TEACHING STUDENTS TO USE READING STRATEGIES

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Strategy Use Lessons

Created by Michelle Winslow, teacher in the Lynn, Massachusetts Public Schools, these Strategy Lessons were made for upper elementary and middle school use. The lessons can be adapted easily for High School or lower elementary use.

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Strategy Use Lessons

Questioning Lesson 1: What makes a Question Important?

- Many times when students are reading, they tend to be confused about the Questioning and Clarification strategies. The goal of the Question Strategy lessons is to teach the idea of using questioning as a way to form important key questions about the text you are reading (just like a teacher does when she prepares a test!). Good questions will also lead to an understanding of the main idea of a particular passage or passages.

Overview: Students will begin the process of understanding what makes a question important.

Materials:
- **Teacher:** Overhead or poster which displays the 5 question words: who, what, where, when, why, how), copy of an old test or quiz that the students are familiar with (preferably a reading comprehension quiz so that you can point out trivial details from the story, as well as important details, displayed on an overhead projector)
- **Students:** Copy of who, what brainstorm, pen/pencil.

Procedure:
1. Tell students that they are going to work on a reading strategy called Questioning. Discuss with them that a **good question asks about a major detail, event, or idea that is important to remember.**
2. On an overhead, place a copy of a quiz/test that the students have already taken. Go through some of the questions and ask the students why these particular questions were on the test (e.g., “because they were about things that we learned”).
3. Continue discussion of test questions until the students have a general understanding that the questions that were asked were about the “most important” details and information from what they learned or read. (**Remember** if you use
a reading quiz you can refer to the story and point out “trivial” or unimportant information as well as important details/events: posing questions such as “why was this detail more important than this event or detail, etc). “

4. Next, display chart of the 5 W’s & 1 H.
5. Brainstorm with the class the Who’s of a story (ex: who is the story about, who are/is the main character(s) etc). Do this for each question starter.
6. Have students record typical types of questions on their brainstorm paper.
7. This would be a great document to place in students’ portfolio for future reference.
Questioning Lesson 2:
Important or Trivial—That is the Question!

Overview: Students will develop important questions and compare them to unimportant elements of the text.

Materials:
Teacher: Informational short story (ex: if seasonally appropriate my kids love “Halloween is … by Gail Gibbons or “A Picture Book of Harriet Tubman” by David Adler; chose one that is relevant to your curriculum. It would be great if it was informational and somehow related to the text that you will be using: ex: Hiroshima or Japanese/Korean conflict. T-Chart Poster resembling students' Brainstorm. Tape or another adhesive. Copies of chosen text, enough for groups or 3-4 or partners. Sentence strips (3 per group)

Students: Good listening skills and good cooperative learning skills. Copy of story or article and brainstorm/organizer, sentence strips (3).

Procedure:
1. Explain to students that they are going to further learn how to identify important information and major details from a text and to identify what is unimportant or “trivial” information.
2. Have students form into groups or partners and distribute both the brainstorm and the article to be read.
3. Have the groups take a minute to organize themselves. They should determine functional aspects such as: (who will read first, who will be the recorder).
4. Suggest to the groups that each member should take a turn reading.
5. Instruct students that they will perform the task in the following order:
   - Read the story
   - Individually generate questions on brainstorm that they think are important/unimportant
   - Unite as a group when each member is done w/brainstorm and determine the top 3 important pieces of information from the story and put them in question form.
   - Next, the group’s recorder will record their questions on the sentence strips.
6. Teacher should place poster t-chart in the front of the room.
7. Have each group come up one at a time and place their questions under the important column.
8. When they are all done lead a group discussion of the questions. Transfer any “trivial” questions to the unimportant column and discuss why these were not as important as the other. (Teacher: have ready your own sentence strips with trivial and important information to add to the list to enhance the discussion).
Questioning Lesson 3:  
Using the 5 Question Words

Overview:  Students will use the five question word (who, what, when, where, why and how) sentence starters to identify the important parts of a story.

