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First Thoughts: Questions and Concerns
Teaching the Academic Essentials

Presenter: Jim Burke

www.englishcompanion.com
“Literacy involves the ability to encode or decode meaning in any of the symbolic forms used in the culture.”

—Eliot Eisner (from “Preparing for Today and Tomorrow” Educational Leadership (2004))

“When we enter a house for the first time, we of course find it unfamiliar. By walking around for a while, however, looking into various rooms and peering into cupboards, we quickly get to know it. But what if we cannot enter the house, and our own knowledge of it comes from the instructions and plans that were used to build it? Moreover, what if those instructions and plans are written in a highly technical language that we find intimidating and incomprehensible? What if, try as we may, we cannot form any mental picture of the house? Then we are not going to get much of a sense of what it is like to live there. We are not going to be able to enter the house even in our imagination.”

—Keith Devlin, from The Math Gene

“Although some students show up at school as “intentional learners”—people who are already interested in doing whatever they need to do to learn academic subjects—they are the exception rather than the rule. Even if they are disposed to study, they probably need to learn how. But more fundamental than knowing how is developing a sense of oneself as a learner that makes it socially acceptable to engage in academic work. The goal of school teaching is not to turn all students into people who see themselves as professional academics, but to enable all of them to include a disposition toward productive study of academic subjects among the personality traits they exhibit while they are in the classroom. If the young people who come to school do not see themselves as learners, they are not going to act like learners even if that would help them to be successful in school. It is the teacher's job to help them change their sense of themselves so that studying is not a self-contradictory activity. One's sense of oneself as a learner is not a wholly private construction. Academic identity is formed from an amalgamation of how we see ourselves and how others see us, and those perceptions are formed and expressed in social interaction. How I act in front of others expresses my sense of who I am. How others then react to me influences the development of my identity.”

—Magdalene Lampert, from Teaching Problems and the Problems of Teaching
### HABITS OF MIND/ABILITIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SKILLS</th>
<th>GENERATE</th>
<th>EVALUATE</th>
<th>ANALYZE</th>
<th>ORGANIZE</th>
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<td>- Literary</td>
<td>- Importance</td>
<td>- Cause/Effect</td>
<td>- Spatial</td>
<td>- Information</td>
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<td>- Informational</td>
<td>- Effectiveness</td>
<td>- Problem</td>
<td>- Cause/Effect</td>
<td>- Events</td>
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<td>- Consequences</td>
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<td>- Sources</td>
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<td>- Visual/Graphic</td>
<td>- Quality</td>
<td>- Relationships</td>
<td>- Problem/Sol.</td>
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<th>WRITE</th>
<th>- Response</th>
<th>- Cause/Effect</th>
<th>- Importance</th>
<th>- Information</th>
<th>- Elements</th>
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<td>- Narrative</td>
<td>- Problem</td>
<td>- Chronological</td>
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<td>- Essay</td>
<td>- Implications</td>
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<th>- Cause/Effect</th>
<th>- Important</th>
<th>- Information</th>
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<td>- Speech</td>
<td>- Causes</td>
<td>- Problem/Sol.</td>
<td>- Elements</td>
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<td>- Implications</td>
<td>- Visual</td>
<td>- Elements</td>
<td>- Strategies</td>
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<td>- Blog/Online Discussion</td>
<td>- Consequences</td>
<td>- Graphic</td>
<td>- Elements</td>
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<th>- Visual Interpretation</th>
<th>- Visual Explanation</th>
<th>- Visual Summary</th>
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<td>- Numerical Expression</td>
<td>- Visual Summary</td>
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<td>- Numerical Expression</td>
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<th>TAKE NOTES</th>
<th>- Lecture</th>
<th>- Reading Lit/Infotexts</th>
<th>- Textbook</th>
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<td>- Research</td>
<td>- Textbook</td>
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<th>- Multiple Choice</th>
<th>- Essay</th>
<th>- Short Answer</th>
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<th>MANAGE ONESELF</th>
<th>- Time</th>
<th>- Materials</th>
<th>- Responsibilities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Time</td>
<td>- Materials</td>
<td>- Responsibilities</td>
<td>- Relationships</td>
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Structured Notes: What does it take to be a survivor?  Name:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trait/Description</th>
<th>Example from Text (w/ pg #)</th>
<th>Explanation (how this contributes to survival)</th>
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<tbody>
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Miraculous Survivors: Why They Live While Others Die

By John Blake

Source: CNN

Develop a PQ (Purpose Question) based on the title above:

As you read, underline those actions or qualities common to all survivors. There are some familiar ideas here that validate your great ideas, but also some new ways of thinking about the subject. You will need these examples to complete the follow up writing assignment. See an example of what I mean on page two (look for the underlined words).

Deborah Scaling Kiley still can't break free from that night.

She can't shake the screams, the image of the frothing water turning red, and the sounds of sharks attacking the man who had just been sitting next to her.

She still can't forget blurting out the Lord's Prayer to block out the cries of the man dying in front of her.

"As long as I kept saying those words, I knew I was all right," she says today. "It was my only proof that I had not gone mad."

Kiley would survive that night, clinging to a dingy in the Atlantic Ocean for five days without food and water. But so have others in circumstances that seemed as hopeless. They are the amazing characters who seem to surface during every manmade or natural disaster -- those who survive against all odds.

What do these survivors share in common? That's the question that the author Laurence Gonzales has long tried to answer. Whenever a disaster hits -- a cyclone in Myanmar; an earthquake in China; a climbing accident in Alaska -- Gonzales scans the headlines for the stories of those survivors who made it out alive when all others perished.

"I know when something big happens, I know the kind of stories that are playing out and the people who emerge from them with similar stories," he says.

Gonzales looks for people like Ma Yuanjiang, a 31-year-old power plant executive who survived seven days buried under rubble by drinking his urine and eating paper after a massive earthquake struck China in May. He studies survivors like Ari Afrizal, a construction worker who survived the 2005 Tsunami by clinging to a raft for two weeks in the Indian Ocean.

Gonzales explains what makes these survivors special in "Deep Survival," a book that dissects the psychological and spiritual transformation that takes place within people who survive against all odds.

Most of these survivors share the same traits, Gonzales says.

"These are people who tend to have a view of the world that does not paint them as a victim," he says. "They're not whiners who are always complaining about the bad things that are happening to them and expecting to get rescued."
Miraculous Survivors

Gonzales says at least 75 percent of people caught in a catastrophe either freeze or simply wander in a daze.

"The first thing people do when something bad happens is to be in denial," Gonzales says. "People who make good survivors tend to get through that phase quickly. They accept the evidence of their senses."

'The Rambo types are the first to go'

Gonzales says many of the disaster survivors he studied weren't the most skilled, the strongest or the most experienced in their group.

Those who seemed best suited for survival -- the strongest or most skilled -- were often the first to die off in life-or-death struggles, he says. Experience and physical strength can lead to carelessness. The Rambo types, a Navy SEAL tells Gonzales, are often the first to go.

Small children and inexperienced climbers, for example, often survive emergencies in the wilderness far better than their stronger or adult counterparts, he says.

They survive because they're humble, Gonzales says. They know when to rest, when they shouldn't try something beyond their capabilities, when it's wise to be afraid.

"Humility can keep you out of trouble," Gonzales says. "If you go busting into the wilderness with the attitude that you know what's going on, you're liable to miss important cues."

Survivors tend to be independent thinkers as well. When hijacked planes hit the World Trade Center during the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, hundreds of workers were trapped in the towers. Gonzales says security told many of them to stay put and wait for rescue.

Most of those who heeded the directions from security died, he says. Most of the survivors decided to ignore security protocol. They headed downstairs through a smoke-filled stairwell and didn't wait to be rescued.

"They were not rule followers, they thought for themselves and had an independent frame of mind," Gonzales says.

Survivors also shared another trait -- strong family bonds. Many reported they were motivated to endure hardships by a desire to see a loved one, Gonzales says.

Gonzales cites the story of Viktor Frankl, author of "Man's Search for Meaning." Frankl survived three years in Auschwitz and other Nazi death camps because he was driven by the thought of seeing his wife again.

"He spent a great deal of time thinking of his wife and motivating himself through his wife," Gonzales says.

Survivors also pay attention to their intuition, Gonzales says. If something tells them that the mountain isn't safe to climb that day, they'll back out even if they've planned the trip for months, he says.

Gonzales followed his intuition once and it saved his life. In 1979, a writing colleague asked him to fly with him on a flight from Chicago, Illinois, to Los Angeles, California. Gonzales declined when he learned that he would fly on a McDonnell Douglas DC-10, which had a spotty safety record. His decision was unusual -- a boss personally asked him to fly with him that day -- but he stuck with it.
Miraculous Survivors

Gonzales says he was sitting in his kitchen later that day when someone called him and told him to turn on his television. The plane he was supposed to be on had just crashed on takeoff, killing all 271 people onboard, including several of Gonzales colleagues. It was one of the worst aviation disasters in the nation's history.

Knowing what to do was not enough for him, Gonzales says.

"It's a story about having the information and using it," he says. "So when this trip came up, I was prepared to do something out of the ordinary."

'I closed my eyes and prayed and waited to die'

Kiley, now 50, also had misgivings about going on the trip that almost cost her life.

It was October 1982 and she was 26 years old when she boarded a sailing yacht in Maine. She joined three men and another woman who planned to sail to Florida. But there were signs early on that the trip would not be smooth. The men bickered, the yacht's captain was lazy, and the ship wasn't properly maintained, Kiley says.

The yacht was soon caught in a fierce storm. It was tossed by 60-knot winds and huge waves. The yacht sank so quickly that the five-member crew barely had time to alert the U.S. Coast Guard and inflate the rubber dinghy, she says.

During the next five days, the survivors battled dehydration, hunger, exposure and massive infections. No ships spotted the rubber dinghy and they drifted alone in an open boat.

The crew eventually divided into two camps, Kiley says. Two men in the boat started arguing with and assaulting the others. They were falling apart emotionally and physically.

Then the crew began to die. Two men couldn't take their thirst anymore and drank salt water. They became delusional and started hallucinating. Both of them calmly slid off the dinghy into a sea full of sharks, convinced they were going to the store for cigarettes. They were killed by sharks -- one right underneath Kiley's dinghy, she says.

A third crew member, a woman who suffered ghastly wounds to her leg when the yacht sank, soon died, Kiley says.

Kiley wondered if she would be next. When sharks attacked one of the men in front of her, Kiley says that she thought she was going to have a nervous breakdown.

"I closed my eyes and prayed and waited to die," she wrote in "The Sinking," an account of her survival.

The sharks moved on, but Kiley had already made a series of small decisions that helped save her life, she says. Instead of expending much of her energy bemoaning her fate, she planned for survival. She covered herself with seaweed for warmth. She took on the role of protector, watching out for another man in the boat.

She also made a ruthless decision. She kept her distance from two male companions in the boat who bickered and cursed with the others. She sensed that they were going to die and she didn't want to waste precious energy fighting with them.

