lesson—anticipation, building knowledge, and consolidation?

LESSON

ANTICIPATION

The anticipation phase is the part of the lesson that arouses students' curiosity and sets purposes for learning. It may also introduce key ideas that will help the students better understand the lesson. Here we use the **think/pair/share** technique in the anticipation phase.

The teacher begins by putting a question to the students.

Teacher: *Today we are going to talk about* ***bullying.*** *You all know what bullying is, right? It's when someone deliberately hurts or abuses someone that he or she thinks is less powerful. We're not talking here*

about murdering somebody—just harassing somebody who is smaller or weaker, deliberately embarrassing that person in front of others, or taking someone from that person, knowing she or he is not strong enough to do anything about it. We've all seen examples of bullying, right?

I want you think a minute and try and recall an incident when you have observed someone bullying someone else. Do that now, please. I'll give you just a minute. You can write down some words if you want. [The teacher waits one minute without making eye contact with anyone].

That's enough time. Now turn to the person behind you. Tell your partner about a time you remember when someone bullied someone else. One of you tell first, then the other one tell. You just have three minutes. [The teacher waits two minutes, quietly].

After two minutes pass, the teacher calls on a pair of students to share their memories.

Pair 1: "We both had stories about the same person. It was a girl in our village who waited on the road and stole food from smaller children who were walking on their way to school."

Teacher: *And what happened when she did?*

Pair 1: "The children would cry. But the girl would just laugh. The children knew she was out there doing it, and most of them would run past her, but she always caught one or two, and yelled at them, and took their food."

Teacher: *Was there anyone who saw this besides the little children?*

Pair 1: "There were some older students who walked by. But they wouldn't do anything. They didn't want to mess with her. Like they were either scared of her, or they didn't want to get their clothes dirty."

Teacher: *Yes, that's an example of bullying. Anyone else*

Pair 2: "There are some older boys right in this school. The stand on the road, and when a girl walks by, they call things after her."

Teacher: *What kinds of things?*

Pair 2: "Bad things. It makes you feel sick."

Pair 1: "Yes. Girls have a right to walk to school, the same as boys. But it's girls they say those things to. It makes you scared to come to school."

Teacher: *Is there anyone else there who hears those things?*

Pair 2: "Sometimes. And sometimes someone will come along, like a teacher, and they'll stop."

Teacher: *What else?*

Pair 2: "There are other people who just walk by without saying anything to make them stop. It makes the girls feel even more scared."

Teachers: *We've just heard two examples of bullying. In this lesson we want to consider some things we can do to protect ourselves from bullies, and to prevent bullying.*

BUILDING KNOWLEDGE

The teacher now shifts to another part of the lesson, the building knowledge phase. The building knowledge phase is the one in which students are encouraged to explore and make meaning. In this phase the teacher will use a mini-lecture.

Teacher: *OK. We have heard two good examples of bullying."* [Writes the word **bullying** on the chalk board]. *"Bullying is intentionally hurting someone with words or actions. Bullying is almost always done to someone the bully thinks is too defenseless to fight back. When you have a bullying situation, you always have two people present. Who are they?*

Student 1: "The bully is one."

Teacher: *Right.* The teacher writes word **bully** on the chalkboard. *Who else is there?*

Student 2: "There's the person who's getting hurt by the bully."

Teacher: *OK. Let's call this person the* ***target person.*** The teacher writes the words **target person** on the chalk board. *Who else might there be?*

Student 3: "Sometimes there are other people."

Teacher: *You mean other young people? Then let's call these people the* ***by-standers***. The teacher writes the word **by-standers** on the chalk-board.

Teacher: *There are some things the victim can do to lessen the risk or the harm from bullying. One of them is* ***avoid the bully***. The teacher writes these words on the chalk board under the word **target person**. *That can mean to stay away from places where you might be caught alone by the bully. It may mean walking quickly past those places. It can mean running away, if you have to. Another is* ***don't react***. *If the bully is saying mean things, it's because the bully wants to make the victim upset. Not reacting—not saying anything—takes the fun out of it for the bully. The* teacher writes these words, too. *A third strategy is* ***stay in groups***. *If you have to walk through places where a bully might be waiting, plan to walk with others. Bullies usually pick out single people.* The teacher writes these words on the chalkboard. *The final strategy is very important.* ***Tell a grown-up.*** *Bullying is wrong. You don't have to put up with it. Ask an adult to help make the bully stop bothering you. All right. What were those four strategies for the target person to use?*

Student 4: "Avoid the bully."

Teacher: *Yes. Stay out of the way. What else?*

Student 5: "Don't say anything back."

Teacher: *That's right. I said 'Don't react.' Don't answer, don't cry. What else?*

Student 6: "Stay with other people."

Student 7: "Tell someone."

Teacher: *That's* right. *Tell a grown-up. Tell a teacher. Nice job.*

Now let's think about the by-standers—the person or persons who witness what is going on. Let's assume that the by-standers are young people—not adults, not a teacher. What can by-standers do if they see bullying going on? There are two strategies I want you to remember. One is, ***stand with the target person.*** *Make a group around the target person and stand between him or her and the bully. You don't even have to know that person. If the target person is suddenly not one child by herself, but a whole group, then the situation has changed for the bully. Tell the bull, "We are here with this person." Don't say things to pick a fight with the bully.* The teacher writes these words on the chalkboard under **By-standers**. *Another thing to remember is,* ***Get help from an adult****. While some of you stand with the target person, one of you goes to get help.* The teacher writes these words, too. *All right. What were those two strategies for the by-standers to use?*

Student 4: "Make a group with the target person."

Teacher: *Yes. Stand with the target person. What else?*

Student 5: "Go tell somebody."

Teacher: *That's right. Go get help from an adult.*
Good job. OK. Let's put these ideas to work…

CONSOLIDATION

Now that the students have the basic concepts the teacher wanted to put across about bullying, it is time to see what they can do with the meaning. This is the consolidation phase of the lesson. Here the teacher uses a role play to practice the concepts about preventing bullying, and combines it with a fishbowl activity, in which the rest of the class observes the action and is asked to comment on it.

Teacher: *Now we are going to have a role play. That means some students are going to act out a scene, while the other students watch and learn from it. I need one volunteer to come forward.* (Several hands go up. The teacher chooses one, and a student comes up to the front of the room). *You are going to be the bully. Here: I will give you a piece of paper that will explain what you are going to do.*

The paper reads:

Bully: You don't have any friends your own age to spend time with. You like to stand behind this tree and wait for little children to come by. If you see one coming by herself, you jump out and shout at her, as if you were a big giant. You shout at the little child until she cries. It makes you feel powerful. Here comes a small child now. Be sure to jump out and look scary. Shout threatening things.

Teacher: *Do you understand what you will be doing when you act out the scene?*

Student 6: "I think so."

Teacher: (Whispering in the student's ear). *You don't have to be too mean. We're just acting, after all, OK?* (The student nods).
Good. We need one more volunteer. (Another child is chosen to come forward). *You are going to be the target-person. Here: I will give you a piece of paper that will explain what you are going to do.*

The paper reads:

Target person: You are young and small and scared. It's a long way to school, and you're all alone. You wish you could stay home. You're not sure you belong at school anyway. When the bully jumps out at you, you're going to be frightened, and very, very unhappy. In fact, if the bully scares you too badly, you might stop going to school altogether.

Teacher: *Do you understand what you will be doing when you act out the scene?*

Student 6: "Yes."

Teacher: *All right. We need four more volunteers.* These students come forward. *You four are going to be the by-standers. Here: I will give you a piece of paper that will explain what you are going to do.*

The cards read:

By-standers: Some of you are younger and some older. You are all on your way to school. But it looks like trouble up ahead. It's that bully again, trying to frighten a little child. You don't want to be late, or get into a fight and get your clothes dirty. Besides, you don't know this little child. Still, the bully is so much bigger than the little child… You watch and wonder what to do.

Teacher: *All right. Do all of you understand what you will be doing when you act out the scene? How old will each of you be? Who will be the same age as the little child, the target-person? Who will be the same age as the bully?* (The students choose roles).

Now we are ready to begin. Speaking to the rest of the class: *Please gather around and watch what is about to happen.*

The small child walks across the front of the room. The bully jumps in front of her.

Bully: "Who gave you the right to walk on this road?"

Little child: "Right? I'm just going to school. I don't know about any right."

The by-standers walk by and stand off by at the side.

Bully: "Well it's my road, and I say you can't walk on it."

Little child: "But I'm going to school. I have to walk on this road." She is sounding anxious.

The by-standers watch, silently.

Teacher: *All right. Little child, how are you feeling right now?*

Little child: "I'm feeling upset, and very scared. I was scared *before* this big bully jumped out. Now I just want to go home and forget all about school. But what if he won't let me?"

Teacher: *Bully, what's in you mind right now?*

Bully: "This is just what I wanted. The little child is terrified. I can do whatever I want."

Teacher: *By-standers, what about you? What are you feeling right now?*

By-stander: "I'm feeling ashamed of myself for not doing anything to help that small child. But at the same time I want to mind my own business. And besides, I don't know what I *should* do."

Teacher: To the class: *Those of you watching, how would you feel if you were the by-standers?*

Student 8: "Just like she said. I would feel ashamed for not helping, but I still might not help. It's hard to be the one person who does something."

Teacher: To the class: *All right, what advice would you give to the little child, the target-person?*

Student 9: "Try to avoid the bully. Don't stop when he jumps out. Walk far around him.

Student 10: "And don't answer when he speaks to you. Just ignore him and walk on by."

Teacher: To the class: *And what advice would you have for the by-standers?*

Student 11: "Go stand around that child."

Student 12: "And tell the bully you are with her. He should leave her alone."

Student 13: "Don't forget: One of you should go get help."

Teacher: *Let's play this scene out again. I want to ask one of you in the class to be the director. You will tell the actors what to do.* A student volunteers and comes forward. *Thank you. Let's get started.*

Student director: "OK, little child. Walk down the road again." The child walks along. "Come on, bully." The bully jumps out and shouts at the little child.

Bully: "Who gave you the right to walk on this road?"

Student director: "Ignore him, little child! Keep walking. Don't say anything!" The bully moves in front of the little child and grabs her arms.

Teacher: *It's not working! He's grabbed her anyway. What now?*

Student director: "Come on, by-standers. Stand around her." The by-standers form a circle around the little child.

Bully: Steps back and asks the by-standers, **"**Who are you?"

By-stander 1: "We're with her."

Bully: "So?"

By-stander 2: "Come on. Can't you see she's just a little kid?"

By-stander 3: "Find something else to do with your time, OK?"

Bully: "Are you going to do something about it?" He approaches By-stander 3.

By-stander 3: "We're with her, that's all. We didn't come here to fight. We just don't want her to be frightened." The other By-standers move between the bully and By-stander 3. One of the By-standers sneaks away.

Teacher: *Good. That's enough. Tell us, bully, how do you feel now?*

Bully: "I still might fight one of these people. It depends on how mean I am. But it's not the same scene it was a little while ago. It's a little hard to have to tell these other people why I was trying to frighten the little girl."

Teacher: *Little child, how do you feel?*

Little child: "I feel safer now."

Teacher: To the class: *What do the rest of you think?*

Student 14: "I think this might work. But like the bully said, it depends on how mean the bully really is."

By-stander: "But that's why I left to get help."

Teacher: *And if help doesn't come soon?*

Student 15: "Then we will all run like crazy!"

The lesson ends here

REVIEWING THE LESSON

At the beginning of this lesson, you were invited to think about it in two ways: as *a student in the class*, and as *the teacher*.

Take a moment and reflect on how it would have felt to be a student participating in this lesson. (It may help to write down your thoughts on a piece of paper.)

How did you feel—interested, engaged, important, detached, controlled, or bored?
What kind of thinking did you do—memorize details, find main ideas, learn concepts that you can use, apply the concepts in life-like situations?
What will you carry away from the lesson—information, important ideas, or strategies?

Now think back over this lesson as if you had been the teacher. Recall the steps to this lesson.

For the anticipation phase:

Think/Pair/Share: The teacher posed an open-ended question to the class. The students first thought of answers one at a time, then they formed pairs and shared their answers with each other. Then the teacher called on two or three pairs to share with the whole class.

For the building knowledge phase:
Mini-lecture. The teacher gave the students some important information and terms in a lecture and discussion format.

For the consolidation phase:
Role play. The teacher assigned roles to the students, in which they acted out a scene that depicts the ideas introduced in the mini-lecture.

Fishbowl. The rest of the class observed the actors, and occasionally were asked to comment on what they were seeing, and to offer suggestions to the actors.

Here follows a review of the methods that were used in this lesson.

THINK/PAIR/SHARE

The **Think/Pair/Share** procedure is used in the anticipation phase of a lesson to encourage the students to think creatively about the topic of discussion, and to share their ideas with others.

RATIONALE: No matter how large the class size, when the Think/Pair/Share is used, every student thinks and communicates: that is, participates.

GROUP SIZE: Think/Pair/Share is carried out in pairs. There can be an unlimited number of pairs within a classroom.

RESOURCES: Think/Pair/Share does not require any resources, other than an open-ended question.

TIME REQUIRED: Think/Pair/Share should be done quickly: four minutes is enough.

ACTIVITY:

Step 1**:** The teacher thinks of an open-ended question that will lead students to think of a personal experience or other issue related to the topic of the lesson.

Step 2: The teacher tells the students the question. They are told to consider the question individually first. They may be invited to write down their answers.

Step 3: The teacher asks students to share their answers with a partner.

Step 4: After three minutes, the teacher invites just a few pairs to share their answers with the whole class.

TIPS: Keep this activity brief--trying to finish up in four minutes. That means usually only two pairs will have time to share their answers. Explain to the others that their turn to share will come another time, and do your best to remember to call on different pairs each time.

MINI–LECTURE

The **Mini-Lecture** is used in the building knowledge phase of a lesson, the part of a lesson in which students are making meaning and receiving information. In this activity, the instructor presents information and concepts the students will need in order to do further activity.

RATIONALE: Research tells us that more than 15 or 20 minutes of lecturing wears down most listeners' ability to pay attention. The idea of a mini-lecture is to provide a

short but coherent portion of information that can lead right to questions or application.

GROUP SIZE: There is no limit to the group size in a mini-lecture.

RESOURCES: Mini-lectures often are better understood if they are accompanied by some graphic display—at least a chalk board on which to write key terms.

TIME REQUIRED: Mini-lectures can range from 10 to twenty minutes in length.

ACTIVITY:

The procedure for a mini-lecture is straightforward.

Step 1: The instructor begins with an anecdote, or a question or statement that arouses interest in the topic. The mini-lecture is often preceded by another anticipation activity, such as a Think/Pair/Share.

Step 2: The main points in the mini-lecture are presented carefully, with key words written on the chalkboard. Students may be asked questions, or to repeat key points to aid understanding and recall.

Step 3: At the conclusion of the mini-lecture, the students may be asked to discuss the information from the lesson, or interpret it, or apply it in some way.

ROLE PLAY

RATIONALE: Role plays offer students the opportunity to try out ideas in contexts that resemble real life—but in the classroom. Role plays invite problem-solving, and critical thinking. They also encourage active listening (each actor must be prepared to respond, in character, to each of the others. Role plays can be engaging and meaningful, even when no written text is available.

GROUP SIZE: Often role plays are performed in front of an audience. When they are, they should have a limited number of lead players, so the audience can concentrate on them—usually between two and six. Many more people can participate as the audience—either sitting in a group, or surrounding the actors in a "Fishbowl" (see below).

RESOURCES: The teacher or other leader of the role play should think through in advance what the situation is. Role cards should be displayed—written instructions about who they are and what they should be trying to accomplish.

TIME REQUIRED: The role play itself is usually short: 5-10 minutes. But there is also time for the characters to prepare—which can take another 3 – 5 minutes, or longer; and also time for the audience to discuss what they observed and what it meant to them.

ACTIVITY:

Step 1: Present to the students information or concepts that can be shared in a role play.

Step 2: Explain that they will now act out those ideas in a role play.

Step 3: Clear a space for the role play to occur. Show the other students where to sit or stand, so they can see the actors.

Step 4: Choose a situation that is focused: usually a moment of conflict, or a turning point in a story.

Step 5: Distribute **role cards** (These should be prepared in advance) that tell each actor who they are and what they want.

Step 6: Give each player a few minutes to understand her or his role. Who is this character? What does she or he want? What does she or he not want? What is at stake for this character right now? What is the relationship between this character and the other characters in the scene? Talk to each player and make sure she or he understands the role, and how she or he will act it out.

Step 7: Now ask the character to remember what they have learned from the mini-lecture they just heard or a text they just read. What concepts or principles will help in this situation? How will the character use them?

Step 8: Tell the other students what to look for. What is the problem? What issue is at stake? What ideas or concepts will be demonstrated?

Step 9: Have the characters act out there scene. If the characters sometimes seem at a loss for ideas, you may use side-coaching if necessary. It is best to offer these as choices: "Will you do ___, or ___?"

Step 10: At key moments in the drama, stop the action and ask the other students who are observing to say what they are seeing (*What is this character doing? How would you feel if you were this character? Why is he behaving this way?*) , and suggest actions (*What should this other character do now?*)

Step 11: After the scene has been enacted, have the audience talk about what they saw. They may suggest other ways of resolving the issue.

Step 12: You may follow the drama with a writing activity. Topics for writing may include: "What was the problem? What was the solution? Why was it a good solution? When would it be a good solution to try? When would another solution be better?"

FISHBOWL

The **Fishbowl** activity is one way for a teacher to conduct a small group activity, such as an intense discussion or a role play, and have a larger group observe and make comments.

RATIONALE: The Fishbowl activity allows a small group to interact, and a larger group to observe and then discuss what the smaller group did. It is a preferred activity when the teacher wants students to be active, but wants to focus students' attention on a few critical events.

GROUP SIZE: The group in the middle of the fishbowl might range from 2 – 15. The group surrounding them may be larger. The size of the audience is limited by the need for the audience to see the action.