Materials:

Teacher: A copy of “Teammates” by Peter Golenbock & Paul Bacon (or any other easy informational read that can be tied into your curriculum). An overhead of the 5 W + 1 H brainstorm.

Students: Individual copies of the brainstorm and a writing partner.

Procedure:

1. First, pose the question “What types of words do good questions start with?”
2. Allow students the opportunity to respond. Record their answers on the board or on chart paper. (e.g., who, what etc.)
3. Ask students “Do good questions usually ask about something important or unimportant? (typical response: “important” b/c the questions are talking about who is in the story, where the story takes place and so on).
4. Next, have students get in partners or small groups. Distribute the brainstorm or organizer to each student or to the group recorder. Group responses should be the same for all members. This is in light of the fact that the students should discuss the possible answers and then arrive at the best possible response as a unified team!).
5. Tell students to pay close attention as you read and sign the story. Explain that when you are done the groups will work in teams to outline the important facts of the story using the question organizer.
6. Read text to the class. Then give students a reasonable but structured amount of time to complete their worksheet.
7. Circulate often to ensure that the groups are on task.
8. When the class is done come together as a group and share responses. Generate a class list of questions (who, what, where, why when, and how). This is when the teacher can guide the discussion on important and not important or trivial questions.
9. Record class comprehension question on chart paper or poster paper and display with the book that was read.

**OPTIONAL EXTENSION ON ABOVE LESSON**

Students Create a Reading Comprehension Quiz

This will work well if the article or story that you read is not the one above, is related to your curriculum, and can further enhance a particular concept or topic.
Overview: Students will create and design Comprehension Quiz for the class to take. Quiz requirements (5 m/c, 2 short answer questions and 1 open response).

****this lesson may need to be broken into two days depending on your class you’re your particular time constraints****

Materials:

    Teacher: Poster or chart of generated questions. Story that was used.
    Students: Copies of their group brainstorm, paper to create a quiz

Procedure:

1. First, have students return to their original groups from the initial session. Then, you can combine the groups into larger focus groups. (try to have no-more then 4 groups).
2. Outline for the students what they are going to do (see rubric checklist requirements). Create a comprehension quiz that will be administered to the class.
3. Allow enough time for students to adequately work in groups, to generate their version of the quiz.
4. When groups are done, inform them that each group will present their Quiz to the class (they can record their outlined Quiz either on chart paper or on an overhead).
5. As each class presents, allow time for discussion of questions. Feedback from the group can educate the presenting group as to whether they were on target with the important concepts or slightly off track and focusing on trivial ideas.
6. Display all possible quizzes to class. View each group quiz and with the class determine what the important things to remember about the story are.
7. Explain to the class that you will combine the information from all of the quizzes that was deemed “important” and create a final draft for the class to take as a reading grade.

****Through discussion and analysis, students should have a clear understanding of the types of questions that will be on the Quiz. Allow time for the students to take notes based on the class generated quizzes for the purpose of individual preparation****

See Rubric and Checklist for students on following page.
Be sure that your Quiz contains each of the following elements. When you are done, review your final version and check off each requirement to ensure that you have done the task correctly!!

**Rubric Checklist Comprehension Guide**

1. Does your quiz ask: **Who is the story about?**
2. Does your quiz ask: **What is the story about or what is the main idea of the story?**
3. Does your quiz ask: **Where does the story take place?**
4. Does your quiz ask: **Why does the story have to be told?**
5. Does your quiz ask: **When did the events take place?**
6. Does your quiz ask: **How did the character(s) actions affect the outcome of the story?**

**Required Format:**

Does your quiz contain the following question format?

- 5 multiple choice questions
- 2 short answer (response) questions
- 1 open response question
Predicting Lesson 1:
What is the Mystery Object?

Overview: Students will learn how to make an “educated guess” based on specific information and their prior knowledge. Students will be given a set of clues in order to make an identification of the “mystery” object.