Even the act of prayer was a survival strategy. Kiley didn't know if she believe in God, but her prayer helped her avoid the loss of control that doomed some of her companions in the boat.
"Surviving is about keeping your wits when everything is falling apart," she says.

Kiley says she was also conditioned to be a survivor from her childhood. She grew up in rural Texas where she learned to survive in the outdoors. Her mother was married several times and was a victim of domestic violence.

"I learned as child how to live and adapt to the environment I was in," she says. "You never knew what was going to come up."

After five days in the open ocean, Kiley and another man were finally spotted and rescued by a passing freighter.

She says the accident changed her. "I learned to accept people for who they are and who they're not," she says. "God doesn't need me to judge anyone else."

Gonzales, who examined Kiley's survival in his book, says Kiley's background helped her survive.

"She grew up having to fend for herself," he says. "She was also a very independent thinker and has strong ties at home to her mother. She had the whole package and was able to use her own anger to motivate herself."

Kiley still sails when she can today. But she says there's hardly a day where she still doesn't think about the accident. She still has flashbacks from that night at sea that come at the oddest of times.

"One minute I would be standing in the shower washing my hair and the next minute sitting in the tub sobbing uncontrollably," she wrote in her book. "And I was never free of the dreams."

Today she lives in Texas where she is a fitness specialist and a yoga instructor. A Discovery Channel documentary was made about her ordeal at sea and she continues to lecture about her experiences while raising money for domestic violence charities.

More than anything, she says, it was her will to live that helped her survive.

"You can never give up," she says. "No matter how bad it gets, something good is going to come out of it."

A little anger also helped her push through, she says.

"At the point you're alone and scared, you have to create a vision for the future," she says. "The vision I had was washing ashore and going to the Coast Guard office and saying, 'Where the hell have you been!'"

"It was enough to help me survive."
Sample summary written by a student

In “Surviving a Year of Sleepless Nights,” Jenny Hung discusses success and how it may not be so good. Hung points out that having fun is better than having success and glory. Jenny Hung survived a painful year because of having too many honors classes, getting straight A’s, and having a GPA of 4.43. Why would any of this be bad? It’s because she wasn’t happy. She describes working so hard for something she didn’t really want. At one point she says, “There was even a month in winter when I was so self-conscious of my raccoon eyes that I wore sunglasses to school.” She says she often stayed up late doing work and studying for tests for her classes. After what she had been through, she decided that it was not her life and chose her classes carefully once sophomore year came around.

BEFORE
1. Determine your purpose.
2. Preview the document.
3. Prepare to take notes.

DURING
4. Take notes to help you answer these questions:
   • Who is involved?
   • What events, ideas, or people does the author emphasize?
   • What are the causes?
   • What are the consequences or implications?
5. Establish criteria to determine what is important enough to include in the summary.
6. Evaluate information as you read to determine if it meets your criteria for importance.

AFTER
7. Write your summary, which should:
   • Identify the title, author, and topic in the first sentence.
   • State the main idea in the second sentence.
   • Be shorter than the original article
   • Begin with a sentence that states the topic (see sample).
   • Include a second sentence that states the author’s main idea.
   • Include 3–5 sentences in which you explain—in your own words—the author’s point of view.
   • Include one or two interesting quotations or details.
   • Maintain the author’s meaning
   • Organize the ideas in the order in which they appear in the article.
   • Use transitions such as “according to” and the author’s name to show that you are summarizing someone else’s ideas.
   • Include enough information so that someone who has not read the article will understand the ideas.

Sample verbs: The author:
• argues
• asserts
• concludes
• considers
• discusses
• emphasizes
• examines
• explores
• focuses on
• implies
• mentions
• notes
• points out
• says
• states
• suggests
In “Miraculous Survivors: Why They Live While Others Die,” John Blake examines who survives during terrible events and what they have in common. While each person is different, he argues that there are traits that allow these people to overcome their circumstances. More than anything else, Blake emphasizes the important role that mental strength plays. Survivors are “not whiners,” and tend to be “independent thinkers,” which prevents them from falling into the traps that others often do. In addition to these mental traits, survivors also establish a goal and use it to keep them focused on the future and their return instead of the crisis at hand. Some concentrate on seeing their family while others feed on their anger, driven by the desire to confront the people responsible for their troubles. Finally, those who survive show a willingness to do whatever it takes to survive, even if it means wrapping themselves up in seaweed to stay warm or living off of urine and paper until they are rescued. What unites them all, Blake implies, is a “will to live” and the belief, often expressed through prayer, that they will make it home to those they love and continue on with their lives.
**Overview**

Students at all levels struggle to find language that expresses their ideas and helps them achieve their rhetorical purpose. Sentence structures offer a useful means of getting students up and running with academic language through either sentence starters or sentence frames. Both approaches are useful for both writing about and discussing different types of texts.

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<tr>
<th><strong>Sentence Starters</strong></th>
<th><strong>Sentence Frames</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Making Predictions</strong></td>
<td><strong>Summarizing</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• I predict that…</td>
<td>• Readers often assume that…</td>
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<tr>
<td>• If x happens, then…</td>
<td>• While many suggest x, others say y…</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Because x did y, I expect z.</td>
<td>• (Author’s name) agrees/disagrees with x, pointing out…</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Making Connections</strong></td>
<td><strong>Responding</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• x reminds me of…</td>
<td>• X claims…which I agree/disagree with because…</td>
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<tr>
<td>• x is similar to y because…</td>
<td>• X’s point assumes x, which I would argue means…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• x is important to y because…</td>
<td>• While I agree that_____ , you could also say…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Making Inferences</strong></td>
<td><strong>Agreeing</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• x means…since x is…</td>
<td>• Most will agree that…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Early on the author says…which suggests x is…</td>
<td>• I agree with those who suggest that…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• x causes y as a result of…which shows…</td>
<td>• X offers an effective explanation of why y happens, which is especially useful because most think that…</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Summarizing</strong></td>
<td><strong>Disagreeing</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• The main idea is…</td>
<td>• I would challenge X’s point about y, arguing instead…</td>
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<tr>
<td>• The author argues that…</td>
<td>• X claims y, but recent discoveries show this is…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• In ________, (author’s name) implies…</td>
<td>• While X suggests y, this cannot be true since…</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Evaluating</strong></td>
<td><strong>Taking the Third Path: Agreeing and Disagreeing</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The author’s point is/is not valid because…</td>
<td>• While I agree that… , I reject the larger argument that…since we now know…</td>
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<tr>
<td>• The author does/does not do a good job of…</td>
<td>• I share X’s belief that… , but question…due to…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The most important aspect/event/idea is…</td>
<td>• Most concede x though few would agree that y is true…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Analyzing the Text</strong></td>
<td><strong>Arguing</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The author uses _______ to show/achieve…</td>
<td>• Although x is increasing/decreasing, it is not y but z that is the cause…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The author assumes _______ which is/is not true…</td>
<td>• While x is true, I would argue y because of z.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The use of _______ strengthens/weakens the author’s argument by</td>
<td>• X was, in the past, the most important factor but y has changed, making it the real cause.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Clarifying</strong></td>
<td><strong>Explaining Importance</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• What the author is saying is…</td>
<td>• Based on x, people assumed y, which made sense at the time, but now we realize z, which means…</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Given that x happened, the author is trying to show…</td>
<td>• This change questions our previous understanding of x, which means that now we must assume…</td>
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<tr>
<td>• x is not _______ but is, instead, _______ since…</td>
<td>• While this conclusion appears insignificant, it challenges our current understanding of x, which means that…</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Synthesizing</strong></td>
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<td>• These elements/details, when considered together, suggest…</td>
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<td>• Initial impressions suggested x, but after learning _______ it is now clear that…</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• It is not a question of x but rather of y because…</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For more about the use and effectiveness of sentence starters, see “A Cognitive Strategies Approach to Reading and Writing Instruction for English Learners in Secondary School,” by Olson and Land in *Research in the Teaching of English* (Feb 2007); to learn more about sentence frames, consult *They Say/I Say: The Moves that Matter in Academic Writing*, by Graff and Birkenstein (Norton 2006).
### Article Notes

Name: ___________________________  
Period: _______  Date: _____________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VOCABULARY</th>
<th>1.</th>
<th>2.</th>
<th>3.</th>
<th>4.</th>
<th>5.</th>
<th>Definitions on back.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### Title: ___________________________

#### Author: ___________________________

#### Subject: ___________________________

1. **Purpose Question (PQ): Identify the goal**

2. **Preview: Gather useful information**
   1. ___________________________
   2. ___________________________
   3. ___________________________

3. **Pause and Reflect: List important details and ideas related to your PQ**
   1. ___________________________
   2. ___________________________
   3. ___________________________
   4. ___________________________
   5. ___________________________

4. **PQ: Answer the PQ: What is the subject and the author’s main idea about it?**

5. **Practice Questions: Create two test questions about the subject, article, or author**
   1. **Factual:** ___________________________
   2. **Inferential:** ___________________________

6. **Post: Post a comment or question on the board for class discussion**  

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## Main Idea Organizer

**Subject**  
What are you or the author writing about?

**Main Idea**  
What are you (or the author) saying about the subject? (i.e., what is the point you or the author want to make?)

**Details**  
- Examples
- Stories
- Quotations
- Explanations

---

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Test-Maker Tool

Book Title

Vocabulary
• Word
• Defined
• Explained
□ Challenging
□ Relevant
□ Unimportant

Factual Question & Answer
• Find the answer in the text.
□ Important
□ Useful
□ Irrelevant

Analytical Question & Answer
• Find the answer between the lines.
□ Insightful
□ Useful
□ Unimportant

Essay Question & Response
• Write one paragraph.
• Establish main idea for the paragraph.
• Develop your paragraph with supporting details/examples.
• Make sure your writing flows from one idea to the next.
□ Challenging
□ Interesting
□ Superficial

Sample Words: valiant, pessimistic, legitimate, persevere, bureaucratic, memoir

Sample Question: which of the following best defines __________ as it is used in this sentence...

Example: How long did the Wright brothers’ first plane stay in the air?

Example: How—and why—does the character change by the end of the story? Provide examples.

Example: Agree or disagree: Socrates was guilty. Support your claim with specific examples from the readings.
**Topic:** Compare and contrast the different types of relationships humans have with nature. Include examples from your own experience and the different texts we have read or viewed. After comparing and contrasting, make a claim about what you feel are our rights and responsibilities toward the natural world in general. Provide reasons and evidence to support your claim.

**Example**

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. <strong>Identify the subject of your paper</strong></td>
<td>Relationships between teenagers and their parents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. <strong>Turn your subject into a guiding question</strong></td>
<td>How does the relationship between teenagers and their parents change?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. <strong>Answer your question with a statement</strong></td>
<td>As teens grow more independent, they resent and resist the limitations and expectations their parents impose on them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. <strong>Refine this statement into a working thesis</strong></td>
<td>Conflict between teenagers and their parents is a difficult but necessary stage in kids’ development.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Analyzing Relationships: Structured Notes

Overview
We have been examining different types of relationships in both stories and our lives. This assignment asks you to characterize that relationship between the main characters and to continue to work on your academic writing skills.

