

**Enhancing Learning
Through
Reading and Writing Strategies
in the Content Areas
(Revised)**

Session Focus

To help sixth- through twelfth-grade teachers “open the door” to content-area learning through reading and writing

As content-area teachers, your “... responsibility is twofold: to teach skills unique to the subject matter and to teach students how to use reading and writing to learn subject matter content”

–Gunning, 2003, p. 3

The Importance of Reading and Writing

- **Sixty percent of U.S. adolescents can comprehend specific factual information, but few have gone beyond the basics to advanced reading and writing**
- **Fewer than five percent of the students assessed could extend or elaborate the meanings of material they read**
- **Only six percent of twelfth graders can read at advanced levels**

Why Is Content Area Reading and Writing Important?

Because students who can read and write:

- **Are better able to learn**
- **May learn more content**
- **Are on their way to becoming independent learners**

Why *Do* Many Secondary Students Struggle in the Content Areas?

- **Difficulty of textbooks and other content-related materials that students are given to read**
- **Lack of familiarity with expository text structures**

Expository or informational texts use facts and details to inform the reader about a topic

Narrative and Expository Texts



It is estimated that after students graduate from high school, ninety percent of their reading is to acquire information in expository texts and ten percent is for pleasure

Narrative text:

- **tells a story**
- **is more familiar to students than the more complicated structures found in expository text**

Different Types of Expository Text Structures

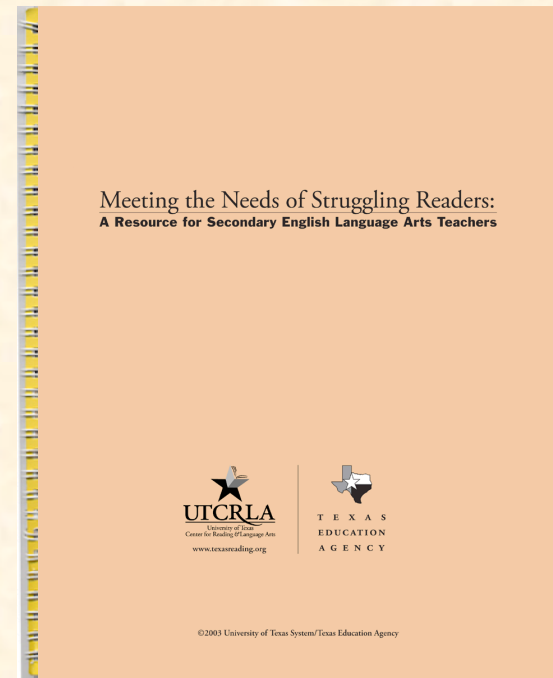
Teaching students about different types of text structures can help them better read and understand content-area texts more easily

Expository text structures include:

- **Cause and effect**
- **Concept/definition**
- **Problem/solution**
- **Compare/contrast**
- **Position statement/support**
- **Goal/action/outcome**

Meeting the Needs of Secondary Struggling Readers

Because of the nature of content-area textbooks, we must consider students who struggle with basic reading skills, as well as with the ability to read critically to analyze, evaluate, and synthesize information

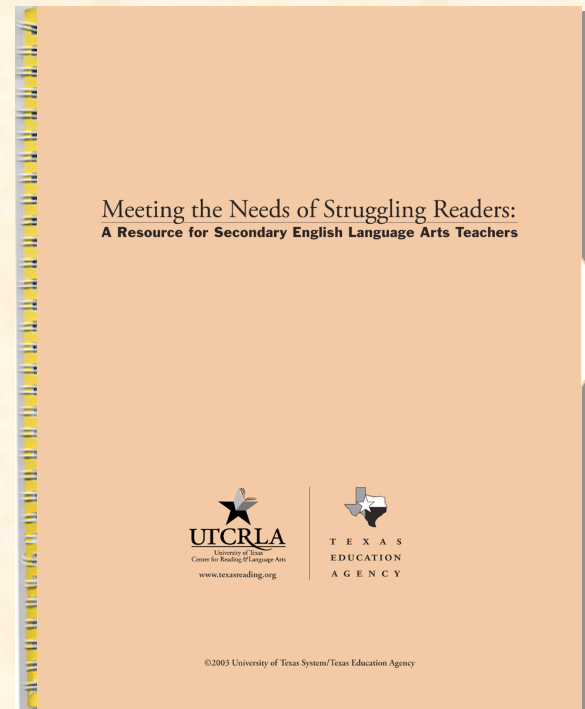


***Meeting the Needs of Struggling Readers:
A Resource for Secondary English Language Arts Teachers***

Effective Instruction Activity

Meeting the Needs of Struggling Readers

- **Find Handout 5**
- **Write a short explanation in ten words or less for the assigned component(s)**



What Does Research Tell Us?

