

THEMATIC UNIT

Related to ELA Prototypes



Theme: **Fairness**

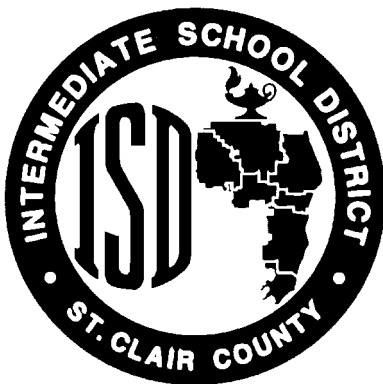
Suggested for: **Middle School**

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~Thematic Units~

Dear Colleagues:

The purpose of this project was to organize thematic units related to previously published MEAP ELA prototypes using best practices in reading and writing.

These were developed by, **real teachers**, just like you! We worked to make them teacher friendly for easy implementation in your classroom. Teachers from school districts across St. Clair County gathered the material. The units are a representation of what each group of teachers thought was important to your grade level and to the themes in the prototypes.

Every packet includes **THEME RELATED TEXT SETS**. These are titles that can be used in a variety of ways to develop a deeper understanding of themes. We have noted the **PAIRED TEXTS** (look for the #2) and **LISTENING TEXT** (#3) that are included in the prototypes. We also noted the title(s) we used for **FRAYER'S MODEL** (#1).

A **PROFUNDITY MATRIX** was developed for each set of paired texts in the prototype to help in identifying possible themes. The matrix also helps look across text to make cross text connections. Blank copies of this chart are included and can be used in your classroom to help students make connections between other texts.

CROSS TEXT QUESTIONS were written and answered to aid in responding to both the multiple choice questions and the provocative question given in the second writing piece of the ELA MEAP assessment.

Many packets include one or more **WRITING MODELS** for the second writing piece. We suggest you use these before or after student writing to exhibit a well written constructed response.

The **TEACHER SUGGESTION PAGE** is a personal response by the individuals involved in the project. Some contain anecdotes from the use of the material in their classrooms. Others contain a plethora of ideas to implement. We hope these help.

OTHER ACTIVITIES (#4) are poems, plays, articles, reader's theater presentations and related suggestions to further develop understanding of the themes.

It is our sincere hope these packets are useful to you and your students.

Happy reading and writing!

ELA Prototype Materials

- **Thematically related texts**
- **Fruyer’s Model examples**
- **Writing from knowledge and experience using narrative strategies**
- **Profundity examples**
- **Cross Text Question examples**
- **Writing in Response to Reading example**

These materials were designed to provide examples of instructional approaches that will help you and your students prepare for the ELA assessment. The examples are all possible answers; they are not to be considered the “right” answers. We wanted to provide examples of other teachers’ thinking through Fruyer’s, Profundity and cross text questions to help guide you through your own thinking.

The sequence of instruction would be to introduce the theme through using the Fruyer’s Model of concept attainment. Have students write from knowledge and experience. Think through each reading selection using the profundity scale to create a matrix by which cross text questions can be posed and answered. Examples and blank copies are provided to help you in planning instruction.

Thematically Related Text Sets – Fairness

| CODE | TITLE | AUTHOR |
|-----------|--|--|
| 1 | The Empty Pot | Demi |
| 1 | The Rag Coat | Lauren A. Mills |
| 3 | Kate Shelley and the Midnight Express | Margaret K. Wetterer |
| 2 (set 1) | Sarah Emma Edmonds www.pinn.net/~sunshine/shm2002/edmonds.html | |
| 2 (set 1) | Helen Keller – A Remarkable Woman (Reader's Theater) www.lisabiau.com | |
| 2 (set 2) | Angel Island Li Keng Wong's Story http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/asian-american/angel_island/index.htm | |
| 2 (set 2) | A Boy's Journey http://teacher.scholastic.com/immigrat/seymour/chap1.htm | |
| 2 (set 3) | Follow the Drinking Gourd | Jeanette Winter |
| 2 (set 3) | Sweet Clara and the Freedom Quilt | Deborah Hopkinson |
| 3 | Frederick Douglas Speech (audio tape) | Great American Speeches published by Scholastic |
| 3 | Patrick Henry Speech (includes audio tape) | Great American Speeches published by Scholastic |
| 4 | Encounter | Jane Yolen |
| 4 | First Biography Christ | Jan Gleiter and Kathleen Thompson |
| 4 | Stone Fox | John Reynolds Gardiner |
| 4 | Sarah, Plain and Tall | Patricia MacLachlan |
| 4 | A Picture Book of Harriet Tubman | David Adler |
| 4 | Little House on the Prairie | Laura Ingalls Wilder |
| 4 | Leaving Hunger Behind (play) | Scholastic Read-Aloud Plays |