Step One Gather Details and Examples
Use the following organizer to help you find, organize, and analyze details from the text that characterize the relationship between the main characters:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What They Do or Say (quotations or examples)</th>
<th>What It Means (interpretation)</th>
<th>Why It’s Important (discussion and analysis)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Step Two Write a Paragraph
Using the quotations and examples from Step One, write a paragraph that characterizes the relationship between the two people in the story. You must include at least three specific examples or quotations, (properly cited with page, act, scene, or line numbers). Be sure to introduce and comment on the examples/quotations before and after.

Step Three Personal Response
Jot down your own thoughts about their relationship and their actions. Do you agree with or understand what they are doing? What do you think—and why do you think it? Is this a good, healthy relationship? Why? Why not?
Powder
by Tobias Wolff

Just before Christmas my father took me skiing at Mount Baker. He’d had to fight for the privilege of my company, because my mother was still angry with him for sneaking me into a nightclub during his last visit, to see Thelonious Monk.

He wouldn’t give up. He promised, hand on heart, to take good care of me and have me home for dinner on Christmas Eve, and she relented. But as we were checking out of the lodge that morning it began to snow, and in this snow he observed some rare quality that made it necessary for us to get in one last run. We got in several last runs. He was indifferent to my fretting. Snow whirled around us in bitter, blinding squalls, hissing like sand, and still we skied.

As the lift bore us to the peak yet again, my father looked at his watch and said, “Criminy. This’ll have to be a fast one.”

By now I couldn’t see the trail. There was no point in trying. I stuck to him like white on rice and did what he did and somehow made it to the bottom without sailing off a cliff. We returned our skis and my father put chains on the Austin-Healey while I swayed from foot to foot, clapping my mittens and wishing I was home. I could see everything. The green tablecloth, the plates with the holly pattern, the red candles waiting to be lit.

We passed a diner on our way out. “You want some soup?” my father asked. I shook my head. “Buck up,” he said. “I’ll get you there. Right, doctor?”

I was supposed to say, “Right, doctor,” but I didn’t say anything.

A state trooper waved us down outside the resort. A pair of sawhorses were blocking the road. The trooper came up to our car and bent down to my father’s window. His face was bleached by the cold. Snowflakes clung to his eyebrows and to the fur trim of his jacket and cap.

“Don’t tell me,” my father said.

The trooper told him. The road was closed. It might get cleared, it might not. Storm took everyone by surprise. So much, so fast. Hard to get people moving. Christmas Eve. What can you do.

My father said, “Look. We’re talking about five, six inches. I’ve taken this car through worse than that.”

The trooper straightened up. His face was out of sight but I could hear him. “The road is closed.”

My father sat with both hands on the wheel, rubbing the wood with his thumbs. He looked at the barricade for a long time. He seemed to be trying to master the idea of it. Then he thanked the trooper, and with a weird, old-maidy show of caution turned the car around. “Your mother will never forgive me for this,” he said.

“We should have left before,” I said. “Doctor.”

He didn’t speak to me again until we were in a booth at the diner, waiting for our burgers. “She won’t forgive me,” he said. “Do you understand? Never.”

“I guess,” I said, but no guesswork was required; she wouldn’t forgive him.

“I can’t let that happen.” He bent toward me. “I’ll tell you what I want. I want us all to be together again. Is that what you want?”

“Yes, sir.”

He bumped my chin with his knuckles. “That’s all I needed to hear.”

When we finished eating he went to the pay phone in the back of the diner, then joined me in the booth again. I figured he’d called my mother, but he didn’t give a report. He sipped at his coffee and stared out the window at the empty road. “Come on, come on,” he said, though not to me. A little while later he said it again. When the trooper’s car went past, lights flashing, he got up and dropped some money on the check. “Okay. Vamanos.”

The wind had died. The snow was falling straight down, less of it now and lighter. We drove away from the resort, right up to the barricade. “Move it,” my father told me. When I looked at him he said, “What are you waiting for?” I got out and dragged one of the sawhorses aside, then put it back after he drove through. He pushed the door open for me. “Now you’re an
Powder

accomplice,” he said. “We go down together.” He put the car into gear and gave me a look. “Joke, son.”

Down the first long stretch I watched the road behind us, to see if the trooper was on our tail. The barricade vanished. Then there was nothing but snow: snow on the road, snow kicking up from the chains, snow on the trees, snow in the sky; and our trail in the snow. Then I faced forward and had a shock. The lay of the road behind us had been marked by our own tracks, but there were no tracks ahead of us. My father was breaking virgin snow between a line of tall trees. He was humming “Stars Fell on Alabama.” I felt snow brush along the floorboards under my feet. To keep my hands from shaking I clamped them between my knees.

My father grunted in a thoughtful way and said, “Don’t ever try this yourself.” “I won’t.” “That’s what you say now, but someday you’ll get your license and then you’ll think you can do anything. Only you won’t be able to do this. You need, I don’t know—a certain instinct.” “Maybe I have it.” “You don’t. You have your strong points, but not this. I only mention it because I don’t want you to get the idea this is something just anybody can do. I’m a great driver. That’s not a virtue, okay? It’s just a fact, and one you should be aware of. Of course you have to give the old heap some credit, too. There aren’t many cars I’d try this with. Listen!” I did listen. I heard the slap of the chains, the stiff, jerky rasp of the wipers, the purr of the engine. It really did purr. The old heap was almost new. My father couldn’t afford it, and kept promising to sell it, but here it was.

I said, “Where do you think that policeman went to?” “Are you warm enough?” He reached over and cranked up the blower. Then he turned off the wipers. We didn’t need them. The clouds had brightened. A few sparse, feathery flakes drifted into our slipstream and were swept away. We left the trees and entered a broad field of snow that ran level for a while and then tilted sharply downward. Orange stakes had been planted at intervals in two parallel lines and my father steered a course between them, though they were far enough apart to leave considerable doubt in my mind as to exactly where the road lay. He was humming again, doing little scat riffs around the melody.

“Okay then. What are my strong points?” “Don’t get me started,” he said. “It’d take all day.” “Oh, right. Name one.” “Easy. You always think ahead.” True. I always thought ahead. I was a boy who kept his clothes on numbered hangers to insure proper rotation. I bothered my teachers for homework assignments far ahead of their due dates so I could draw up schedules. I thought ahead, and that was why I knew that there would be other troopers waiting for us at the end of our ride, if we even got there. What I did not know was that my father would wheedle and plead his way past them—he didn’t sing “O Tannenbaum,” but just about—and get me home for dinner, buying a little more time before my mother decided to make the split final. I knew we’d get caught; I was resigned to it. And maybe for this reason I stopped moping and began to enjoy myself.

Why not? This was one for the books. Like being in a speedboat, only better. You can’t go downhill in a boat. And it was all ours. And it kept coming, the laden trees, the unbroken surface of snow, the sudden white vistas. Here and there I saw hints of the road, ditches, fences, stakes, but not so many that I could have found my way. But then I didn’t have to. My father was driving. My father in his forty-eighth year, rumpled, kind, bankrupt of honor, flushed with certainty. He was a great driver. All persuasion, no coercion. Such subtlety at the wheel, such tactful pedalwork. I actually trusted him. And the best was yet to come—switchbacks and hairpins impossible to describe. Except maybe to say this: if you haven’t driven fresh powder, you haven’t driven.
Character Decision Graph

Directions: Generate a list of decisions featured in the story; then evaluate, and label each one in terms of importance. Identify the person who made the decision (e.g. Romeo), evaluate how right (5 is very right) or wrong (-5 is very wrong) the decision was, and label the point (e.g., Romeo accepts Tybalt’s challenge). Include the page or act/scene number. When you finish, connect the dots to show the pattern. Finally, write a paragraph in which you make a claim about the most important decision, then defend your claim with reasons and evidence from the text.

Character Abbreviation Key:
Responding to Research

*Beating the Odds: Teaching Middle and High School Students to Read and Write Well*

by Judith Langer (http://cela.albany.edu)

**Feature One: Students learn skills and knowledge in multiple lesson types.**
- Provide overt, targeted instruction and review as models for peer and self-evaluation
- Teach skills, mechanics, or vocabulary that can be used during *integrated* activities such as literature discussions
- Use all three kinds of instruction to scaffold ways to think and discuss (e.g., summarizing, justifying answers, and making connections)

**Feature Two: Teachers integrate test preparations into instruction.**
- Analyze the demands of a test
- Identify connections to the standards and goals
- Design and align curriculum to meet the demands of the test
- Develop instructional strategies that enable students to build the necessary skills
- Ensure that skills are learned across the year and across grades
- Make overt connections between and among instructional strategies, tests, and current learning
- Develop and implement model lessons that integrate test preparation into the curriculum

**Feature Three: Teachers make connections across instruction, curriculum, grades, and life.**
- Make overt connections between and across the curriculum, students' lives, literature, and literacy
- Plan lessons that connect with each other, with test demands, and with students' growing knowledge and skills
- Develop goals and strategies that meet students' needs and are intrinsically connected to the larger curriculum
- Weave even unexpected intrusions into integrated experiences for students

**Feature Four: Students learn strategies for doing the work.**
- Provide rubrics that students review, use, and even develop
- Design models and guides that lead students to understand how to approach each task
- Supply prompts that support thinking

**Feature Five: Students are expected to be generative thinkers.**
- Explore texts from many points of view (e.g., social, historical, ethical, political, personal)
- Extend literary understanding beyond initial interpretations
- Research and discuss issues generated by literary texts and by student concerns
- Extend research questions beyond their original focus
- Develop ideas in writing that go beyond the superficial
- Write from different points of view
- Design follow-up lessons that cause students to move beyond their initial thinking

**Feature Six: Classrooms foster cognitive collaboration.**
- Students work in small and large groups to
  - Share their ideas and responses to literary texts, questions, etc.
  - Question and challenge each others' ideas and responses
  - Create new responses
- Teachers provide support during discussions and group work by
  - Moving from group to group
  - Modeling questions and comments that will cause deeper discussion and analysis
  - Encouraging questions and challenges that cause students to think more deeply
Elements of Effective Adolescent Literacy Instruction
Jim Burke

Research on adolescent literacy has identified certain common elements in effective adolescent literacy instruction. Drawing on a range of reports, articles, and books, as well as my own classroom practices, I offer the following recommendations for content area teachers intent on helping adolescents become better readers and writers.