RESOURCES: There needs only to be an activity planned or a text to be discussed.

TIME REQUIRED: A fishbowl activity should be sustained no longer than about 20 minutes before the active ones and members of the audience trade places.

ACTIVITY:

Step 1: The teacher chooses members to be in the fishbowl.

Step 2: The teacher gives the group in the fishbowl clear instructions of what they will do. The possibilities include putting on a role play, having a discussion, solving a problem together, etc.

Step 3: The teacher tells the other members of the class to gather around the fishbowl.

Step 4: The teacher explains to the audience what they are about to see in the fishbowl. What is the question at hand? What should they look for and listen for? They may take notes of their observations.

Step 5: The students in the fishbowl carry out the activity while the others observe.

Step 6: The teacher may stop the activity from time to time and ask the observers, those outside the fishbowl, to comment on what they are seeing and hearing.

Step 7: The teacher may substitute students from outside the fishbowl with those inside.

Step 8: After the end of the activity, the teacher leads a discussion of what the observers saw and thought. Those in the fishbowl are invited to share their observations and thoughts, too. Finally, everyone discusses what was learned from the activity.

ASSESSMENT

One way to assess students' performance in a role play activity is for the teacher can observe each student as she or he participates, and assess the quality of her participation by means of a **rubric**. The teacher may wish to know:

- How willing was each student to participate?

- Does the student seem to identify with the role?
- Can the student articulate the character's motives and feelings?

The teacher can construct a rubric for assessing the students' participation in the activity that may look like the following:

RUBRIC TO ASSESS PARTICIPATION IN ROLE PLAY	TO A SMALL EXTENT	TO A MODERATE EXTENT	TO A GREAT EXTENT
HOW WILLING IS EACH STUDENT TO PARTICIPATE?			
DOES THE STUDENT SEEM TO IDENTIFY WITH THE ROLE?			
CAN THE STUDENT ARTICULATE THE CHARACTER'S MOTIVES AND FEELINGS?			

The teacher may assess the students, or each student may assess himself.

TIPS: When you call on the students who are observing what is happening inside the fishbowl, whether it is a role play or something else, you may need to model for them the kind of comments you are after. They should not criticize the players! They should, rather, mention things they observe, and motives they infer.

When the role play or fishbowl activity is going on, make sure to take notes yourself, so you can have observations to share during the debriefing discussions later. You will want to slip those observations into the discussion without dominating it, of course.

VARIATIONS AND RELATED METHODS

DRAMA AS INTERPRETATION

Dramatization should be done after the children have read or heard a story, and have had a chance to air their first thoughts about it. The procedures include these: *immerse* the students in the story, *choose critical moments* to dramatize, do *warm-ups*, invite students to *segment the situation*, *dramatize* the scene, *side coach*, and *reflect* (The procedures that follow are adapted from Spolin (1988) and Heathcote (Betty Jane Wagner: Drama as a Learning Medium. Washington: NEA, 1976).

RATIONALE:
Dramatizing a story, or a part of a story, can be a very effective way for children to unpack its meaning.

GROUP SIZE: Dramatizations can be done with the whole class. Or fewer students can do the dramatizing in a fishbowl arrangement with the rest of the class observing.

RESOURCES: The only resources required is a story or a situation that is well known to the class.

TIME REQUIRED: The activity usually takes a class period or less.

ACTIVITY:
Step 1: **Immerse students in the story**. You need to make sure the students get the story on a literal level--that they know what happened. This may mean reading the story to them, or asking them to reread the part you are going to dramatize.

Step 2: **Warm the students up to do drama.** There are many warm up activities that work well to prepare students to act with more expression. See the next section for suggestions.

Step 3: **Choose critical moments to dramatize**. It can especially useful to dramatize just a few choice scenes from the story--especially the turning points: when the most is at stake. In the story of "Jack and the Beanstalk," a critical scene might be the moment when Jack first approaches the Giant's castle, knocks on the door, and is greeted by the Giant's wife.

Step 4: **Segment the Situation**. Now assign students to take the roles of the characters in the scene. Invite other students to join them as they to think about the situation from each character's point of view. What must be on Jack's mind when he approaches the huge door? What do the door and the walls of the castle look like? How large are they in proportion to Jack? What does Jack hear around the place? What does he smell? How does the place make

him feel? What makes him pound his fist on the door? What's at stake for him? What are his choices? What will he do if he *doesn't* knock on the door? Why does he decide to do it? Do the same for the Giant's wife. How does the knocking sound to her--huge, or puny? What does she think when she sees the small but plucky
boy at her door? What thoughts go through her mind, knowing what she knows about her husband? What are her feelings as she looks down at Jack?

Step 5: **Focus on a few aspects.** Ask the actors to focus their minds on a few of these considerations as they prepare to act out the scene.

Step 6: **Dramatize the scene**. Use minimal props and minimal costumes to help students think their way into their roles. Ask the other students to watch carefully and see what the actors make them think of.

Step 7: **Side coach**. As the director, don't be passive, but take opportunities to make suggestions from the sidelines that will help children act more expressively: A
Jack, do you feel scared now, or brave? How can you show us how you're feeling?

Step 8: **Invite reflection**. Ask the other students what they saw. What did they think was on the characters' minds? It is worthwhile to invite several groups of students to dramatize the same scene, and discuss the aspects of the situation that each performance brings to light.

Step 7: **Write.** Students can write journal entries from the point of view of one of the characters, or soliloquies, or letters of advice, etc.

TIPS: Help the students resist the urge to act out the whole story. The point of this exercise is to focus on one issue at a time. The preliminary discussion can yield as much thought as the acting and what comes after it.

If there is time, you can invite other students to play the roles.

REFLECTIONS: It can be amazing how many nuances of the story, and insights into human nature, can be revealed by this exercise.

WARM-UP EXERCISES FOR DRAMA

The following activities prepare students to do drama. They are fun and engaging, and they are good for getting members of the class to interact well with each other, too. These exercises can be done with students from later primary grades on up through adult.

RATIONALE:
Drama teachers remind us that students should warm-up to do drama, just as they should warm up before vigorous physical exercise..

GROUP SIZE: These exercises are done with the whole class.

RESOURCES: The main requirement is space. These activities may be done outdoors.

TIME REQUIRED: The warm-up activities may take 15 – 20 minutes if children are unused to drama. They may be shortened as children gain experience and are more willing to take part in drama.

ACTIVITY: THE FOLLOWING ARE NOT STEPS IN A SINGLE ACTIVITY, BUT RATHER DIFFERENT ACTIVITIES THAT CAN BE DONE BY THEMSELVES

Activity 1: *Stretches*. Have the students stand in a circle. Now tell them to stretch their arms as high as they can as they spread their feet apart and make very wide faces. Now tell them to shrink up into tiny balls. Then stretch out big again. Have them do the same with their faces: "Lion face!" (Expansive expression). "Prune face!" (Shrunken expression).

Activity 2: *Signals.* The students stand in a circle. One person stands in the middle. Across the circle, pairs of students give each other silent signals that they wish to change places. If the person in the middle can get to the space occupied by one of the partners, she or he stays there and the one left out then stands in the middle. Several pairs can trade places at once. The game must be played silently. Students should not make physical contact with others as they hurry to fill the empty spaces.

Activity 32: *Mirrors*. Have students stand opposite each other. One is the person and the other is her reflection in the mirror. Have the person move (slowly) as the partner mirrors her movements. Then switch roles.

Activity 4: *Portraits*. Have students get into groups of four or five. Have them think of something to depict that uses all of them as parts. For example, if they choose **lion tamer**, one student can be the lion tamer, others can be lions, others can be the guards, and others can be the thrilled spectators.

Activity 5: *Machines*. Have groups of students think of and dramatize an exotic factory machine in which parts move in relation to each other.

Activity 6: *Superactions*. This activity is more complex. Explain to the students that when we do things with other people we often act on two levels: what we are doing, and what we mean by what we are doing. For example, when we pass somebody we know in the hallway, having just seen him a short time before, we may nod and say "hi." But when we see a friend in the hallway who has just come back to school after a long vacation, we say "HI!" In both cases the action is the same: to greet the friend. But the *superaction* is different--In the first case, it's just to show the person we know he's there, but in the second case it's to show that we're surprised and delighted to see him. Now practice dramatizing superactions by setting up brief situations. The

action can be a waiter taking a customer's order. Write superactions on small pieces of paper and give one privately to each actor. The make the person go away, to get this over with as soon as possible, or to stretch this out as long as possible--you're bored or lonely or both. Have different pairs of students act out the same scene, the same actions, with different superactions, leaving time for the other students to guess what they thought the superaction was and say why they thought so.

TIPS: It is a good idea to explain to the students why you are doing these warm-ups. Older students may find them childish, otherwise. They are useful, though, because they (1) build trust and mutual knowledge in a group so people can play off each other in a dramatic scene, (2) they "loosen us up" so we can get into roles more easily. Can you think of other reasons?

DRAMA IN GROUPS

As a less teacher-directed alternative to the above activity, after they have read or listened to a story that was particularly interesting to them, students can work in groups to decide on ways of enacting scenes from the story with interpretative drama. Like the other dramatic activities in this section, this one can be used with any interesting text with dramatic possibilities—that is, where there are strong characters and interesting situations, such as an account of a historical event or even a newspaper article.

RATIONALE:
If students can direct their own dramatic activities, they may do higher order thinking; but they will need preparation, and structure, in order to function on their own.

GROUP SIZE: Drama in groups can be done with the whole class, divided into groups of four or five.

RESOURCES: The activity requires that the students have heard or read and understood a story or other texts with strong characters in an interesting situation.

TIME REQUIRED: The activity may take most of a class period. It may also be spread over more than one day, with the preparation work done on one day, and the performance on another.

ACTIVITY:
Step 1: When the class has finished reading or listening to the story, the teacher conducts a brief discussion to allow the students to express their feelings and ideas.

Step 2: The teacher then explains that the class is going to have different scenes from the story or text act out. The teacher assigns the students to groups of four or five to prepare to enact their scene. The teacher assigns a different scene to each group. (As an option, the teacher may assign the same scene to different groups, so later they can compare enactments).

Step 3: The teacher explains that the group will proceed through seven steps as they prepare and act out their scene. The steps are:

1. **Read aloud or retell** the scene you are going to perform.
2. **Take notes** on what the characters do, and the order in which they do them.
3. **Discuss** the reasons why the characters do what they do.
4. **Assign roles** to the characters in the scene (One person can be the director; other people can provide sound effects; some can be the audience).
5. **Enact** the scene.
6. **Evaluate** the enactment. Did it work? What parts can be made better?
7. **Refine** the enactment; improve what needs improving. Reassign roles.

Step 4: Before they begin, remind the students of three ground rules:

1. Stay in character (Act like the person you are supposed to be, not like yourself)
2. Talk to others using their role names, and treat them like their characters.
3. Be thinking about what is working, and how to improve the drama.

Step 5: The teacher decides on the amount of time to give the students for each step. The teacher tells the students to begin, and then gives a loud signal when it is time for the groups to finish one step and go on to another.

Step 6: The groups perform their scenes for each other. The teacher leads a brief discussion after each scene has been enacted, asking questions such as, "How did this group make X character seem?" "How do you think character X and Character Y feel about each other?" "What did you realize about the story (or the text) from watching this scene?"

TIP: It is advisable to mix the students in the groups, so that there is a capable reader, a good organizer, someone who pays attention to detail, and someone who has an outgoing personality.

REFLECTIONS: Taking responsibility for planning and enacting their own scenes is good practice for working in groups. It may work more successfully if students have had prior experiences in classroom drama.

READERS' THEATER

In readers' theater, a cast of readers performs a text with their voices. Each reader takes a role—either a named character, or a narrator, or one of multiple narrators.

RATIONALE: Using readers' theater is like performing a play—except that texts that would be impossible to stage in a drama can be brought to life through the audience's imaginations (as writer Aaron Shepard reminds us). Performing readers' theater is a kind of interpretation, because the readers have to catch the personalities of the characters, and the emotional tone of the events. In order to stage a work effectively, students must practice reading the text many times, which contributes to their reading fluency.

GROUP SIZE: A text can be performed in readers' theater using as few as two readers, and up to thirty. However, for the sake of keeping students involved, it is recommended that the size of the cast be kept to between eight and fifteen. In a larger class, more than one group can practice a text and take turns performing it.

RESOURCES: Readers' theater requires that copies of written texts be available for everyone to read. The best texts have many speaking parts. Texts for readers' theater can be prepared by the teacher or the students, or they may be located already scripted. Many scripts for readers' theater are available at no cost on the Internet. If texts are going to be prepared for performance in readers' theater, you can follow the suggestions listed in the box below.

1. It is best to retype the text, with the name of the person reading (The name of the character, and narrator 1, narrator 2, etc.) in the left-hand margin. The text should be written in large enough type for readers to see it easily.

2. Make a distinction between the words that are said by characters and the rest of the text, the narration. (Words said by characters are written between quotation marks). If there are not enough parts for the students in the class, the narration can be broken up and given to different narrators.

3. Leave out any words you don't need. For example, "He said," and "She answered" may be unnecessary to include—unless they are needed to make a character's identity clear to the audience the first time that character speaks. Long description can be cut out as well.

A sample text for readers' theater is attached as an appendix to this section.

TIME REQUIRED: Time will be needed for students to study the text and practice reading it dramatically before they perform it. A full class period may be needed.

ACTIVITY:

Step 1: **Locate or prepare a text prepared for readers' theater.** Make sure there are enough copies available for everyone to be able to read it.

Step 2: **Assign parts to the students.** Make adjustments so that everyone has a role. Many smaller groups can perform the same text if necessary—it can be interesting to compare the performances.

Step 3: **Allow the students to read the text through** to decide what is happening, what the characters are like, and how the characters and the narration should sound.

Step 4: **Side-coach:** ask questions and make suggestions to help the students decide how to read their passages. Encourage them to reread lines until they can produce them fluently and with proper expression. Have them practice reading parts one after another so that the text flows smoothly.

Step 5: **When the students perform,** you may have them stand in a semi-circle in front of the audience. Or the characters can face each other and the narrators can face the audience.

Step 6: **When the performance is over, ask the audience to share their impressions.** The may be guided to name things they liked about the performance, and also suggest ways to improve the performance.

TIPS: You must be careful, because there is potential for embarrassing students who do no read well if they are asked to read publicly. You may need to divide the roles into easier and more challenging ones, and also provide plenty of opportunities for practice before the performance.

REFLECTIONS: Readers' theater can be a delightful way to have students work on reading fluently and also interpreting what they read. A work that is performed through readers' theater can later be used for further discussion, using many of the methods in this guidebook.

Appendix: “Why Leopard Has Spots”

A Folktale from Liberia, retold by Won-Ldy Paye. Arranged for 10 readers: 7 narrators (identified as “Narrator 1,” “Narrator 2,” etc.,) and Spider, Deer, and Leopard.

==========

All: Why Leopard Has Spots

Narrator 1: Retold by Won-Ldy Paye

Narrator 2: Long ago, in the days when Leopard had a beautiful coat of solid gold, Leopard and Deer were friends.

Narrator 3: They lived in a little village with Spider, who was a great farmer.

Narrator 1: Every morning Spider walked to his farm.

Narrator 2: He worked all day planting, tending, or harvesting his crops.

Narrator 1: Every evening he cooked a huge meal, and because there was always more than he could eat by himself,

Narrator 2: he invited his friends Deer and Leopard to dinner.

Narrator 3: One day, when Spider was cutting off a head of cabbage, he noticed a space in his row.

Narrator 4: Someone had taken a cabbage.

Narrator 5: The next day he noticed an eggplant was gone.

Narrator 6: Every day another vegetable disappeared from his farm.

Narrator 5: Sometimes it was a lettuce or several carrots.

Narrator 6: Other times it was some corn

Narrator 7: or cassava.

Narrator 1: At first Spider didn't care, because he had so much. But when things kept disappearing, he began to get mad.

Narrator 2: Spider went to Deer's house and asked,

Spider: "Have you been stealing vegetables from my farm?"

Deer: "Not me!"

Narrator 3: said Deer.

Deer: "You invite me to dinner every evening. Why should I steal from you?"

Narrator 4: Then Spider asked Leopard,

Spider: "Have you been stealing from my farm?"

Leopard: "No!"

Narrator 5: said Leopard.

Leopard: "You cook such a good dinner for us every evening. I wouldn't steal from you, Spider."

Narrator 6: But every day more and more of his vegetables disappeared.

Narrator 7: Spider got angrier and angrier.

Narrator 1: Finally he went back to Deer's house and said,

Spider: "Please help me find the one who's stealing my vegetables."

Deer: "That's easy. Just make a trap. Dig a big hole right inside the gate to your farm. Make a huge fire in the hole, and let it burn down to hot coals. Then cover the hole with dry branches and dead leaves. When the one who's stealing from your farm goes through the gate tonight, the branches will break, and he'll fall into the hole and get burned."

Spider: "You are smart. Thank you for your help."

Narrator 2: Spider hurried to his farm and did exactly what Deer told him to do.

Narrator 3: Then he went back to his home in the village.

Narrator 4: That night, when everyone was sleeping, Deer got up quietly and sneaked out to Spider's farm.

Narrator 5: He walked carefully around the dry leaves and branches that were covering the hole and stole some cucumbers.

Narrator 6: He took the cucumbers home and ate them.

Narrator 7: Then he ran to Leopard's house.