Code Key: Suggested Uses

- 1 – Frayer's Model
- 2 – Paired Text
- 3 – Listening
- 4 – Others (additional titles)

Thematically Related Text Sets – Fairness

| CODE | TITLE | AUTHOR |
|--------------|---|---|
| 1, 2 (set 1) | Molly Bannaky | Alice McGill |
| 1, 2 (set 1) | Teammates | Peter Golenbock |
| 2 (set 2) | A Fair Days Wages (play) | Scholastic Read-Aloud Grades 4-8 |
| 2 (set 2) | Kids At Work | Russell Freedman |
| 3 | Patrick Henry Speech (includes audio tape) | Great American Speeches published by Scholastic |
| 3 | Chief Joseph Speech (includes audio tape) | Great American Speeches published by Scholastic |
| 3 | A Picture Book of Harriet Tubman | David Adler |
| 3 | Susan B. Anthony Speech (includes audio tape) | Great American Speeches published by Scholastic |
| 1 | Old Henry | Joan Blos |
| 2 (set 3) | Lilly's Purple Plastic Purse | Kevin Henkes |
| 2 (set 3) | Amazing Grace | Mary Hoffman/Caroline Binch |
| 4 | Gleam and Glo | Eve Bunting |
| 4 | Baseball Saved Us | Ken Mochizuki |
| 4 | Ballot Box Battle | Emily Arnold McCully |
| 4 | Faithful Elephants | Yokio Tsuchiya |

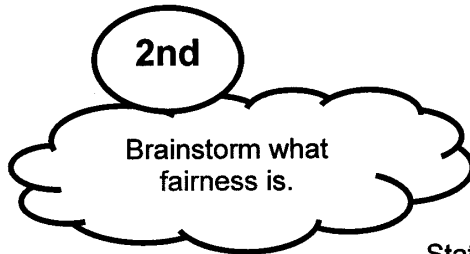
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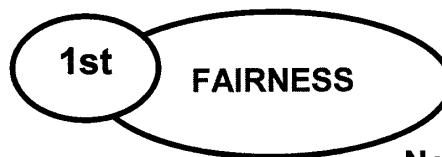
How to Use Frayer's Model to Develop Student Understanding of Themes

Fairness is...

Fairness is not...

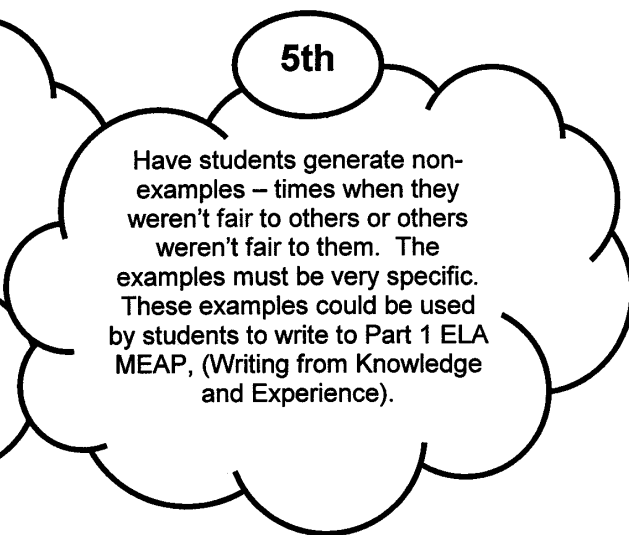
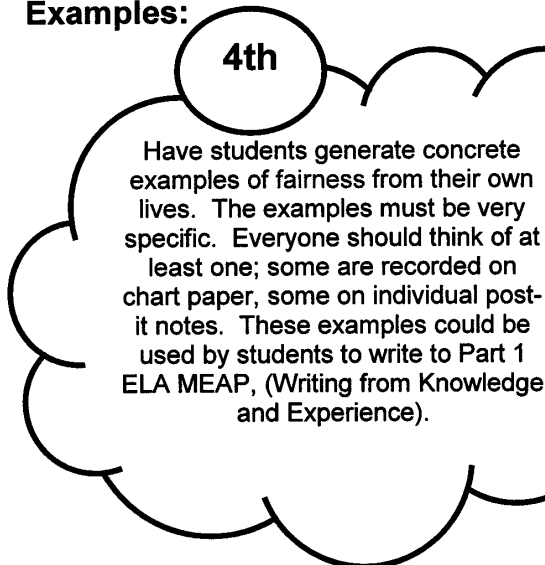


State theme in center oval



Examples:

Non-examples:



6th: Read a book about "Fairness" that is not in the prototype. Have students listen for clear examples and non-examples of fairness. Use names and situations specific to the reading selection, when recording the examples.