What Teachers Do
- Provide direct, explicit comprehension instruction in which strategies to use, when to use them, and how to use them with a variety of types of text. Such strategies include summarizing, making inferences, evaluating importance, and visualizing.
- Embed effective instructional principles in the content so that students learn how to read, write, and think in ways specific to that subject area.
- Provide access to background knowledge—cultural literacy, vocabulary, personal experience—before, during, and after students read and write about a subject.
- Design opportunities for purposeful discussion. Examples might include literature circles, Socratic Seminar, or reciprocal teaching. Reciprocal teaching demands that students become the instructors in the following way: They work in groups of four, reading the assigned passage together, during which they make predictions, ask questions, clarify misunderstandings, and summarize what they learned, which they then share with the class through discussions.
- Assess and monitor students’ understanding informally as they go, teaching them also how to monitor their own understanding and performance.
- Embed test preparation into the curriculum in ways that deepen understanding of the material as well as improve such skills in the context of that subject area.
- Provide ample time for reading and literacy instruction. This means giving students the time they need to learn how to read the text and adequate time to actually read and understand it.
- Read aloud to students those passages that are difficult, modeling for them not only how to read the passage but how you make sense of it as you read.

What Students Do
- Write often and for different purposes. Students should write in ways that are specific to the types of writing common to school and work; but they should also use writing to think, explore, and understand what they are learning.
- Take notes when reading, letting the format and content be dictated by the reading purpose. Such structured note taking strategies as “Reporter’s Notes,” “Q Notes,” or “Summary Notes” provide additional support.
- Make connections between what students are reading and have read, between the text and their own experiences and knowledge of the world.
- Use graphic organizers and other such cognitive tools to develop students’ ability to evaluate, analyze, organize, and synthesize. Use these tools then as the basis for subsequent writing or discussion.
- Generate questions before, during, and after students read a text. Such questions might be personal (make connections), strategic (evaluating importance), or practical (following directions).
- Establish a clear, compelling purpose for their reading or writing that allows students to evaluate the importance of information and monitor their progress toward that goal.
- Engage in cognitive collaboration before, during, and after working with a text. Students may have assigned roles or be preparing to bring to the group their understanding. Students collaborate to make sense of a range of challenging texts and to convey that understanding.
Teaching Reading in the Content Areas

Presenter: Jim Burke

www.englishcompanion.com
The Second Coming
By W. B. Yeats

Turning and turning in the widening gyre
5 The falcon cannot hear the falconer;
Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,
The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere
The ceremony of innocence is drowned;
10 The best lack all conviction, while the worst
Are full of passionate intensity.

Surely some revelation is at hand;
Surely the Second Coming is at hand.
15 The Second Coming! Hardly are those words out
When a vast image out of Spiritus Mundi
Troubles my sight: somewhere in sands of the desert
A shape with lion body and the head of a man,
A gaze blank and pitiless as the sun,
20 Is moving its slow thighs, while all about it
Reel shadows of the indignant desert birds.
The darkness drops again; but now I know
That twenty centuries of stony sleep
Were vexed to nightmare by a rocking cradle,
25 And what rough beast, its hour come round at last,
Slouches towards Bethlehem to be born?
**Reading Process Worksheet**

**Directions** Use this sheet to adapt the reading process to your own class or one assignment in particular. Describe what *you* do during each stage of this process as well as what the students do.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Before</th>
<th>What the Student Does</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Set a purpose.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preview the text.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make a plan; choose a strategy or technique most appropriate to the task and text.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>During</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Read with a purpose.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connect what you do or read to other subjects you’ve studied, and to your own interests and experiences.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>After</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pause and reflect on what was important, what you learned, and what you still do not fully understand.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reread to clarify, connect, or examine more closely (e.g., for a different purpose).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remember what you read and learned so you can apply it or demonstrate your understanding of it (e.g., on an exam).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from *The Reader’s Handbook: A Student Guide for Reading and Learning* (Great Source, Burke, 2002)
### Reading Process Self-Evaluation

**BEFORE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Always</th>
<th>Usually</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I gather any materials (highlighter, notebook, stick notes, etc.) I might need.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. I choose a place without distractions to do my reading.</td>
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<td>3. Make sure I have a dictionary within reach.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. I go over any directions for the assigned reading.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. I preview (skim) the assignment to determine what it’s about, how long it will take me, and how hard it is.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. I make a plan for how to take notes based on the assignment.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. I generate a purpose question about the text</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. I make predictions about what I will read before beginning</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. I ask myself what I already know about this subject, this story, or this author.</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. I decide which reading strategy/strategies will be most useful.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**DURING**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Always</th>
<th>Usually</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Never</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11. I revisit my purpose and make sure I look for the information that will help me achieve it.</td>
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<tr>
<td>12. I make connections to myself, the world, and other texts/studies.</td>
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<tr>
<td>13. I identify the main idea and supporting details.</td>
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<tr>
<td>14. I use previous experience and background knowledge to understand new information about the subject or story.</td>
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<tr>
<td>15. I take notes, annotate the text, or highlight important details.</td>
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<tr>
<td>16. I keep a list of questions about things I do not understand.</td>
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<tr>
<td>17. I look up words I do not understand in the dictionary.</td>
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<tr>
<td>18. I summarize what I read (in my head and/or in my notes) as I go</td>
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<tr>
<td>19. I make predictions about what will happen.</td>
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<tr>
<td>20. I monitor my understanding as I go and stop to use various “fix up” strategies when I get confused.</td>
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<tr>
<td>21. I ask questions about what I read as I go.</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**AFTER**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Always</th>
<th>Usually</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>22. I stop and ask whether I know the answer to the purpose question I asked when I first began reading.</td>
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<tr>
<td>23. I reread all or part of the text to answer remaining questions, examine the author’s style, or review for tests.</td>
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<tr>
<td>24. I evaluate all that I read to determine what is most important to remember in the future (e.g., for tests, papers, discussions).</td>
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<tr>
<td>25. I use one or more strategies to help remember these details.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Reading Improvement Plan

Based on your evaluation above, make a plan for what you will do to improve your reading performance. In your plan, identify just those actions (3-5) that you can do immediately to get rapid results; then discuss how you accomplish your plan and why it will make a difference.

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Knowledge is power, and if you don't believe that, just ask "Dummy."

"Dummy" is Dr. Benjamin S. Carson, the director of pediatric neurosurgery at Johns Hopkins Hospital. He's a world renowned surgeon and the first person to separate Siamese twins connected at their heads. Yet, through the first five grades, the kids at his Detroit school knew him as "Dummy." Then he discovered how important knowledge is.

Born to a single teenage mom who worked two and three jobs as a domestic to keep the family afloat, Carson was constantly at the bottom rung of the academic ladder. By the time he was in the fifth grade, "Dummy" was firmly ensconced as his nickname. So his mother stepped in.

She didn't go to school to tackle the problem, however - she turned to her son. She heavily restricted his TV time and wouldn't let him go out to play until his homework was completed. More important, she insisted that Carson and his brother each read two books a week and write a report on them. The youngsters complied reluctantly.

"I thought it was very unfair," Carson said in a recent interview. "I thought it was unreasonable."

Although his mother placed a check mark on the reports after looking at them, it wasn't until later that Carson discovered she couldn't read. Still, her plan worked. In 18 months, Carson went from the bottom to the top of his class.

The turning point came when a science teacher asked a question about a rock on his desk. Having just read a book on geology, he was the only one who knew the answer.

"Before that, I felt everyone knew more than I did," he said. "I thought I wasn't very smart, and it sort of led to an attitude of 'why even bother?""
Learning from reading (as opposed to television or videos) made the difference, Carson maintains. "You actually have to work when you read, just as you have to work when you lift weights. You have to take letters and make them into words so you learn how to spell. You have to take words and make them into sentences so you learn grammar and syntax. And you have to take these sentences and translate them into concepts. You don't have to do that when you're watching television. The concepts are already developed for you, so you don't become creative."

His home environment was also crucial. "The family has the potential to be an anchor and an incredible source of strength, particularly for young people," Carson said. "Unfortunately, nowadays the family doesn't do that, and young people are seeking family elsewhere. And that's often their peers, which can be dangerous."

A positive environment, he feels, is important in the workplace as well. "It's a top-down kind of thing," he said. "The leader sets the tone. If he's a nice person, a courteous person, that tends to permeate throughout the organization. If the leader is someone who is self-centered, only interested in money, that tends to permeate as well."

Slow Rise

For Carson, learning to love reading was only part of the process. He also had a terrible temper and didn't control it. "I would go after people with baseball bats and rocks and sticks," he recalled. Once he tried to stab a classmate with a knife. Luckily, the student had on a large metal belt buckle that deflected the knife.

"It was terrifying to me," Carson recalled. "After I realized what I'd tried to do I locked myself in the bathroom. I started thinking about how out of control I was and how this mode of behavior was going to end with me in jail."

Desperate, he relied on his religious faith to see him through. "At that point, I was just overwhelmed by emotion, and fell to my knees and said, 'Lord you have to help me.' There was a Bible there and I spent three hours reading Proverbs, which has a lot of verses about anger. And I realized that lashing out was not a sign of strength, but a sign of weakness."

Even then, his upward rise wasn't always smooth. In the eighth grade, a teacher awarded him a certificate for academic excellence and then criticized the other students - all white - for allowing a black student to get better grades than they did.

"For the teacher, it was a foregone conclusion that the black kids were stupid," Carson said. "Almost all the black kids were in special ed classes, and it was inconceivable to her that I had the highest grade average. I didn't get angry. It only made me more determined to succeed."

That meant college, but finances were tight. So Carson searched hard for scholarships and part-time jobs.

One summer, he returned to Detroit only to find no jobs available. Confident that where there's a will there's a way, he went to the office of a local advertising executive who'd helped him when he applied and was accepted at Yale University. The executive called the personnel department and got Carson a job. Others were surprised he'd gone to the top of the company, but Carson figured that was the best place to start. "To me it was a matter of not going the same route as everyone else," he said.
Carson tries to keep everything in perspective. Often when he went into a patient's room as an intern, the nurse thought he was an orderly and treated him as an underling. He didn't react with anger.

"From her point of view, the only black men in scrubs she saw in the ward were (orderlies), so why shouldn't she think I was an orderly?" Carson said. "To me, that wasn't a sign of racism, but culturization. I saw it as an opportunity to point out how things had changed. And I always prefer to give people the benefit of the doubt."

He's No Quitter

His attitude doesn't let Carson consider giving up. He likes to note that the cleaning fluid Formula 409 got its name because there were 408 failures before the manufacturer found a successful combination. You learn from your mistakes, he says.

"As human beings, we're obviously not perfect, and we're always in the process of learning. When we try something the first time, it (might) not work out. But if we take something away each time, you get something from the experience."

Because of the risky nature of neurosurgery, Carson painstakingly analyzes each situation before heading for the operating room. Not only does he consider the patient, but he also asks himself if he's the best person to perform the surgery. "If someone else can do it better, has more experience in the procedure, I send the patient there. I won't get caught up in that ego game," he said.