Materials:

Teacher: Large box (preferably wrapped) containing an object that will be identified by the class. I like to use something that will provide the students with enough clues so that they can make a logical “educated guess” as to what the mystery gift is. (HAVE FUN)

Students: Paper to record clues/prediction. Imaginations & great listening skills!!!!!!!

Inform:

1. Explain to students that they are going to begin working on their abilities to make a good “guesses” or “prediction” based on information that they already know.
2. Give them fun examples of what you mean. For example state: “If there are dark clouds in the sky then you can make a guess or prediction that it is going to rain. “If you have not been paying attention in class and not doing your homework then you can logically predict or guess that your recent test score may not be that great.” (Maybe allow students to share their own examples of situations that are predictable based on existing info.)
3. State that we as learners use what we know about something to enable us to determine what is going to happen in the future.
4. The ability to predict the next event in a story or the outcome of an experiment is a crucial strategy in comprehending what you are reading or doing.

Procedure:

1. Place a medium to large box in front of the class (I like to gift wrap mine).
2. Tell the students that the class has received a mystery “gift”
3. Explain that you thought that with the arrival of this gift you thought it would be a perfect opportunity to practice their “guessing or predicting skills.”
4. Tell the students that a set of clues was attached to the mystery gift. They give specific instructions. The instructions stated that the student who had the closest
guess or predicted what the identity of the gift is would be the person who is awarded the gift!

5. Read the clues to the students. (Remind them to listen closely & take notes if necessary).

6. Encourage the students to play the role of a good “detective” by using the information they have to make a reasonable guess as to the identity of the gift.

7. Allow students an adequate amount of time to analyze their clues and make their determination as to the gift’s identity.

8. RECORD the clues on the board or on chart paper. Students can refer to them during their analysis.

9. When done recording clues, record students’ PREDICTIONS on the board/chart paper.

10. Reveal the identity of the mystery gift.

11. Award the student with the best or closest guess/prediction. (Have some back-up prizes in case more then one student is right on w/their prediction…yikes)

12. Have the student who predicted correctly come up and explain to the class how the clues helped him/her determine the identity. (Guide the discussion so that the student explains their analysis of the clues (maybe they brain stormed ideas under each clue etc.). Try to get the students to see that the student’s prediction was based on the information in clues and allowed the student to make a logical guess based on what he/she already knew.

13. Time permitting: Analyze with the class some of the more “WILD” or “WAY OFF” predictions and have a whole group discussion as to why those predictions didn’t relate to the information in the clues.
Predicting Lesson 2:
What Will Happen Next?

Overview: Students will listen to part of a short story. They will utilize a graphic organizer to predict what they think will happen next in the story.

Materials:

Teacher: A captivating short story (I like to use “John Patrick Norman McHennessy- the boy who was always late,” by John Burningham. Enough copies of the graphic organizer for each student (next page).

Student: Graphic Organizer

Procedure:

1. Tell the students to pay close attention to the details in the story.
2. Explain that these details will help them to make a prediction as to what might happen next in the story.
3. Read the story to a certain point. (In the above story I like to stop when the character walks to school and for the first time does not experience a bizarre encounter).
4. Stop where you think the students will have enough understanding of the text and have enough detail to determine a logical next event or prediction.
5. Distribute the brainstorm and have the students work alone or in partners. This is such a fun book that partners can have great discussions about the possible predictions!
6. When the students are done record their predictions on chart paper or on the board.
7. Then read the rest of the text to see who was right!
Making a Prediction is like making an “educated guess” about what you think is going to happen next in a story. A good prediction is based on the important events and information in the story. These events are clues that a reader can use to determine what’s going to happen next! In the space below record the events/details from the story that helped you make your prediction.

Event/Information

My Prediction

Event/Information

Event/Information

A good prediction is based on the events that you just read…It is what is most likely to happen next.
Predicting Lesson 3:
Predicting at the Movies

Overview: Students will work in groups to determine the outcome of a film or video clip that they are shown in class. They will use the information that they know to write what they think will be in the next scene in a film (or some form of visual media chosen by the teacher).

