Interactive Strategy Lessons For Informational Text

Comprehension Strategies for the Common Core Standards

Students need a toolbox of flexible strategies to employ as they make their way through a variety of challenging informational texts. The research-based list of comprehension strategies (Dole, Duffy, Roehler and Pearson 1991; Pressley 1997; Keene and Zimmerman 1997) that educators rely on includes inferring/predicting, asking questions, clarifying, summarizing, synthesizing, and evaluating. Classrooms in the age of Common Core State Standards still incorporate this proven set of strategies to unlock deeper meanings in a variety of increasingly complex texts. Organizing strategies around the updated thinking in the Common Core provides a new framework for the familiar proven strategies. By modeling using strong mentor texts and interactive think alouds, teachers scaffold the reading experience and then provide support for use of comprehension strategies in cooperative guided practice. The many options for engagement and independent practice along with solid suggestions for working with second-language students and struggling readers make these lessons practical and fun! Student comprehension will improve as they work in teams to *Text Walk This Way*, play text structure bingo in *Building Inspection*! or judge informational texts for their content in *Compare it! Contrast it!* Filled with many rich options, these lessons are designed to use over and over again all year long with complex informational texts.

	Craft and Structure Lessons
168	Building Inspection! Identifying Informational Text Structures
171	Looking In and Around Tricky Words!
175	Picture This!
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Text Walk This Way!

The saying, "Walk this way," a line from Mel Brook's 1974 classic hit comedy movie *Young Frankenstein*, was adapted for the title of this lesson. Lead a quick walk around the classroom or playground walking in different ways: skipping, lumbering, dancing, hopping, etc. Then, share that there are different ways to "walk" through a text as well that include a "quick flip" or a "slow look" depending upon your purpose for reading the text.

Objective/Standards

Preview a text by "walking" through the pages and skimming the visuals, headings, and text for a variety of purposes; read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences (CCSS); ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text (CCSS); integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words (CCSS); know and use various text features to locate key facts or information in a text efficiently (CCSS)

Materials

- informational text
- *Text Walk This Way Group Discussion Bookmark* (See Appendix B)
- *Text Walk This Way: My Own Bookmark* (See Appendix B)

Teacher Model

1. Explain that when good readers read informational texts, they often flip through the text (or online they scroll through a text) before actually reading it word for word. This is called taking a "text walk" before reading and resembles a "picture walk" except when reading an informational text, the reader also studies the text features such as headings and bold words.

2. Tell students that text walking before reading helps us understand and better remember what we read in an informational text. A good reader may text walk multiple times for different reasons before settling in to read the text all the way through.

3. Choose an informational text to model from and provide copies for students. Display the text so everyone can see as you demonstrate. Text walk three times using the following language frames as guides.

    - **First Text Walk—What I Think I Know Already…** Say, "Watch me as I page through the text. My first text walk is going to be quick as I flip through the text to see what I already know about the topic." As you page through say, "I think I already know…" and share some facts you already know. Ask students to work with partners and use the frame *I think I know…* as they quickly page through and skim the text looking for what they may already know about the topic.

- **Second Text Walk—Text Features: I Think I Will Learn…** Say, "As I go through the text this time I am going to go slower and identify each text feature and tell what I think I will learn from it." As you text walk, pause on each feature to study and make predictions/infer using the frame, "I think I will learn _____ in/from this _____ because…." Have students work in pairs and take turns pausing on each text feature (heading, visual, etc.) to identify the feature and tell what they think they will learn about in that portion of text. "The text feature _____ shows (says) _____ so I think we will learn _____."

- **Third Text Walk—What I Want to Know: I wonder…** Share, "As I flip through the pages this time my text walk will focus on what I want to know about the topic of _____ and what I am wondering." Page through again and share a few of your wonderings and questions. Then, have students work in pairs with the same text and walk through the text a second time to share what they want to know about the text. They may use the frame "I wonder _____." Or "My question about _____ is (what, when, where, why, how,) _____."