He follows a strict routine before surgery. Even if it's a surgery he performs regularly, he'll study texts again and again. He prays for wisdom. "I'm never above admitting that I may forget something."

Keenly aware of the struggle it takes to achieve any goal, Carson tries to lend a hand to young people. He began the Carson Scholarship Fund in 1996, which awards $1,000 scholarships to children beginning in the fourth grade. They can win another $1,000 every year until they graduate from high school as along as they must maintain a 3.75 GPA and perform community service. There are currently 1,200 children in the program, available in many parts of the country.

For him, it's all about the kids.

"My greatest accomplishment is when I can walk into that waiting room and tell a mom and dad that their 3-year-old is awake and alert and asking for them," he said.

AFTER: Pause and respond to your PQ: Answer it (on a separate sheet of paper or on the back of this sheet if there is room). List the key qualities that led to the Carson’s success and explain how these led to (i.e., caused) his success. Finally, write a brief response based on your own thoughts. You might, for example, compare Carson, Bill Gates, the Wright brothers, and those people you think are successful.
Interactive Notes

**DIRECTIONS** Use Interactive Notes to help you read informational or literary texts. Interactive Notes guide you through a reading process to help you develop your ideas and express them in academic language. You may put questions, comments, connections, or favorite lines in any column. Then use the prompts (or create your own) to help you write.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BEFORE Prepare to Read</th>
<th>DURING Question and Comment</th>
<th>AFTER Summarize and Synthesize</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• List:</td>
<td>• I wonder why...</td>
<td>• Three important points/ideas are...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ title(s)</td>
<td>• What caused...</td>
<td>• These are important because...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ headings</td>
<td>• I think...</td>
<td>• What comes next...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ captions</td>
<td>• This is similar to...</td>
<td>• The author wants us to think...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ objectives</td>
<td>• This is important because...</td>
<td>• At this point the article/story is about...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ themes</td>
<td>• What do they mean by...</td>
<td>• I still don’t understand...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ words to know</td>
<td>• What I find confusing is...</td>
<td>• What interested me most was...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ask questions</td>
<td>• What will happen next is...</td>
<td>• The author’s purpose here is to...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Make predictions</td>
<td>• I can relate to this because...</td>
<td>• A good word to describe (e.g., this story’s tone) is...because...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Set a purpose</td>
<td>• This reminds me of...</td>
<td>• This idea/story is similar to...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Decide what matters most</td>
<td>• As I read, I keep wanting to ask...</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
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Core Skills

ASK QUESTIONS
- Who is involved?
- What are they doing? (Why?)
- What do they want very badly? (Why?)
- What is the situation or problem?
- Who is telling the story? (Why?)
- How is the story designed? (Why?)
- What is the source of tension?
- Can you trust the narrator?

MAKE CONNECTIONS
- I wonder why . . .
- What caused . . .
- I think . . .
- This is similar to . . .
- This is important because . . .
- This reminds me of . . .
- What I find confusing is . . .
- What will happen next is . . .
- I can relate to this because . . .

PREDICT
- What will happen next?
- Why do you think that?
- What effect will that have on the story or the characters?

SUMMARIZE
- What happened?
- What is essential to tell?
- What was the outcome?
- Who was involved?
- Why did this happen?
- Is that a detail or essential information?

STANDARDS/TEST CONNECTION
- The best word to describe the tone is . . .
- What device does the author use to . . .
- The writer organizes information: sequentially, spatially, comparatively . . .
- The main character feels/thinks . . .

SYNTHESIZE
- Three important points/ideas are . . .
- These are important because . . .
- What comes next . . .
- The author wants us to think . . .
- At this point the article/story is about . . .
- I still don’t understand . . .
- What interested me most was . . .
- This means that . . .

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- What interested me most was . . .
- This means that . . .
Reflective Reading Quiz

1. Generate five words that best describe ______________________ in ______________________.
   These should be words that capture not just what he does but why he does it; what he is like; and how he acts, thinks, and feels.

2. Evaluate those five words and choose the one word that best describes ______________________ in ______________________.

3. Generate a claim in which you apply that word to ______________________, explaining why this is the best word and providing examples from the text to illustrate and support what you say. Be sure to show how this word applies not only to what ______________________ is like but also to what he does (i.e., key actions or events) in ______________________.

4. Turn in your paragraph.

5. Get into groups, and using the words you generated for the quiz, begin a discussion about ______________________.

6. Evaluate all the different words people finally chose for their one word on the quiz. Then choose the one word your group will offer to the class as the single best word to describe ______________________.

7. Enter into a full class discussion guided by these words from step 6.
Discussion Cards

Before the Discussion

1. Complete the assigned reading (in or outside of class) and any related assignments.
2. On a 3 x 5 card, generate one discussion question that everyone would be able to respond to—even if they did not complete the assigned reading—but that connects to the text in a meaningful way.
   
   Example: How is it that one very small group can dominate another group that is ten times larger?
   On some level, does the dominated group have to give control to the controlling group?
   (This question relates to South Africa; Cry, the Beloved Country; and Lord of the Flies.)
3. Write your response thoughts on the back of the card.
4. Form groups of 4 to 8 participants, keeping your discussion cards in hand.

During the Discussion

5. In the new group, do a read-around of all the questions. Do not read the responses—just the question each person wrote down.
6. Choose two or three questions the group feels are especially useful (i.e., would ensure productive, meaningful discussion).
7. Appoint someone in the group to take notes (keep a record of your group’s ideas) during the discussion. Put everyone’s name at the top of this paper.
8. Discuss those questions, connecting when possible to the text you have been reading.
9. Choose one question from your two or three questions to offer to the full class for follow-up discussion. This should be your group’s best question, the one that will yield the best thinking and discussion from the full class.
10. As a class, read aloud the final questions from each group.
11. Engage in a full class discussion, beginning with one of those questions.
12. Connect the discussion to the text.
13. Ask if there are other ways to interpret a passage or see an event.

After the Discussion

14. Using your notes and new ideas from the class discussion, write a well-organized paragraph in which you summarize and respond to the text and the discussion.
15. Turn in all notes and evidence of your work.
## Reading: The Essential Rs

| Ready | • Set a purpose before reading  
• Prepare to read by accessing and acquiring essential background knowledge about events, genre, language  
• Generate questions—about the type of text, author’s purpose, topic—and make predictions to improve reading comprehension and analysis |
|---|---|
| Retell | • Summarize key details from the text  
• Evaluate which of the many details are important enough to include in your summary  
• Use your own words to improve comprehension even more |
| Respond | • Offer a critical response to the author’s perspective, characters’ actions, or key themes in the text  
• Analyze a particular aspect of the text and how it contributes to the author’s purpose or the meaning of the text  
• Provide a personal perspective on people, events, or ideas |
| Relate | • Connect this text to your own experiences with similar texts about this same idea or by this author  
• Compare this text’s or author’s ideas with those of other authors  
• Contrast ideas in this and other texts in one class to those studied in another subject area |
| Represent | • Draw or otherwise render through art those ideas important to the text  
• Graph or visually explain key ideas and connections within and between the texts  
• Perform or otherwise translate events or ideas in the text into actions or gestures  
• Translate the main ideas of the text into analogies, metaphors, similes |
| Reflect | • Take time before reading to consider which strategies work best for you when reading this type of text  
• Pause to examine how effective your approach is in light of your purpose  
• Consider after you finish what did and did not help you better understand the text in light of your purpose |
| Re-read | • Require students to go back through a text—or some part of it—with a new purpose in mind now that they are familiar with the text  
• Evaluate the extent to which you achieved your original purpose; then revisit those parts of the text that will help answer those questions you still cannot answer  
• Return to the text to read from a different, more critical perspective |
| Revise | • Ask students to reconsider their original predictions and purpose questions, revising their interpretations and predictions in light of new information  
• Use alternative strategies if those initially used proved ineffective |
While not representing a strict continuum or hierarchy, Ways of Reading describes how we read depending on our purpose. Which one we use—that is, how we read—depends on why we are reading.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Surface Reading</td>
<td>Surface reading is like rock-skipping at a lake: the reader touches down periodically but never goes below the surface to seek a deeper or even more complete understanding of the text. When finished, the reader can tell someone what the subject of the text is but not what it means.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close Reading</td>
<td>Close reading is like jumping in and swimming in the water. You read all the words and make a serious effort to understand the text, paying attention to organization and punctuation as they affect meaning. When finished, the reader can identify the subject of the text and what it means, but not how the author created the text or its effect on the reader.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical Reading</td>
<td>Critical reading means you are not just swimming in the water but studying it; you are a diver who has come to examine the ecosystem to better understand how it works and how the elements relate to each other. Critical readers examine not just what the writer says but how the writer says it; they look also at what the writer does not say but may imply through imagery, language, or organizational patterns. Critical readers examine the narrators’ reliability, arguments’ effectiveness, authors’ intentions, and stylistic devices. When finished, the reader knows the subject and meaning of the text, the author’s purpose, and how the author achieved that purpose.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflective Reading</td>
<td>Reflective reading is reading to think. Such reading involves some elements of both close and critical reading; yet it is different, for the reflective reader uses reading to think; thus the text is itself a tool. We do such reading when conducting research; it is akin to grazing in many pastures, digesting what we find there to see if it relates to or brings clarity to our subject of inquiry. It is also how one might read a sacred, literary, or philosophical text from which one sought insight and inspiration. When finished, the reader has some new insight—into themselves, the world, or a subject of serious interest—that will contribute to their academic research or personal inquiry.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concentric Reading</td>
<td>Concentric reading involves reading across other texts, moving out from an idea and making associations, connections to and through other texts. Carol Ann Tomlinson calls this “orbital reading.” Thus one might read a literary or historical text which leads to some other idea that can only be explored in a second text; there one finds ideas that lead the reader to still a third text, say one about the elements of effective argument. Many innovative thinkers read this way, making connections within their own and across other fields of study as one text suggests a new connection that the next text confirms and extends. When finished, the reader sees patterns and connections between texts, authors, disciplines, ideas, or eras.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dynamic Reading</td>
<td>Dynamic reading is what Judith Langer calls “envisionment building.” Langer writes that “understandings grow and change and spiral and become transmuted. And ideas we have at one point in time may be gone in another. We don’t merely add information. I use the term envisionment to refer to the world of understanding we have at one point in time, when we are reading, writing, or thinking…. Envisionments are always in a state of change, as new ideas, information or experiences come to mind—even after you have completed the overt literary experience.” (CELA English Update Spring 2003) When finished, readers understand that they are not finished, that their understanding of the text and its subject continues to change depending on their purpose, experience, and knowledge. One enters into a conversation with and through the text that is ongoing so long as the reader maintains a relationship with the text and its subject.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here are some other ways to think about how we read. The top row represents readings that remain—in one respect or another—on the surface level; the deliberate and effective use of active reading techniques and strategies allows readers to “build envisionments” as Langer calls them, of greater sophistication.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Surface</th>
<th>Denotative</th>
<th>Literal</th>
<th>Concrete</th>
<th>Terminal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Deep</td>
<td>Connotative</td>
<td>Figurative</td>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>Generative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What to Do</td>
<td>How and Why to Do It</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| **Mark up the Text (Annotate)** | Reading with a pencil in your hand transforms you into a reader looking for something to mark; the pencil demands that you constantly evaluate the importance of the information as you read, checking each idea to see how it relates to your reading purpose. Use these different tools and techniques to make you a more interactive reader:  
  • **Highlighter:** Highlighters are useful when you want to color code certain aspects of the text. The problem with using them as a general highlighting tool is that you often don’t remember why you highlighted the words later on—like when you review for finals.  
  • **Pencil:** Offers several advantages, including the fact that it can be erased. Underline no more than you need—key terms, important phrases—but as much as you should. Explain in the margin why you underlined words/phrases. Create your own codes or abbreviations for more efficient note-taking.  
  • **Sticky Notes:** A useful variation on annotating the text with pencil since you cannot always write on the pages of your textbook. Simply keep a pad of 3 x 3 sticky notes handy. When you find an important passage, put in a sticky note to explain its importance or how you might use it in an essay. Another useful trick: in a difficult book, stop after each section or chapter and explain on the sticky note what the last section was about. If you get stuck, put a sticky note on the exact place where you got confused and explain what makes it hard to understand. This self-diagnosis develops your ability to monitor and fix up your own problems.  
  • **Mental Annotations:** When reading, keep a running conversation in your head about what you would underline if you were annotating the text; this keeps you attentive and reminds you that you are reading the text for a purpose.                                                                                                                                 |
| **Ask Questions**         | Asking questions is one of the most important habits for any reader to develop. Direct questions at the author, the characters, yourself, or the text itself. Which questions you ask will depend on why you are reading the text in the first place. Thus your first question is always, “Why am I reading this?” Here are a few examples of other questions you might ask:  
  • What does this word mean in this context?  
  • Why does the author include this scene or detail?  
  • What does the character want most of all?  
  • How does this text relate to others we have read (or to our studies about the Holocaust History?)  
  • What was I trying to learn by reading this? Did I learn it? If not, which part should I reread?                                                                                                                                 |
| **Monitor Understanding: Keep Track** | You absorb so much information as you read. You must create a system, use some strategy or tool to help you keep track of what happens to whom and when. By keeping track of these details you become a more attentive, active reader, one who will be more likely to remember the important details later when you must take a test, write a paper, or participate in a class discussion about the text. Most graphic or note taking strategies will help, but here’s a few that are very effective: Q Notes, Episodic Notes, Timeline Notes, Reporter’s Notes.                                                                                                                                 |
| **Comment and Connect**   | We read about others’ thoughts and experiences to better understand our own. Enter into conversation with the author, the characters—the text. Comment on what they do, say, feel, or think; agree or disagree as you wish; such interactions help you connect what you read to your own ideas and experiences. When possible, ask how a character, author, or text connects to others you have read or read about in this or other classes.                                                                                                                                 |
| **Use Your Senses**       | Authors, especially those writing narrative, pack their work with sensory details. Ignoring these details is like watching a movie with the sound turned off and your back to the screen. Bring the text to life and improve your understanding of it by doing any of the following:  
  • **See the Text:** use visualization techniques—drawing, acting it out, etc.—to help you see what you are reading.  
  • **Listen to the Text:** Good readers use their ears as often as their eyes to read. Read aloud or develop your capacity to hear what you read; cultivate the “voice inside your head.”  
  • **Use Sensory Notes:** This note-taking tool forces readers not only to look for sensory details but to evaluate them and identify the details that are most important to the story’s meaning.                                                                                                                                 |
| **Predict the Future**    | Good readers interact with what they read, arguing with the characters and authors, saying to themselves, “How can you do that?” They also constantly make predictions, speculating about what will happen next. Develop this habit further by using such questions as:  
  • What will happen next? Why do I think that? What effect would that have on the story?  
  • What are some different possible endings to this situation or story? Which one is the author most likely to choose—and why? Which do I think is the most appropriate—and why?                                                                                                                                 |
| **Talk it Out**           | Literary conversations are one of the best parts of reading a good book: We can’t wait to tell others what we think about the book, or to hear what they have to say. Have students talk before, during, and after they read a text to help them process the text’s ideas and their responses. Literature Circles are one option; using tools to prepare for discussions (e.g., Article Notes) is another. One other variation is to have someone play the role of the author or a character in the story and talk as that person to the class; such a class might, for example, treat the author as a visiting guest whom they can interview.                                                                                                                                 |
**Visualizing Strategies: Reading Is Seeing**