7th Have students identify clear examples from the 1st reading selection to record on the chart.

8th Have students identify clear examples from the 2nd reading selection to record on the chart.

9th Have students listen for clear examples and non-examples of fairness during part three of the prototype to record on the chart.

10th Students who need help can use the clear examples from this chart when writing to Part II ELA MEAP, (Response to Reading).

Example of Frayer's Model

Fairness is...

Everyone gets a turn
Very difficult to achieve
Treating everyone equally (in some cases)
Sharing
Agreement about rules
Compromise
Following the rules
Thinking of others

Fairness is not...

Someone getting more
Greed
Not being able to take turns
Not being willing to share
Breaking the rules
Not compromising
Easy to achieve



Examples:

Sarah rotates her classroom jobs so that everyone gets a chance.

Evelyn gives a lot of homework to her students just like Lucas does.

Non examples:

The whole classroom was punished because Joe threw his food.

...from *Teammates*, by Peter Golenbock

Examples:

Branch Rickey thought segregation was unfair.

Branch Rickey gave Jackie the chance to try out for the Dodgers.

Pee Wee sticks up for Jackie and doesn't sign the petition.

Pee Wee says that Jackie is his friend.

Non examples:

White Baseball players were paid more than black players.

White players got to stay at good hotels.

Opposing players were cruel to Jackie because he was black.

Jackie received threats to his life.

A petition was circulated to throw Jackie off the team.

...as you continue through the prototype add examples from each of the reading and listening selections

Fairness is...

Fairness is not...



Examples:

Non examples:

Writing From Knowledge and Experience

The English Language Arts MEAP assessment requires students to write from knowledge and experience. Students may choose the style or genre of writing that suites them best. However, the majority of students choose to write personal narratives. Dr. Elaine Weber, Barbara Nelson and Ray Woods, the authors of *Profiles in Writing 2002*, have granted us permission to offer you some information from the book. This information may help you instruct students in personal narratives.

These resources will provide you with:

- Description of the four qualities of writing the MEAP assessment used to evaluate student writing;
- A model for creating writing prompts;
- Examples of well written student papers;
- Attributes of writing that commonly appear at this grade level;
- Strategies used by narrative writers; and
- Examples of student papers with the narratives strategies highlighted.

attributes of **writing**

Note

This year the Profiles Project has reorganized the attributes of writing to align with the 4-trait rubric most widely used by Profiles Network members:

Focus on Content and Ideas

Organization

Voice/Style,

and

Conventions.

focus on content

Focus refers to concentration on the content and ideas of the piece of writing and to the development of the content and major ideas with appropriate details, examples, etc.

organiza·tion

Organization refers to the structure of a piece of writing with logical sequence; beginning, middle, and end; flow; cohesion, coherence, unity, effective leads; transitions and conclusions; sense of wholeness, etc.

Voice/style

Voice refers to the writer's ability/attempts to engage and interest the reader through stylistic elements and techniques such as: descriptive detail, precise word choice, sentence variety, strong verbs, humor, figurative language, personal reflection, etc.

con·ven·tion(s)

Conventions refer to a writer's presentation of a piece of writing through accurate and effective use of writing form including: directionality, spacing, mechanics (capitalization, punctuation), grammar and usage, spelling, etc.

attributes **grade seven**

focus on content

- ✓ focuses on one topic
- ✓ develops clear theme/message
- ✓ elaborates (supporting details, examples)
- ✓ develops with imagination and creativity
- ✓ develops with insight and maturity
- ✓ demonstrates depth of knowledge of topic
- ✓ includes effective title
- ✓ demonstrates mature thinking
- ✓ uses of anecdote/vignette
- ✓ uses characterization
- ✓ takes a position
- ✓ expresses conflict with resolution
- ✓ uses mix of reality and fantasy

or **gan** **i** **za** **tion**

- ✓ organization unifies writing
- ✓ includes beginning, middle, end
- ✓ flow of ideas
- ✓ smooth, connected text
- ✓ logical sequence of events
- ✓ strong lead engages reader
- ✓ hook at beginning
- ✓ reflective ending
- ✓ ending ties in with beginning
- ✓ paragraphing becomes refined
- ✓ effective use of transitional words