Deer: "Leopard,"

Narrator 1:	Deer called.
Deer:	"Wake up! Spider wants to see you."
Leopard:	"Where is he?"
Deer:	"On his farm."
Leopard:	"Okay, I'll go, even though it is the middle of the night, because Spider is my friend."
Narrator 2:	Leopard ran to Spider's farm.
Narrator 3:	Deer followed him quietly.
Narrator 4:	Just inside the gate Leopard stepped on the branches over the hole.
Narrator 5:	The branches broke and Leopard fell WHAM! into the hole.
Narrator 6:	The hot coals burned holes in his coat.
Leopard:	"OWWW! Help me!"
Narrator 7:	But no one heard him.
Narrator 1:	Deer was already on his way to Spider's house. When he got there, he banged on the door.
Deer:	"Spider! Wake up! Come with me! The one who's been stealing your vegetables fell into the trap and is getting burned."
Narrator 2:	Deer and Spider ran to the farm. Someone was howling with pain.
Narrator 3:	When Spider looked down into the hole and saw his friend Leopard, he was furious.
Spider:	"You lied to me, Leopard Now I see what's going on! You've been stealing all this time!"
Leopard:	"I don't know what you're talking about. Just help me get out of here!"
Narrator 4:	Spider reached down and Leopard grabbed his legs. He scrambled out of the hole and rolled in the dirt to put out the flames that were burning holes in his coat.
Leopard:	"I almost burned to death. Why did you make a trap? Why did you tell Deer you wanted to see me?"

Spider:	"Deer told me to make a trap."
Spider:	"And I never told him I wanted to see you."
Leopard:	"You're the thief, Deer,"
Narrator 7:	said Leopard.
Leopard:	"And you lied too. Look at me. Because of you, I've got holes all over my beautiful golden coat. You're not my friend anymore. I'm going to eat you up!"
Narrator 1:	Leopard leaped toward Deer, and Deer bounded off into the forest. Leopard raced after him.
Narrator 2:	Now whenever Leopard sees Deer, he chases him.
Narrator 3:	And since that day, Leopard has black spots all over his beautiful golden coat.
All:	The end!

MOCK TRIAL

A mock trial is simulated jury trial in which students consider an issue that has a question of guilt or innocence. The question can come from nearly any source: from a work of literature, from a historical incident, or from current events.

RATIONALE: Participating in a mock trial encourages critical thinking. Students must take a position and justify it with reasons and evidence, defending their arguments against those who are taking opposed positions. Mock trials also help students understand the basic mechanics of a jury trial.

GROUP SIZE: Mock trials can be conducted with groups of students up to about 30 in number, from grade 3 or 4 through secondary school and university. Students are assigned roles in the trial: a judge, a team of attorneys for the defense (from one up to eight), a defense clerk, a team of attorneys for the prosecution (also from one up to eight), a prosecution clerk, witnesses for the prosecution, witnesses for the defense, a jury (from four up to about twelve), and a clerk for the jury.

RESOURCES: A story or other text is needed that contains the issue on which the trial is based. The text can be presented orally. It is helpful if there are hand-outs that explain the roles of each group (See below).

TIME REQUIRED: Mock trials usually are carried out in a period of time ranging from two hours to one week, depending on the depth of the students' participation.

ACTIVITY:

Step 1: **Share the story or the text with the students.** After discussing it, raise the question of guilt or innocence that will result in a mock trial.

Step 2: **Explain briefly what a mock trial is.** A person is charged with a crime. The crime is considered a violation of a law. A prosecutor, working for a plaintiff (a person who brings the complaint against the defendant—often this is the state), will try to prove beyond a reasonable doubt that the defendant, the person charged with the crime, is guilty. The defense attorneys will try to prove that the defendant is innocent. Witnesses offer testimony that is considered evidence. The jury will listen to the evidence presented by both sides, discuss the evidence and the arguments, and decide if the person accused of the crime is guilty under the law. The judge's role is to make sure the attorneys on both sides ask proper questions, and that the trial goes smoothly. And clerks keep everyone participating and keeping within time limits.

Step 3: **Assign students to roles:** a judge, a team of attorneys for the defense (from one up to eight), a defense clerk, a team of attorneys for the prosecution (also from one up to eight), a prosecution clerk, witnesses for the prosecution, witnesses for the defense, a jury (from four up to about twelve) and a clerk for the jury.

Step 4: **Explain the roles**. Distribute copies of the hand-outs below, if possible.

Handout 1: How to Conduct Your Mock Trial

1. Each attorney may make an opening statement. The attorneys tell the jury a little about the case (from their own point of view) and explain what they intend to prove.
2. After opening statements, each attorney may call witnesses. In this mock trial, each witness may be questioned for a maximum of three minutes. The attorneys for the plaintiff is always allowed to present their case first.
3. After each witness has testified for the side of the prosecutor or the defendant, the attorney for the other side may ask the witness questions for two minutes. This is called cross-examination, and the attorney may ask questions only about information that the witness has already talked about.
4. After the witnesses have testified, each attorney delivers a closing argument to the jury and summarizes what the witnesses have said that helps his or her side of the case. The attorney tells the jury why they should agree with his or her position.
5. After closing arguments, the jurors review and discuss the case privately. When they all agree on a verdict, they tell the judge what they have decided.

Handout 2: What the defense attorneys do

1. Create a list of arguments for your side, and the evidence that supports those arguments.
2. Make a list of witnesses that can provide evidence to support your side.
3. Make an opening statement to the jury.
4. Present your arguments and your evidence.
5. Question witnesses for your side, to bring out the evidence that supports your case, and rebuts the other side's arguments
6. Cross examine witnesses from the other side, in order to bring out evidence that supports your arguments and rebuts the other sides arguments
7. Make closing arguments to the jury.

Handout 3: What the Clerks for Both Sides Do

1. Makes sure everyone participates in meetings and during the trial
2. Keeps the entire prosecution team within the time limits for their presentation
3. Helps the group prioritize arguments and make the best use of the limited time, as needed

Handout 4: What the Witnesses Do

1. Have specific knowledge of what happened
2. Tell the jury what they think or feel
3. Do not present gossip
4. Respond to questions posed by the attorneys for both sides.

Handout 5: What the Jury Does

1. Serves as the audience for all arguments presented in the trial
2. Listens very carefully to what the witnesses say in order to decide (1) whether witnesses are telling the truth, (2) whether what they say is important to the case, and (3) whether they are accurate when they give their information.
3. Compares the testimony of the witnesses. Do the facts fit together? Was one side more reasonable than the other? Are you persuaded that the defendant is innocent?
4. Judges the effectiveness and merit of the arguments and evidence presented by the prosecution and defense teams
5. Evaluates the arguments presented by the prosecution and the defense in order to determine the guilt or innocence of the defendant
6. Votes on the outcome of the trial according to the established criteria only
7. Decides if the defendant is guilty or innocent under the law
8. Decides on a just punishment or "damages."

Handout 6: What the Jury Clerk Does

1. Makes sure everyone participates in meetings and during the trial
2. Keeps the jury pool within the time limits for their presentation

Handout 7: What the Judge Does

1. Decides which evidence may be presented to the jury (Hear-say and rumor doesn't count!)
2. Explains to the jury what the law says in this case, and how they should conduct themselves.

Handout 8: Agenda for a Mock Trial

1. **The judge announces the case** saying "The people versus _____ (name of the defendant)" or" _____ (name of the person bringing the complaint, the plaintiff, versus _____ (name of the defendant)" (1 minute)

2. **The judge tells the jury to listen with an open mind,** and not pre-judge the defendant until they have heard all the evidence and have had a chance to discuss it among themselves. (2 minutes)

3. **The attorneys for the prosecution present their arguments to the jury.** They introduce their witnesses, and ask the witnesses questions that will bring out evidence against the defendant. (8 - 10 minutes)

4. **The attorneys for the defense present their arguments to the jury.** They introduce their witnesses, and ask the witnesses questions that will bring out evidence that supports the defendant. (8 - 10 minutes)

5. **The attorneys for the prosecution cross-examine** the defense's witnesses to cast doubt on what they said, or bring back their own witnesses to strengthen their case. (4 – 5 minutes)

6. **The attorneys for the defense cross-examine** the prosecution's witnesses to cast doubt on what they said, or bring back their own witnesses to strengthen their case. (4 – 5 minutes)

7. **The attorneys for the prosecution address the jury,** summing up their arguments and making a closing statement. (4-5 minutes).

8. **The attorneys for the defense address the jury, summing up their arguments and making their own closing statement.** (4-5 minutes).

9. **The jury deliberates (discusses the case among themselves)**. They may speak out loud, but no one but members of the jury may speak. (In an actual trial, the jury would have their discussions in private). (8 – 10 minutes)

10. **The jury announces its decision.** They say that the defendant is guilty or not guilty, and they explain their decision. Was it the strength or weakness of the evidence presented by one side r the other? If so, what strengths or weaknesses? (3 minutes).

Step 5: **Supervise the trial.** But stay off to the side, as much as possible. If the students are well-prepared, and the clerks and the judge do their jobs, the trial should run smoothly and within the time limit.

TIP: Be clear on your purposes before you begin this activity. Mock trials are often used in law schools to teach law and legal proceedings. They are also used in third grade classrooms to provoke thoughtful and enjoyable debates about characters in stories. The amount of emphasis placed on the details about the law on the one hand, or the characters and the plot on the other, will differ along with the purpose of the activity. So will the amount of time the activity takes.

REFLECTIONS: The mock trial is a more complicated activity than most of the ones in this guidebook. It is worth doing more than once, because with experience, students can be less self-conscious about following the steps correctly and focus more on developing arguments and supporting them with evidence, defending them against counter-arguments, and also examining arguments. This is the stuff of critical thinking.

Source: This activity is adapted from the International Reading Association's and the National Council of Teachers of English web site, Read/Write/Think. A full version of the mock trial activity can be found on line at www.readwritethink.org.

An outline for a mock trial based on the story, "Why the Leopard Has Spots," is attached below.

"Why the Leopard Has Spots:" A Mock Trial

INTRODUCTION

Many students are familiar with the Liberian tale, "Why the Leopard Has Spots." It is the story in which a generous spider is deceived by a clever but manipulative deer, while poor leopard is falsely accused of a crime he did not commit. Spider doesn't know whom to believe and is angry—he wants justice.

Using this story we can actually create TWO different mock trials that engage students in thinking about big issues like "what do we mean by justice?" "What counts as evidence?' "How can a society create laws which protect the rights of its citizens?"

In the first trial, the teacher tells the students that leopard has been accused by the spider of stealing spider's vegetables. There seems to be lots of evidence against him. Who might spider's lawyer want to call to present evidence against leopard? What might the defense do to convince the jury of leopard's innocence? Call witnesses who can testify about his good character? Look for additional evidence?

The second trial is based on the idea that everyone is entitled to a good defense and a fair trial. In this case, let's assume that in a ""weak moment" deer confessed to the crime. Now, however, his lawyer says that this confession was all a mistake – that there was, in fact, a reason for accusing leopard and that that reason will come out in the trial.

For both trials you will need students to play a variety of roles:

Objectives-- After completing this lesson, students will:

1. Understand the basic mechanics of a jury trial.
2. Recognize the responsibility of functioning as a juror.

Target Group: Intermediate (grades 3 and 4) and up

Time Needed: 1 week

Materials Needed: copy of the story. Student Handouts on the roles people play In a trial (see previous section) are optional. "Courtroom" props and character props (e.g. masks, or costumes) can also be used as options.

Procedures: (See the previous section).

STUDYING CONTRASTS

It can be illuminating for students if we study the contrasts in stories, and use them to explore the "intertextuality" among stories—the overlapping plot structures, character types, and messages.

RATIONALE:
Simple stories, folktales especially, have characters and situations that are starkly contrasted with each other. Discussing these contrasts can be a valuable way to discuss lessons about behavior, virtue, and roles of women and men. .

GROUP SIZE: Studying contrasts can involve the whole class.

RESOURCES: The activity requires that the students have heard or read and understood a traditional folktale with contrasted characters.

TIME REQUIRED: The activity usually takes 20 minutes.

ACTIVITY:
Step 1: **Start by asking: What two characters in the story are most in contrast to each other?**. In the story of "Jack and the Beanstalk," those two characters would be Jack and the Giant.

Step 2: **Then ask: "What words can we use that describe these characters?"**

Step 3: **On the chalkboard, set up columns for recording the describing words**, like this:

Jack	**The Giant**
Young	Old
Small	Huge
Poor	Rich
Weak	Strong
Seems unlikely to succeed	Seems invincible
One his way up in life	On his way down in life
Ambitious	Greedy

Step 4: **Now add two more columns and ask "Who else is contrasted like these two characters?"**

Like Jack	Jack	The Giant	Like the Giant
David	Younger	Older	Goliath
Hansel & Gretel	Small	Huge	The Witch
Snow White	Poor	Rich	Stepmother
Robin Hood	Weak	Strong	Sheriff of
	Seems unlikely to succeed	Seems invincible	Nottingham
	One his way up in life	On his way down in life	
	Ambitious	Greedy	

Conversations about these contrasts can begin with characters in literature, and then go on to characters in history, and in contemporary life. Why do stories have repeated patterns such as these contrasted characters? Do we ever exaggerate our differences with people we know in real life by assigning ourselves to one of these contrasted roles, and them to the other? What happens when we do?

TIPS: This activity works better and better the more stories the students have heard and discussed.

REFLECTIONS: It is interesting to ask what contrasts come up again and again in the stories we tell. Why *those* contrasts? Are they still important to us in our lives today? If not, what would we replace them with?

DRAMATIC ROLES

Story characters play certain roles, and they want certain things. A French drama critic identified three roles and one object that help orient readers to the characters and actions in a simple story.

RATIONALE:
Like the "Studying Contrasts" activity, studying dramatic roles shows the similarities among stories, and helps us see them in a new way. .

GROUP SIZE: Studying dramatic roles can involve the whole class.

RESOURCES: The activity requires that the students have heard or read and understood a traditional folktale, or better yet, several.

TIME REQUIRED: The activity usually takes 20 minutes, but it can be extended. .

ACTIVITY:
Step 1: **Explain to the students that many tales have characters or conditions in them that play these roles:**

The hero—the person whose desires or needs gives direction to the actions in the story;
The goal—the object or condition of the protagonist's desires or needs;
The rival—the condition or the person that opposes the protagonist in getting her or his needs;
The helper—the person or quality that helps the protagonist as she seeks her or his needs.

Step 2: **Ask the students to identify each of the protagonist, the goal, the rival, and the helper in a story they are considering.** Be prepared for disagreements to arise over some of these. Give the students time to share their reasoning. Remember, there are really no correct answers to these.

Step 3: **Retell the story from another perspective.** Using dramatic roles, ask the class to look at a story from a different character's point of view. Suppose, for example, that the story if told from the point of view of the Giant's wife. She is the **protagonist**. What is her **goal**? Who is her **rival,** and who is her **helper**?

Step 4: **Unpack this activity**. You might ask what they learned from telling the story from a new perspective? How does our perspective—the person' whose point of view we take—affect the way we experience the events of our lives? What does it do to our attention and our sympathy when we identify a character as a protagonist, a rival, or a helper—or don't assign them any role at all? These questions are worth exploring.

FIFTH CORE LESSON: COOPERATIVE LEARNING

Cooperative learning has been used in schools around the world for several decades. The methods of cooperative learning have proved valuable for several reasons.

Cooperative learning allows students to learn actively, even in large classes. Learning experts tell us that in order to learn, students must act and communicate. But in classes of 60 or more, the amount of time any one student can talk is very limited. Cooperative learning techniques allow every student in the class to participate for much of the time, but they organize the activity of many students at once so that the activity will be productive and not chaotic.

Cooperative learning has academic and social benefits for students. Cooperative learning is not simply an expedient device to get students in large classes to participate in learning. Cooperative learning also has these benefits:

1. Higher order thinking. Students in cooperative learning groups are made to work with ideas and concepts. They are challenged to offer their own interpretations of topics and to solve problems.

2. Motivation and morale. Students who take part in cooperative learning feel more attached to the school and to the class. This may lead to better attendance and better retention rates.

3. Learning interpersonal skills. Students in cooperative learning groups learn to cooperate with others. Cooperation is increasingly recognized as an important life skill, both for productive work on the job, for happy family life, and for participation in a democratic society.

4. Promoting inter-personal and inter-group understanding. Students who work in cooperative groups are more likely to learn to get along with people of different sexes and from different social groups. They are also likely to develop stronger self-concepts.

This lesson follows the three-part format of **anticipation, building knowledge**, and **consolidation** that was presented in the first section of this guidebook. The lesson will use **Mix/Freeze/Pair** (Kagan 1994), **Reading with Text Coding** (Vaughn 1986), and the **Jigsaw** (Slavin 1994).

The text for this lesson is called "Remembering Columbus," but the procedures in the lesson are meant to be used with any informational text that you have. This lesson is done here with eighth graders, but the procedures can be used with grades below that or up through the secondary level.

HOW TO READ THIS LESSON

As you read the following demonstration lesson, please bear in mind that its purpose is to demonstrate teaching methods (and not to teach you about Christopher Columbus). Think about this lesson in two ways.

1. Imagine that you are *a student* who is participating in this lesson. What is your experience? What kind of thinking are you doing? What are you learning?

2. Then think yourself into the role of *the teacher* who is leading the lesson. What are you doing? Why are you doing it? How are you handling the three phases of the lesson—anticipation, building knowledge, and consolidation?

LESSON

ANTICIPATION

The anticipation phase of a lesson is where students are made ready to learn from the lesson. Here the anticipation phase begins with a method called **Mix/Freeze/Pair** (Kagan 1997), and continues with a reading activity that uses a text coding procedure.

The teacher begins the lesson with Mix/Freeze/Pair, mixing the students in the class up and having them discuss a question with new partners.

Teacher: *Please get a notebook and a pen, then stand up. When I say "go," you are to move around the room. Mix it up. Go in lots of different directions. When I say, "Freeze," you are to stop, shake hands with the person nearest you, and silently wait for more instructions. "Go."* The teacher plays recorded music for about one minute while the students move around the room.

Teacher: *Freeze! Now, shake hands with the person closest to you. Introduce yourselves. Tell your partner one thing that you have done lately that you are proud of.*

After one minute, the teacher gives the **quiet signal:** he raises his hand over his head. The students see him doing this, and they are immediately silent, and raise their hands above their heads too, facing the teacher. A couple of students do not notice and keep talking. Someone close to them taps each one on the shoulder, and they are silent and raise their hands too.