**Use Visualizing when:**
- The text is difficult, in particular because it is abstract or hard to follow.
- Students struggle to see how the information or text is organized.
- Students find the material vague or foreign; lack of exposure or knowledge makes it hard to imagine what they are reading (e.g., ancient texts like Homer’s *Odyssey*).
- You want to provide students an alternative way to make sense of and respond to what they read, particularly with more spatial, visual abilities.

| **Draw the Text** | Using the actual words from the text as your guidelines, translate the text into a drawing to help you see what it looks like, what is happening.  
**Example:** In Homer’s *Odyssey*, he describes the hall in which the suitors gather; yet it is so foreign to our experience. Draw the hall in precise detail, using each sentence in the section as a checklist of what to include, how to arrange it, and what it looks like. |
| **Sensory Notes** | Create a page with columns for the different senses (e.g., sounds, smells, etc.). As you read, write down any sensory details the text includes. When finished reading the selection, use those details to write a description of the scene that will show you understand what you read and help you see what it looks like and thus better visualize what you read. Students can also use this list of details to analyze the author’s style.  
**Example:** In *Tale of Two Cities*, Dickens uses abundant sensory detail to help readers see and sense the London of his era was like and how its people lived and looked. |
| **Visual Explanation** | Use some sort of symbolic means of representing movement and connections. One possibility is to envision those complex diagrams football coaches draw to show who is going where and doing what on a given football play.  
**Example:** In *Julius Caesar*, Cassius is left standing alone at the end of act one. Throughout the act, however, he is everywhere, talking to everyone. Using a set of dots somewhat like billiard balls that have an initial for each character in them (e.g., © for Cassius), show how Cassius moves through the act, then explain what it means that he stands alone at the end of the first act. |
| **Perform the Text** | Whether role playing a scene or creating a tableau to represent a moment, students create a physical, visible performance that corresponds with the text.  
**Example:** When reading *Lord of the Flies*, place everyone in formation to show the different dynamics in the opening scene as Jack enters and towers over Ralph who is blinded by the sun and impressed by the boy “who knows his own mind.” |
| **Compare the Text** | Comparing what you do not understand to what you *do* understand helps to create a visual sense of comparison.  
**Example:** Thus if you say, “Gatsby is like a grown up Holden Caulfield,” you might better understand the text. |
| **Recast the Text** | Recasting a written text into a movie script or even a poem can sometimes help you better understand it by thinking about it and working with it in a different, more visual genre.  
**Example:** Describe the battle scenes from *Odyssey* as Speilberg would the opening scene from *Saving Private Ryan* on D-Day in WW II. |

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School-Wide Reading Improvement
For school-wide reading improvement to occur, the following conditions must exist
- Conception
- Commitment
- Consistency
- Content

Conception You cannot work toward or hope to achieve improvement if you do not know what you are trying to accomplish. Conception answers the question, "What does the program we want to create look like?" You can answer this question by several routes, including:
  - Reading about other schools' programs
  - Visiting (online or in person) other places with programs similar to yours
  - Generating ideas among yourselves until a clear conception begins to emerge; then seeking additional support or guidance from others with previous experience
  - Using data to create an accurate conception and using multiple sources of data throughout the program to make decisions about instruction and the program.

Commitment No program will work if the teachers and administration are not genuinely committed to the program. Ideally such commitment would extend beyond the school to include parents and the community. Commitment is evident when:
  - Teachers receive training they need to succeed
  - Teachers have, and know how to use, the necessary resources
  - Teachers use the same core strategies and tools across subject areas
  - Teachers have time to learn from each other about what works and why
  - A school sustains its commitment to the program over time
  - Community agencies and members contribute materials, expertise, and support

Consistency Students learn from six teachers in as many subject areas each day. Consistency means teachers and students use the same terms and techniques in all subject areas so students can focus on learning content, not what each teacher means when they use a term. Consistency exists when:
  - All teachers use the same terms to refer to the same tools or techniques.
  - If, for example, the school has adopted "Q Notes" as one of its core note-taking techniques, this is the term that students and teachers use.
  - Teachers use the same techniques in similar, complementary ways.
  - Teachers evaluate the students’ use of techniques by the same criteria.

Content Engaging, challenging content remains at the heart of any effective instructional program. Successful school-wide programs embed the skills and related strategy instruction in the curriculum to support both teacher and student, allowing one to accomplish what the other asks. Thus the focus remains on learning skills and strategies within the context of the content of the course. As these skills and strategies are, however, an integral part of the course, teachers also:
  - Model the effective use of the techniques when applying them to new or more difficult course content.
  - Monitor students' use of the techniques, especially struggling readers, and suggest alternative strategies or ways to improve their use of the current one.
  - Discuss which strategy a student used on a given assignment in order to make them and others more aware of how the strategy can be used.
  - Use student performance data on content assessments to measure and improve effectiveness of the skills and strategies.
Teaching with Tools

Presenter: Jim Burke

www.englishcompanion.com
Teaching with Tools: An Overview

Tools include, but are not limited to:

**Words**
- Individual words
- Sentences/Statements
- Passages
- Texts
- Questions

**Images**
- Painting/Sculpture
- Photographic
- Advertisements
- Film/Video
- Multimedia

**Graphic Organizers**
- Thinking Maps
- Graphic Organizers
- Advance Organizers
- Structured Notes

**Visual Explanations**
- Diagrams
- Graphs
- Charts
- Shapes

Research says that effective use of tools:

- Helps struggling students and those with special needs by providing structure and support
- Supports English Learners by helping them see how information is organized and giving them a more visual means of understanding or conveying ideas
- Increases engagement by providing ways for cognitive collaboration on academic tasks
- Achieves more sophisticated thinking by asking students to analyze, organize, and synthesize
- Improves comprehension by allowing students to analyze text structure and connections
- Enhances memory through organization of information
- Promotes generative thinking and scaffolding
- Stimulates the brain by activating the brain’s need to impose order and find patterns

Teachers use tools effectively when they use them:

- Before, during, and after a primary activity such as reading
- With individuals, pairs, groups, and the full class as appropriate
- To generate, organize, analyze, and synthesize
- To prepare to read, write, speak, or learn
- To create organization on information that lacks order
- *Not as* the end but a means for the learning
- Demonstrate for students how to use them
- Not automatically but when it is efficient and appropriate
- For all but especially English Learners and those with learning differences
- In ways that allow for metacognitive processing of their learning from and use of tools
MySpace.com article
The siren call of myspace.com

Do you MySpace? A growing number of South Sound teens use the Web site to express themselves and meet friends, but some adults worry about their sharing personal information.