Voice/style

- ✓ demonstrates writer's voice/personality
- ✓ engages reader throughout
- ✓ shows awareness of audience
- ✓ uses emotional appeal
- ✓ includes effective word choice
- ✓ uses strong verbs
- ✓ point of view is clear
- ✓ analytical
- ✓ uses contradiction
- ✓ builds momentum
- ✓ sets scene or mood
- ✓ includes imagery through use of senses
- ✓ uses figurative language devices: metaphor, similes, clichés, expressions, personification
- ✓ experiments with different genres: poetry, narrative within a story
- ✓ risk-taking with vocabulary
- ✓ uses varied sentence structure and length
- ✓ experiments with different formats: chapters, flashbacks, scene changes, stage directions
- ✓ includes conversational tone
- ✓ includes reflective tone
- ✓ uses literary allusions
- ✓ uses conversation effectively
- ✓ uses questions to engage the reader
- ✓ shows insight and creativity
- ✓ describes visual details – binoculars
- ✓ uses snapshots

con·ven·tion(s)

- ✓ uses standard writing conventions
- ✓ uses standard grammar and mechanics
- ✓ experiments with breaking rules of standard grammar
- ✓ risk-taking with types of punctuation: ellipses, parenthesis, semicolon, quotation marks
- ✓ uses techniques for emphasis: bold face, underline, capital letters
- ✓ uses standard spelling
- ✓ uses asterisks for passage of time
- ✓ legible

profiles prompt

Topic

A Special Place

Thinking About The Topic

Do you have a favorite place that is important to you?

- Where or what is this place or space? (indoors, outdoors, your bedroom, closet, tree house, a place you like to visit, etc.)
- What is it like there?
- What do you do there
- Why is it special to you?

Writing About The Topic

Write about a special place.

You might, for example, do one of the following:

- describe in detail a place that is important to you.
- or ■ tell what you like to do in your special place.
- or ■ tell why your special space is important to you.
- or ■ write about the topic in another way.

You may use examples from real life, from what you read or watch, or from your imagination. Your writing will be read by interested adults.

grade seven (A Special Place)

~Special Place~

My special place is a place where everywhere you look you see trees taller than towers. There is a huge valley when you peer out into the distance.

You can smell moisture in the air from the morning dew, and the essence of daisies and daffodils.

You can hear birds tweeting and chirping all around you, and frogs are always making their silly croaking noise.

There is the hot sun beating down on you through green, leafy trees during the summer. A cool wind blows and there are leaves of all colors on the ground during autumn. You see a sparkling, white blanket of snow during the cold winter months. During early spring there are little birds popping out of all the trees.

There are black, brown, and grey squirrels scurrying around, snapping twigs, and tracks from a doe and her young pressed deeply in the soil.

My special place is a place to think, to clear my mind. I have no distractions, it is just me, alone with God.

a special place is a place that you can call your own, where you can go anytime and "get away from it all." It is where you can sit back, relax, and become your surroundings. Do you have a special place? Well, I do.

My special place is my dad's backyard. This includes the pond but there that I usually swim in during the summer. I like to climb on the island in the center of it and leap off.

Climbing on the island is hard. There is no ladder or anything to step on, and around the island, the water is about fifteen feet deep.

In order to get onto the island, you have to dig your nails into the slimy, slippery, mud around it and push yourself up with all of your weight. Then, start grabbing weeds, but be careful, some of them are prickly. Once you reach the top of the island, you have to put one of your legs up on the surface (I prefer my left leg) and pull yourself up with all of your body-strength. Then, after you get your

other leg up, you are practically up there.

After all of that work, I choose to jump off into the water. You become really muddy after climbing on the island, so going in the water helps all of the mud to wash off of your body.

In the rest of the pond, I like to run free or play with a frisbee or something like that, something that occupies me.

I like my special place because I like to smell and breathe the fresh air outside. I like to be out in the open and last of all, I like to be by myself, alone from this wicked world. I "became one with the earth."

My dad's backyard is ten acres large. That is why I keep talking about the open and running around outside.

The house is in Jeddo, Michigan. It is about twenty-five minutes away from my mom's house in Port Huron, Michigan.