Materials:

Teacher: Age appropriate short film or movie or snip it from an educational literary film or story. TV/VCR. Poster paper, or some large sheet for the groups to record their predictions on.
Student: Materials to record any notes. Poster/Chart paper.

Procedure:

1. Springboard the lesson by asking students: “Have you ever watched a movie and began making guesses or “predictions” as to what might happen next? Or had a discussion with your friends about what might happen next in the next episode of your favorite TV show? When you discuss things like this you are actually activating a great comprehension strategy: making predictions.
2. In your discussions about a TV show, you and your friends are unknowingly recapping the important events in the storyline so that you can justify your Prediction about what the next episode is going to entail (events, character development, change in setting etc). Allow for class discussion.
3. Explain to students that they are going to work on their predicting skills in a group setting. Their group prediction is going to be based on the events that they will view in a short series of scenes that you are going to show them.
4. Split the class into groups
5. Tell them to pay close attention to the events in the story that they are going to see (only show @ 5-7 minutes. If you have more time, you can stop every few minutes and ask for a prediction about what will happen next).
6. Show the video.
7. After the video, tell students that they must now discuss and analyze what they just saw. Focusing on the important details or events, they must make a group prediction as to what is going to happen next.
8. Distribute poster/chart paper. Tell students that they should record their prediction along with the details from the video that lead them to determine their prediction. Explain that they will do a short presentation of their prediction to the class and will display their paper at the front of the room.
9. Allow enough time for the groups to discuss the video and record their predictions/details. (Circulate often to ensure that the groups are on task!).
10. When the time is up have the groups come up one at a time to present their predictions and discuss how or why they arrived at that prediction.

11. When all groups have presented and displayed their work, show the next clip to see which group was the closest or right-on with their prediction.

12. Guide a whole class discussion to determine the best or closest group prediction and then allow for an analysis of the other predictions and why they were not on target. (Clear up any clarifications or misunderstandings about the information that was presented to the class).

13. End with a discussion of why the chosen prediction was the most logical and realistic prediction for the next event in the video.
Summary Lesson 1: Sum it up

Out of all of the RT strategies, summary appears to be the most difficult for the students to master. I like to do initial summary lessons in either small groups or partners until I feel that the students have a good grasp of the process of summarizing.

Overview: Students will listen to a short story or informational text. They will then be asked to identify 3 details that will support or identify what they believe to be the main idea of a story/passage.

Materials:

Teacher: Short story or passage that is captivating to students. I like to use some form of informational text such as “Follow the Drinking Gourd,” by Jeanette Winter, or a short biography such as the ones written by David Adler (Harriet Tubman, Florence Nightingale, or Sojourner Truth). Copies of the 3-detail brainstorm.

Students: Writing utensil, copy of "3-Detail" brainstorm.

Procedure:

1. Separate students into groups or partners (whichever you prefer).
2. Tell them that you are going to read them a short story. And they need to pay close attention to the major details in the story.
3. Explain that they are going to identify 3 major (not minor!) details that support the main idea of the text, or what the text is about.
4. Read the text.
5. Give the groups a specified time limit to finish their brainstorm.
6. When all groups are done have them share their findings with the class. This will allow for discussion and help students understand the main idea of the text together.
3-Detail Summary Brainstorm

Identify three major details that are important to the text. Use these details to write the main idea. (What the story or text is about!).

Detail #1

Detail #2

Detail #3

Main Idea of my text...

THE MAIN IDEA CAPTURES THE THEME OR TOPIC OF WHAT YOU JUST READ!!!

Book / Story
Title: _______________________
__________________________________________________
Author: ____________________________
Summary Lesson 2: Summary Set-Up

Overview: The following lesson will reinforce students’ understanding of how the details from a story help to identify the main idea.

Materials: 4-5 paper bags, sentence strips, tape or some form of adhesive that is easy to remove. A story that is related to an area of study. I teach Ancient Civilizations, so I like to use a book by Kathryn Lasky titled, “The Librarian Who Measured the Earth.” It is a great book about an Ancient Greek scholar named Eratosthenes.