By DEBBY ABE
The News Tribune

Eighteen-year-old Aaron VanMeer's daily routine goes something like this: Get home from school, grab a snack and slide in front of the family computer for his daily fix.

He's just gotta log on to MySpace.com, the Web site where millions of teens and young adults gather to socialize.

For an hour - OK, maybe three or four sometimes - the Puyallup High School senior sends messages to some of the 149 friends listed on his site, tinkers with his site profile and surfs through other MySpace pages.

“This Web site is pretty important to me and my friends’ social lives. . . . It’s an unphysical way of hanging out,” he said. “It’s probably the first and last thing I do each and every night.”

MySpace.com, along with similar sites, has exploded into a social necessity for more and more young people in the South Sound and across the country.

The free site allows members to create a personal Web page, called a profile, describing themselves and their interests.

Users can send e-mail and instant messages, and post music samples, snapshots and blogs by themselves and friends. They can download music, talk to local and national band members, meet people and join online groups to ramble about topics as diverse as scrapbooking, music from the ‘90s or surviving cancer.

Yet for all the enthusiasm the site generates, it’s also raising concerns among some parents and causing headaches for schools.

Parents wonder about the safety and content of the site, where tech-savvy kids spend hours each day communicating in the anonymity of cyberspace.

“The fact you don’t know who you’re meeting on there is kind of scary,” said Bonney Lake resident Kim Halter, whose 14-year-old son recently joined MySpace. “It makes him happy, so I hate to just cut him off. I do watch him and limit the time he’s on there.”

Meanwhile, high schools are starting to see spillover effects from the site now that such a mass of teens has a forum to communicate with electronic speed.

“www.MySpace.com has hit schools with a vengeance,” said Jim Boyce, dean of student affairs at White River High School in Buckley. “We have seen a very negative impact with MySpace.com as students from our school and others use it for negative purposes such as threats, harassment and malicious gossip.”

Massive popularity
Launched in January 2004, MySpace.com counts more than 46 million members. In November, an Internet measurement service found MySpace was the third-most-viewed site on the Internet in terms of total page views, out-ranking Google and eBay.

The site is open to anyone 14 or older, and advertisers use the site to reach 16- to 34-year-olds, according to information forwarded by Rena Grant with Edelman public relations firm for MySpace.

VanMeer, the high school senior, speculates most students at Puyallup High have a MySpace account. A quick search on the site found more than 900 users who say they attend the 1,650-student school.

Samantha Smith, a 15-year-old Curtis High School sophomore in University Place, says one of the most commonly asked questions when meeting another teen these days is “Do you have a MySpace?”

“Most of my friends at school are on it,” she said.

If anything, users say one of the site’s biggest downsides is too much MySpace.
“It pretty much is ruining my life because I’m constantly check-
ing on it at work, at home, you name it,” said Travis Noble, 19, a
Pierce College student who estimates he spends up to six hours a
day on the site. “It’s such a time-
waster. You spend your time on
there instead of doing things you
should be doing.”

University of Washington sociol-
ogy professor and author Pepper
Schwartz sees MySpace and similar
social networking sites as a means
to connect people in new ways and
to maintain less intense relation-
ships across distance and time.
It also feeds peoples’ desires to
be a star.
“This allows you to be on the
Web and to have your own page,”
she said. “People like to read about
their friends, their hobbies. We’re
interested in ourselves and others.”

MySpace pages are as unique as
each individual. Some feature girls’
dreams of the perfect date, photos
of favorite actors and screen back-
grounds decorated with hearts.
Others include photos of 16-
year-olds mugging next to half-
empty bottles of beer. Raunchier
profiles ooze lewd and profane
language and display snapshots of
barely clothed women.
All sites contain thumbnail pho-
tos of virtual “friends” - MySpace
users who’ve requested or been
asked to join the member’s friends
list, enabling them to exchange e-
mail and post messages on each
others’ sites.
Not all users are enamored with
the site.

Travis Collett, 17, occasionally
uses his MySpace account, but he
said, “Most of the people in
advanced placement classes (at
Tacoma’s Wilson High School)
don’t have them. A lot of them
think it’s ridiculous, it’s an atten-
tion-getter. I think it’s a teenage
girl thing.”

Schools, parents worry
Parent concerns have grown
amid national media reports of
problems at schools over informa-
tion posted on MySpace sites or
isolated cases of men assaulting or
starting sexual relationships with
underage girls they’ve met through
the site.
In Graham, Claudia Chapman
limits her 15-year-old daughter,
Dani Clark, to chatting with known
friends. Dani also must give
Chapman her password, let her
mom check her site profile and sit
at the computer when the teen
chats online.
“I’ve heard so much bad stuff
about MySpace,” Chapman said.
“Predators . . . can come in and act
like a high schooler. Unless we
know who they are, there’s blocked
access to her. I don’t want her to
become a statistic.”
Dani says her friends would flip
out if their parents were as strict,
but she doesn’t mind.
“I understand my mom’s trying
to watch out for me,” the Graham
Kapowsin High sophomore said.
“That’s the one thing my mom and
I can do, is play on the computer.”
The Washington State Patrol’s
Missing and Exploited Children
Task Force began working on its
first MySpace case a couple of
weeks ago by posing as a teenager
with a site, said Detective Sgt. Dan
Sharp, who supervises the task
force.
“We’ve noticed how the lan-
guage and chatting in there is very
sexual in nature,” Sharp said.
“Then we received a profile of an
adult advertising himself as being
over the age of 18, and his lan-
guage was sexual in nature.”
Preteens and adults alike should
remember that personal informa-
tion they post and discuss on
MySpace can go to anyone on the
Internet, including predators or
pornographers, Sharp said.
He advises against placing a
name, age, address, school, per-
sonal photo or other identifying
information anywhere on the Web.
When a News Tribune reporter
asked MySpace.com about safety
concerns, the company’s public
relations firm referred to the site’s
safety tips area and provided a
news release about its partnership
with wiredsafety.org to create a
safer site.
MySpace.com lists extensive
safety tips, and the news release
said the site has algorithms, spe-
cially designed software and staff
to monitor the site for rule viola-
tors and underage users.
“If we find out a user is under
14, we will delete his or her pro-
file,” the safety tips say.
The list tells parents how to
remove information from their
child’s site or delete the profile
altogether. MySpace profiles also
can be set so that users must approve who can view their site and send them e-mail.

Many teen users say they take care to avoid problems.

Jill Nguyen, an 18-year-old Foss High School senior, says she made up some of her profile details both as a joke and to keep from giving out too much personal information. She uses the site to communicate with friends, not meet new people.

“I don’t think it’s that dangerous,” she said of MySpace, “but you should always be cautious.”

**Difficult to police**

Aside from attracting predators, MySpace, like any type of online communication, can lead to misunderstandings and become a technological monster.

Although most schools attempt to block the site from appearing on school computers, students often find ways to enter.

Mount Tahoma High commercial design teacher Lisa-Marie McDonald said students constantly try to sneak onto MySpace on one of the 30 computers in her room. Sometimes, they’re successful.

If she catches them on the site twice, she bans them from her class computers for the rest of the quarter.

“It’s the hugest problem I have,” McDonald said.

Meanwhile, at White River High, administrators have intervened to prevent disagreements over what’s written on MySpace blogs from escalating into something serious, said Boyce, the dean of student affairs.

“Put yourself in a teenager’s shoes. Someone writes in and says ‘Jim Boyce is blah blah blah.’ You’d write in and say ‘no he isn’t.’ Another person would say ‘you shut up.’ That would happen at a school in the course of a day, but it doesn’t have the speed of the Internet.”

At Curtis High in University Place, administrators have asked students to remove two inappropriate photos posted on MySpace profiles in the past year, said associate principal David Hammond.

In one case, three cheerleaders wearing their Curtis outfits were photographed playfully spanking the backside of a fourth uniformed cheerleader, who was bent over to receive the swats.

In the other case, a boy took a camera-phone photo of a teacher, and posted the picture and inappropriate comments about the teacher on his MySpace site, Hammond said.

While schools generally can’t dictate what content students put on personal sites outside school, Hammond said they can impose discipline if the content leads to threats or violence at school.

With the less-serious Curtis cases, administrators talked with the students and their parents, and the students voluntarily removed the photos, he said.

Despite the concerns about MySpace and similar sites, neither the school administrators nor Detective Sharp suggest banning teens from using MySpace.

Instead, they say young users need to learn about Internet hazards and parents need to monitor their computer use.

“I’m confident with some education, kids will do just fine,” Boyce said. “It’s up to parents and educators to help them become aware.”
Ask yourself what the focus of your paper, discussion, or inquiry is. Is it a character, a theme, an idea, a trend, or a place? Then examine it from four different perspectives, or identify four different aspects of the topic. Once you have identified the four areas, find and list any appropriate quotations, examples, evidence, or details.
Dear Sen. Clinton:

I'm writing to commend you for calling for a $90-million study on the effects of video games on children, and in particular the courageous stand you have taken in recent weeks against the notorious "Grand Theft Auto" series.

I'd like to draw your attention to another game whose nonstop violence and hostility has captured the attention of millions of kids — a game that instills aggressive thoughts in the minds of its players, some of whom have gone on to commit real-world acts of violence and sexual assault after playing.

I'm talking, of course, about high school football.

I know a congressional investigation into football won't play so well with those crucial swing voters, but it makes about as much sense as an investigation into the pressing issue that is Xbox and PlayStation 2.

Your current concern is over explicit sex in "Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas." Yet there's not much to investigate, is there? It should get rated appropriately, and that's that. But there's more to your proposed study: You want to examine how video games shape children's values and cognitive development.

Kids have always played games. A hundred years ago they were playing stickball and kick the can; now they're playing "World of Warcraft," "Halo 2" and "Madden 2005." And parents have to drag their kids away from the games to get them to do their algebra homework, but parents have been dragging kids away from whatever the kids were into since the dawn of civilization.

So any sensible investigation into video games must ask the "compared to what" question. If the alternative to playing "Halo 2" is reading "The Portrait of a Lady," then of course "The Portrait of a Lady" is better for you. But it's not as though kids have been reading Henry James for 100 years and then suddenly dropped him for Pokemon.

Another key question: Of all the games that kids play, which ones require the most mental exertion? Parents can play this at home: Try a few rounds of Monopoly or Go Fish with your kids, and see who wins. I suspect most families will find that it's a relatively even match. Then sit down and try to play "Halo 2" with the kids. You'll be lucky if you survive 10 minutes.

The great secret of today's video games that has been lost in the moral panic over "Grand Theft Auto" is how difficult the games have become. That difficulty is not merely a question of hand-eye coordination; most of today's games force kids to learn complex rule systems, master challenging new interfaces, follow dozens of shifting variables in real time and prioritize...
between multiple objectives.