I go to my dad's house almost everyday, but it will still, always be my special place.

focus on content

- ✓ on topic
- ✓ develops clear theme
- ✓ elaborates with examples

organization

- ✓ organized/flows
- ✓ smooth, connected text
- ✓ paragraphing is refined
- ✓ effective lead
- ✓ reflective ending

Voice/style

- ✓ engages reader
- ✓ imagination and creativity
- ✓ sets mood
- ✓ reflective tone
- ✓ shows insight and creativity
- ✓ describes visual details – binoculars
- ✓ snapshots
- ✓ use of personification

con·ven·tion(s)

- ✓ writing conventions in tact

strategies used by **narrative writers**

The next step in the Profile process, after selecting the most effective writings and holistically scoring the papers with a rubric, is to identify writing strategies used by the authors of the effective papers. The following list of writers' strategies is a combination of the original list that came from the New Standards Project shared by Sally Hampton and modified by Barbara Nelson to include the writing strategies of Barry Lane. These writing strategies can be taught in focused lessons. It is also a way to talk about narrative writing with students during writing conferences. The list of strategies used by narrative writers follows:

1. forecasting
2. flashback / flash forward
3. foreshadowing
4. compressing - shrink a century
5. naming (specific names of people or objects quantities, number)
6. describing visual details of scenes, objects, or people (size, colors, shapes, feature, dress) binoculars
7. describing sounds or smells of the scene - snapshots
8. narrating specific action (movements, gestures, postures, expressions) snapshots
9. creating dialogues, interior monologues, or expressing remembered feelings or insights at the time of the incident - thoughtshots
10. slowing the pace to elaborate the central moment in the incident - explode a moment
11. using syntax to support meaning
12. creating suspense or tension - explode a moment
13. including the element of surprise
14. comparing or contrasting other scenes or people
15. detailing subjects's routines habits or typical activities - binoculars
16. humor or irony
17. repetition / recurring events, objects, phrases
18. using various characters' voices to narrate a story
19. inserting historical or factual information into a story
20. figurative language - simile, metaphor, personification, onomatopoeia, alliteration
21. effective lead
22. effective conclusion, ending
23. literary allusion
24. creative, insightful word choice/word order (eg. active not passive voice, strong verbs, interesting or unusual use of or combination of words, etc.)
25. transitions
26. engaging audience intentionally and effectively (questioning, conversational tone)

strategies used by **narrative writers** (cont.)

Seventh Grade

Special Places

My special place is a place where everywhere you look you see trees taller than towers **effective lead, comparison, detail**. There is a huge valley when you peer out into the distance.

You can smell moisture in the air from the morning dew, and the essence **strong verb** of daisies and daffodils. **snapshot-smell**

You can hear birds tweeting and chirping all around you, and frogs are always making their silly **personification** croaking noise.

There is the hot sun beating down on your through green, leafy trees **binoculars** during the summer. A cool wind blows and there are leaves of all colors on the ground during autumn. You see a sparkling white blanket of snow during the cold winter months. During early spring there are little birds popping out of all the trees.

There are black, brown, and grey squirrels scurrying around, snapping twigs, and tracks from a doe and her young pressed deeply in the soil.

My special place is a place to think, to clear my mind. I have no distractions, it is just me, alone with God. **effective conclusion**

Using Profundity in Grades 3-12

To get third through twelfth graders to think about books at the theme level we use an activity that is systematic, based on the Profundity Scale, and dependent upon group discussion. The activity must be presented using the to, with and by format. First the teachers model the entire activity to their students. Next, teachers will share the responsibility of the activity with their students. Then teachers will guide students working in small groups through the use of the activity. Finally, students will independently work in small discussion groups to complete the activity or independently complete the activity. Following are the directions we give to teachers to guide students working in small groups. From these directions you should be able to model and share the activity and to help students move to independent use of this activity. The directions will be followed by some hints to help you do that. Depending upon the age of the student, adjust how much direction is needed.

To prepare for the activity you need the following materials for each small group working on the activity; sets of eight different color markers, large sheets of unlined chart paper: two sheets for the teacher and one sheet for each small group. You will also need a great book. There is a list of thematically linked text at the beginning of this unit. If they are books that you and your students have enjoyed over time they are probably good books with good lessons to be learned.

We are going to demonstrate the use of the activity using the book, *Elmer*, by David McKee. *Elmer* is the story of a patchwork colored elephant. He is always the center of attention until one day he mistakenly gets the notion that the other elephants are laughing at him, not with him. He leaves the herd to find a berry bush that has elephant colored berries. He covers himself in berry juice until he looks like any other elephant. When he rejoins the herd he is unnoticed by the others. He stands there seriously still until he can't stand it any longer and yells, "Booo!" The other elephants think it is a great joke and make the remark that Elmer should have been there to enjoy the joke. In the next moment a rain cloud showers Elmer back to his normal patchwork color. All the elephants think that what Elmer did was his best joke ever and they decide to have a parade each year to celebrate Elmer's best joke. So, every year Elmer comes to the parade looking like a normal elephant and all the other elephants color themselves patchwork.

