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References for Further Reading

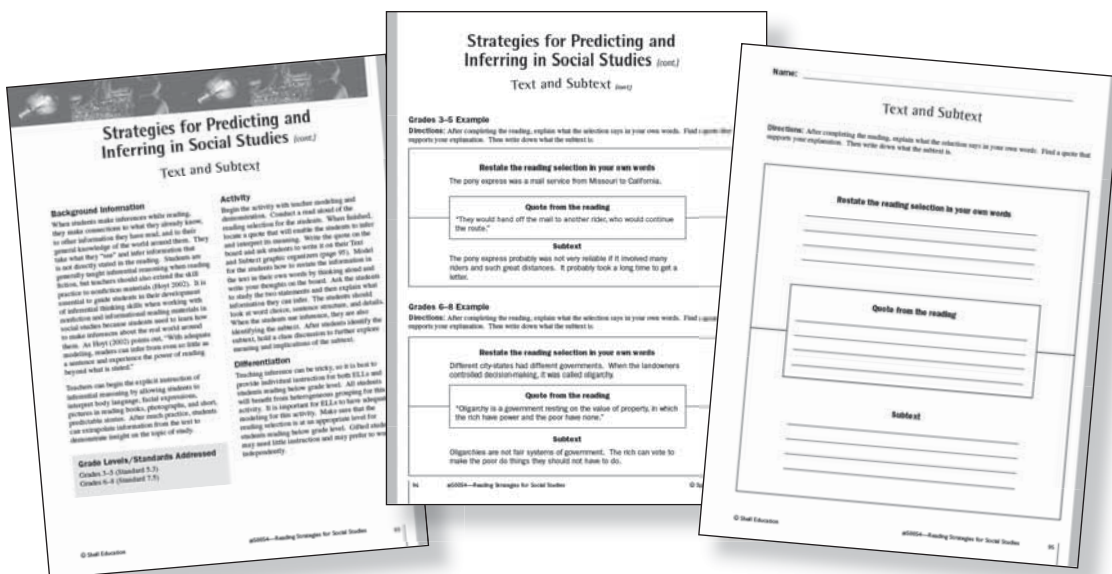


Introduction: How to Use This Book

This book includes a variety of strategies that can be used within social studies lessons to improve students' reading comprehension skills: promoting word consciousness, analysis of word parts, activating knowledge through vocabulary development, using and building prior knowledge, predicting and inferring, think-alouds and comprehension monitoring, questioning, summarizing, using visual representations and mental imagery, using text structure and text features, and multiple reading comprehension strategy instruction.

Each section opens with an overview of current research in that area to emphasize the importance of that particular reading comprehension skill. It also includes a clear and detailed definition of the skill, suggestions for instruction, and best practices. This information provides teachers with the solid foundation of knowledge to provide deeper, more meaningful instruction to their students.

Following each skill overview are a variety of instructional strategies to improve students' comprehension in that area. Each strategy in the book includes the definition and purpose of the strategy, the research basis for the strategy, and the reasons why the strategy is effective in improving comprehension. The grade level spans for which the strategy is most appropriate (1–2, 3–5, or 6–8) and the language arts standards that are addressed are listed. A detailed description of the strategy includes any special preparation that might be needed and extension ideas where appropriate. Finally, suggestions for differentiating instruction are provided for English language learners, students reading below grade level, and gifted students. Following the strategy descriptions are grade-level examples of how the strategy is applied to social studies. A blank template of the graphic organizer or activity page is included as a reproducible where applicable as well as on the accompanying CD-ROM.





Strategies to Assess and Build on Prior Knowledge in Social Studies *(cont.)*

Think Sheet

Background Information

The Think Sheet strategy enables students to compare and contrast their pre-reading ideas with their post-reading understandings. Teachers encourage students to examine their own background knowledge and questions on social studies issues to be studied so that they will be better prepared to read. After reading, when students compare and contrast their ideas and questions with the new information in the reading materials, they are better able to make connections between their prior knowledge and their new conceptual knowledge. This technique helps new social studies information remain in the long-term memory because the students have made the connections among their schemata.

This strategy works best when there is an issue that involves some debate or controversy. The teacher models the process on an overhead transparency so that students better understand the procedure. The teacher should take some time to explain that social studies reading generally centers on an issue or topic about which the reader may have many questions.

