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Reading

Strategically

FOCUSING ON WHAT GOOD READERS DO, AND BUILDING A COMMUNITY OF EFFECTIVE READING TEACHERS!

“I have a passion for teaching kids to become readers, to become comfortable with a book, not daunted. Books shouldn't be daunting, they should be funny, exciting and wonderful; and learning to be a reader gives a terrific advantage.”
-Roald Dahl

Helping Your Students Become More Competent Readers

One strategy we can use as teachers to help our students become more competent readers is to encourage them to synthesize and analyze what they have read. One way of assessing whether or not our students comprehend

their reading is to have them display their comprehension of the text using pictures. I was given the opportunity to do just that in one of my graduate courses. After reading the book Tears of a Tiger, I chose two photos to represent two



The two pictures above represent the following themes: courage to persevere in spite of difficulties (the black room with the white door) and knowing your own strength in spite of adversity (white tiger).

Andy said in the story that he felt like he was in a “dark, closed room, with invisible hands pushin’ [him] up in all directions, pushin’ [him] toward a light he [couldn’t] see” (Draper, pg. 58). I believe that this quote and picture on the right represent having the courage to persevere towards the light even when you can’t see it and you feel like you are in the dark. Andy’s friends talked about how he didn’t have the courage to keep going in spite of his pain and how they hated him for that.

The image on the left, that of the white tiger, is representative of having strength in spite of adversity. Andy talked about how he felt that everything that was good was white. I chose a white tiger to represent Andy. He was pure and innocent inside, even though he carried the burden of Rob’s death. He wasn’t able to realize his own strength. He allowed his circumstances to get the best of him, when he needed to realize that he was a fighter with a good, pure soul.





Building Better Readers Through Literature Circles

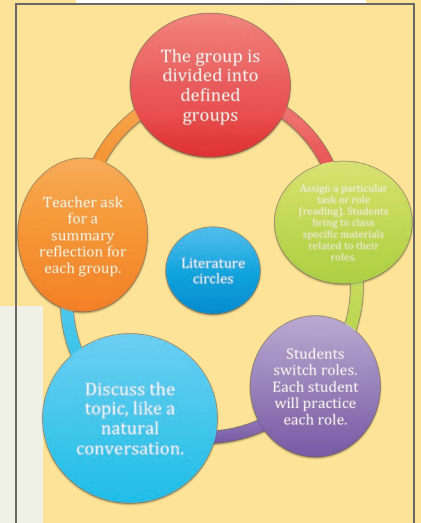
“Lit circles are usually a big hit with kids. Not only do they get the freedom to examine the book in their own ways, but they also can actively discuss literature in small groups, rather than the (often intimidating) entire class.” -Unkown



Literature circles and workshops have been implemented in classrooms across the country throughout the last decade. They have been a form of instruction proven as an effective strategy in the teaching of reading, writing, math, science, and social studies. Therefore, it is important for teachers to understand how to implement them in an effective way in their own classrooms. As a reading teacher I have had the opportunity to use reading workshop everyday in my own classroom, and as a graduate student, I was able to experience various roles that my own students could use during reading workshop time.

Literature Circle Roles

Tears of a Tiger
That's what we read in grad class.
We assumed various roles
We had to fulfill in order to pass.
Connector and Questioner
A couple of roles we had
One made the connections
The other asked questions,
That made me glad.
Then there was the scene setter, word wizard,
and researcher.
We all had our place,
That was for sure.
The last three roles were not all in vain
The summarizer, illustrator, and luminary
Kept us all on the reading train!
 Original Poem written by: Stephanie Lee



The graphic above illustrates the elements included in literature circles and/or workshops.

Narrative Text: Strategies to Assist Readers Before, During, and After Reading

BEFORE	DURING	AFTER
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CONSIDER THE TITLE OF THE TEXT AND HAVE STUDENTS PONDER MEANING MAKE PREDICTIONS ABOUT WHAT THE STORY WILL BE ABOUT TO INTRODUCE A NARRATIVE STORY, TAP INTO SEMANTIC AND EPISODIC MEMORY WHEN MAKING PREDICTIONS/ASKING QUESTIONS/MAKING CONNECTIONS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CITE EVIDENCE FROM TEXT TO SUPPORT QUESTIONS AND PREDICTIONS CONFIRM PREDICTIONS DURING READING MAKE PREDICTIONS THROUGHOUT TEXT PROMPT STUDENTS' THINKING MAKE CONNECTIONS SHARE THOUGHTS AND IDEAS WITH OTHER STUDENTS REREADING MAKING INFERENCES STEP BACK TO REFLECT TO DEEPEN MEANING TEACHER MUST LISTEN CAREFULLY AND GENTLY CHALLENGE IDEAS WHEN OPPORTUNITIES ARISE FOR DEEPER THINKING INVITE STUDENTS TO EXTEND THEIR RESPONSES SILENT READING IS GREAT FOR COMPREHENSION 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ASK STUDENTS THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS TO STIMULATE CONVERSATION AND CRITICAL THINKING ABOUT THE TEXT: What was the most interesting part of the story? What is the story really about? What part of the story can you visualize most clearly? What did you notice about how the author told this story? What interesting words or phrases do you want to talk about? STUDENTS NEED TIME TO REFLECT AND RESPOND ON THE FOLLOWING DIMENSIONS: INTERPRETIVE, THEMATIC, VISUAL/IMAGINATIVE, WRITER'S CRAFT, ANALOGICAL, METACOGNITIVE, MORAL/ETHICAL, INTERTEXTUAL, AND ELABORATIVE DISCUSS VOCABULARY