Teacher: *Thank you. Now I have another task for you. We will be talking today about Christopher Columbus, and what happened when he came to the New World. I want each pair of you to take a clean sheet of paper and divide it vertically into two columns. Label one column "East to West" and the other column "West to East." Do that now.*

Thank you. Now, in three minutes, please list everything you can think of that traveled from east to west right after 1492 and write them in the right-hand column. Do the same for the things you can think of that traveled west to east. Begin now. The teacher circulates among the pairs for three minutes and listens to their conversations.

Teacher: (Gives the **quiet signal**). *Thank you. What were some things you thought of that traveled east to west?*

Pair 1: "Guns and gunpowder."

Teacher: *OK. Something else?*

Pair 2: "Christianity."

Pair 3: "Diseases. The Europeans had diseases that the Indians had no resistance to."

Teacher: *Good. And what things traveled the other way?*

Pair 4: "Tobacco."

Pair 5: "Corn and potatoes."

Teacher: *Good. That's a nice beginning. Now please go sit in your* ***home groups*** *of four. These are the groups you have been working in for the past three weeks.*

BUILDING KNOWLEDGE

The building knowledge phase of a lesson is the phase of inquiry, in which the students discover or construct new knowledge about the topic.

The students will **Read with Text Coding**; they will be given a text to read and will mark certain passages with symbols indicating the theme.

Teacher: *You all have copies of the text, "Remembering Columbus." I want you to read it in a special way.*

Whenever you come across a passage that describes products or goods that moved from east to west or from west to east —that is, from the Old World to the New World or vice versa—pencil this mark in the margin: ***X***

Whenever you come across a passage that names historically interesting people, pencil this mark in the margin: ☺

Whenever you come across a passage that describes cultural or economic changes that came about because of the coming of the Europeans to the New World, pencil this mark in the margin: ***C/E***

Finally, whenever you come across information that involves geography, pencil this mark in the margin: ***Geo.***

Now please read and mark the article.

REMEMBERING COLUMBUS

Bucksnort Trout

> Twenty thousand years ago the land bridge over what is now the Bering Strait sank too low to be passable, and two halves of the world began to grow up separately. Plants and animals, peoples and cultures, gods and diseases, all went their separate ways—until one sunny morning, 500 Octobers ago, when a skiff bearing Christopher

Columbus crunched into the sand on San Salvador Island and brought the two parts of the world together again.

It is amazing to think that one person could have engineered that first contact, however unknowingly. When he did, Christopher Columbus was caught in the glare of world scrutiny forever. Columbus was an Italian map-maker and some-time wool salesman from Genoa. Somehow he persuaded Isabella, the Spanish queen of Castilla (but not her husband Ferdinand, the king of the neighboring province of Aragon), into giving him three ships to command on his improbable trip to China. But the queen made him wait until Spanish soldiers pried the last of the Moors, the Muslims from the south, loose from their 800 year occupation of Spain. What a year that was, 1492. The Moors were pushed out of Spain. The Spanish Inquisition was established, and all religions but Christianity were outlawed. And in August, Columbus embarked on his famous journey. For Spain, 1492 was a bizarre combination of fanaticism, intolerance, and discovery.

The powers that flowed through Columbus' point of contact changed the whole world profoundly and rapidly. The plants that the Indians offered to the Europeans—plants that they had bred carefully and improved through many, many generations—potatoes, corn, long-staple cotton—soon reversed the Old World's cycles of famine and led to population explosions—and changed everything from economies to cooking. Who can imagine Italian food without tomatoes? Or Indian food without hot peppers? Or an Irish meal without potatoes? (Or Sherlock Holmes without pipe tobacco?) All came from the New World. Without long-staple cotton, Europe wouldn't have had a textile industry. Without long-staple cotton and the example of the sugar mills of the Caribbean—which were arguably the world's first factories—Europe may not have had an Industrial Revolution.

Going the other way, who can imagine "the Wild West" without cattle, or cowboys and Indians without cows, or horses on which to chase them? The Spanish brought both cows and horses to the New World in 1493, and they quickly adapted, multiplied, and spread. In the 1580s, the Spanish explorer Cabeza de Vaca was blown across the Gulf of Mexico and shipwrecked on the Texas coast. He was the first European to see Texas, but Spanish cattle already had beat him there, and they looked so wild, so much at home, that he assumed they were native to America. The Lakota Sioux, Indians of the American Great Plains, have legends about the coming of wonderful animals that improved their lives. The Elk Dogs were said to have been brought up from a magical land at the bottom of a deep lake. They were horses, of course.

But the diseases Columbus and his followers brought with them wiped out whole civilizations within a few decades. The Taino people who lived on the Caribbean island of Hispaniola (the location of present day Haiti and the Dominican Republic), for example, were reduced from perhaps half a million souls to virtually none within a space of only 50 years. And even though European explorers didn't arrive on the seaboard of North America until many years after Columbus' voyage, the diseases introduced by the Spanish are believed to have spread rapidly northward, so that by the time Captain James Smith reached Jamestown in Virginia in 1607, the

indigenous population was already in disarray because at least a fourth of them had died from a plague of smallpox that had originated with the Spanish explorers far to the south, and had been passed northward from tribe to tribe.

Back a century earlier in the Caribbean, when the Taino population began dying off at an alarming rate, the Spanish imported forced workers from Africa, and the troubled heritage of slavery, as well as the multiracial character of the New World, began to take shape.

All of this happened because of a man who didn't know where he was.

CONSOLIDATION

The consolidation phase of the lesson is the part where the students reflect back on what they know, apply it to other problems, and interpret the new knowledge.

When the students have finished reading the article, the teacher moves to the **Jigsaw** activity. The teacher writes four questions on the chalk board:

1. What were some products and goods that were exchanged between the east and the west right after 1492? Which ones where the most important? Why do you say so?

2. What were some cultural and economic consequences of the first contact between the Europeans and the people of the New World? Which ones where the most important? Why do you say so?

3. Who were some of the famous people and groups who were involved in the first contact? Who are some other important people whose names we don't know?

4. Trace the geography of the first contact. What do you know that Columbus didn't?

Teacher: *We are going to carry out a Jigsaw activity. I have written some questions on the chalk board here. Each one of you should be able to give an intelligent answer to all four of them by the end of the period. You will be responsible for teaching each other—but I repeat, each one of you is responsible for knowing all of the material yourself. Please count off at your tables, 1, 2, 3, 4.*

*If you are number 1, please stand up. Bring a notebook and your text with you and go to this corner of the room (*indicating one corner). *If you are number 2, bring a notebook and your text with you and go to that corner of the room (*indicating another corner). *Number 3? You will go there, and number 4, there.*

The students move to their new seats.

Now that you are in your groups, I will give you your assignment. Group number 1, you are responsible for question number 1. Group 2, question 2; group 3, question 3; and group 4, question 4. But pay attention: You should first discuss the question among yourselves to make sure you can answer it. And second—this is important—you should prepare to teach your question to the others in your home group. By "teach" I don't mean to explain. I mean to question the others in your group: Hear their answers, debate with each other,

and make sure everyone has a thorough understanding. You will have eight minutes to prepare to teach your question. When you return to your home group, each of you will have five minutes to teach your question to your home group. Good luck.

As the students work in their groups, the teacher moves among the four groups to hear how they are doing and to offer suggestions. After eight minutes, the teacher gives the quiet signal.

Teacher: *Thank you. Now in a moment you will return to your home groups. You should deal with the questions in order, one though four. You will have five minutes for each question. Use your whole five minutes: remember to ask others to share their ideas and don't just share yours.*

Now the teacher walks among the groups and listens to their discussions. After 20 minutes, the groups are done. The teacher gives the quiet signal.

Teacher: *Let's share your ideas with the whole group. I will call out a number and ask the person with that number to summarize your group's answer to the question. I will ask number 4 to tell us your group's thinking on question 1, number 3 to share question 2, number 2 to share question 3, and number 1 to share question 4. Let's start with the person with number 4. Take a minute now and remember what your group said.*

The teacher waits one minute.

Good, let's hear from someone in this group over in the corner. Who is number 4, and what was your group's answer to the first question?

Student 4: "A whole host of things were exchanged. But we thought the most important were the diseases, which weakened the Indian populations and made it easier for the Europeans to take the land away from the indigenous peoples. And we also thought potatoes were important because they kept people in Europe from starving."

Teacher: *Nicely done. Now let's get person number 3 from this group in the other corner. You have question 2.*

Student 3: "We thought all that business about cotton and factories and the Industrial Revolution was fascinating. That showed that coming to the new world—we don't want to use the word 'discovery'—helped advance technology and commerce in Europe. We didn't know that before. Religion was important. But we shudder to think about people bringing Christianity and disease at the same time. That was very strange about the priest who argued for bringing in African slaves. And we wanted to mention that the diseases and food had cultural and economic consequences too, obviously."

Teacher: *Again, nicely done. Number 2, you have question 3.*

Student 2: "We noted Cabeza de Vaca, and Captain John Smith, and the king and queen of Spain, and of course Columbus. We remembered the Taino people, who died, and the Lakota Sioux Indians, who thought horses were elk dogs But the question made us realize that we don't know the names of the Muslims or the Jews who were expelled from Spain, or of the Indians who died of diseases. We only have the names of the people who got to tell the story."

Teacher: *Well put. Finally, Number 1, you have question 4.*

Student 1: "There was a lot of geography. The article mentioned the Bering Strait. That's between Alaska and Siberia. The people who became the Indians walked across that strait up until 20,000 years ago. But then it sank, and they couldn't get across. Then we had Genoa in Italy where Columbus came from, and two provinces in Spain. Then across in the New World we had the island of Hispaniola, where Haiti and the Dominican Republic are. We don't know much about what Columbus didn't know about the geography—except that he thought he was in Asia when he was really in North America."

the lesson ends here

REVIEWING THE LESSON

At the beginning of this lesson, you were invited to think about it in two ways: as *a student in the class*, and as *the teacher*. Take a moment and reflect on how it would have felt to be a student participating in this lesson. (It may help to write down your thoughts on a piece of paper).

How did you feel—interested, engaged, important, detached, controlled, or bored?

What kind of thinking did you do—memorize details, find main ideas, look below the surface at important issues, or make interpretations and support interpretations with reasons?

What will you carry away from the lesson—information, important ideas, or thinking skills?

Now think back over this lesson as if you had been the teacher. Recall the steps to this lesson. They were:

Mix/Freeze/Pair: Here the teacher stirred up the class and had students walk around until they found random partners to talk to.

Reading with Text Coding: Students next read a text with certain things to look for and instructions to mark the text with special symbols corresponding to each item they were looking for.

Jigsaw: All of the class was given a set of questions to answer, but students went to expert groups to prepare to teach the students in their home group only one of the questions. Then they returned to the home group and led their group in learning their part of the material.

You may want to learn exactly how you would conduct each activity. Here are the steps to each one.

METHODS

MIX/FREEZE/PAIR

Mix/Freeze/Pair (Kagan, 1994) is a lively means of having students work with new partners to complete a closely defined task.

RATIONALE: Having students move around can rekindle their energy and make them more alert. Finding a random partner with whom to solve a problem develops social skills, especially the ability to work cooperatively to solve problems.

GROUP SIZE: Six to sixty.

TIME REQUIRED: Mix/Freeze/Pair should be done quickly, in two to five minutes.

ACTIVITY:

Step 1: Think of a question or a series of questions ahead of time.

Step 2: Give the directions ahead of time, to avoid chaos! Tell students that when you give the signal, they are to get up and move around the room. When you say "freeze" they should stop and pair up with the person closest to them.

Step 3: Give the signal. Allow one minute for them to move. Then say, "Freeze!" and tell them their task.

Step 4: Give the students a fixed amount of time to accomplish their task. Then ask them to go back to their seats.

CLOSE READING WITH TEXT CODING

Close reading with text coding refers to the act of having students look for certain things in a text, then mark the text when those things are found.

RATIONALE: When students are reading texts as part of a lesson, it helps to use a reading strategy that links their reading closely with their questions and purposes. Close Reading with Text Coding help students set purposes for reading, read to achieve those purposes, and later be able to use information from the text.

GROUP SIZE: Unlimited.

TIME REQUIRED: Close reading with Text Coding might add 25% or more to the amount of time otherwise needed to read a text.

ACTIVITY:

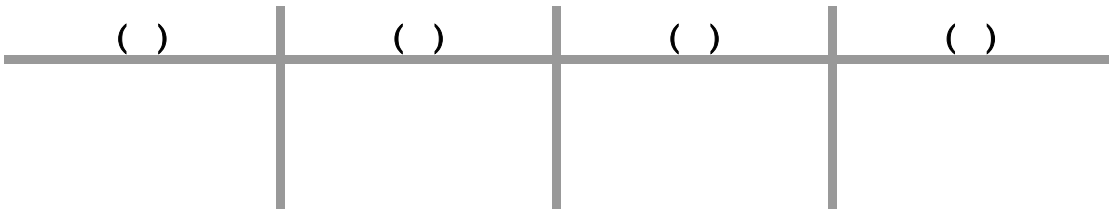
Step 1: Ahead of the activity, think of four or five kinds of information you wish students to locate in a text. Come up with a simple symbol for each kind.

Step 2: Carefully explain to the students the kinds of information you want them to look for as they read the text. Give examples. Then show them the symbols with which they should mark each one.

Step 3: Tell the students to begin reading the assigned text and to mark (in light pencil) each piece of information of each type.

Step 4: (Optional): As an optional step, or to occupy those who finish early, ask the students to construct a table like this:

.



Tell them to put the symbols they used in their close reading between the parentheses. In pairs, have them list several pieces of information they found for each category.

JIGSAW

Jigsaw (Slavin 1994) requires students to help each other learn. It can be used when students are reading a text, listening to a presentation, or carrying out a group investigation. Like other cooperative learning activities, the Jigsaw method employs both **home groups** and **expert groups**. The method requires some prior work from the teacher, who must prepare **task sheets** in advance of the lesson.

RATIONALE: The Jigsaw technique helps all of the students to study and learn all of the material. They become "experts" as they teach each other parts of the material. Each student thus has an active role in teaching and learning and experiences deep understanding and higher order thinking.

GROUP SIZE: At least nine students, up to ninety. The Jigsaw method can be used in classes of nine to ninety students. **Home groups** are best kept to four members. These groups should continue to work together for three weeks or more, and should be composed of a mix of students: boys and girls, more and less capable students. It is worth taking the time to help students work effectively in groups, especially in their home group. **Expert groups** may also be kept to four or five members. That means when you are doing a Jigsaw you may have more students in each home group than the number of expert groups, you will need to randomly assign the "extra" students to different expert groups so that the sizes of the expert groups may remain balanced. If the number of students in the class requires it, you may have more than one of each expert group.

TIME REQUIRED: The Jigsaw strategy can be used in a single class period of 45 minutes, but the time will be limited. Assuming that the meeting of the expert groups requires 8 minutes, and that each "expert" will need 4 minutes to lead her or his part of the discussion, there will be 20 minutes left to divide between starting and ending the class and reading (or otherwise experiencing) the class material. In order to gain more time, the students may read the materials over night, or experience the lecture or class experiment on another day to have more class time to participate in the Jigsaw activity.

RESOURCES: The questions that will guide the "experts" discussions must be prepared in advance. They may be written on the chalk board. The students may be given material to read—but they may also be told a story, given a lecture, or engaged in some other stimulating experience.

ACTIVITY:

Step 1: The teacher prepares expert sheets. The teacher begins by reviewing the materials to be learned, and writing questions about it to guide the students' learning. The teacher should prepare the questions in groups, with as many groups of questions as there will be expert groups—usually four or five. Each group of questions might pertain to its own section of the material. (See **Preparing Questions** for suggestions of ways to write questions).

Step 2: The teacher assigns the students to home groups**.** Students should be assigned to home groups of four or five members. Each group should have a mix of boys and girls and of more capable and less capable students. The home group is important, because the students in it will work to-gether for a period of time and will take responsibility for each other. Thus they should at least be-gin to feel some loyalty to each other. Students should be assigned to the same home group for at least three weeks, and they should carry out many cooperative activities together besides this one Jigsaw lesson.

Step 3: The teacher assigns a warm-up or team-building exercise for each home group. In order to make the team members relaxed together, they should be given a warm-up or team-building exercise the first time they meet together and periodically after that. A useful warm-up is to invite each home group to develop its own "team cheer." They may be given three minutes to develop the cheer, and then each group should be asked to demonstrate it to the whole group. (Note that there are many suggestions for warm-ups given in the section below.)

Step 4: Students read the materials or otherwise experience the lesson. Each student should now be given a copy of the text to be read. Or, if there is not a text, the teacher may read or tell a story, give a lecture, or lead the students in a learning activity.

Step 5: The teacher shares study questions and assigns students to expert groups. Now the teacher may either write the questions on the chalk board or distribute copies of the questions on repro-duced sheets. The questions are listed in groups (see above). The teacher asks the students to "count off" within the groups: "one, two, three, four." The teacher points to different parts of the classroom where each expert group should meet. The teachers asks every student number one to go to seats in one corner of the room, every student number two to go to seats in another corner of the room, and so on until all of the expert groups have an assigned place to meet. The teacher then appoints a discussion leader for each expert group.

Now the teacher explains that group number one is to prepare to teach certain of the questions (The teachers names the questions), group number two is to take certain other questions, and so on until all of the questions are assigned.

Step 6: The expert groups prepare to teach their portion of the questions. The teacher allows time for the expert groups to discuss their questions and decide on ways to teach them. The students in each expert group should locate ideas in the text or in the lesson that answer their questions. In the expert groups, the students' task is to *decide how best to lead a discussion of each question once they return to their home groups*. The teacher should make sure everyone understands

that their task is not to answer the questions for their groups, but to lead the other members of their group to answer them. Then the students should think of strategies for getting their home groups to discuss them.