Preparation:
1. Read your chosen story.
2. Identify the main idea of the story and record it on sentence strips (you need to create a copy of each main idea for each group).
3. Identify key points or details that support the main idea and separately record them on a sentence strip (make enough for each group).
4. Record a concluding statement on sentence strips (enough for each group).
5. Get enough small brown bags for each group (1 bag per group). Fill each bag with a main idea strip, each of the details and the concluding statement.
6. Fill out several other sentence strips with details or facts from the story that are not very important to the support of the main idea or are trivial in nature. Evenly distribute these into the bags.
7. Get a piece of chart paper for each group and record a number at the top. Display them around the room. (This is where the groups will attach their brainstorm of the book).

Procedure:
1. Tell students that they are going to play a “Summary Set-Up” game. Separate the class into groups.
2. STRESS to the groups that they need to pay close attention to the story that you are going to read.
3. Model the procedure for the game:
   • Each group will receive a bag with the strips.
   • They will have a set amount of time to choose the main idea-supporting details-concluding statement.
   • Each group will display in order their set-up for writing a summary on the story.
   • The first group to finish correctly wins a homework pass in the subject that the text is related to (in this case Social Studies).
4. Read your story or text.
5. Distribute the bags to the groups and give them a time limit for their set up (about 15 minutes).
6. When time is up award the groups that are correct a free homework pass and allow for discussion. **Extension:** Have students write a brief summary about the book for an extra credit grade!
Summary Lesson 3: Key Points

Overview: The following lesson will aid students in identifying the main idea of a story or passage. The key to determining the main idea of a story is adequately identifying the key points of a story.

It is important to model this procedure prior to students doing it on an individual basis. I like to put this worksheet on an overhead after reading a short passage or story and doing it as a whole class activity.

Materials: Copies of Key Points brainstorm ("Graphic Organizers...helping children think visually," by Kris Flynn). Copy of an informational text such as “Hadaka and the Thousand Paper Cranes,” by Eleanor Corer.

Students: Copy of Key Points Brainstorm, writing paper.

Procedure:
1. After you have completed reading a story to your class, distribute the Key Points brainstorm.
2. Students could complete this worksheet in a small group or with a partner so that they can share ideas or opinions.
3. When students are done have them share their findings with the class. Record the Key Points on an overhead or chart paper.
4. Have students return to working on their own.
5. Instruct students to now write a brief summary of the story using their Key Points brainstorm.
Summary Lesson 4: Summary Sandwich

Overview: Students will work in groups to create a Summary Sandwich chart that could be used to summarize a story.

Materials:
Students: Copies of Sandwich Summary Chart brainstorm. A book for each group (I like to focus on a particular topic or subject area that we are studying in class. For example, for Social Studies I will give each group a short story/picture book that relates to a topic (ancient Greece). Construction paper that could be used to create the sandwich (green=lettuce, red=tomato….), markers or crayons, scissors & string.

Procedure:
1. Explain to students that they are going to work in groups to create a Sandwich Summary Chart of a particular book that you give them.
2. Distribute the books and other supplies.
3. Explain that each group will be presenting their book and their brainstorm to the class.
4. Instruct the groups to choose one person in the group to be the reader of the book and another person to be the recorder who will write on the sandwich worksheet in preparation for creating the larger brainstorm.
5. Tell the groups that you will be circulating to ensure that they are on task and that all members are participating.
6. Allow the groups time to be creative and concise.
7. When the groups are done have them read their story to the class and present their Summary Sandwich Chart.
8. Display the creations by attaching them to string (somewhat like a mobile). Could be added to an area where other products of a particular unit of study are displayed.

This particular lesson could take several days to complete due to the presentations.
Visualizing Lesson 1: Describing a Picture

Overview: The following lesson will give students the opportunity to identify the relationship between nouns and the adjectives that describe them. They will practice their ability to not only identify the nouns of a picture but to generate 2 or 3 descriptive adjectives that bring life to the elements of a picture.

