



4th Grade

General Strategies

- Select, create and use graphic organizers to interpret textual information
- Answer literal, inferential and evaluative questions to demonstrate comprehension of grade-appropriate printed texts, electronic and visual media

What Students Need to Know:

graphic organizers

questions

- literal
- inferential
- evaluative

textual information

- print
- electronic
- visual media

What Students Need to be Able to Do:

- Demonstrate (comprehension of various texts)
 - Select (graphic organizers)
 - Create (graphic organizers)
 - Use (graphic organizers)
 - Answer (questions)
 - literal
 - inferential
 - evaluative

Important Vocabulary

evaluative question—A question that asks the responder to make a judgment

graphic organizer—A method of organization of information which incorporates diagrams or other pictorial devices

inferential question—A question that asks a responder to draw a conclusion

General Strategies

The indicators about graphic organizers and answering questions appear in the middle of the power standards web because these are ways that students have of demonstrating their comprehension of a text and they are applicable to all of the other indicators. It should never be the goal of instruction to teach students to complete a graphic organizer. Graphic organizers are simply tools that can be used to help students understand what they are reading. If that purpose is not being achieved, then the graphic organizer should not be used. The ultimate goal would be that students are able to understand a selection without needing to complete a graphic organizer.

Similarly, instruction should not focus on answering questions. It's through answering questions that students are able to demonstrate their level of understanding of the other indicators. Some instruction should occur to help students learn to write answers to questions, especially in preparation for short answer and extended response items found on achievement tests. It is also important that students understand the demands of certain types of questions. The process for answering a literal question is very different from that needed to answer an inferential question. The QAR strategy will be helpful in teaching students these differences.

Although any type of graphic organizer might appear on a test, there are several that commonly occur. These include the following:

- webs
- Venn diagrams
- T-charts
- timelines

Explanations and samples of each of these graphic organizers are contained in the strategies section.

Exposure to these four organizers repeatedly throughout the year should prepare students for whatever form they may take on the achievement test.

MINI-LESSONS FOR TEACHING GENERAL STRATEGIES

Strategies for answering open-ended questions

- Turn the question into a topic sentence. (Turn the question around)
- Use details from the story.
- Staying on topic.
- Answering all parts.