As the expert groups meet, the teacher should circulate among them to help them stay on task and provide any clarification they need.

Step 7: Experts return to their home groups and take turns leading discussions. Once they have prepared to teach their part of the expert questions, the participants leave the study groups and return to their home groups. Experts take turns discussing their assigned questions on their expert sheets with the other members of their home groups. Each participant should take about five minutes to lead his or her part of the discussion. The expert's task is not just to report ideas, but to ask and entertain questions from the group to ensure everyone has thoroughly considered and learned the piece of the text or lesson that the expert has been assigned to cover.

Step 8: Evaluate the process. The teacher asks everyone to think about what he or she contributed to the discussion, and ways to improve the activity.

ASSESSMENT: The catchphrase of cooperative learning is "collective responsibility, individual accountability." This expression means that cooperative learning activities require students to be responsible to each other, in order to enable each other to learn. But they are also individually accountable: that is, each student must also learn all the material. All of that means that each student should be tested on her or his mastery of the materials in a written or oral examination. It is possible for the teacher to reward group effort, however, by tracking the average grades of each group over time and awarding points to each member of the group if the average performance of the group impr6oves.

TIPS: So that you can give them directions, such as telling them when it is time to move from one group to another, you will need some way to quickly get the attention of everyone in the workshop when they are working in groups.

Teach the participants a **quiet signal**: For example, raise your hand in the air and make a vee with your fingers. Each student who sees you do that should immediately stop talking, turn around, face you, and wait to hear what you will say. She or he should gently tap the shoulders of others who are talking so they will know to be quiet and listen to you.

Practice using the quiet signal several times at the beginning of a workshop so that everyone learn to do it

VARIATIONS AND RELATED METHODS

ROLES IN COOPERATIVE GROUPS

Cooperative learning groups may work more efficiently if students are assigned certain roles within the groups. The roles may rotate among the group members, though, so each student will have plenty of opportunities to practice each role. Together, the roles outlined below add up to the habits and skills of a talented group member.

RATIONALE: **Roles in Cooperative Groups** are intended to give each student a clearly understood contribution to make to the success of the group; and to teach each student, over time, the skills and attitudes that make a cooperative and productive group member. These roles also teach skills of cooperation that are worthwhile in themselves.

GROUP SIZE: Roles in cooperative groups can be introduced to the whole class and practiced when students are working in home groups and expert groups.

RESOURCES: No special resources are required to introduce roles in cooperative groups.

ACTIVITY:
Step 1: Introduce the following roles to the students:

Questioner. The Questioner presents the task to the group. **Checker**. The Checker makes sure that everyone understands the task at hand, and sticks to it. **Timekeeper**. The timekeeper keeps track of the time allotted for the task and makes sure every group member stays within his or her time limit.	**Encourager**. The Encourager encourages the others to answer, congratulates them on their good ideas, and asks them to say more. **Reporter**. The Reporter shares the small group's findings with the whole group.

Step 2: Explain one role at a time. Describe the role. Demonstrate to the students how to perform in that role.

Step 3: Ask for several students to provide their own versions of its use and offer correction and clarification as needed.

Step 4: After the students understand all of the roles, ask the students in groups to count off, one through four or five. Assign the roles to the students according to their numbers.

Step 5: The teacher explains that the role of the reporter will be assigned later, so everyone must listen carefully, in case they turn out to be the one assigned that role.

REFLECTIONS: It is important for the teacher to give students a different role each time they work in groups. This may be done by having them keep the same numbers, and matching a different role with each number each time the students participate in groups. After the students have experience working within each role, they will become better rounded group members. Each of these roles stresses a different aspect of what a competent group member does.

COMMUNITY AGREEMENTS

Community Agreements are rules of behavior that students agree to abide by when they participate in cooperative learning activities.

RATIONALE: Community Agreements are meant to teach students to behave responsibly and cooperatively in a group, to conduct learning groups that get their work done, and to manage their own behavior.

GROUP SIZE: Community Agreements are derived and discussed with the whole class. They are reinforced later, any time the students are participating in group activities.

RESOURCES: The teacher will need a chalk board to record the initial discussion in which the Community Agreements are reached, and chart paper to display the agreements permanently thereafter.

ACTIVITY:

Step 1: The teacher begins by asking the class to get into home groups. Ask each home group to think of a group activity they have done that went particularly well. That is, one in which their group was particularly productive, and being a member of that group was particularly enjoyable. Then the teacher asks them to think of rules of behavior they might suggest to others to make a group work as effectively as that one.

Step 2: Now the teacher asks a group to name one rule. It is listed on the chalk board. The teacher asks each group to list one new rule that hasn't been mentioned before, and the teacher writes these on the chalk board.

Step 3: When all of the groups have contributed ideas the teacher reviews those ideas with the whole group. The teacher explains that the class is now trying to arrive at a set of Community Agreements—guidelines for productive behavior in groups to which all members can voluntarily subscribe. There should be no more than four or five of these, because that is the maximum number that students can easily remember. The teacher tries to combine the ideas that are similar, and to eliminate those that are redundant, so that the class ends up with four or five ideas on the chalk board or flip chart.

TIPS: Typical community agreements often include these:

- *Everybody participates*
- *Nobody dominates*
- *Students stay on-task*
- *There are no "put-downs" (students take pains not to offend or criticize anyone else).*
- *Students practice active listening.*

Step 4: Next, the teacher explains that having a list of community agreements is important, but more work needs to be done before students will be guided by them as they work in groups. Write an "M-Chart" on chart paper. Label the M-Chart with one of the community agreements, like this:

PRACTICE ACTIVE LISTENING

What does it look like?	What does it sound like?	What does it feel like?

Step 5: Ask the group to describe what it looks like when students are actively listening to each other. You may have to demonstrate active listening. (The teacher may say: *Students lean toward the speaker. They look at the speaker. They nod in agreement.*)

Step 6: Now ask the students to say what it sounds like when students are practicing active listening. (The students may say: *"Only the speaker is talking." Others may say "Um, hum," or "that's right!"*).

Step 7: Now ask what it feels like to be the speaker when others are practicing active listening. (The students may say: *"The speaker feels confident." "The speaker feels important." "The speaker feels smart!"*).

Step 8: Finally, make an M-Chart of each of the Community Agreements and post these around the classroom.

Step 9: In the future, remind the students to practice the community agreements. For example, when the students are engaged in group work, you should walk around the room and observe the students. From time to time you should point out the examples you have seen of the community agreements in action (active listening, students talking in a friendly way without criticizing each other, etc.). Remind the students what it looked like and what it sounded like.

REFLECTIONS: It is worth the time to elicit community agreements from students and teach them how to follow them. Group learning activities will be much more effective if students know how to behave in groups.

TIPS: A problem that groups of students commonly experience is unequal participation of the members. Some students are outgoing by nature and may dominate the group's discussion, while others are quieter by nature and may hold back their valuable contributions. The following two procedures are meant to get students used to participating equally in discussions. Use them occasionally—not all the time—to remind the group of the benefits of equal participation

PENS IN THE MIDDLE

A cooperative learning strategy that helps students share group time equitably.

RATIONALE: In cooperative learning groups, one student occasionally dominates the conversation. Other students have difficulty contributing. **Pens in the Middle** method is intended to ensure that all students have the opportunity to participate in a

cooperative learning group, and provide the teacher with a stimulus for asking students about their contributions.

GROUP SIZE: Pens in the Middle works well in small groups of from three to ten students.

RESOURCES: No special resources are required except that each student should have a pen or pencil.

TIME REQUIRED: The activity is carried on at the same time students are carrying out another cooperative activity.

ACTIVITY:

Step 1: When students begin to share ideas in the typical cooperative learning group of three to seven members, each student marks his or her contribution by placing a pen or pencil on the table in the middle of the group.

Step 2: That individual may not contribute again until every other student has placed his or her pen in the middle. All members are equal in their ability to contribute, and no one may dominate.

Step 3: A student who has not contributed and who has nothing to add at that point can say, "Pass," placing his or her pen in the middle when speaking.

Step 4: At any time, the teacher may go to the group, select a pen on the table, and ask what contribution its owner made.

TIPS: When students are discussing an issue in a small group, a useful way to make sure everyone participates is to have them pass an object (a stone, a small ball) from speaker to speaker. Only the speaker holding the object may speak.

WALK AROUND—TALK AROUND

A cooperative learning activity for sharing ideas during the anticipatory phase of a lesson.

RATIONALE: This method is useful for quickly sharing ideas among a large group of students in a very short time. It is highly active, and motivation is high during the activity.

GROUP SIZE: A large group—20-30 or more.

RESOURCES: A large space.

ACTIVITY:

Step 1: The teacher asks each student to think briefly about a problem related to the lesson.

Step 2: The students then stand up and walk to a clear space in the classroom.

Step 3: The students walk around randomly in the space until the teacher claps one time.

Step 4: The students stop and talk to the nearest person about the question that the teacher asked.

Step 5: After about one minute, the teacher claps two times. Everyone should walk around again.

Step 6: The teacher claps once again. The students stop again and talk to the nearest person.

Step 7: Repeat this process a third time.

Step 8: After they talk with other students three times, the teacher asks them to sit down again.

Step 9: The teacher asks a few of them to share their ideas with the large group. The teacher asks them if any questions came up. The teacher writes their ideas and questions on a chart.

Step 10: The teacher then tells the students: "*Let's talk about these ideas and then identify two important issues.*"

We found out how much it means to be listened to by the others, to express your feelings, beliefs, and to hear those of others.

(Secondary-school student, Macedonia)

ONE STAY/THREE STRAY

A cooperative learning activity for sharing ideas within a classroom.

RATIONALE: This method is a very useful strategy for quickly sharing ideas within a large class. It has the advantage, shared by many cooperative learning techniques, of putting students in responsible roles in which they function as expert providers of information to others.

GROUP SIZE: The method of One Stay/Three Stray can work well with home groups of four or five. There may be any number of groups within a classroom.

RESOURCES: It helps if the groups have paper and pencils with which to record the group's deliberations, and if individual students also have paper and pencils to record ideas they learn in the other groups.

TIME REQUIRED: As far as time, the moving about can be done in a matter of seconds once students are used to it, and the visit to the new groups should take no more than five or six minutes.

ACTIVITY:

Step 1: The students are assigned to **home groups** of four or five.

Step 2: Going clockwise around the room, the teacher numbers the tables. The teacher also gets the students sitting at each table to count off, one through four or five.

Step 3: The students are assigned a question to discuss, or a task to perform.

Step 4: After they have worked on the task for an interval, perhaps 15 minutes, the teacher asks everyone with the number one to stand up, then move one table to the next highest numbered table (from table one to table two, from table two to table three, and so on).

Step 5: Once the students with number one have moved, the teacher asks those with number two to stand. They should move from table one to table three, from table two to table four, and so on. Those with number three move three tables: from table one to table four, and so on. **Those with number four or five should stay at their original tables.**

Step 6: The teacher asks the students who are visiting each table to interview the remaining member from the original group to find out how that group answered the question. They should take notes and prepare to take them back to their own table. The student who stayed behind explains as clearly as possible his or her group's answers to the question.

Step 7: After five to eight minutes, have everyone go back to their original group and report on what they learned from the other tables. Each student should take three minutes to report on what they learned.

REFLECTIONS: One Stay/Three Stray can be fun for the students, because it gets them up and moving around, and exposes them to other faces. Students enjoy being interviewed, and they also enjoy telling their table mates what they learned when they visited the other groups. If the procedure is set up properly, students can learn to move around quickly to their new places. We once observed a class of 80 sixth graders in rural Tanzania get up, move to new groups, and sit down again—all in 10 seconds.

ACADEMIC CONTROVERSY

A cooperative learning activity that leads students to argue different sides of an issue.

RATIONALE: Learning to take a position and defend it with reasons is an essential skill in a democratic society. Learning to entertain arguments that are contrary to one's own belief is an important step toward sound consideration of an issue and informed decision making. **Academic Controversy** gives students the support of a group while they practice these skills of critical thinking.

GROUP SIZE: The method works best if students work in home groups of four. Groups of five will work if necessary. There may be any number of groups of four in the classroom.

RESOURCES: The method requires no particular resources, but it will help if each student has paper and a pencil for recording ideas.

TIME REQUIRED: The activity takes about 20 minutes to carry out.

ACTIVITY:

Step 1: The teacher assigns the students to groups of four. The teacher gives them a question to discuss. Note that the question should have a "yes" or "no" answer.

Step 2: The teacher has the students discuss the question in groups of four, so they reach a common understanding of what the question means and why it matters.

Step 3: Then the teacher has the students count off in the group, 1, 2, 3, 4. Tell students with numbers 1 and 2 that they should prepare to argue for the point of view that "Yes, we should." Tell numbers 3 and 4 that they should prepare to argue the point of view, "No, we shouldn't."

Step 4: The teacher tells both pairs within each group to go off by themselves and spend five minutes listing reasons to support their position.

Step 5: After five minutes, the teacher calls time. The teacher than tells each student with a number 1 or 2 to go find a different student with a number 1 or 2. Those with number 3 or 4 should find a different partner with number 3 or 4. In three minutes, they should hear their partner's reasons, and write down any they had not thought of.

Step 6: The teacher calls time again. Now the teacher has the students return to their original partners and pool their ideas. Each pair should now think of the best reasons that support their position, and prepare to debate the other pair within their group of four. In order to debate, they should come up with a sentence stating their position and two or three good reasons for their position.

Step 7: After five more minutes, the teacher tells the pairs to join the other pairs in their group and join the debate. In order to debate, one side states its position with the reasons for it, then the other does the same. Then they debate each other's reasons and conclusions.

Step 8: The teacher lets the debate go on for six or seven minutes. Then he or she tells each group that they are now free to drop their assigned positions and argue for whatever positions they truly believe. The teacher asks the groups if they can come up with a consensus position: that is, a position with which everyone agrees, and reasons to support it.

Step 9: The teacher can now call on a member of each group to give a statement of the group's conclusions from their debate.

TRADE A PROBLEM

Trade a Problem is a cooperative activity that requires students to locate an important issue in a topic of study and then formulate a problem about it for another group to answer.

RATIONALE: The method teaches students to identify important issues in course material, formulate problems about those issues, and to interact with others.

GROUP SIZE: The method works best if students work in home groups of four. Groups of five will work if necessary. There may be any number of groups of four in the classroom.

RESOURCES: The method requires no particular resources. But it will help if each student has paper and a pencil for recording ideas.

TIME REQUIRED: The activity takes 15 to 40 minutes to carry out.

ACTIVITY:

Step 1**:** Ask each group to write the problem down on a sheet of paper, and hand that piece of paper to another group.

Step 2: That group must solve the problem. Once they are handed a problem statement, each group has a fixed amount of time in which to think of a solution to the problem.

Step 3 (Optional): Once they have solved the problem, the group may plan a lesson in which they teach the problem and its solution to another group In teaching their lesson, they must

1. **show** and not **tell**
2. engage the students.

SPECIALIZED ROLES IN DISCUSSIONS

Specialized Roles in Discussions is a cooperative learning technique for managing discussions in small groups within particular discipline areas. Specialized Roles in Discussions is used after a text has been read or a topic has been presented. The technique has everyone discussing the same topic or text. By playing a different role, each student takes a different perspective on the discussion. Because the roles are chosen to highlight aspects of comprehension, the method enables students to learn those aspects deliberately through active practice. Later, when they study on their own they will combine the different roles into a comprehensive ability to make sense of a topic.

RATIONALE: A literary text can be considered in different ways, and this method allows students to practice those ways. When the method is applied to other disciplines, it highlights different ways of thinking about topics in those disciplines. The

method teaches students to play an active role in the discussion, learn all of the material under discussion, accept responsibility for their classmates' learning, and practice one aspect of comprehension of the topic at a time.

GROUP SIZE: Specialized Roles in Discussions is done in groups of four or five students. There may be any number of groups in a classroom.

RESOURCES: If a text is to be read, there needs to be a copy to read aloud, or enough copies for the students to read themselves. If the desks can be moved, they can be arranged in clusters for the groups. If the students sit on benches, the students can turn around to work with a cluster of students around a bench top.

TIME REQUIRED The activity takes 15 to 40 minutes to carry out.

ACTIVITY:

Step 1: Before this activity begins, the text will have been read or the material will have been presented. Also, the teacher will choose a number of roles corresponding to the number of students in the home groups. Here are some potential roles for use in a literature class:

Quotation Finder. This student's job is to pick a few special sections of the text that the group would like to hear read aloud.

Investigator. This student's job is to provide background information on any topic related to the text.

Connector. This student's job is to find connections between the text and the world outside.

Question asker. This student's job is to write down (in advance of the discussion) questions for the group to talk about--questions he or she would like to discuss with the others.

Word finder. This student's job is to find interesting, puzzling, important, or new words to bring to the group's attention and discuss.

Character interpreter. This student's job is to think carefully about the characters and to discuss with the other students what the characters are like.

Illustrator. This student's job is to draw pictures of important characters, settings, or actions, so that the other students may discuss the pictures.

Travel Tracer. When characters move from place to place in a text, this student's job is to keep track of their movements.

Step 2: The students are assigned to home groups of four or five members.

Step 3: Within each group, the students count off, one through four or five. Each number is given one of the roles from the set chosen by you.

Step 4: As you would if you were using the Jigsaw technique, send the students to **expert groups** to plan ways to teach the material from each role. For example, send all the students

who will be **quotation finders** together to decide which quotations to share, and how they will have their home groups discuss them. Give them five to eight minutes to work in expert groups.

Step 5: Call the students back to their **home groups**. In their home groups, give each student a fixed amount of time—three to five minutes—to lead their own part of the discussion.