The National Reading Panel report identified studies that have shown that teaching students to use comprehension strategies before, during, and after reading can improve their understanding of texts

Some of the research-based strategies include:

- Monitoring comprehension**
- Using graphic organizers**
- Answering and generating questions**
- Recognizing story structure**
- Summarizing**

How Do Students Learn to Effectively Use Strategies?

Teachers:

- **Demonstrate how to use a strategy**
- **Explain when and why to use it**
- **Show students how to use a strategy flexibly and selectively**
- **Show students what to do if they have difficulty using a strategy**

Metacognition

Metacognition—an awareness of mental functions, such as remembering, focusing attention, and processing information, or “thinking about thinking”

Metacognitive strategies include:

- Previewing and surveying text *before* reading
- Monitoring comprehension *during* reading
- Synthesizing, summarizing, and analyzing *after* reading

Organizational Framework

BEFORE

DURING

AFTER

READING

When reading and writing are combined, students are given powerful tools to help them learn and assimilate new information

Graphic Organizers

Help:

- **Activate students' prior knowledge**
- **Organize information as students read and write**
- **Guide students as they reflect on and evaluate what they have read**

K-W-L

Students use K-W-L graphic organizers to record:

- What they **K**now about a topic
- What they **W**ant to learn about a topic
- What they have **L**earned about a topic

What I K now	What I W ant to Know	What I L earned

Pre-Reading Strategies

Include:

- **Preview, Brainstorm, and Predict (PBP)**
- **Anticipation guides**
- **Admit-exit strategy (quick writes)**
- **Vocabulary development**

Pre-Reading: Preview, Brainstorm, Predict (PBP)

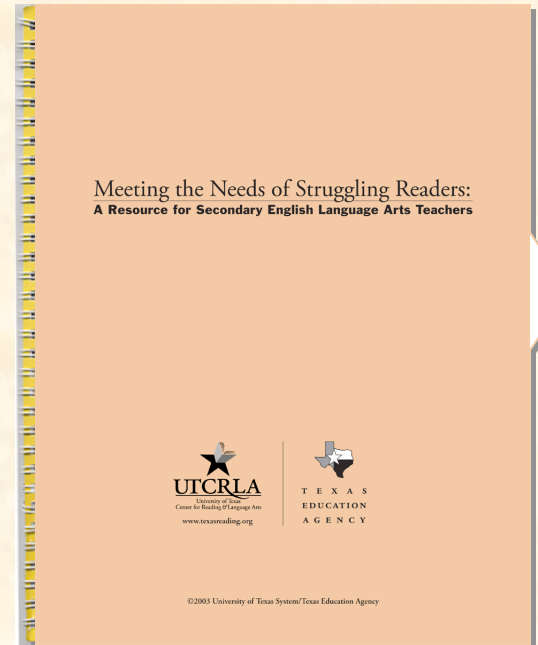
Teachers:

- **Model the strategy and complete the PBP chart**
- **Have students work in pairs to complete the chart as they finish reading the chapter or selection; provide support as needed**
- **Encourage students to use the strategy as they read independently**


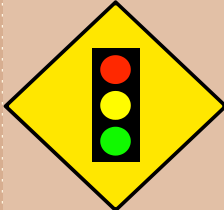
Pre-Reading: Anticipation Guides



Anticipation guides can be used to:

- **Activate prior knowledge**
- **Challenge beliefs or perceptions**
- **Identify misconceptions**
- **Pique students' interest in reading**



Pre-Reading: Admit/Exit Strategy

A D M I T	S L I P		CLASS: _____ DATE: _____
			NAME: _____

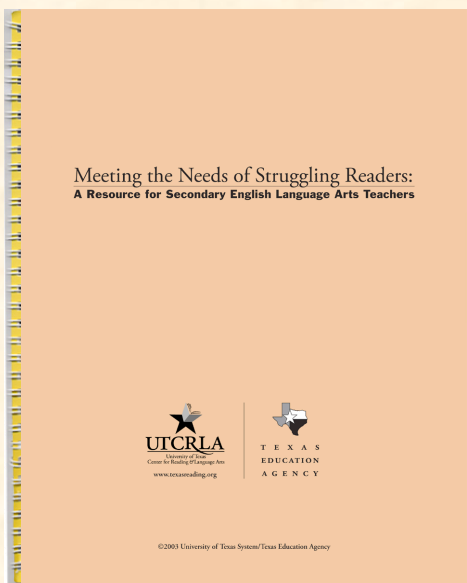
E X I T	S L I P		CLASS: _____ DATE: _____
			NAME: _____

Pre-Reading: Vocabulary Development

“Teaching words well entails helping students make connections between their prior knowledge and the vocabulary to be encountered in the text and providing them with multiple opportunities to clarify and extend their knowledge of words and concepts during the course of study”