Materials:
Teacher: Overhead projector, overhead of a detailed picture, chart paper, markers.
Students: Piece of writing paper, A/A/N (adjective/adjective/noun) Brainstorm, pen or pencil.

Procedure:
1. Place the overhead picture on the projector and allow students ample time to study/observe the picture.
2. As students are studying the picture, verbally cue them to start creating a mental list of the nouns (people, place(s), things) represented in the picture.
3. Distribute A/A/N brainstorm to each of the students. Tell them to list as many nouns as possible from the picture. When they are done tell the students to put their pencils down until the entire class has had time to individually brainstorm their list of nouns.
4. Place a piece of chart paper up on the board (preferably near overhead picture) that resembles the students' brainstorm. As a class share ideas regarding the nouns of the picture. Record students' responses on paper. Encourage students to record nouns that they did not identify on to their papers.
5. Next, tell the class that they are going to brainstorm and come up with 2 or 3 adjectives that describe each noun. While you are brainstorming, encourage students to use vivid, colorful words. (i.e. if you are given sad, encourage student to think of a bigger/better word or synonym for sad).
6. Students should record the class-generated adjectives from the teacher’s chart paper onto their own paper next to the appropriate noun.
7. Finally, when the lists are completed have the students either break up into partners or work individually. Ask the students or partners to write a descriptive paragraph regarding the overhead picture. Tell them that the paragraph must include at least 3 or 4 a/a/n combinations (adjective/adjective/noun).
8. Tell students that their paragraphs should be descriptive enough so that someone who has not seen the picture could draw or sketch the picture based on their fabulous description!!!!
9. Share paragraphs. Create a bulletin board or wall of description based on the children's work.
Adjective/Adjective/Noun Brainstorm

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adjective</th>
<th>Adjective</th>
<th>Noun</th>
</tr>
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</table>

Name: ________________________________ Date: ______________
Visualizing Lesson 2: Using Descriptive Words

Overview: To introduce the students to descriptive language in various pieces of literature/writing. Students will review the terms adjective and noun and have a solid understanding of their relationship to each other.

Materials:

Teacher: Copies of “The Rainbow Fish” and or “That’s Good! That’s Bad! (or any other book which uses descriptive language).
Student: a/a/n combinations worksheet, pen/pencil.

Procedure:

1. On the board write the words adjective/noun. Brainstorm with students the meanings of these words. (hopefully, students will have a relatively strong understanding of these parts of speech).
2. Next, display a piece of chart paper that is broken into three columns. adjectives/noun/a/a/n combination. (see attached).
3. With the class generate approximately 3 examples of a noun, three examples of an adjective that “describes” the noun and then combine 2 of the adjectives and the noun to arrive at a a/a/n/ combination. (Make sure that students are copying what is on the class b-storm onto their own a/a/n combination worksheet).
4. Motivate the students to see that the adjectives bring life and expression to the noun and could truly enhance the term in a story or a writing piece.
5. Read a story with descriptive language (I love the Rainbow Fish), and tell students to pay close attention to the story so that they can record any a/a/n combinations from the story.
6. Stress to students that they should not worry about spelling.
7. At the end of the story come together as a class and share your findings!
Visualizing Lesson 3:
From Words to Pictures

Overview: Based on a descriptive passage students will create a visual image or drawing that represents what they just heard. Allow students to view a possible organizer (see attached) so as to compile their thoughts or interpretations of what was just read.

Materials:

Teacher: Descriptive reading passage (I prefer a passage from the book “Why Butterflies go by on Silent Wings); chart paper which represents the brainstorm format, markers etc.

Students: Copies of chosen passage (optional), drawing paper, markers, crayons, or any other material that can be used to create a visual image.