TIPS: Five suggestions will make the use of these roles more successful:

1. The first is to teach the roles to the whole class, one at a time. You may read or tell a story, then introduce one of the roles—for example, the connector. You may then call attention to a connection between something in the text and something in real life. Then you will invite several students to do likewise. Over several days, many of the roles can be introduced in this way, before students use them in a group discussions.

2. Students should be encouraged to **ask questions** from their roles, rather than to say what they know. For example, the character interpreter might invite the other students to construct a character map or a character web about a character, and only venture his own ideas after the other students have shared their own.

3. Choose only the most useful roles for a particular discussion. Sometimes four or five roles are sufficient.

4. Rotate students through the roles. Each student should play many roles over the course of several discussions; the accumulated experience of playing many of these roles adds dimensions to each student's awareness of literature.

5. Be careful not to stress the roles more than the rich discussion of the literary work. Having students carry out the roles is a means to the end of sharing their insights about a work. Once the conversation is under way, you should feel free to suspend the roles and let the conversation proceed.

DISCUSSION ROLES FOR OTHER SUBJECTS

Different subjects require different kinds of thinking to understand and apply the material. To adapt the method of assigning roles in discussions to a **geography class**, one teacher came up with these roles:

Mapmaker, the student who drew a map of the area in question;

Historian, the student who gave a bit of historical background to the area in question;

Geologist, the student who described the land forms, soil types, and climate of the area under study;

Economist, the student who talked about the kinds of economic activity students engaged in and related that activity to the land forms;

Anthropologist, the student who talked about the people who live in an area, their traditions, and their culture.

In a **mathematics class**, the roles might be these:

> **Problem interpreter**, the student who restates the problem so that everyone understands the task at hand;
>
> **Term finder**, the student who identifies and labels the relevant numbers in the problem that must be used in solving the problem;
>
> **Calculator**, the student who sets up the problem in mathematical terms and leads the others through solving it;
>
> **Checker**, the student who checks over the work to make sure it has been done correctly;
>
> **Connector**, the student who leads a discussion to find examples of other problems that can be solved the same way.

REFLECTIONS: Specialized Roles in a Discussion is an engaging strategy to use. You must watch the groups carefully, though, to make sure the discussions are carried out deeply and at some length. Otherwise, students may simply say what they know and be done with their role, the activity will go too quickly, the other students will not fully understand, and you will end up with some groups finished well before others. As with the other co-operative learning methods, once the students learn to carry out the activity they will be able to do it efficiently.

THE REQUEST PROCEDURE

The ReQuest Procedure (Manzo 1969) is a useful activity partners can use when they are reading through a text that is difficult for them.

RATIONALE: The ReQuest Procedure is an older and simpler learning technique than Reading and Questioning and Reciprocal Teaching (see below). It is fairly easy to teach students to do, and does not take as much time for reading the text as the other two methods.

GROUP SIZE: The method will work with an unlimited number of pairs.

RESOURCES: Each pair will need at least one text between them.

ACTIVITY:

Step 1: Assign the text to be read, and decide on the units of text that will be discussed (Each sentence? Each paragraph? Each page?).

Step 2: One of the partners reads the first paragraph out loud.

Step 3: The other partner asks questions about what the text said. The partner must try to answer them. Both partners should try to agree on good answers to the questions.

Step 4: Switch roles. Now the partner who asked the questions reads the next paragraph aloud. The other partner then asks questions, as explained above.

TIPS:
Here is what we mean by a "good question":

Ask about main ideas *("What is the most important thing the author has said here?"*)

Try to clarify details (*"What do you think the author meant by_____? What does that idea have to do with the main point?")*

Make inferences *("Why do you suppose the process works that way?"*)

Relate what was said to what will be coming in the text (*"What do we need to know now? What do you think the author will tell us next?")*

READING AND QUESTIONING

Reading and Questioning (Temple 2003) is a more complicated reading-for-information procedure that is carried out in pairs. It is recommended for studying materials that must be understood and recalled.

RATIONALE: The Reading and Questioning procedure helps students read carefully and study materials with a partner. Working together can be more motivating than working alone.

GROUP SIZE: Like the ReQuest Procedure, Reading and Questioning will work with an unlimited number of pairs.

RESOURCES: Each pair will need at least one text between them.

TIME REQUIRED: A Reading and Questioning activity may take half an hour to complete. Often it is done by students independently, outside of class time.

ACTIVITY:
Step 1**:** The students take turns reading an assigned text in sections. The first student reads a section aloud, from one heading to the next heading.

Step 2: The two students decide on key terms to write in the margin of the text.

Step 3**:** When student 1 has finished reading the section, student 2 makes up questions about the text, using the terms from the margins. The questions should resemble test questions the students think might appear on an examination covering the material. The student writes each of these questions on a small piece of paper small slips of paper (8 cm by 12 cm) or an index card.

Step 4: Student 1 says aloud the answer to each question. If student 2 agrees with the answer, they write the answer to the question on the other side of the index card.

Step 5: Trade roles. Student 2 now reads a section. Both students decide on key terms to write in the margin of the text. Student 1 comes up with questions for the terms, which student 2 answers out loud. If they agree on the answer, they write it on the other side of the index card or piece of paper. They continue to trade roles until the assigned text is read.

Step 6: Using the cards or slips of paper with the questions and answers on them, the students continue to quiz each other on the assigned material in the days after the activity.

TIPS:
The first time you do the Reading and Questioning procedure stop the class after the students have finished reading and questioning the first section of the text. Review their terms, questions, and answers, and suggest corrections as necessary. Thereafter, you should circulate among the students and listen to their questions and answers. Also, before the students study from their questions and answers, it is a good idea for you to review the questions and answers to make sure they are adequate, and accurate.

RECIPROCAL TEACHING

Reciprocal Teaching (Palincsar 1984) was developed by learning theorists for the purposes of having students read carefully for understanding.

RATIONALE: As all teachers know, the best way to learn about something is to teach it to others. In Reciprocal Teaching, students not only teach materials to their peers, but they also practice important comprehension skills while doing so. Reading and Questioning teaches students to read for understanding: find main ideas, locate details, and make connections among ideas in a text.

GROUP SIZE: Reciprocal Teaching is best done in groups of four. It will work with an unlimited number of foursomes.

RESOURCES: Each foursome will need at least one text among them.

TIME REQUIRED: Reciprocal Teaching is time consuming, but the pay-off in comprehension is usually worth it.

ACTIVITY:
Step 1: Assign the participants to groups of four or five. Explain that they will be doing a cooperative learning activity called "Reciprocal Teaching." They will take turns being the teacher within their group. The person playing the role of teacher will carry out these five tasks:

1. Read a paragraph aloud. Read slowly, in a clear voice, with emphasis.

2. Summarize what it said. Say aloud the main points of the text in a sentence or two.

3. Ask questions about it. Formulate and ask questions about—

- *the main ideas* ("What two kinds of soil erosion are there?")
- *explanations behind those ideas* ("Why does wind erode the soil on some land more than others?")
- *the implications of those ideas* ("According to what we have read, is the land around here prone to soil erosion?")

4. Clarify the hard parts. Try to make the more obscure parts clear—

    - *vocabulary* ("When the text says 'wind break,' it means 'trees planted to prevent wind erosion.'")
    - *background knowledge* ("Topsoil is the layer of fertile soil that lies on top of the subsoil. It has the organic matter in it that nourishes plants.")

5. Predict what will come next. Try to predict where the author's presentation is going. Say what we need to know next. Point to words in the text that preview coming ideas, such as "as we shall see…."

Step 2: Read a paragraph aloud yourself. Then **summarize it** carefully. Explain to the participants how you have brought out the main ideas in your summary. Then **ask two questions** about it. Call attention to the kinds of questions you asked (main idea, explanation, implication). Then **clarify the hard parts** and point out that you stressed vocabulary or background knowledge. Finally, **predict** what is coming next, and say what you based your prediction on.

Step 3: At each step, you may ask participants to try the step themselves and comment on what they say. Once you have explained the procedure, ask the participants, in groups of four or five, to practice Reciprocal Teaching with the text on soil erosion.

Step 4: After they have all had time to do the first step, "summarizing," ask for the group's attention, then ask volunteers to give you examples of the summaries. Point out what is good about the summaries, or suggest improvements. Then have them go on to the next step, and again, call for people to share their questions, and critique those.

Step 5: Now let the groups go ahead independently. After they have read at least four paragraphs, you may let them read the rest of the text independently, if time is short.

TIP: Before asking the participants to try out Reciprocal Teaching, it is important to explain and demonstrate each step very carefully.

FOCUS ON: WARM-UP ACTIVITIES

In order to learn, students must be emotionally ready to take risks. Educational psychologists remind us that learning happens most easily in psychologically "safe" environments (Marzano, 1992). That means they will feel free to venture answers to questions, ask new questions, and state original opinions without fearing that they will "look stupid." It also means that they should be willing to work together and support each other in learning tasks.

It is a good idea to begin the school year with a series of warm-up activities to help "break the ice" between students who do not yet know each other well. The teacher should repeat the warm-ups periodically throughout the school year. When students are working in cooperative learning groups, they should use warm-ups often—twice a week at least—especially when new groups are getting to know each other.

The following warm-up activities are recommended as a starter set. See if you can add to them by asking other educators what works for them.

These activities will work best in groups of 20 or less. Since most classrooms have more students than that, the activities can be practiced in small groups functioning at the same time. You may explain the activity to the whole class at once, and then have them practice it in smaller groups. If the weather permits, many of these activities can be done outside, where the groups have room to spread out.

SCAVENGER HUNT

Step 1: On a flip chart write:

Find a person who—

1. Is a middle child
2. Has an interesting hobby
3. Knows a good joke (and have them tell it!)
4. Is left-handed
5. Speaks more than two languages
6. Has recently learned a new skill

Step 2: Ask the participants to take a piece of paper and make a grid with six numbered boxes. Give them seven minutes in which to go around and collect two signatures of people who fit each criterion.

SECRET TALENTS

Step 1: Distribute pieces of paper and have students write one thing they like to do that the other students probably don't know about.

Step 2: Collect the papers, mix them up, and distribute them to the students, making sure no one gets his or her own.

Step 3: The students go around and try to find the student who has the secret talent.

TWO TRUTHS AND A LIE

Step 1: Have each student write down three things about herself—a favorite pastime, a chore they perform at home, etc. Two of these three statements must be true and one must be a lie. The lie should be plausible, though, and the true statements can be surprising.

Step 2: The rest of the class (or small group) must guess which statement is the lie.

SPIDER WEB
This builds inclusion and a sense of community through the practice of attentive listening.

Step 1: Ask the group to sit in one large circle.

Step 2: Explain that during this activity each student will have an opportunity to share his or her name and something special about himself or herself. Give the students a minute to think of something special.

Step 3: Have one student begin the activity by stating his or her name and something about himself or herself. (Example: "My name is Ana, and I am wonderful at remembering things.") Then, have the student hold onto the end of the yarn and roll the ball to someone across from him or her in the circle. Have the students continue this process until everyone has either shared or passed and a "spider web" pattern has been created.

I LOVE YOU, DEAR (For any size group)
Step 1: Have the students stand in a large circle.

Step 2: Choose one student to stand in the middle. He must walk up to one person in the circle and say, "I love you, dear." That person must respond, "I love you too, but I'm not supposed to smile," without smiling. It can be said twice to the same person in the same way.

Step 3: If the person smiles—and most will—the smiler may then trade places with the person in the center. As an alternative, the student who smiled may join the student in the center in tempting others to smile. The second may be easier for shy students, and it makes the activity proceed faster.

TALK TO ME (For groups of 10 up to 30)
This warm-up is very entertaining. It also provides practice in reading comprehension.

Step 1: Count the number of participants you have. Make a small sheet of paper for each participant. Write an instruction on each one. Here are some sample instructions:

Lie to me.
Talk to me in an angry way.
Look at my shoes.
Close your eyes often.
When you talk to me, touch your nose.
Ignore me.
Look at the ceiling.
Give me compliments.
Change partners.

You can write many more similar instructions. Some can be used twice.

Step 2: Do not let the participants see the papers. Tape one sheet of paper with an instruction on the back of each participant.

Step 3: Tell the participants to walk around the meeting room. They should read the instruction on another participant's back.

Step 4: Tell them to talk to that participant and follow the instruction. For example, if the instruction says, "Close your eyes often," talk to the participant and close your eyes often. After a few minutes, move on to another participant. Of course, other people will be reading that participant's paper on his or her back. Everyone will be reading everyone else's note and following the directions.

Step 5: At the end of the activity, each participant should try to guess what his or her note says.

LOOK UP, MON!

This warm-up is a good way to choose random pairs to work together when the group numbers 10 to 30 students. Each two who say, "Mon" to each other make a pair. Continue until everyone is paired up.

Step 1: Ask the students to stand in a circle. Tell everyone to look at the floor.

Step 2: The teacher calls out, "Look up, mon!" Everyone should look at the face of another person in the circle.

Step 3: Almost everyone will be looking at someone who is looking at someone else. But a few will be looking at each other. Those who are looking at each other must say, "Mon." They are out and must leave the circle.

SEVENTH CORE LESSON: UNDERSTANDING ARGUMENTS

This lesson shows you ways to help students follow an argument in a written text or a speech. The strategies presented here will enable students to analyze the argument, test it for soundness, and construct counter-arguments. The lesson follows the three-part format of **anticipation, building knowledge**, and **consolidation** that was presented in the first section this guidebook. For the first phase of anticipation, the lesson will use an **M-Chart** to focus on vocabulary, in combination with a strategy that was introduced earlier in this guidebook: a **Think/Pair/Share**. For the second phase of Building Knowledge, the lesson will use **Text Coding for Arguments.** In the third or Consolidation Phase of the lesson, the lesson will subject the text to questions from the **Critical Literacy** tradition.

The text for this lesson is called "Let's Hear It for Smokers!" but the procedures in the lesson are meant to be used with any persuasive text that you have—any many informative texts. This lesson is done here with eighth graders, but the procedures can be used with several grades below that, or up through the secondary level.

How to Read This Lesson.

As you read the following demonstration lesson, please think about it in two ways.

- First imagine that you are a **student** who is participating in this lesson. What is your experience? What kind of thinking are you doing? What are you learning?
- Then think yourself into the role of the **teacher** who is leading the lesson. What are you doing? Why are you doing it? How are you handling the three phases of the lesson-- **anticipation, building knowledge**, and **consolidation**?

Text Preview, Think/Pair/Share, and "M-Chart." The teacher begins the lesson by reading a short section from the text, and calling attention to a key word in it. The talk goes like this:

Teacher: Today we are going to read a piece of writing about cigarette smoking. Let's begin with your own thoughts on the subject. Do you think cigarette smoking should be

banned? Take a minute to think about that question. Write down your thoughts if you wish to. [The teacher pauses for one minute while the students think and write].

Teacher: Now turn to your elbow partner and share your ideas. I'll call on some volunteers to share with the whole class in just a moment. [The teacher pauses another minute for the students to share their ideas with partners]. Now let's hear from three pairs. Tell us what you think, and why.

Student 1: Yes, they should ban cigarettes. They're bad for people. They cause sickness. It makes no sense to allow people to use something that we know will make them sick.

Teacher: Thank you. Does anyone think differently?

Student 2: It's hard to just ban cigarettes because many people smoke and can't quit. Millions of people, probably. How can you ban something that so many people want to do?

Teacher: OK, that will do for now. We'll pursue this question further in a few minutes. Now let me read you a short quote from the end of an essay about cigarette smoking. See if you can tell what position the writer is arguing about the question of smoking.

The teacher reads: *Those zealots—those fanatics, those moral tyrants who would take away the joys of [tobacco farmers], and invade the privacy of smokers … ought to be ashamed of themselves.*
So what is the writer's position?

Student 3: This person is in favor of smoking…

Student 4: Or at least you can say he or she is against people who are trying to ban smoking.

Teacher: Yes. You can say the author is trying to protect the rights of people to grow tobacco and to smoke cigarettes. But let's focus now on the terms the writer uses. Look at these terms: "zealots," "fanatics," and "moral tyrants." Are these the terms that someone in favor of such people would use?

Student 5: No, no. Those terms are negative and disapproving.

Teacher: Then what would be a positive term for people who want to ban smoking? That is, what might those people call themselves?

Student 6: "Campaigners for clean air."

Student 7: "Health guardians."

Teacher: Good. We have negative terms like "fanatic" and "moral tyrant." And we have positive terms like "campaigners for clean air" and "health guardians." Let's get some of these terms on the board. [The teacher draws an M-Chart on the chalkboard]. And what would be neutral terms for the people we are talking about?

Student 8: How about "anti-smoking activists"?

Teacher: Yes, that will work. [The teacher writes the terms on the M-Chart].

Positive	Neutral	Negative
Campaigners for clean air; Health guardians.	Anti-smoking activists	Zealots, fanatics, moral tyrants

Teacher: Interesting isn't it? Just by the choice of words, a writer can convey positive or negative attitudes toward the subject. Now let's look at some other more formal ways a writer argues for a position. I'm going to teach a focused lesson to introduce you to some

elements we can look for when we read written arguments. Then we will try to find those elements in the full text about cigarette smoking.

BUILDING KNOWLEDGE PHASE. The building knowledge phase is the part of the lesson where the students inquire to find out more about the topic.

The Teacher now teaches the students about elements of argumentation.

The teacher writes these questions on the chalkboard:

- *What is the main question posed by this piece?*
- *What answer does it offer?*
- *What reasons are offered in support of that answer?*
- *What evidence is offered in support of each reason?*
- *What reasons or facts are left out—things that might have supported different answer to the question?*
- *What "facts" are we expected to accept on faith?*
- *What loaded words are used—what words carry value judgments?*
- *Given all we have considered, do the reasons justify the conclusion?*

Teacher: Let's see what these mean. The **question** is the idea or problem that the writing is about. It's the matter that the writer is about to argue about.

Student 9: You mean it's like naming the topic, without saying how you feel about it yet?

Teacher: Exactly. Now let's look at the **answer**. We can also call this the **claim.** This is the position that the writer takes on the question.

