

The Common Core Classroom



Shift 2: Increasing Text Complexity

Textbook / Article Reading Strategies

1) Number the Paragraphs

The Common Core asks students to be able to cite and refer to the text. One simple way to do this is by numbering each paragraph, section or stanza in the left hand margin. When students refer to the text, require them to state which paragraph they are referring to. The rest of the class will be able to quickly find the line being referred to.

2) Chunk the Text

When faced with a full page of text, reading it can quickly become overwhelming for students. Breaking up the text into smaller sections (or chunks) makes the page much more manageable for students. Students do this by drawing a horizontal line between paragraphs to divide the page into smaller sections.

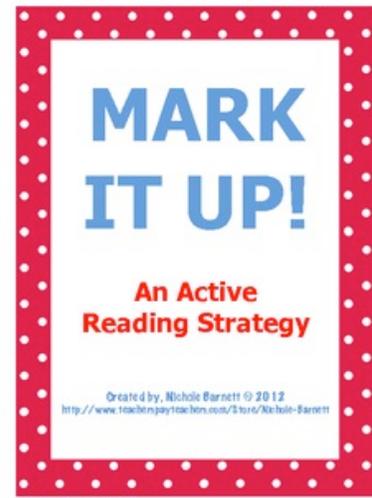
3) Underline and Circle...with a purpose

Telling students to simply underline "the important stuff" is too vague. "Stuff" is not a concrete thing that students can identify. Instead, direct students to underline and circle very specific things. Think about what information you want students to take from the text, and ask them to look for those elements. What you have students circle and underline may change depending on the text type.

For example, when studying an argument, ask students to underline "claims". We identify claims as belief statements that the author is making. Students will quickly discover that the author makes multiple claims throughout the argument.

When studying poetry, students could underline the imagery they find throughout the poem.

Circling specific items is also an effective close reading strategy. I often have my students circle "Key terms" in the text. I define key terms as words that: 1. Are defined. 2. Are repeated throughout the text. 3. If you only circled five key terms in the entire text, you would have a pretty good idea about what the entire text is about.



4) Left Margin: What is the author SAYING?

It isn't enough to ask students to "write in the margins". We must be very specific and give students a game plan for what they will write. This is where the chunking comes into play. In the left margin, ask students to summarize each chunk. I demonstrate how to write summaries in 10-words or less. The chunking allows the students to look at the text in smaller segments, and summarize what the author is saying in just that small, specific chunk.

5) Right Margin: Dig deeper into the text?

In the right-hand margin, I again direct my students to complete a specific task for each chunk. This may include:

Use a power verb to describe what the author is DOING. (For example: Describing, illustrating, arguing, etc..)

Note: It isn't enough for students to write "Comparing" and be done. What is the author comparing? A better answer might be: "Comparing the character of Montag to Captain Beatty".

Represent the information with a picture. This is a good way for students to be creative to visually represent the chunk with a drawing.

Ask questions. I have found this to be a struggle for many students, as they often say they don't have any questions to ask. When modeled, students can begin to learn how to ask questions that dig deeper into the text. I often use these questions as the conversation driver in Socratic Seminar.

The above information was brought to you by: iTeach, iCoach, iBlog

The above strategies can be completed by using Preview on the laptops or by "old fashion" sticky notes that can be placed in textbooks.

Article of the Week #6

Mark the text

1. Number each paragraph
2. Chunk: 1-3 / 4 / 5-6 / 7-8 / 9-11 / 12-13 / 14-15
3. Circle key terms
4. Underline the claims
5. Left margin: What is the author SAYING?
6. Right margin: What is the author DOING? (POWER VERBS)

Saying?

Lebron has little in common w/ the 99%

Doing?

Comparing Lebron James to the 99%

13 99% like the 99% but he is controlled by an owner

Comparing NBA players to the 99%

Players are accusing the owners of shady business

Explaining the issues between the NBA players + owners

Understand revenue split

1. **What NBA Stars and Occupy Wall Street protesters have in common**
Source: Paul Frymer and Doran T. Warren, Bangor Daily News, November 2, 2011

2. **LeBron James is as far as you can get from the 99 percent.**

3. **The NBA superstar is paid more than \$10 million a year as a forward for the Miami Heat and has a \$90 million contract with Nike. After his team lost the NBA Finals to Dallas in June, he told griping fans to go back to the hardman reality of "the real world," while he retreated to his recently purchased \$9 million home in South Beach.**

4. **So James may seem to share nothing with the 99 percent — Occupy Wall Street's terms, the vast majority of American workers, who suffer in a culture of unabashed greed that has created a historic gulf of inequality between the richest Americans and everyone else.**

5. **But he and the other NBA players have something important in common with the 99 percent. James is an employee of the Miami Heat. Despite his recent tweet hinting that he will try to join the National Football League if the NBA lockout continues, he finds himself, like most Americans, beholden to the owners and managers who control his workplace and industry. If the owners want to lock out the players, he leave the country in search of greater profits, he — like American workers whose jobs have disappeared overseas — is left with few options. He is beholden to team owners who are not always upfront about their revenue and profits, and who are claiming a right to make more money without equitably sharing it with the workers who make the huge windfalls possible.**

6. **In the split between NBA players and owners, the players are voicing frustrations that may seem awfully similar to what the Occupy Wall Street protesters are saying. The players are accusing the owners — who keep recording yearly profits as a group while claiming hardship and the need for belt-tightening — of playing by different rules, avoiding public scrutiny, and benefiting from a range of insider deals, bailouts and protections without sharing the profits.**

7. **At issue in this dispute is whether the league can impose a tighter salary cap on the teams, which would effectively lower the salaries of the players. The other major conflict is over how "basketball-related income" — which includes revenue from the sale of tickets, parking, food at concession stands, player jerseys and broadcast rights — will be split between players and owners. Until now, players got a slight majority of this revenue. This made sense, since it was superstars such as Michael Jordan and Magic Johnson, and now Kobe Bryant and LeBron James, who brought the league to new heights in popularity and profits. The owners, however, say it is unreasonable to maintain high salaries and existing profit margins. They want a 50-50 split of the basketball-related income.**

8. **The players have remained united and responded angrily to NBA Commissioner David Stern's initial threats of canceling the season. Dwyane Wade, James' teammate and one of the league's biggest stars, yelled at the commissioner in a heated meeting, saying: "You're not pointing your finger at me, I'm not your child." Steve Nash, two-time NBA most valuable player, questioned the owners' representation of their finances, tweeting: "Why are the owners unwilling to negotiate in**