–Vacca & Vacca, 2002, p. 162

***Meeting the
Needs of
Struggling
Readers***



What I K now	What I W ant to Know	What I L earned

K–W–L Chart

During-Reading Strategies

Include:

- **Think-alouds**
- **Say Something paired reading strategy**
- **Identifying main ideas**

During Reading: Think-Alouds

Include:

- **Using background or prior knowledge**
- **Using context clues**
- **Rereading**
- **Summarizing**
- **Paraphrasing**
- **Predicting and confirming**
- **Noting text structure**
- **Visualizing or picturing the text**
- **Making connections**



During Reading: Say Something Paired Reading

- **Students take turns reading paragraphs in a quiet voice**
- **Readers stop at the end of each paragraph and say something about what they have read**
- **They can ask a question, make a comment, restate or retell what has happened, summarize, or make a connection**

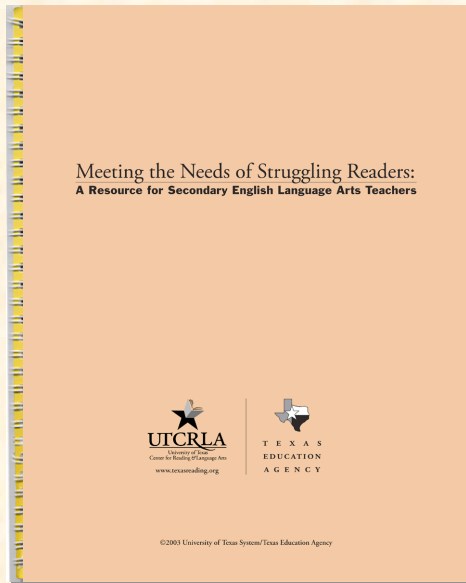
During Reading: Identifying Main Ideas

Meeting the Needs of Struggling Readers

“Finding Main Ideas” pp. 59-62

“Main Idea Record” pp. 65-69

*Meeting the
Needs of
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What I K now	What I W ant to Know	What I L earned

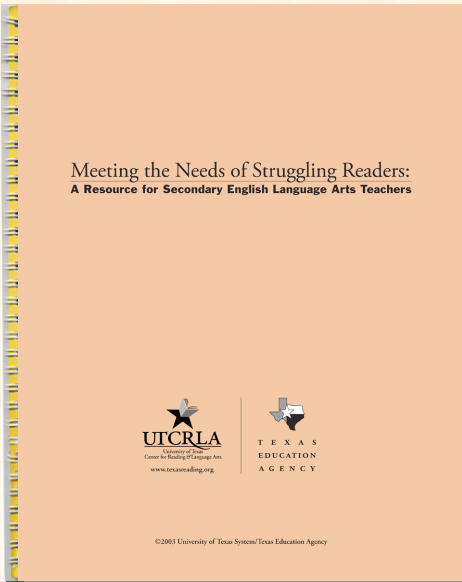
K-W-L Chart

After-Reading Strategies

Include:

- **Question-answer relationships**
- **Learning logs and journals**
- **Summarizing**
- **Cued retelling**
- **Making generalizations and drawing conclusions**

After Reading: Question-Answer Relationships



A range of questions that move from literal to inferential or higher-order thinking responses

After Reading: Learning Logs and Journals

- **Encourage students to extend their thinking beyond literal and factual responses**
- **Promote sharing opinions, drawing conclusions, and conducting evaluations**

Dialectic journals:

double-entry journal writing

After Reading: Summarizing

“Somebody Wanted But So”—focuses students’ attention on the important information to include in a summary

- **Somebody** is the who or the most important person or thing
- **Wanted** refers to what that somebody wanted to do or accomplish
- **But** signals what happened to cause a problem to thwart the outcome
- **So** reminds students to include how the problem was resolved

After Reading: Cued Retelling

Retelling is another after-reading strategy that can improve comprehension, as well as serve as a means for monitoring students' understanding of content-area text

After Reading: Making Generalizations and Drawing Conclusions



“Tasks need to be set up that model and give students practice in activities that involve making connections between related pieces of information and identifying implications and potential differences and contradictions Restricting the intellectual complexity of tasks . . . [especially for struggling readers] results in a progressive lowering of scores on tests of academic aptitude”

—Nuthall, 1999, p. 337 as cited in
Gunning, 2003, p. 435

What I K now	What I W ant to Know	What I L earned

K–W–L Chart

Reading and Writing Strategies in the Content Areas

“As teachers, it is important that we help children engage actively in reading and then apply strategies to learning new material so it will stay with them over the long term. Our instruction is only partially useful if what we teach is not retained By being consciously aware of what we do in the classroom, we can significantly enhance the long-term effects of our teaching”

—Blachowicz & Ogle, 2001, p. 227