Procedure:

1. Read a descriptive passage to your students. After reading it to them, have them close their eyes and “paint” a picture or create a “movie” based on the passage.
2. Place a large piece of chart paper in front of the class that is broken into columns. (setting/sights/actions/sounds/smells).
3. Brainstorm as a class words that represent the vision that was created based on the text that was read.
4. When the class is done with a group list, tell the students that you will display the passage on an overhead. It is now time for them to create a Visual image of the passage that they just heard. Encourage them to be creative, colorful and vivid with their image. Remind them to consider the brainstorm that the class generated as a reference.
5. Display the students' work.
# Visualizing Brainstorm

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adjectives</th>
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<td>(describing words: <strong>fireworks</strong>(N) = brilliantly, colorful) (adj/adj)</td>
<td>(people, place(s), things)</td>
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Feelings Lesson: Empathizing with Story Characters

Overview: Students will chose a character from a story and analyze their feelings.

Materials:
Teacher: “The First Strawberry”, by Joseph Bruchac, or another story that includes two characters in a situation that evokes strong feelings. copies of Feelings brainstorm.

Student: Copy of brainstorm.

Procedure:

1. Explain to students that you are going to read them a book that has two characters. Both of these characters’ feelings are honest and are a result of particular actions taken by each of them.
2. Tell the students that they will be choosing one of the two characters to analyze.
3. Distribute the brainstorm to the students prior to reading the story and discuss its format.
4. Stress to students that in order for them to fully understand the main idea of the story, they must first understand the characters.
5. Explain that they need to pay close attention as you read so that they can record the events that caused the character to feel a certain way.
6. Tell the students that they will also be responding as if they were the character and experienced the events or actions of the other character.
7. Read the story to the students.
8. Circulate as students work to make sure that they understand the task.
9. When all are done compare responses!!
Choose a character to analyze. Try to place yourself in the character’s position and record how you would feel if you were one of the characters.

**Character to Analyze:**

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<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Character's Feelings...</th>
<th>How I would feel...</th>
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Vocabulary Lesson 1

The following lesson is designed to enhance your students' vocabulary. Most students use general, basic terms of expression (bad, sad, happy, mad) in their writing as well as their expressive language. The goal is not only teach them how to identify and generate more vibrant and captivating language, but also to use them correctly. I usually introduce this “Trashing of the Terms” concept relatively early in the year. I have established an entire wall in my classroom dedicated to the Trashed Terms and whenever we as a class feel the need to ban another basic word from our everyday usage, we add it to the wall. As the year progresses, so does our wall of basic banned words. I find my students referring to it on a regular basis to enhance their work.

Overview: Most students usually use general, basic terms of expression (bad, sad, glad) when they are responding to either a Feelings or Visualization Response Strategy. This lesson will begin to inspire students to enhance and increase their vocabulary.

Materials:

Teacher: Manila construction paper to record your banned word. Designated area to display your Trashed Terms. Markers, tape. Clean barrel that is solely for the use of trashing terms (you can store terms yet to be trashed in preparation for the continuation of this activity.)

Students: A copy of an age appropriate thesaurus.

Procedure:

1. Explain to the class that they are going to learn how to identify and use more expressive words. They are going to work on increasing their vocabulary and get away from the simple, basic terms that they are used to using. (You can focus on the Feelings & Visualization strategies).
2. If your students are not familiar with a thesaurus, then take a minute to explain its function to them.
3. Next, display the Trashed Terms barrel (I like to label my barrel with a bright sign to ensure that all parties understand that it is not intended to hold actual icky trash). Explain to students that the barrel is a symbol of words that are trashed from their vocabulary and will be recycled into bigger & better words.
4. Describe how it is important to allow your vocabulary to grow and expand as you progress thorough your years in school.

5. Brainstorm with students words that they use to express their **Feelings** (bad, sad, happy, glad etc).

6. Choose about 3-4 terms to Trash, identify them by drawing a circle around them.

7. On a piece of construction paper (I like to use manila) model for the students how to Trash a Term.

8. Write the term in the center of the paper (e.g., bad), and then circle it.

9. Then crinkle the paper up and give it serrated edges (being careful not to rip it too much!) **EMPHASIZE** the fact that you need to leave enough room around your word so that you can WEB onto it the replacement words. Put several trashed terms into the Trashed Terms barrel for recycling.