Guided Practice

4. Guide the class to go on three text walks using a text all students have a copy of. Students may work in pairs or teams of four, taking turns as they text walk using the jobs below:

- **Text Walker #1** walks by skimming for what the group knows already.

- **Text Walker #2** walks, pausing through the text identifying text features to determine/predict what the group will learn by reading the text.

- **Text Walker #3** walks to preview the text a final time before reading to determine what questions the group has about the text.

- **Final Text Checker #4** walks through the text after reading to help evaluate the learning and the text features that helped the readers the most.

English Language Learner Support

Work with students in a small group. Practice as a group just one of the text walking jobs (1, 2, 3, or 4) together. Focus on modeling for students and on asking students to use the various sentence frames in this lesson to guide their oral responses. **Option:** You may ask students to text walk several different ways while assisting a younger student in another class to practice text walking with an easier text and to role play as a "teacher" or tutor. Debrief the experience as a group. What was easy, hard, or the most fun? How did text walking help the younger student understand the material better?

Independent Practice

5. Have students use the *Text Walk This Way: Group Discussion Bookmark* to read with a partner (See Figure 5.5 and Appendix B). Students may practice using the *Text Walk This Way: My Own Bookmark* on their own with a text you assign or text of their choice (See Figure 5.6 and Appendix B). Conference with students and ask them to choose one or more of the text walks to demonstrate for you.

Wrap-Up

6. Poll students and ask them which of the text walks—1, 2, 3 or 4—is their favorite to participate in, and share why. Which text walk is most helpful or least helpful? Why?

Assessment

Observe students as they work in their teams and pairs to see if they are text walking and using the text clues to stick to what the text says. Also, collect student responses on the *Text Walk This Way: My Own Bookmark* and form small groups based on which of the text walks (1, 2, 3, or 4) students need help with. Model for groups and ask students to work in pairs to practice each type of text walk.

Figure 5.5 Text Walk This Way: Group Discussion Bookmark

Figure 5.6 Text Walk This Way: My Own Bookmark

Text Walk This Way: My Own Bookmark

Text Walk This Way: My Own Bookmark	Text Walk This Way: My Own Bookmark
Text Walk #1 Before reading, quickly flip through the text. What do I already know? Page _____ I know about _____. Page _____ I know about _____.	**Text Walk #1** Before reading, quickly flip through the text. What do I already know? Page _____ I know about _____. Page _____ I know about _____.
Text Walk #2 Before reading, page through the text pausing to study all the text features. Check all the text features that you see in this text. _____ heading(s) _____ photo(s) _____ map(s) _____ diagram(s) _____ chart(s) _____ bold words _____ table of contents _____ index _____ glossary **Choose two text features to predict what you will learn.** The _____ on page ____ shows or says _____ so I think I will learn _____. The _____ on page ____ shows or says _____ so I think I will learn _____.	**Text Walk #2** Before reading, page through the text pausing to study all the text features. Check all the text features that you see in this text. _____ heading(s) _____ photo(s) _____ map(s) _____ diagram(s) _____ chart(s) _____ bold words _____ table of contents _____ index _____ glossary **Choose two text features to predict what you will learn.** The _____ on page ____ shows or says _____ so I think I will learn _____. The _____ on page ____ shows or says _____ so I think I will learn _____.
Text Walk #3 Before reading, page through the book one more time thinking about what you are wondering about the topic. **Choose two things you are wondering about.** On page _____, I am wondering _____. On page _____, I am wondering _____. **Start reading the text!**	**Text Walk #3** Before reading, page through the book one more time thinking about what you are wondering about the topic. **Choose two things you are wondering about.** On page _____, I am wondering _____. On page _____, I am wondering _____. **Start reading the text!**
Final Text Check #4 **After reading the text, answer the following:** The main idea was _____ I could tell it was important because the author _____ I also learned _____ **Which text features were most helpful and why?** (see list in #2) 1. The _____ on page ____ was helpful because _____ 2. The _____ on page ____ was helpful because _____	**Final Text Check #4** **After reading the text, answer the following:** The main idea was _____ I could tell it was important because the author _____ I also learned _____ **Which text features were most helpful and why?** (see list in #2) 1. The _____ on page ____ was helpful because _____ 2. The _____ on page ____ was helpful because _____

Compare It! Contrast It! Rating Informational Texts

Good readers synthesize across texts and evaluate the information they learn from each of them every day. With the wealth of online information available today, it is essential that students learn how to evaluate and compare texts.