BIBLIOGRAPHY – GENERAL STRATEGIES

TEACHER RESOURCES FOR TEACHING READING

Resource for teaching reading comprehension, addresses ESL learner

www.literacymatters.org/links/website.htm

Excellent resource for primary teachers and for support with emergent readers

www.kinderkorner.com

Download a variety of graphic organizers for classroom use

www.Its.guilford.k12.nc.us/resrouce/teacher/ws_teach.htm

Resource for 3-6 teachers

www.theteacherscorner.net/reading/website

Reading specific genres

www.toread.com

Link for additional websites for teaching reading

www.waukeganschools.org/files/readingskills/readingwebsitesforteachers.htm

Reading strategies

www.kimskorner4teachertalk.com

Comprehension support in the classroom

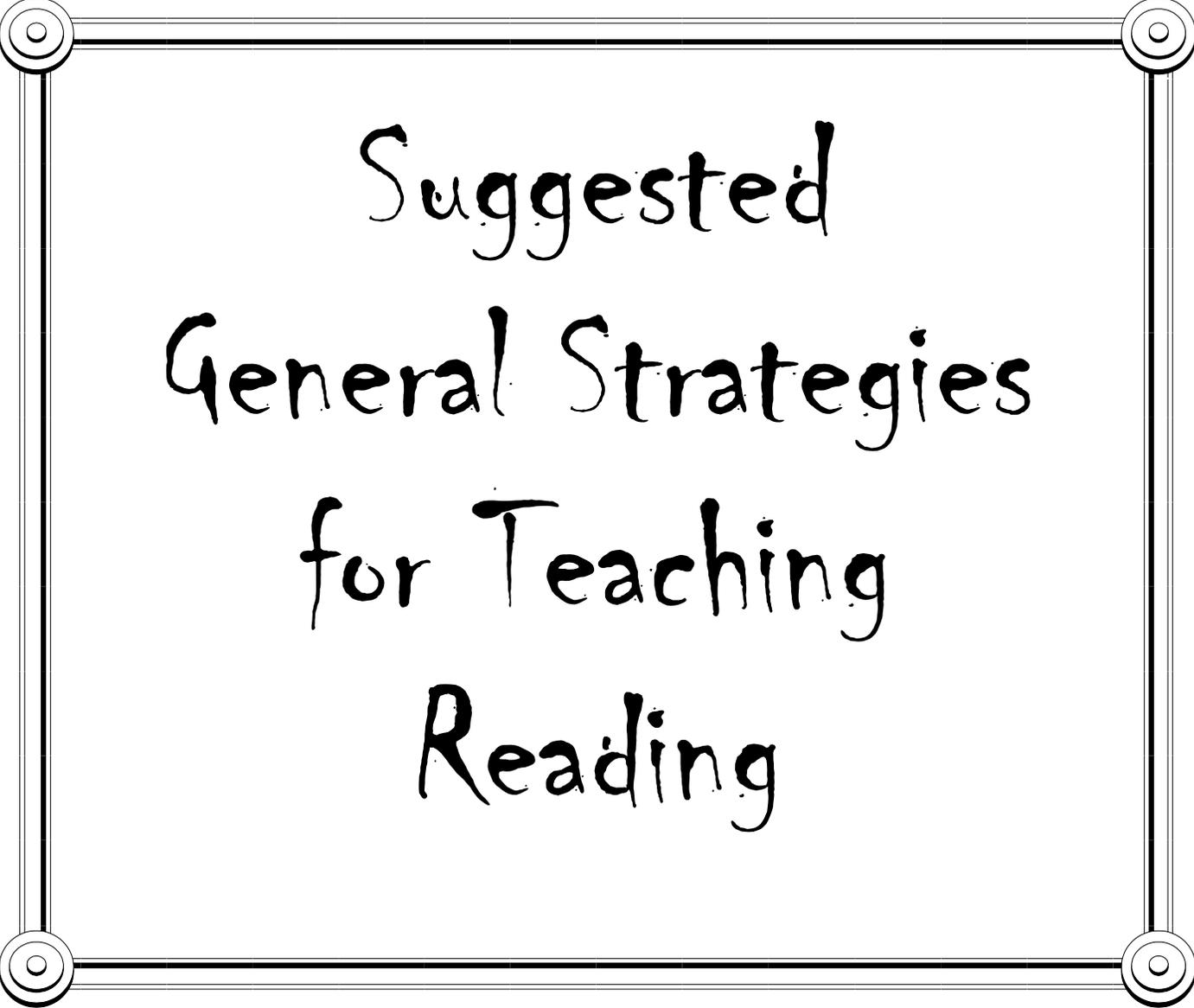
www.literacy.uconn.edu/compre.htm

International Reading Association website-good resource for all reading teachers

www.reading.org/resources/community/links_lit_tp.html

QUESTIONS FROM PAST TESTS

<p>Complete the timeline about Mae Jemison's life. Use information from the selection.</p> <p>1960 <u>Mae Jemison grows up in Chicago.</u></p> <p>1985 _____</p> <p>1987 _____</p> <p>1988 _____</p> <p>1991 _____</p>	<p>Why does Mr. Lee sweep the litter in front of his store?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Mrs. Polansky tells him the sidewalk is dirty. It is something he does every day. He is following Rachel's actions. He gets a warning letter from the city council.
<p>What are two benefits of solar energy? Use information from the selection in your answer. (2 points)</p>	<p>What does the speaker do while wearing the coat?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> falls asleep looks at stars puts tools away walks to school
<p>Under which subheading does the narrator explain what she expects will happen when she calls the puppy "Cabbage"?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The Hypothesis The Control Word The Data The Results 	<p>What are the data for the narrator's experiment?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> how many names and nicknames the puppy has how many times the puppy wags her tail how many times the narrator has to call the puppy how many times the narrator pets the puppy
<p>What made Mae Jemison wonder whether she had any chance of becoming an astronaut?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Mae had to study very hard. Space travel was very popular. There were no women astronauts. Mae had been born in Georgia. 	<p>Which detail from the selection supports the fact that it was difficult to be chosen for the astronaut program?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Fifteen people were chosen from the 2,000 who applied to the space program. NASA's training program was a year long. The astronauts had to study astronomy, mathematics and earth resources. The astronauts had to exercise to be strong.