Student 10: The writer is telling us how she feels?

Teacher: That's true, but it should be more than feelings. The writer should give you **reasons** for the answer or claim she is defending. A **reason** is a statement or a group of statements that support an answer or a claim.

Student 11: What do you mean "support" it?

Teacher: To give us something to make us believe something or do something. I'll give you an example. Suppose your little brother is in another part of the house. Suddenly he shouts, "Come here!" You're busy and don't want to go. So you say, "Why?" He says, "Because I want you to." That's not good enough, so you say, "Give me one good reason." And he says, "Because I have my head stuck in the window." Then you go!

Student 12: But suppose he doesn't have his head stuck in the window? It would be just like my little brother to say that when it wasn't true!

Teacher: Right. So sometimes we ask for **evidence** that support a reason.

Student 12: I might say, "If your head is stuck in a window, how come I can hear you?"

Teacher: Yes, that's a good example. And just like your little brother who sometimes might play tricks on you, some writers make arguments that we shouldn't believe, even though they sound convincing at first. Let's look at three ways they do this. One way is to offer so called "facts," that turn out to be no more than opinions. For example, an article might say "Leading doctors agree that you should use our medicine." But unless the article names the actual doctors, or cites respectable research, we cannot consider that statement as evidence. Another shortcoming is to leave important things out of their argument. Here's an example: "A study has shown that the more little old ladies there are in a town, the more crimes are committed. Therefore we should arrest all little old ladies." What is wrong with that argument?

Student 13: That can't be right!

Teacher: Of course it's not right. But why isn't it? What is missing from the argument?

Student 14: I know! If there are more little old ladies in a city, there are more people! If there are more people, there is more crime! Little old ladies don't cause the crime. There is more crime because there are more people, and some of those people are bound to be criminals.

Teacher: Thank you! So you see? Something was missing from the argument. That's another way writers can deceive us. We considered yet another way a little while ago. Suppose a writer is talking about smoking, and he uses terms like "zealot" and "fanatic" to name everyone who is concerned enough to want to limit smoking?

Student 15: That's not fair.

Teacher: You're right. It's not fair. If a writer uses **loaded words** that convey attitudes without having justified those attitudes, she or he is trying to win the *effects* of arguing without really arguing. So we will be on the lookout for loaded terms like those. And finally [The teacher points to the last item on the list] we should decide if, when all is said and done, the writer has made a convincing argument.

Now I want pairs of you to read an article called "Let's Hear It for Smoking!" Mark the article with these symbols in the margin:

Q	What is the **question**?
A	What is the **answe**r that is offered?
R	What **reasons** are offered?
E	What **evidence** is given?
"F"	What "facts" are we expected to accept on faith?
M	What information or arguments are **missing**? (Write a number in the margin and write out the missing idea)

LW	What **loaded words** are used?

The students then read the following article.

Let's Hear It for Smoking!

By Bucksnort Trout

In more and more places in the world there are campaigns against cigarette smoking. Few and far between are the places of work or leisure where smoking is still allowed. In some places cigarette manufacturers are even being sued to pay the medical expenses of people who become ill from smoking. Well, it's time someone stood up for the rights of people who make cigarettes and those who smoke them, and that's what we intend to do here. Let me be clear: many good people are involved in the production of tobacco, and many more good people enjoy their products. Their rights must be respected. Leave them alone!

Picture, if you will, a family farm with a small plot of tobacco, sometimes only two hundred meters on a side. Every day the family walks the rows between the growing plants to tend them, one by one. Even the children can carefully pick off the tassels, so the leaves will grow to their fullest. They harvest the tobacco by hand, and the whole community gathers to pile the broad tobacco leaves carefully on a mule-drawn wagon, and later to hoist racks of leaves up into the barn where they will hang until they are dry. When the tobacco is sold in town at auction, the family makes a tidy profit to spend on its needs. Tell me—would you take that money away from them?

Now picture the smoker. This one is a young woman who's risen before dawn to catch a commuter train to work. In the fifteen minutes she has between arriving at the station and signing in at the office, she can have a cup of coffee—and a cigarette. And in that short space of time, she is truly in charge of her world and fully at peace. The rest of her day may belong to someone else, but for now she is alone with herself, her coffee, and her cigarette. Would you take that joy from her, too?

Those zealots, those fanatics, those moral tyrants who would take away the virtues of family farming, and invade the privacy of smokers like this hard-working young woman--they ought to be ashamed of themselves.

After the students have read and marked the article, the teacher asks the students to call out the parts they had marked.

Teacher: Who found the **question**?

Student 15: We marked the whole first paragraph. The author didn't quite come out and say it, but he raised the question of whether we should make it hard for people to smoke.

Student 16: And also whether we should punish people who make cigarettes.

Teacher: Good. And what was the author's answer to that question?

Student 17: That we should leave them alone.

Teacher: Leave them alone? Does the author say what he means by that?

Student 18: Not really. People should be allowed to grow and sell tobacco. And people should be allowed to smoke cigarettes. That is all he says.

Student 17: That's not much.

Student 18: No, it's not.

Student 19: We found two reasons, though. One is that tobacco is grown by family farmers.

Student 20: And the other is that some smokers enjoy smoking.

Student 21: The evidence he offered is pretty thin, don't you think? Both pieces of evidence he offers are not very believable.

Student 22: Yes. He paints us a picture of a family farm that grows tobacco. That's nice, but…

Student 23: How do we know that most tobacco is grown that way? It could be grown on huge plantations and picked by machine for all we know.

Student 24: And he also shows a young woman whose only pleasure is her cigarette and her cup of coffee.

Student 25: That's silly! She should find some other pleasures, like reading a good book. Going roller skating. Feeding the birds.

Teacher: You all are very perceptive! Good for you! Did you find anything missing from the argument?

Student 26: Well, they didn't say anything about the cigarette manufacturers. It's easier to sympathize with the family farmer than it is with the big corporations that make billions of dollars off cigarettes.

Student 27: And when the author described the young smoker, he failed to mention that four smokers out of five want to quit—but they can't, because they are addicted to cigarettes. I read that somewhere.

Student 28: There was no mention of the damage smoking causes. Cigarettes cost a lot of money, and if you're addicted you have to keep buying them. And they cause lung cancer and heart disease—they kill hundreds of thousands of people every year.

Student 29: We marked some loaded words. They were the ones that we worked with at the beginning: "zealot," "fanatic," "moral tyrant."

Teacher: In what way were they "loaded"?

Student 29: Well, we really don't know anything about people who are opposing smoking. They may not be zealots or fanatics or tyrants. They may be people who don't want to work in a tiny office with someone who smokes all day. They may be public health workers who are concerned about their patients. We can't call them zealots or tyrants without knowing something about their motives.

Student 30: That's right. There are good reasons why people might oppose cigarette smoking—even if this author doesn't admit any of them.

Teacher: One more question. Do you think the reasons the author gave justify his conclusion?

Student 31: That's tricky! If you read this article quickly and thoughtlessly, you might say 'yes.' But the reasons given don't have good evidence to back them up…

Student 32: And we found so many important things that weren't said in the paper. You might agree with it if you didn't think of the things that weren't said. So, no. We don't think his conclusion is justified.

CONSOLIDATION PHASE. The consolidation phase comes toward the end of the lesson, when students use the meaning they constructed to reach new insights. In this lesson, they are exploring argumentation, and ways to detect and argue back against inadequate or dishonest arguments.

The Teacher now asks the students to consider two questions designed to reinforce polite skepticism about arguments.

Teacher: Given all the gaps we found in this argument, we're getting a little bit suspicious about this author's motives, aren't we? Here is a question to think about with your partner:
Whose voices, and whose interests, do you think are represented in this article? Whose voices and whose interests are left out? [The students are given time to consider and discuss the question].

Student 1: Well, it's certainly the voice of someone who is in favor of smoking. It could even be the tobacco industry, the cigarette companies who are behind this article.

Teacher: We don't know, do we? But whose voices are left out?

Student 2: All kinds of people. The other workers in the office with that woman, who don't want to breathe her smoke.

Student 3: The public health people, who have to deal with all those people who get sick from smoking.

Student 4: Taxpayers. Because they end up paying the hospital costs of people who can't afford to pay.

Teacher: OK. One final thing. I'd like you to construct a counter-argument to what you've just read. Remember to state the question, then give your **own** answer. Make sure you provide reasons to support your answers to the question. And evidence to support your reasons. Write these out in the next fifteen minutes, and then we will share some of them.

After the students write, and a few of them share, the **lesson ends here.**

Message to the reader:

At the beginning of this lesson, you were invited to think about the lesson in two ways. First you would focus on your experiences as a *student in the class*, and then you would focus on what *the teacher* did to conduct the lesson.

Take a moment and reflect on how it would have felt to be a student participating in this lesson. (It may help to write down your thoughts on a piece of paper).

- **How did you feel—**interested, engaged, important, detached, controlled, or bored?
- **What kind of thinking did you do—**did you accept ideas at face value, or did you look below the surface at the quality of arguments? Were you the passive recipient of ideas or ideas, or were you placed in a position to exercise skepticism, and argue back?
- **What will you carry away from the lesson**—information, important ideas, or thinking skills?

Now think back over this lesson as if you had been the teacher. Recall the steps to this lesson. They were:

- **Think/Pair/Share:** A question is discussed individually and in pairs.
- **Terms With M-Charts**: A method for exploring the connotations of key terms, to look for loaded words.
- **Focused Lesson on Argumentation.** The teacher introduces and explains terms about argumentation.
- **Text Coding:** The students mark parts of the texts where they find elements or argumentation.
- **Writing Counter-arguments:** Students write out their own positions and arguments on the question.

Now consider how the activities fit into the three phases of a lesson: **anticipation, building knowledge,** and **consolidation.** They are presented here as a chart.

ANTICIPATION	BUILDING KNOWLEDGE	CONSOLIDATION
Think/Pair/Share. **Terms With M-Charts.**	**Focused Lesson on Argumentation.** **Text Coding.**	**Writing Counter-Arguments.**

THE METHODS EXPLAINED

Now you may want to learn exactly how you would conduct each activity. Here are the steps to each one.

Anticipation	Building Knowledge	Consolidation
√		

[Doug and Gabi: The check marks should be in the *first* box]

M-CHARTS ON TERMS.

M-Charts on Terms are a device for bringing to light "loaded words," terms that make what are called "descriptive assumptions." Descriptive assumptions are value judgments that are built into the words themselves, as you can see in the difference between words like "freedom fighter" and "terrorist."

Rationale:

Students need to develop strategies to protect themselves from manipulative uses of language.

Group size: Unlimited.

Subjects: Best for use with persuasive essays, such as newspaper editorials or advertisements; but the technique is also useful with materials drawn from popular media, public documents, and even from textbooks.

Time required: Can be completed in ten minutes.

Activity:

Step One: Begin by sharing a passage in which a loaded term or terms are introduced.

Step Two: Call the students' attention to the term, and ask them what they think the author's disposition is toward the item in question. .

Step Three: Ask the students to think of terms they would use for that item if they felt the opposite way from the author.

Step Four: Now ask students to think of a neutral term for the item in question.

Step Five: Write all three groups of terms in a chart with three columns. The positive terms can go on the left, the neutral term in the middle, and the negative terms on the right.

Reflections on the Method. The M-Chart is a graphic organizer for making clear the different stances authors take toward an item by their choice of words. Using this device frequently induces a certain skepticism toward manipulative language and cultivates a spirit of independence in the students.

Focused Lesson on Arguments:

A critical discussion is one in which students approach a text with systematic skepticism, identify its arguments, and subject them to scrutiny. This focused lesson introduces students to different elements of arguments, as well as tricks that are commonly used as short-cuts in arguments.

Rationale:
Students need to understand the structure and components of arguments, so they can tell when an argument is fairly or badly made, and so they can develop strategies to protect themselves from manipulative uses of language.
Group size: Unlimited.
Subjects: Best for texts from popular media, or about current events.

Time required: There are many ideas to be learned here. An introduction can be done in a class period, but these ideas should be revisited and practiced many times over.

Activity:

Step One: Share a list of the elements of an argument, in the form of questions.

- *What is the main question posed by this piece?*
- *What answer does it offer?*
- *What reasons are offered in support of that answer?*
- *What evidence is offered in support of each reason?*
- *What "facts" are we asked to accept on faith?*
- *What has been left unsaid?*
- *What **loaded terms** must we accept in order to reach the same conclusion as the author? That is, has the author conveyed value assumptions about some entities by the choice of words that have positive or negative connotations?*
- *Do the reasons the author offers justify the conclusion she or he draws?*

Step Two: Explain and give examples of each element.

Step Three: Share an argumentative essay with the students. Show the students a set of codes that can be used to mark each element, and ask the students in pairs to mark the text according to the elements they find in it.

Step Four: Review the elements the student find.

[After Browne and Keeley (2000) and Unruh (1998)].

Reflections on the method: There are many ideas being introduced in this lesson. It may be preferable to introduce these elements more slowly, spreading them over several lessons. One way to do so would be to begin with a text that has a well-formed and straightforward argument. After introducing a few of the elements, you would have the students look for the **question**, the author's **answers** to the question, and the **evidence** that is given to support each reason. Then you would ask if the author's **conclusion** was justified. After having the students practice using these elements several times, you would then introduce other elements: so-called **"facts"** that must be taken on faith, **missing information or arguments**, and **loaded words**.

VARIATIONS AND RELATED METHODS

CRITIQUING NARRATIVE WRITING.

Anticipation	Building Knowledge	Consolidation
	√	√

[Doug and Gabi: The check marks should be in the *last two* boxes]

Critiquing narrative texts calls for a slightly different set of questions from those used with argumentative texts. In a sense, any work of fiction is an argument for a certain view of the world, and that argument may be challenged. For example, in traditional stories from many cultures, males are usually portrayed as active heroes and females are depicted as passive "prizes" to be won by the males as rewards for their valor. Old people may be depicted as infirm and useless, and possibly sinister. Stereotypes like these deserve to be questioned.

Suitable for: Any narrative text.

Time needed: A discussion can be conducted in a class period, but critical discussions of this kind will gain power if students have repeated practice with them.

Activity: Students should be introduced to the dynamics of "reading against the grain" of fiction through one or more focused lessons. Then they can be asked to address questions like the following to works of fiction:

- *Who "won" in this story? What did he or she do to win? Who lost? Why did he or she lose? What lesson do we draw from this?*
- *With whom does the author of this work want us to identify? Whom do you think the author wants us to emulate? What is it about the way characters are portrayed that leads you to those conclusions?*
- *Suppose this character had been of a different sex: Would events have played out the same, or differently? Suppose she or he had come from a different social class; or a different age group. Would things have been the same or different? How do the answers to these questions square with our contemporary views of male and female, rich and poor, young an old, people from this ethnic group versus that ethnic group?*
- *What things about our lives or our culture or our society does this work set out to defend? What things does this work set out to challenge? What things does it seem to take for granted?*
- *What alternative readings can you suggest for this story?*
- *Who is the intended audience for this story? What sort of reader could accept the premises of this story unproblematically?*

[Sources: After Luke and Freebody, 2000, and Temple, 2001.

For Allan Luke, "Four Resources Model of Literacy" at

http://www.trinity.wa.edu.au/plduffyrc/teaching/4resource.htm.

For Charles Temple, *Critical Thinking Across the Curriculum: RWCT in Higher Education*. New York: Open Society Institute, 2001.]

PLANNING FOR INSTRUCTION

When teachers attend workshops where they see new methods for active learning demonstrated, they often wonder how they can work these methods into their short class periods. We will attempt to answer that question here. We recognize, however, that in different places teachers use different lesson plans, and sometimes the form is firmly dictated by local policies. If that is the case, consider the following as a guide to thinking through a lesson, rather than a prescription for a formal lesson plan.

PLANNING AN INDIVIDUAL LESSON.

Teachers report that planning lessons that invite active learning takes more care than planning traditional lessons. That is because the teacher is not simply writing down pages of a book to be covered or a lecture to be delivered. Instead, the teacher is choreographing the activity of many students at once. And this means thinking through what the lesson is meant to achieve and what students must do to gain the most from it.

> *When I teach for active learning and critical thinking, it is true that I spend more time planning my lessons, because I now think of ways for students to "mine" their own knowledge, instead of thinking of students only as places to "deposit" more knowledge. As a result, the students are taking more risks in learning and communicating, and they are assuming more responsibility for learning in the classroom.* Secondary school teacher, Kyrgyzstan.

The planning procedure that is laid out below is deliberately elaborated to show what a teacher thinks about at each phase of a lesson: before, during, and after. With practice, much of this will become second nature, and the plans will not need to be thought through in such detail.

Preliminary concerns:

What is the topic or question? Lesson planning usually begins with the topic. It is preferable to state the topic in the form of a question, because questions raise curiosity and encourage inquiry. For example, instead of setting as the topic "The Amazon River," we might instead frame the study around the question "How has the Amazon River affected the lives of people who live along it?" The students will study the same content either way, but in the latter case they will be invited from the very beginning to look for answers.

Why is this lesson worthwhile? It is a good idea to ask why the lesson is valuable: how the lesson in itself helps the students, or how it functions as an important step in the sequence of understandings, or as an opportunity to practice thinking and communication skills.

What are the objectives? That is, what do you expect students to understand and be able to do by the end of the lesson? Objectives guide your teaching—but only if they are detailed, only if they describe observable behaviors so clearly that you could tell if the student had or had not achieved the objective. Having objectives for understandings and abilities means that the focus should not just be on what is learned but on what the students can do with the learning: what kind of thinking, interacting, and communicating they do. Objectives should address not only the content students should learn, but also the nature of their learning, and the strategies of thinking, investigating, and communicating

they will learn to use. For example, an objective for a lesson might be, "Students will learn the geography of the Amazon River and its resources." But a better objective would be, "Students will be able to contrast the effects of the Amazon River on the lives of the peoples who live along different stretches of it."