In short, precisely the sorts of skills that they're going to need in the digital workplace of tomorrow.

Consider this one fascinating trend among teenagers: They're spending less time watching professional sports and more time simulating those sports on Xbox or PlayStation. Now, which activity challenges the mind more — sitting around rooting for the Packers, or managing an entire football franchise through a season of "Madden 2005": calling plays, setting lineups, trading players and negotiating contracts? Which challenges the mind more — zoning out to the lives of fictional characters on a televised soap opera, or actively managing the lives of dozens of virtual characters in a game such as "The Sims"?

On to the issue of aggression, and what causes it in kids, especially teenage boys. Congress should be interested in the facts: The last 10 years have seen the release of many popular violent games, including "Quake" and "Grand Theft Auto"; that period has also seen the most dramatic drop in violent crime in recent memory. According to Duke University's Child Well-Being Index, today's kids are less violent than kids have been at any time since the study began in 1975. Perhaps, Sen. Clinton, your investigation should explore the theory that violent games function as a safety valve, letting children explore their natural aggression without acting it out in the real world.

Many juvenile crimes — such as the carjacking that is so central to "Grand Theft Auto" — are conventionally described as "thrill-seeking" crimes. Isn't it possible that kids no longer need real-world environments to get those thrills, now that the games simulate them so vividly? The national carjacking rate has dropped substantially since "Grand Theft Auto" came out. Isn't it conceivable that the would-be carjackers are now getting their thrills on the screen instead of the street?

Crime statistics are not the only sign that today's gaming generation is doing much better than the generation raised during the last cultural panic — over rock 'n' roll. Math SAT scores have never been higher; verbal scores have been climbing steadily for the last five years; nearly every indicator in the Department of Education study known as the Nation's Report Card is higher now than when the study was implemented in 1971.

By almost every measure, the kids are all right.

Of course, I admit that there's one charge against video games that is a slam dunk. Kids don't get physical exercise when they play a video game, and indeed the rise in obesity among younger people is a serious issue. But, of course, you don't get exercise from doing homework either.
## Claim
What is the main point you will argue?

## Reason
Why should readers accept your claim?

## Evidence
- Facts
- Figures
- Statistics
- Observations

## Acknowledge & Respond
to other perspectives on the subject
Use these “signal words” when writing your paragraph:

**CONTRAST**
- although
- but
- however
- on the other hand
- yet
- even though
- still
- while
- despite
- on the contrary
- in contrast
- regardless
- though
- nonetheless
- instead

**COMPARE**
- again
- also
- similarly
- likewise

**EXAMPLES**
- for example
- indeed
- such as
- after all
- even
- in fact
- for instance

**Subject:**

**Main Idea (What you say about the subject):**

**Paragraph (continue on the back of this page):**
Reading: Think About It!

Thinking about how you read
- I was distracted by...
- I started to think about...
- I got stuck when...
- I was confused/focused today because...
- One strategy I used to help me read this better was...
- When I got distracted, I tried to refocus myself by...
- Those word(s) or phrases were new/interesting to me... I think they mean...
- When reading, I should...
- When I read today, I realized that...
- I had a hard time understanding...
- I’ll read better next time if...

Thinking about what you read
- Why does the character/author...
- Why doesn’t the character/author...
- What surprised me most was...
- I predict that...
- This author’s writing style is...
- I noted that the author uses...
- The main character is/\...
- If I could, I’d ask the character/author...
- The most interesting event/idea in this book is...
- I realized...
- The main conflict/idea in this book is...
- I wonder why...
- One theme that keeps coming up is...
- I found the following quote interesting...
- I learned from this book because...

Elaborating on what you think
- I think ________ because...
- A good example of ________ is...
- This reminded me of ________ because...
- This was important because...
- One thing that surprised me was ________ because I always thought...
- The author is saying that...

Core Skills

ASK QUESTIONS
- Who is involved?
- What are they doing? (Why?)
- What do they want very badly? (Why?)
- What is the situation or problem?
- Who is telling the story? (Why?)
- How is the story designed? (Why?)
- What is the source of tension?
- Can you trust the narrator?

MAKE CONNECTIONS
- I wonder why...
- What caused...
- I think...
- This is similar to...
- This is important because...
- This reminds me of...
- What I find confusing is...
- What will happen next is...
- I can relate to this because...

PREDICT
- What will happen next?
- Why do you think that?
- What effect will that have on the story or the characters?

SUMMARIZE
- What happened?
- What is essential to tell?
- What was the outcome?
- Who was involved?
- Why did this happen?
- Is that a detail or essential information?

STANDARDS/TEST CONNECTION
- The best word to describe the tone is...
- What device does the author use to...
- The writer organizes information: sequentially, spatially, comparatively...
- The main character feels/thinks...

SYNTHESIZE
- Three important points/ideas are...
- These are important because...
- What comes next...
- The author wants us to think...
- At this point, the article/story is about...
- I still don’t understand...
- What interested me most was...
- This means that...

Character Card

Useful Literary Terms
- allusion
- analogy
- antagonist
- character
- conflict
- convention(s)
- diction
- exposition
- imagery
- irony
- motif
- narrator
- persona
- plot
- point of view
- protagonist
- setting
- theme(s)
- tone
- voice

Literature Circle Roles

Discussion Director/Illuminator Questions
- What were you thinking about as you read?
- What did the text make you think about?
- What do you think this text/passage was about?
- How might others think about this text/passage?
- What would you ask the writer if you could?
- What are the most important ideas/moments?
- What do you think will happen next—and why?
- What was the most important change in this section?

Illustrator Questions
- Ask your group, “What does this picture mean?”
- Why did you choose this scene to illustrate?
- How does this drawing relate to the story?
- Why did you choose to draw it this way?
- What is the focus of this picture?
- What did drawing it help you see?
- What do you think this drawing makes you think about?
- What are you trying to accomplish in this drawing?

Connector Questions
- What connections can you make to your own life?
- What/who else could you compare this story to?
- What other books might you compare to this one?
- What is the most interesting or important connection?
- How does this section relate to the ones before it?

Word Watcher Questions
- Which words are used frequently?
- Which words are used in unusual ways?
- What words seem to have special meaning?
- What do you wonder about?
- What part of speech is this word?
- What is the connotative meaning of this word?
- What is the denotative meaning of this word?

Summarizer Questions
- What are the most important events in the section?
- What makes them so important?
- How do these events affect the plot of the characters?
- What changes did you notice when you read?
- What questions about this might appear on an exam?
- What might be a good essay topic for this section?
Character Arc

Name: ___________________________    Period: __________________    Date: ______________

Characters change over the course of a story; at least the important characters do. But how do they change—and why? We should also ask which of the changes is most important—and why it is so important. Use this tool (and these questions) to analyze how the character changes over the course of the story. Identify key moments in the story that change the character along the way. What caused the changes? Do the changes align with the theme of the story?

PART ONE: ANALYZE

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<th>Adjectives or Nouns</th>
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<td>End</td>
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PART TWO: SYNTHESIZE

Use your notes and ideas from Part One to help you write a paragraph in which you synthesize the character’s changes and the causes and significance of those changes. Be sure your paragraph has a claim, organizes the information effectively, and provides specific examples that illustrate and support your claim.

Directions:

Use your notes and ideas from Part One to help you write a paragraph in which you synthesize the character’s changes and the causes and significance of those changes.
Suggestions for Use: Use this Decision Tree diagram to examine the possible outcomes of different decisions. You might consider the different consequences of a character's possible choices, or you might consider how it would change the story to tell it from different points of view. In Health, History, or Business, you might consider the ramifications of different choices. Provide arguments for and against each decision.
**Stages of Life**

Overview

Life falls into distinct stages, each one different from the next. This assignment asks you to identify these different stages, describe each one, and gather examples from the literature you are reading and your own life. Using your model as a guide, you should then write a short explanation of your model as outlined below.

Requirements

Each of you must:

- Work with your group to determine the stages of life and represent your ideas in some visual form.
- Include in your model the stages, descriptions, and examples from the literature and life in general.
- Present your model to the class.
- Write a well-organized page summarizing your model with details from both the book and your own life and experience.

Steps

Complete each of the following:

1. Generate a list of the different stages into which you think life falls.
2. Describe each stage: duration and details.
3. Identify the causes and effects of the transition from one stage to the next (i.e., what *causes* someone to move from one stage to another, and what is the *effect* of this change on them?)
4. Gather examples from the literature you are studying and life in general to illustrate each stage in your model.
5. Organize your stages and details into a visual model which could, but does not have to, resemble the diagram included here.
6. Present your model to the class as part of our discussion of life’s stages and how they apply to the literature.
7. Write a one-page paper explaining your model. It should have a clear **topic sentence** (focus); **transitions** to organize your ideas into the different stages; and **details** (descriptions and examples) that develop your ideas.
PYRAMID OF HATE

Genocide
The deliberate, systematic extermination of an entire people

Violence
Against People
- Threats
- Assault
- Terrorism
- Murder

Against Property
- Arson
- Desecration (violating the sanctity of a house of worship or a cemetery)

Discrimination
- Employment Discrimination
- Housing Discrimination
- Educational Discrimination
- Harassment (hostile acts based on a person’s race, religion, nationality, sexual orientation or gender)

Acts of Prejudice
- Name Calling
- Social Avoidance
- Not Challenging Belittling Jokes
- Telling Belittling Jokes

Prejudiced Attitudes
- Accepting Stereotypes
- Social Exclusion
- Scapegoating (assigning blame to people because of their group identity)

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You will find links to each book, program, or report on my website: www.englishcompanion.com. Also, a link to the handouts for today’s workshop is on the homepage of the website for easy access and to share these resources with colleagues in your school or department.

Books by Jim Burke

Heinemann (www.heinemann.com) and (www.50essentiallessons.com)
- ACCESSing School: Teaching Struggling Readers to Achieve Academic and Personal Success (2005)
- The Teacher’s Daybook: Time to Teach • Time to Learn • Time to Live (2005)
- School Smarts: Teaching the Four Cs of Academic Success (2004)
- Tools for Thought: Graphic Organizers for Your Classroom (2002)
- Illuminating Texts: How to Teach Students to Read the World (2001)
- I Hear America Reading: Why We Read • What We Read (1999)

First Choice Education Group (www.curriculumassociates.com)
- Academic Workout: Reading and Language Arts Grades 6-8 (2006)
- Academic Workout: Reading and Language Arts Grades 9-10 (2007)

Great Source Education Group (www.greatsource.com)

Scholastic (www.scholastic.com)
- The Teacher’s Essential Guide to Classroom Management (November 2007)
- The Teacher’s Essential Guide to Effective Instruction (Spring 2008)
- The Teacher’s Essential Guide to Writing (Fall 2008)

Holt McDougal (http://www.mcdougallittell.com/ml/)
- Literature (English Language Arts series, 6-12, 2008)