10. Select one word from the barrel and tape the paper to the board so that all of the students can see it. Instruct them to look the word up in their thesaurus to identify words that mean the same as “bad” but are more descriptive or exciting to use (e.g., horrible, awful, devastating).

11. Have students share their findings. Write in web form around your word the replacement or recycled terms (upset, distraught etc.). Place the word on your designated Trashed Terms wall and go on to the next word that was up for trashing that day.

12. Explain to students that they need to now think and individually brainstorm words that they want to trash in preparation for the next lesson.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trashed Word</th>
<th>Recycled Words</th>
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**Brainstorm**

**Trashed Terms**
Overview: Students will individually choose a word that they want to trash. They will create a recycled term for the word wall.

Materials:

Teacher: Trashed Terms barrel. Enough paper for each student. Thesaurus for each student (If possible! If not, partner up). Tape.

Student: Thesaurus, paper and markers or some other bold writing utensil.

Procedure:

1. Remind students of the importance of using better words when responding to various strategies or within their writing.
2. Instruct each student to choose a basic word that they want to “trash”.
3. Tell them that you want them to focus on words expressing feelings (sad, happy, etc.) or words that describe something (bright, dark, cold, etc.).
4. Allow students time to come up with a word and trash their papers Emphasize that they need to be careful and not make the paper too small (they still need to add their replacement or recycled terms).
5. Instruct students to refer to their Thesaurus and web at least 3-5 new terms around their trashed term. Be sure to tell that them that the words need to be written large enough and neat enough for other people to read.
6. When the students are done, go around the room with your barrel and collect the Trashed Terms from each student.
7. Reach in and display the recycled words on your wall. Discuss how these words and the strategy for thinking of more descriptive vocabulary can be used when students are writing their responses to the strategies, especially visualization and feelings, and as part of their everyday vocabulary.
Improving Student Strategy Responses Lesson 1

The following lesson is only one of many methods to help students improve the quality of their reading strategies responses both on and off the computer. This initial lesson can be repeated when necessary for each of the strategies.

Overview: The following lesson has been helpful when trying to encourage students to improve the reading strategies responses that they make on the computer/strategy quizzes/etc. This lesson allows students to take an active role in “bettering” a particular response. By going through the whole process with the class, it will help support their individual revisions.

Materials:

Teacher: Overhead projector. Example of a student response copied onto an overhead & the particular passage that the student was responding to. Chart paper or another overhead w/brainstorm copied onto it.

Procedure:

1. Choose a strategy to work on. Based on student responses, create a typical “weak” response that can be improved. (if you use students’ actual responses, be sure to ask their permission to share it with the class beforehand).
2. Read or Review the passage that the response applies to. Tell students to pay close attention to what the passage is about!!!!!
3. Brainstorm what makes a good (prediction, summary etc….depending on which strategy you are using).
4. Work with the whole class on editing and revising the response directly on the overhead (maybe allowing students to come up and make the changes).
5. Compare the before and after versions and discuss why the revised version is better.

****You can repeat this lesson for each strategy as needed****
Improving Strategy Responses

In the space provided, write down the important elements of a good response for your particular strategy. You can refer to it when working on a better version of your response.

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<th>Strategy:</th>
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<td>Elements:</td>
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<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Revised Response</th>
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Improving Student Strategy Responses Lesson 2

Materials:

Teacher: Overhead projector. Example of student responses copied onto an overhead & the particular passage that the student was responding to. Chart paper or another overhead w/brainstorm copied onto it.

Procedure:

1. First show the students an example of a “strong” response and then an example of a “weak” response (they should be of the same strategy & passage).
2. Split the class into small groups and assign them the task of analyzing the two responses.
3. Explain that each group must record the responses and highlight the reasons and attributes that make the strong response “strong” and the weak response “weak.”
4. Have the groups revise the weak response and present/share with the class.
5. Allow for discussion to compare what the other groups arrived at as their revised strong or improved response.

Hint! This lesson could also be modified for partners or peer editing sessions. Students love to share their ideas or methods for mastering the strategies.