Objective/Standards

Read text and compare and contrast the information as well as the effectiveness of texts on the same topic; analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take (CCSS); compare and contrast the most important points and key details presented in two texts on the same topic (CCSS)

Materials

- informational text
- *Compare It! Contrast It!* (See Appendix B)
- chart paper
- sticky notes or index cards

Teacher Model

1. Tell students that when good readers research topics, they often need to read information from more than one source. Give an example of a time where you needed information and read two sources either online or in books. Tell how you used both sources to help you gain the information you needed. Ask students if they have ever done the same—used more than one source for information.

2. Explain to students that when we use two or more sources we compare and contrast the two books or articles as we think about which one was more useful. We might use information from both or from one—however, the text is most helpful.

3. Select two texts on the same topic to model from. You may want to use a high-interest topic such as animal training or a sport. Read a portion of one of the texts aloud. Or, if the texts are brief, read both of them. Create a chart that will help evaluate what you learned from each text (use *Compare It, Contrast It!* as a guide).

4. Show both texts and briefly skim through them. Share one question you have about your topic or something you want to know. Involve students by asking them to turn and tell a partner what questions they have about your topic after you model yours. Write your question at the top of the chart.

   Text #1—Read the portion of text that may answer your question. Write your answer.

   Text #2—Read the portion of text that may answer your question. Write your answer.

Share what else you learned by reading each text. What did you learn from each one that was NOT in the other? How would you rate each text? Which was the best? *Optional:* Model again using another question.

Guided Practice

5. Using the two texts you just modeled from, guide students to ask a question that they can research in both texts. Have students work with a partner or table teams to fill in a simple chart, such as what is shown below (or use an index card.)

Text #1	Answer to our question
	_____
	_____
Text #2	Answer to our question
	_____
	_____

Which text was most helpful in answering your question?

Why?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Options:

Table or Partner Book Switch: The class discusses one thing they want to know about or a question they want answered about the topic. Give each team just one of the two texts that the class is reading. The entire class researches the answer to the same question but teams use different books. Teams share what they learned. Tables switch books and hunt for the same question in a different book.

Partner Switch: Two students each read a different book to find the answer to the same question or a "what we want to know" issue. When the teacher signals "record," the pair stops reading and records their answers on a sticky note or on an index card. When the teacher signals "switch," the students swap books and read for the same question or issue in the different text. When the teacher signals "record," the students flip their index card and write their responses for the second text on the other side. Have students discuss which text they found most helpful for answering their question.

Independent Practice

6. Provide students with two texts on the same topic to compare/contrast. If you have limited copies, give half the students one title and half the other, and swap at some point.

7. Students may think of a topic they are interested in and use two texts for research. They should use the *Compare It! Contrast It!* organizer to record their questions, answers, and evaluation of the texts (See Figure 5.18 and Appendix B).

Wrap-Up

8. Discuss what students enjoy about evaluating and using two texts to research a topic. What did they learn? How can they use this information when they research other topics?

Assessment

Observe students as they work together and alone to research topic questions and find answers in two or more texts. Do they experience difficulty finding a topic question or finding the answers? Can they compare the usefulness of a text in answering their questions?

Struggling Reader Tips:

Work with struggling readers in a small group. Guide the students to come up with something they are wondering about a topic after picture walking through a text so that their wonders will stick closer to the text. Use the frames "I wonder" (why, how, when, where, who, what), and ask students what they see in the text that makes them wonder about that. Guide students to read for their question. Discuss whether the text answered their question in detail or not. Give the text a score on a scale of 1-3 for how it addressed their wonder.

Figure 5.18 Compare It! Contrast It!