Activity

Determine the main topic of a reading passage. Distribute copies of the Think Sheet (page 87) to the students or recreate one on an overhead transparency or on the board. Present the main issue to the class, and ask students to write down questions that they have about the topic. Ask them to explain what they hope to learn from reading. Write their questions down in the first column, “My Questions.” Next, ask students to explain what they already know about the main issue, and encourage them to share even if they are not sure if their information is correct. Write their information in the second column, “My Thoughts.” Explain to students that they should read the text to locate the answers to their questions and also to determine if their thoughts were supported or countered by the information in the text. As students read, they record the important ideas from the text in the last column on the Think Sheet, “Text Ideas.” After reading, students share what they have learned from the reading and make connections between their questions, their thoughts, and the information presented in the text.

Grade Levels/Standards Addressed

Grades 1–2 (Standards 7.3, 7.4)

Grades 3–5 (Standards 7.1, 7.6)

Grades 6–8 (Standards 7.1, 7.4)



Strategies to Assess and Build on Prior Knowledge in Social Studies *(cont.)*

Think Sheet *(cont.)*

Activity *(cont.)*

The reading can be completed as a read aloud for the younger students (1–2), paired reading for middle grades (3–5), or as a homework assignment for the older students (6–8). Discuss what students learned from the reading, and show them how their questions, their thoughts, and the information in the text are all related and connected. Ask questions such as: *What did the book say about your question? Did you have any questions that were not answered by the book? Were any of your thoughts inaccurate? Which ones?*

Differentiation

Model how to formulate questions for ELLs. Gifted students should be encouraged to conduct further reading to find the answers to any questions left unanswered by the reading selection and share their findings with the class. Scaffold the Think Sheet with some responses for students reading below grade level, and they should do a paired reading or hear the reading selection aloud.

Strategies to Assess and Build on Prior Knowledge in Social Studies *(cont.)*

Think Sheet *(cont.)*

Grades 1–2 Example

Main Issue: Local Geography and Weather

My Questions	My Thoughts	Text Ideas
What is a brook?	I think it is like a little river.	A brook is a type of moving water, like a river.
How are lakes and oceans different?	The ocean is salty. Lakes aren't salty.	Rivers flow into both lakes and oceans.
When will it snow here?	I have never seen it snow at my house.	The weather is warm in the South.

Grades 3–5 Example

Main Issue: American Pioneers

My Questions	My Thoughts	Text Ideas
What did Daniel Boone do?	I know he wore leather skins and had a raccoon-tail hat.	He was a pioneer and trailblazer who settled west of the Appalachians, which was against British law. He settled in KY.
How did pioneers settle the land without the help of the British?	I wonder if the local natives attacked and raided them. I can't imagine how they survived.	The people who settled in Boonesborough, KY, built their cabins close together for protection. They were raided by natives, but the land was good.
What did Lewis and Clark explore? Why? Did they do it for the British?	I know they explored in Oregon. Maybe they traveled from KY to Oregon.	Lewis and Clark were hired by Jefferson to explore the Missouri River and the land west of it.

Grades 6–8 Example

Main Issue: Factory Work in the 1800s

My Questions	My Thoughts	Text Ideas
Why were working conditions so bad in factories if there were so many workers?	I've seen movies about the bad conditions in factories, but I just don't understand why the workers put up with it.	Conditions were decent in the early 1800s. With increased immigration in the 1840s, so many people wanted jobs that conditions got much worse.
How long did people work in the 1800s?	Eight hours seems long to me, but it must have been longer when people were poorer.	The workday started at 4am and didn't end until 7:30pm. When did people have a life?
What did workers do if they got hurt on the job?	I doubt they sued the factory and got money for their injury. Maybe they got to do a different job.	Workers saw a factory doctor, and were sent back to work with their injuries. If they were severely injured, they were just out of luck.

Name: _____

Think Sheet

Directions: Write down the main topic of the reading. Next, write questions about the topic in the My Questions column. Write what you already know about the question in the My Thoughts column. After reading, record important ideas in the Text Ideas column.

Main Issue: _____

My Questions	My Thoughts	Text Ideas