Activities:

Anticipation activities: What will you do at the beginning of the lesson to remind the students of what they already know, or give them preliminary information, or lead them to ask questions or set purposes for learning? These include activities like **brainstorming, free writes, think/pair/share,** or **semantic maps.**

Building Knowledge Activities: What will you do to help students encounter the material, especially in such a way that they are actively inquiring, exploring, and discovering? Activities for this phase include **text coding, reciprocal teaching,** and **paired reading.**

Consolidation Activities. What will you do to help students to think back over what they have learned, and think of its implication? How can they be led to apply it, interpret it, debate it? Activities for the consolidation phase include **shared inquiry**, the **discussion web**, and the **jigsaw**.

Extension Activities. What will students do after the lesson to practice new skills, apply new ideas, and otherwise to extend their learning?

Management Concerns:

Resources: What materials or space will you need?

Timing. With student-centered activities, it can be a challenge to fit all of the activities into a limited amount of time. It helps to write down the amount of time you want to allow for each part of the lesson, so you can speed up or slow down as necessary. It also helps to plan a lesson over more than one instructional period. A lesson might begin with the anticipation activity during the last ten minutes of one class period. Then the students

can carry out the "building knowledge" activity outside of class, by reading or wring something on their own, interviewing someone in the community, or otherwise collecting data. The **consolidation activity** can take place at the beginning of the next class period.

Grouping. Perhaps you have 30 nine year olds in your class. Or you have 100 seven year olds. Or you have 10 eight year olds, 12 nine year olds, and 11 ten year olds. In each case, you should decide how you will work with the students:

- As a whole group?
- As individuals?
- Working with a small group while individuals work on their own, independently or is small groups?
- In small cooperative groups?
- Sharing students with another teacher?
- Having parent volunteers or older students helping out as tutors or small group proctors?

Assessment. How you assess the students depends upon what the objectives for the lesson are. Objectives relating to the mastery of content will require that students demonstrate that they learned the content. Objectives related to the practice of a skill will require that you observe that practice. Assessment is treated at length in a later section.

Here is a sample lesson plan, written to the format just described.

Sample Lesson Plan

PRELIMINARY CONCERNS:	
What is the topic or question? *What question and information should students investigate during this lesson?*	What are the effects of the Amazon River on people who live along different parts of it?

Why does it matter? *Why is this knowledge worth having? What opportunities for thinking and communicating does this lesson afford?*	The Amazon River is a major river, worth knowing about in its own right. The class will be studying the history of Brazil, and the river is central to understanding that. The lesson allows students to conceptualize relationships between geography and human activities.
What are the objectives? *What knowledge should the students gain? What should they be able to do with that knowledge? What strategies for thinking, investigating, and communicating will they learn?*	**Content objective:** Students will be able to explain the effects of the Amazon River on the lives of the peoples who live along different stretches of it. **Process objective:** Students will be able to read a text to find information about the Amazon River. Students will be able to present information graphically. Students will work cooperatively and share responsibility for a task.
ACTIVITIES:	
Anticipation. *What will you do at the beginning of the lesson to remind the students of what they already know, or give them needed information, or lead them to ask questions or set purposes for learning?*	**Advance Organizer:** Teacher will tell two short stories to orient students to the topic of the Amazon River. **K-W-L:** Teacher will ask students what they know and what they want to know about life along the Amazon River.
Building Knowledge. What will you do to help students encounter the material, especially in such a way that they are actively inquiring, exploring, and discovering?	**Paired Reading/Paired Summarizing.** **Reading With Text Coding.** Students will read a monograph about the Amazon River and code information about: 1) Geography of the river 2) History of settlements

	3) Economic activity
Consolidation Activities. What will you do to help students to think back over what they have learned, and think of its implication? How can they be led to apply it, interpret it, debate it?	**Presentation with Graphic Organizers**: Students will display their learning about the river using graphic means. Students will critique each other's presentations using a rubric (see below).
Extension Activities. What will students do after the lesson to practice new skills, apply new ideas, and otherwise to extend their learning?	Students will prepare promotional brochures for chosen sections of the river.
MANAGEMENT CONCERNS:	
Timing. How will time be allocated to each part of the lesson?	The lesson will be conducted over three class periods: 1st day: Advance Organizer. 2nd day: Reading and coding, and preparing displays. 3rd day: Presenting displays
Resources: What materials or space will you need?	Students will need copies of the monograph: "The Story of the Amazon," one for each pair. They will need big sheets of paper, and charcoal for writing. They can work on top of their desks to create the displays.
Grouping. In what groups will students work? Individuals? Pairs? Home groups and expert groups? Whole class?	Pairs will read. They will join other pairs to pool their information and make the display. In groups of four, students
Assessment. How will the students learning of the content and of the thinking and communicating	Students will be evaluated by means of a paper and pencil test about the Amazon River. They will also use these rubrics (They will be shared and

strategies be assessed?	discussed in advance): a) Rubrics for the graphic presentation. (One is for self-assessment, and the other for assessing one other group's project). b) Rubric for self-assessment of each student's participation in the group.

THEMATIC UNITS OF INSTRUCTION

A government agency is charged with protecting the environment. A team of experts in that agency is asked to write a law to children from the effects of lead poisoning. This cannot be done by a single person. A good solution will draw on many kinds of expert knowledge:

- A physician can explain the harm done by different amounts of lead that people take into their bodies, but she can't tell you all the ways people are exposed to lead originally.
- An environmental scientist can identify sources of lead in the environment, but he cannot say how products can be made differently to eliminate lead pollution.
- An engineer can tell us ways to substitute safer ingredients for lead in many products, but she cannot tell if the companies that produce those products could make those substitutions without losing money.
- An economist can calculate how much it will cost to take lead out of the products that cause lead pollution, but he would not know how to write a law acceptable to everyone.
- A political scientist can suggest ways to write the law that will satisfy most of the people who are affected by it, but she will rely on all of the others for the information she needs.

In fact, it will take all of these people—a physician, an environmental scientist, an industrial engineer, an economist, and a political scientist—working together for many months to write a bill that will protect children from lead pollution.

Inquiry in the real world is often like that: People divide a problem into its parts, find information from different disciplines, and work together to find a solution. As teachers prepare students for productive citizenship in the real world, many make use of thematic units of instruction.

Thematic units are usually extended lessons or a series of lessons that approach a topic from different viewpoints. They usually reflect the framework of more than one discipline. Thematic units go beyond lectures and books, and they employ a rich variety of learning resources. They may have students researching different aspects of the topic at the same time, and they almost certainly involve students in making choices of what they will study, in deciding how they will pursue that study, and in carrying out the study.

The thematic unit consists of an interdisciplinary framework for organizing the work of several days or weeks as a set of related and sequenced lessons. The components of a thematic unit usually include:

- Goals and objectives – What are the desired outcomes?
- Activities – What activities and strategies will lead to success in learning?
- Instructional materials and resources – What is needed to implement the unit?
- Assessment – How will the teacher assess the effectiveness of the unit?

The thematic unit provides an opportunity for the teacher who teaches all subjects to integrate reading and writing across the curriculum. The unit can incorporate information from social science, science, literature, mathematics, and other subject areas. Teachers can augment the text in the classroom and library with text on the theme from the Internet, from magazines, and from newspapers. Other sources of information include observations, experimentation, field trips, and other direct experiences both in and out of the classroom.

In a departmentalized secondary school, teachers of different subjects may team together to plan and present a thematic unit. A social studies teacher gives lessons on content related to the theme. A literature teacher gives lessons from novels that reflect the theme, and so on. Students can sometimes be involved in planning thematic units with guidance and direction from a teacher or from several teachers in different disciplines.

Thematic units of study offer several advantages to students.

- They may follow the course of the students' and teacher's curiosity across disciplinary boundaries. Like real-life inquiries, they demonstrate the integrated nature of knowledge and make natural connections to what students know and what they want to know.
- They actively engage students as learners in many levels of activity:
    - Framing questions
    - Organizing inquiry
    - Finding resources
    - Collecting information
    - Organizing their findings
    - Presenting and teaching their findings to others
- They allow students to go beyond the limited perspectives of textbooks, and use the fullest available range of resources available on a topic.
- They offer opportunities for students to work cooperatively on meaningful tasks.
- Teachers can provide reading materials on different levels to meet the needs of students with different abilities.
- Capable students and less capable students can work together effectively.

Thematic units also pose several challenges to the teacher and the students alike.

- Thematic units require careful planning. The teacher must coordinate the activities of several groups of students working together for many days or even weeks.
- They require that the teacher locate in advance the resources needed by the students.
- They require that the teacher pay attention to the skills students will need. The teacher may need to conduct "Just in Time" lessons on the skills the students will need in the skills of research, data processing, writing, and presentation that the students will need to employ, including some or all of the following:
    - Using a library to find resources
    - Etiquette and safety issues when arranging and carrying out an interview
    - Note taking and transcription

    - What to do when sources disagree
    - Conducting a survey
    - Using graphs for tabulating and reporting data from surveys
    - Writing outlines and first drafts of reports
    - Revising reports to make them informative and clear
    - Editing reports for correctness
    - Making oral presentations to share outcomes
- They require that the teacher be ready to assess learning in many different ways; much of the learning will be richer that what can be captured in a paper and pencil test.

STEPS IN DEVELOPING A THEMATIC UNIT

Teachers often plan their own thematic units. A more advanced form of planning involves students at the earliest stages. Below is an example of the steps for this process.

- **The topic for the unit is decided on.**
    - The teacher identifies a range of possible topics for a unit before bringing the idea to the students. A good topic may come from the curriculum, students' interests or a problem the class is having, or a story in the news.
    - Before suggesting the topic to the class the teacher should ensure that there are sufficient resources to support several strands of inquiry suggested by a topic.
- **The topic is introduced.**
    - The teacher may tell a story or read an essay and ask students what they already know about the topic and what they want to know in a KWL mode.
    - The teacher may make some observations and ask a question
- **The students brainstorm subtopics.**

- The teacher asks the students to list subtopics of a large topic, or questions that invite students to investigate aspects of the topic. The class may together make a cluster of subtopics or questions related to the main topic.
- The teacher adds questions of his or her own to ensure that key issues in a topic will be covered and also that the questions will lead students to resources that are available.
- The teacher raises questions from different disciplinary viewpoints. In order to prepare these questions, the teacher may consider the following: How has this topic been treated in the arts: in literature, drama, dance, and music? How do science and mathematics help us understand this topic? How has the topic been treated in philosophy? In history? What national significance does the topic have now? How does it affect people in this community right now? How does it affect the students in this class? Other teachers and classes may have contributions to make here.
- The teacher asks the students to narrow the list of subtopics down to five or six interesting ones, combining some subtopics into new ones if necessary.

- **The teacher and the students identify resources for learning more about each subtopic**.
  - The teacher tells the students about possible sources of information about the subtopics, and gives examples: the newspaper; community experts; works of fiction; surveys; other teachers; the Internet.
- **Committees are formed to plan the study of their subtopics.**

- Students assign themselves or are assigned to groups to research each subtopic. (Teachers use their judgment to form groups that will work well together.)
- Group members prepare a written proposal of the work they plan to do. The teacher posts questions on the wall to guide this step:
  - What questions will you answer in your report?
  - What resources will you use (books, interviews, surveys)?
  - What tasks will each person do?
  - What is your schedule for completing your work (proposal submitted, research completed, first draft of report, presentation of the report)?
  - What help will you need from the teacher or from others?
  - How will you ensure that everyone participates?
  - Each proposal is presented to the teacher, who reviews it and makes suggestions for improvements.

- **The teacher conducts "Just in Time" lessons on the skills the students will need.**
  - The teacher anticipates the skills of research, data processing, writing, and presentation that the students will need to employ, and also stays alert to other skills that become necessary along the way.
  - The teacher makes short, well-planned lessons to teach each skill. Ideas for such lessons can include some of the following:

- They require that the teacher pay attention to the skills students will need. The teacher may need to conduct "Just in Time" lessons on the skills the students will need in the skills of research, data processing, writing, and presentation that the students will need to employ, including some or all of the following:

- Using a library to find resources
- Etiquette and safety issues when arranging and carrying out an interview
- Note taking and transcription
- What to do when sources disagree
- Conducting a survey
- Using graphs for tabulating and reporting data from surveys
- Writing outlines and first drafts of reports
- Revising reports to make them informative and clear
- Editing reports for correctness
- Making oral presentations to share outcomes

In a typical lesson, the teacher demonstrates and perhaps even role-plays the skill in question, and immediately asks the students to practice the skill themselves, if possible.

- **The students carry out their research working in their groups.**
  - Time is set aside in class or outside of school for the students to plan together and do their work.
  - The teacher may assign cooperative learning roles within the groups: questioner, checker, timekeeper, active listener, and summarizer.
  - The teacher meets frequently with each group to ensure that each person has a clear role and direction, that the work is going ahead on schedule, and that obstacles are being overcome.
  - The teacher arranges a time for each group to make a preliminary presentation of their findings. The teacher may suggest further research at this stage.
  - Representatives from each group may meet in a plenary committee with the teacher in attendance, to make sure that the reports will fit together to give adequate coverage of the whole topic.

- **The groups make their presentations.**
    - The presentations may be made in many media: oral reports, a magazine or class book, a poster discussion (each group displays a poster and uses it as a basis for their talk about their topic), a radio show (real or fictional), or a bill to be introduced in parliament (fictional).
    - The presentations may be made to different audiences. They may first present their findings to one another, but they also may share them with other classes in the school, or with adult citizens' groups. They may write them in book form and put the book in the school library. They may send them to a newspaper.
- **The class decides on follow-up actions.**

The students follow the presentations with a discussion about what they should do next.

- There are probably thank-you letters to write, and there may be other actions they can take. For example, if the topic was conflict resolution, how can the class or the whole school incorporate the lessons they learned into their daily conduct? If the topic was waves, how can they send help to the victims of a typhoon they studied?
- They may decide what related topic they want to study. A study of waves might lead to a study of the sea. A study of conflict resolution may lead to a study of ethnic group relations.

- **The students' learning is evaluated.**

Evaluation of a thematic unit usually focuses on three aspects:

- The content the students learned
- The skills and processes they used
- Whether or not the lesson expanded students' understanding of the topic under consideration

Assessment of the Students

In classes that promote active learning and critical thinking, teachers do assess students' mastery of the content of the curriculum, and they may do this by means of traditional paper and pencil tests or oral recitations. But they also look at two more things. They assess students' learning processes. That is, they observe carefully to see how well students can carry out the learning activities they have been taught, and to find ways to improve their learning. They also assess the quality of students' thinking. At the same time, teachers take care to assess in such a way that they teach students how to perform. We will explain what we mean by this below.

Assessing students' learning processes. In assessing students' learning processes, the device used most often is a **rubric**. A rubric is a set of criteria that constitute a good job of carrying out an activity. A rubric allows the teacher or the student to assess the student's performance on each of the criteria—and at the same time, they remind the student of the steps to doing a good job. Below is a sample rubric for carrying out one learning activity: The Directed Reading-Thinking Activity.

RUBRIC FOR A DIRECTED READING-THINKING ACTIVITY

	Never	**Sometimes**	**Most of the Time**
Once I know the genre or the type of the story (folk tale, tall tale, realistic fiction, or fantasy), I can use it to narrow down my predictions			
I look for the main character and the problem in the			

story, and try to predict the solution to the problem from what is said about them			
I pay attention to details in the story that may be important and use them to guide predictions			
I read carefully to see if my predictions are coming true or not			
I can find the part of the text that confirms or disconfirms my prediction			
After reading, I review my predictions, and try to see what details guided the correct predictions.			

Note that a rubric such as this should be thoroughly discussed with the students, and should be used often so they will come to know these criteria very well. Once students have internalized the criteria, the rubric may be self-administered by the students.

Assessing the Quality of Students' Thinking.

Using the principle, "assessments that teach," requires that teachers think through what kinds of thinking they want their students to be able to carry out. For example, the teacher who designed the rubric shown below had asked the students to write an essay that answered a question about a short story they had read. Notice that the teacher was not expecting the students to arrive at a particular answer, but rather to show qualities of thinking and communicating.

[Doug and Gabi—Ignore the weird horizontal lines that cropped up in this chart! If I ever get my hands on Bill Gates! Grrr!]

Marking Guide for an Essay on "The Secret Sharer" (J. Conrad)

The assignment asks that you respond to this question: *The captain of the ship in this story is a rigid man. How does his experience with the castaway he hides in his cabin transform him?*

In order to write a good response to this question, you must do these things:

1. Write a statement that clearly answers the question;

2. Furnish convincing arguments that draw on details from the text in order to support your answer;

3. Write an essay that is sufficiently clear that the reader can easily follow your presentation.

Criterion 1: The essay has a thesis that is expressed by the end of the first paragraph that clearly sets out your answer to the question;

There is no thesis, or
The thesis is not clearly stated. The thesis is clear.

2 4 6 8 10

Criterion 2: The thesis is supported by a convincing argument that draws on details from the text.

The argument is not convincing, or it lacks details from the text — Convincing argument and significant details

2 4 6 8 10

Criterion 3: The work is clear and correct

Paragraphs and transitions:	2	4	6	8	10
Clear sentences:	2	4	6	8	10
Grammatical Correctness:	2	4	6	8	10
Spelling and Punctuation:	2	4	6	8	10

(After Thomas Bean (1998), *Engaging Ideas.* San Francisco: Jossey Bass).

A rubric like this one will be given to students before they begin writing the essay, so that the criteria will guide them as they plan and write the work.

Developing Rubrics.

In order to develop rubrics for assessing students' work, the teacher first decides on the criteria that describe a good job of the task. The criteria do not state simply that the students should get the "right answer" to the question, but rather set out the kind of reasoning and communicating that the student should do.

The criteria should be clearly and thoroughly explained to the students. It may help to show students examples of some works that do a good job and some that do a poor job of meeting the criteria.