To begin, hang two sheets of chart paper up where everyone can see them. Devise a way for students to gather the material they need. We usually have them count the number of buttons on their person. The one with the most buttons gets to come up and get the markers and sheet of chart paper. Once everyone is situated in small groups, four to a group seems to be a workable size, and has the materials they need you tell the students to listen for the actions of the main character in the story as you read. Profundity depends on following the actions of one character throughout the story.

Tell the students to listen for the actions of Elmer as you read the story. Remind them that actions are the things Elmer does. Read the story aloud to the class. As a class cooperatively build a list of important actions on the first piece of chart paper. **This list goes along with the Physical Plane: the reader is aware of the physical actions of the character.** Choose the three actions the class feels are the most important being sure that one of them is the turning point of the story (the turning point is often the clearest example of the theme in stories). Then explain that they will be working in co-operative groups, which means we will listen to each person talk and each person will have an opportunity to talk. The person with the most buttons needs to pick up the black marker and draw this shape (a rectangle divided into three equal parts) in the middle of their group chart paper. Then they write one of the three actions chosen by the class in each of the boxes. As they are writing the teacher also draws the boxes and writes one of the three actions in each of the boxes (on the second sheet of chart paper), as a model.

We always have the students use the markers as their talking sticks. That means when you have the marker in your hand it is your turn to talk and everyone should listen to what you have to say. It is very important to establish this procedure from the very beginning especially if this is the first time the student will be working in cooperative discussion groups. The first student in each group to have a marker is the one with the most buttons on his or her person. We always start there and then have the students exchange the use of the marker by the order they are sitting in, moving clock-wise around the group. So, moving clock-wise around the group the next person needs a red marker to draw a red bubble that connects to the first action box. We are going to use the example for *Elmer* to help explain the next steps. What the group is going to be thinking about is “Why did Elmer think the other elephants were laughing at him?” **This question goes along with the Mental Plane: the reader is aware of the intellectual actions of the character.** The person with the red marker tells why first, then passing the marker clock-wise, everyone gets to share his or her reason why. When everyone is done sharing, the group synthesizes the information and the person with the red marker writes their response in the red bubble. The next person takes a blue marker and draws a blue bubble that connects to the red bubble. What the group is going to be thinking this time is “was it right or wrong for Elmer to think the other elephants were laughing at him and tell why?” **This question goes along with the Moral Plane: the reader is aware of the character in light of an ethical code.** Repeat the process of sharing and writing shared response in the bubble. The next person takes a green marker and draws a green bubble that connects to the blue bubble. What the group is going to be thinking this time is “What did Elmer get from thinking the other elephants were laughing at him?” **This question goes along with the Psychological Plane: the reader is aware of the psychological forces influencing the character.** It is important to remember that Profundity begins with the actions of the character and always goes back to the actions. It is also important to remember that for the third bubble you must stay specific to the action, you can never go beyond the next action. Students repeat this process for the next two actions on their own. As they are working you wander from group to group monitoring the group discussion, giving advice, modeling discussion behavior, prompting for deeper discussion and giving evaluative feedback that students can use to help monitor their own discussion groups.

Next, the teacher explains to the students that they will understand stories and theme better when they attempt to identify with the characters of the story. Every group now turns over their large sheet of chart paper and makes a list of how these are like a character in the story. Think about the ways you are the same as Elmer to make your list. This typically starts out as a list of physical characteristics; such as, we are both animals. Teachers should get students to think deeper by posing situations from the story to consider while they are filling out the chart. One such situation is pointing out that when Elmer was standing with the herd still, quiet and serious, he yelled, “Booo!” If you would do that then you are like Elmer. Teachers want students to see how their thinking is the same as Elmer’s. Do they do the same things as Elmer? Do they think the same things are right or wrong?

An example of the power identifying with characters has in helping students get to the theme level came about one day as while presenting this activity in a third grade classroom in Memphis, Michigan. We walked into the classroom and were immediately able to identify at least one Elmer, in the room. You can always identify the Elmers in classrooms very quickly. He was a very vivacious, very blond boy seated with a group of about 10 students and he was keeping them very entertained as we were preparing for the activity. He did stop long enough to become thoroughly engaged in the activity. However, when we got to the part where they had to think about “Why did Elmer yell, “Booo!” he stood up, threw his arms in the air, in very Elmer fashion, and announced, “Nobody needs to think, I know the answer, Elmer was addicted to attention, just like me!” It was a very easy jump for him to get from that understanding to the theme of “Be true to yourself.”