Suggested
General Strategies
for Teaching
Reading

SAY SOMETHING

Conversation helps to deepen comprehension and moves students from an understanding of the text to an interpretation of text. The Say Something strategy can be used at all levels and can even begin with picture books. Children are simply asked to “say something” about the cover, and to move through the story constructing meaning. Teachers can help students new to this technique by modeling three types of response:

I notice . . .

I wonder why . . .

This reminds me of . . .

Each of these starters helps children build to the next level of interpretation, with the “I notice” setting the groundwork for the “I wonder why.” You might even take it a step further and encourage participants to “catch a spark.” When real discussions take place in the classroom, sparks fly and students begin making connections, building on each other’s interpretation and ideas. Such opportunities begin with “I really like what you said and it made me think of . . .” For example, when discussing *Hatchet* by Gary Paulsen, someone might say, “He needs to begin looking for food and deciding how he’s going to take care of himself.” A classmate might “catch a spark” from this statement and continue with “I really liked what you said about his need to think about how he’s going to survive, and it made me think of *My Side of the Mountain*.”

Once students have mastered the use of the three types of responses, you might try providing them with the attached cards which focus their thoughts on specific aspects of comprehension. These were developed by Kylene Beers and shared in her book *When Kids Can’t Read, What Teachers Can Do* published by Heinemann.

SAY SOMETHING

<p>Make a Prediction</p> <p>I predict that . . . I bet that . . . I think that . . . Since this happened (fill in detail), then I bet the next thing that is going to happen is . . . Reading this part makes me think that this (fill in detail) is about to happen . . . I wonder if . . .</p>	<p>Ask a Question</p> <p>Why did . . . What's this part about . . . How is this (fill in detail) like this (fill in detail) . . . What would happen if . . . Why . . . Who is . . . What does this section (fill in detail) mean . . . Do you think that . . . I don't get this part here . . .</p>
<p>Clarify Something</p> <p>Oh, I get it . . . Now I understand . . . This makes sense now . . . No, I think it means . . . I agree with you. This means . . . At first I thought (fill in detail), but now I think . . . This part is really saying . . .</p>	<p>Make a Comment</p> <p>This is good because . . . This is hard because . . . This is confusing because . . . I like the part where . . . I don't like this part because . . . My favorite part so far is . . . I think that . . .</p>
<p>Make a Connection</p> <p>This reminds me of . . . This part is like . . . This character (fill in name) is like (fill in name) because . . . This is similar to . . . The differences are . . . I also (name something in the text that has also happened to you) . . . I never (name something in the text that has never happened to you) . . . This character makes me think of . . . This setting reminds me of . . .</p>	

QAR **(QUESTION-ANSWER-RELATIONSHIP)**

QAR (Question-Answer-Relationship) is a strategy to help students relate prior knowledge and text information. This strategy helps students become aware of the relationship between questions and answers, helps them know different types and levels of questions, and helps them analyze, comprehend and respond to text concepts.

Start by discussing the two main categories and four different kinds of questions students may encounter.

In the Book

Right There – The answers are RIGHT THERE in the text in one or two continuous sentences.

Think and Search – The answers are found by THINKING and SEARCHING from different parts of the text.

In my Head

Author and You – Students use their own knowledge AND text information to answer

a question

On My Own – The answer is not in the text. Students use their own knowledge and experience to answer questions.

The teacher first models using the following procedure:

1. Read a selection.
2. Ask a question.
3. Consider and state the answer.
4. State the QAR – right there, think & search, author & you, or on my own.
5. Explain the QAR choice.

Gradually relinquish these responsibilities to the students, starting with #5 and going backward. Eventually have students write their own questions for passages, varying the types.

When students understand the process needed to answer a question, they will be better able to answer it correctly.

As a follow-up, have students read a selection and write a number of questions about the text. (This could be done for homework.) Students take turns in class reading their questions. Other students answer the questions and identify the QAR. If a student is successful, he reads one of his questions, calling on another student to answer it and identify the type. Continue with this process until all students have had an opportunity to share at least one question.

SAMPLE QAR QUESTIONS

Based on the passage in the box at the right, it's possible to write all types of questions. Samples are listed below:

Right There

According to the speaker in the poem, what does Dad take him when he's sick?

Think and Search

Where do the crumbs in the speaker's bed come from?

Author and Me

The next time the speaker is sick, do you think he will want his father to bring him toast in bed? Why or why not?

On My Own

Should people eat in bed? Why or why not?

Crumbs in Bed!

Jeff Moss

Crumbs in bed!
Crumbs in bed!
Whenever I'm sick, I get
Crumbs in bed!

Dad's so nice
When he brings me toast
But when I'm done
What I hate most

Is
Crumbs in bed!
Crumbs in bed!
Feels so yucky with
Crumbs in bed!
They sneak in your pjs
And itch your head!
Next time I'll have
Soup instead
'Cause boy do I hate
Crumbs in bed!

THINK ALOUD

“Think-alouds” help students understand the kind of thinking required by a specific task. The teacher models her thinking process by verbalizing her thoughts as she reads, processes information, or performs some learning task. Students see how the teacher attempts to construct meaning for unfamiliar vocabulary, engages in dialogue with the author, or recognizes when she isn’t comprehending and selects a fix-up strategy that addresses a problem she is having. Ineffective readers especially benefit from observing what skilled readers think about while reading.

How to use it:

1. Explain that reading is a complex process that involves thinking and sense-making; the skilled reader’s mind is alive with questions she asks herself in order to understand what she reads.
2. Select a passage to read aloud that contains points that students might find difficult, unknown vocabulary terms, or ambiguous wording. Develop questions you can ask yourself that will show what you think as you confront these problems while reading.
3. While students read this passage silently, read it aloud. As you read, verbalize your thoughts, the questions you develop, and the process you use to solve comprehension problems. It is helpful if you alter the tone of your voice, so students know when you are reading and at what points you begin and end thinking aloud.
4. Coping strategies you can model include
 - making predictions or hypotheses as you read: “From what he’s said so far, I’ll bet that the author is going to give some examples of poor eating habits.”
 - describing the mental pictures you “see”: “When the author talks about vegetables I should include in my diet, I can see our salad bowl at home filled with fresh, green spinach leaves.”
 - demonstrating how you connect this information with prior knowledge: “‘Saturated fat?’ I know I’ve heard that term before. I learned it last year when we studied nutrition.”
 - creating analogies: “That description of clogged arteries sounds like traffic clogging up the interstate during rush hour.”
 - verbalizing obstacles and fix-up strategies: “Now what does ‘angiogram’; mean? Maybe if I reread that section, I’ll get the meaning from the other sentences around it. I know I can’t skip it because it’s in bold-faced print, so it must be important. If I still don’t understand, I know I can ask the teacher for help.”

After thinking-aloud for your students multiple times, have students work with partners to practice “think-alouds” while reading short passages of text. Informally listening to your students’ thinking-aloud will give you helpful information in determining their levels of understanding of a text and their ability to apply reading strategies.

GRAPHIC ORGANIZERS

Graphic organizers are used as a scaffold to assist students in understanding what they have read. Although there are numerous graphic organizers, four specific ones seem to appear over and over on achievement tests. These include:

- timelines
- webs
- T-charts
- Venn diagrams.

Exposure to these four and variations of them throughout the year should occur in preparation for achievement testing. Be sure to provide opportunities for students to read directions and determine how to complete a graphic organizer after you have modeled similar ones. In examining student performance on practice tests, it has been found that often students don't understand how to complete an organizer even though they appear to have the knowledge needed to do so.

Timelines

Timelines can take several different formats. The basic idea on a timeline is that students need to either fill in appropriate dates or events that happened on a particular date. Some timelines involve boxes, some are horizontal and others are vertical. Three samples are attached.

Webs

A general topic is found in a middle circle or rectangle with supporting information in circles or rectangles extending from the middle. Sometimes some of the supporting information is already filled in and students are asked to supply additional information. An area of confusion has been that the supporting information may appear in a small circle, and the circle in which students are to supply information is much larger. Try to expose students to similar situations throughout the year.