Go back to the person with the most buttons and have them turn the chart paper back over to the bubbling side. He or she needs to draw a large brown bubble. What the group is going to be thinking about here is “What is the theme of this story?” **This question goes along with the philosophical plane: the universal truth the author is trying to expound.**

Then you finish up the activity by having everyone draw a square and respond to one of the prompts listed on the three ways reading can transform your thinking page. This illustrates to students that universal truths are generative. This step often takes you beyond the theme level to the ideas in action level. Now that you know this to be true what can or are you going to do about it. This is the social action level that is described well by Terri and Randy Bomer in their book, *Reading and Writing for Social Action*, (1999) and by Paula Rogovin in her book, *The Research Workshop, Bringing the World into Your Classroom* (2001).

Here are some helpful hints to help you manage the activity in the classroom. This activity takes a few hours to do with the children so think of creative ways to break it down and spread the instruction over several days. You could do all the red bubbles one day, the blue bubbles the next day and then the green bubbles another day or you could do the first action one day or you could do the first action one day the second action the next day and then the third action another day. We recommend that the book be reread each day before resuming the activity. Since it takes a great deal of time to complete the activity, be sure to select text carefully. The teachers we have worked with always stress that they would never have students complete this activity with a book they themselves had not personally analyzed. They want to make sure they are able to help students through the tough spots and they want to make sure that the theme the students infer is reasonable and justifiable given the evidence in the story.

Here are some helpful suggestions to help you present this activity in a to, with, and by format. When modeling the activity the teacher will do all the talking and will be demonstrating how to draw the boxes and bubbles and how to think about the questions before filling in the bubbles. A time or two of modeling should be enough for most classes. When sharing the activity the teacher will share the talking and thinking about the questions with the students. The teacher still draws the boxes and bubbles and fills them in with synthesized answers. It looks and sounds like this when a teacher is sharing, the teacher draws the red bubble and poses the question, “Why did Elmer think the other elephants were laughing at him?” He or she then asks for responses from several students. The teacher then shares their own response and shows the children how to synthesize the several responses into a statement that can be written into the bubble. The teacher continues to share the talking and thinking until the activity is completed. Again, a time or two of sharing should be enough for most classes. When independently completing the activity, the students are to work alone. The teacher’s job becomes one of facilitator and evaluator. As they are working, you wander from group to group, monitoring discussion, giving advice, modeling discussion behavior, prompting for deeper discussion, and giving evaluative feedback that students can use to help monitor their own discussion groups. The ultimate goal is to have kids either using the Profundity Scale in small discussion groups or individually to understand text at a deeper level.

It is very helpful to repeat this process with a second thematically related book. A book that I often pair with *Elmer* is *Stand Tall Molly Lou Mellon*, by Patty Lovell. The theme of both stories is “Be true to yourself,” however; both characters accomplish this through entirely different means. By repeating the process with thematically related books students can compare and contrast one characters understanding of the theme with the other characters understanding of the theme and with their own understanding of the theme. It also demonstrates to students that theme is inferred. It is the teacher in this case who is inferring the theme of both books, declaring them thematically related and then asking students if they agree or disagree with the theme that the teacher has inferred. To answer that question effectively students will need to provide clear examples from the text to support their position. Looking at two thematically linked books will lead students to a deeper understanding of both texts.

As mentioned before, our ultimate goal is to have kids either using the Profundity Scale in small discussion groups or individually to understand text at a deeper level. We hope, by now, that it is becoming clear to you how useful the Profundity Scale is in helping students discuss and think about text. Hopefully, students will be able to choose text about which they are curious, get with interested others and successfully start and sustain a discussion group around that text. Hopefully, individual students will have enough experience with thinking this way that it will become internalized and students will think this way about all text. One teacher during a workshop remarked, “Now I have all the questions I need to discuss texts with my students.” She was referring to the questions asked at each plane during the bubbling activity.

Another adaptation was to use the Profundity Scale Matrix as shown on the next page. Teachers should read two thematically linked texts. Then on a greatly enlarged version of the matrix they would lead children through a group discussion about each box of the matrix. You complete the matrix one book at a time. When you have completed the matrix for both books you can then lead discussions that compare and contrast the two characters’ understanding of the theme to your own understanding of the theme. Students then can agree or disagree if the theme of both stories really is the same. Of course, to effectively answer that question, they will need to provide clear examples from the texts to support their position. Using this matrix truly helps students develop a deeper understanding of both texts.