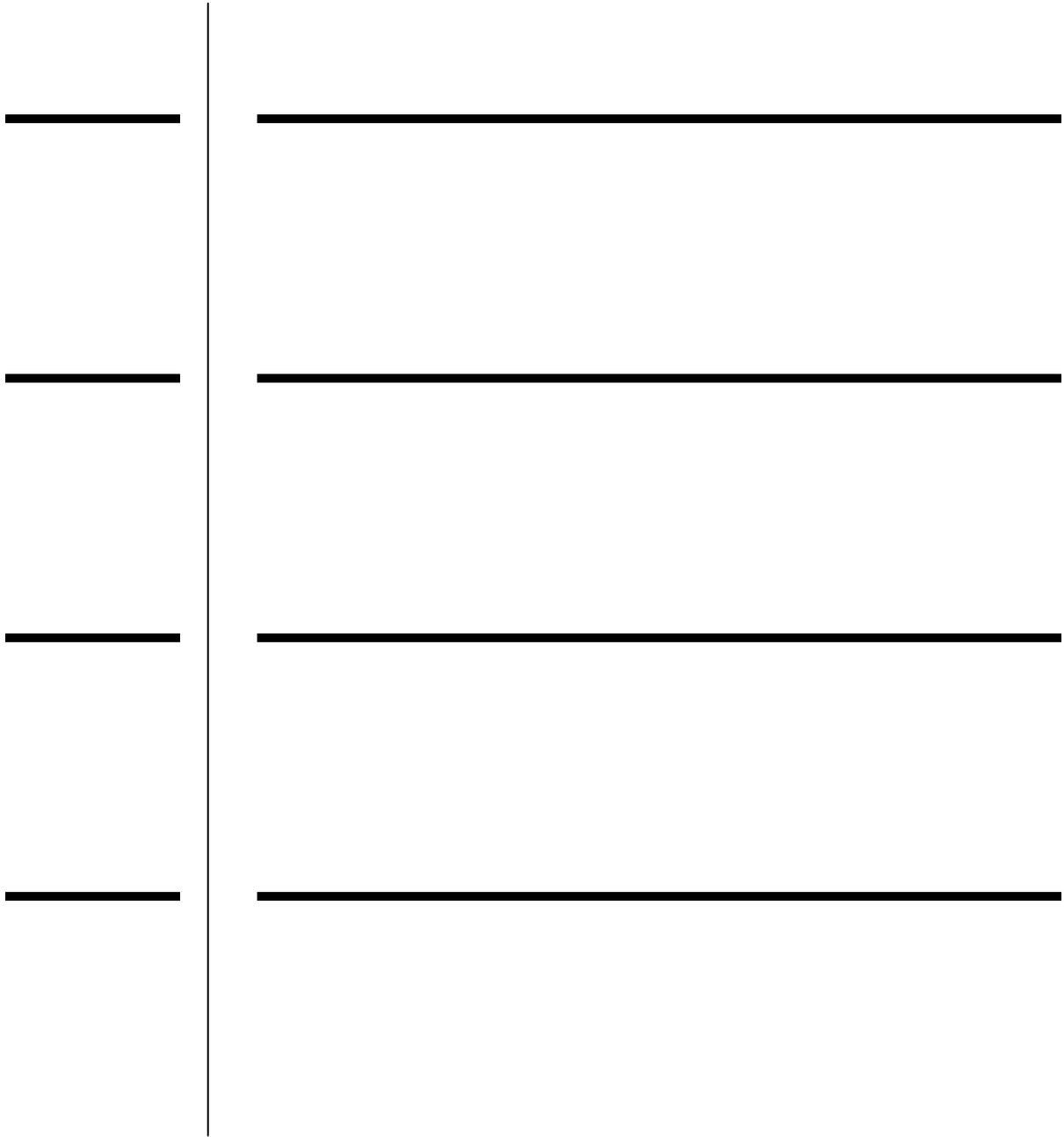
T-Charts

T-charts, double entry diaries, double entry journals all involve two columns. Students complete each side of the chart in accordance with how it is labeled. Cause may appear on one side and effect on the other. Other variations include character names and actions, questions and answers, fact and opinion, etc.

Venn diagrams

Venn diagrams are used to compare two things. Information related to the first item is found in one circle and information related to the second item is found in the second circle. Information related to both appears in the overlapping parts of the circles.

TIMELINE



TIMELINE



TIMELINE

Title: _____