Profundity Matrix - FAIRNESS

| Titles of paired texts | List three important actions of one character | Why did the character act this way? | Was it right or wrong for the character to act this way? | What did the character get from acting this way? | How am I like the characters in this story? | What is the lesson learned from this story? | How has this lesson learned changed the way I think? |
|--|--|---|---|---|---|--|--|
| <p>The Scholarship Jacket, By, Martha Sainas Character: Martha</p> | <p>Martha worked hard to earn the jacket Listened to the argument regarding the jacket Took her grandfather's position & told the principal that they refuse to pay for the jacket</p> | <p>Her sister had one and Martha knew she could do it also; sports jackets were not possible. ...she heard her name; curiosity; needed to wait to get her gym shorts</p> | <p>Right: setting goals is good. Academic talent helped her feel good about herself. Wrong: you don't need a jacket to validate yourself; you don't always need a reward for doing what is right.</p> | <p>Recognition Dignity Respect from grandparents Power</p> | | <p>Life isn't always fair.</p> | |
| <p>The Southpaw, By, Judith Viorst Character: Janet</p> | <p>She changes her goldfish's name from Richard to Stanley. She ridicules Richard's losing team. She offers him a package deal.</p> | <p>She was angry that Richard didn't ask her to be on his baseball team. To get back at Richard; to goot Because she wants to be the pitcher on Richard's baseball team</p> | <p>Wrong: because she didn't attempt to talk it out with Richard. Wrong: she is still being a poor sport. Right: she was trying to negotiate and she knew her talent was in pitching.</p> | <p>To pitch To be on the team She got to make her point. Gloat</p> | | <p>Sometimes what is really "fair" is subjective. Or "Fairness" is in the eye of the beholder.</p> | |

Thematically Related Text Sets

| Titles of paired texts | List three important actions of one character | Why did the character act this way? | Was it right or wrong for the character to act this way? | What did the character get from acting this way? | How am I like the characters in this story? | What is the lesson learned from this story? | How has this lesson learned changed the way I think? |
|------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|--|--|---|---|--|
| | | | | | | | |

CROSS TEXT QUESTIONS FOR “THE SCHOLARSHIP JACKET” AND “THE SOUTHPAW”

Q. Did Martha and Janet do the same kinds of things? How were their actions similar or different?

A. Both Martha and Janet hung on to their beliefs of what they wanted. Neither one lost confidence in themselves.

Q. How are their reasons for acting the way they did similar or different?

A. Martha stood by her grandfather’s decision not to pay for the scholarship jacket and bravely told that to her principal. Janet never backed down from wanting to be the pitcher on Richard’s baseball team.

Q. Did you agree more with the way that Martha acted or with the way that Janet acted? Why?

A. We agree with Martha because we feel that Janet did not show good sportsmanship when she was ridiculing Richard’s losing team. Martha, on the other hand, demonstrated a lot of honesty in her dealing with the principal.

Q. Did Martha and Janet get the same thing for their actions? Why or why not?

A. They both got what they wanted.

Q. If both of the characters learned the same lesson what was the lesson?

A. Even when life isn’t treating you fair, you still have to believe in yourself.

Q. If each of the characters learned a different lesson what were the lessons learned?

A. Martha learned that being true to yourself was more important than compromising your beliefs. Janet learned that persistence pays.

Q. Do you agree or disagree that the theme of these two stories is “fairness?”

A. We agree.

Writing in Response to Reading Graphic Organizer to Help Students Organizer Their Ideas

*** Use with scenario prompt located in Part 2b of Prototypes.**

Graphic Organizer for Scenario Writing

Theme: _____

| | |
|---|----------|
| Title | Title |
| Scenario Question | |
| What are the choices? | |
| Choice 1 | Choice 2 |
| <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p>Your Choice</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> </div> </div> | |
| Text Examples / Support | |
| Text 1 | Text 2 |
| Cross-Text Connection | |
| Related Personal Experience or Lesson Learned | |

Sample Scenario Writing

Dear Mrs. Andrus,

In the matter of should students have the right to exclude other students from their projects, I think they should. This is my opinion because, if someone works very hard on their part of the project and no one else does, they will receive a low grade. This grade is fair for the students who slacked off, but not fair for the ones who tried their best. If students were allowed choose their own groups, then they would be picking the grade they want, based on how hard they wish to work with their own group. Sometimes, students who work with people they cannot get along with do not get their work done. Yet, if allowed to choose groups, students are able to choose whom they can work with. Those are just a few reasons to support my position.

There are two stories I read that support my opinion. *The Scholarship Jacket* is the first. In this story Martha is a girl who was almost treated unfairly, just like the students who get unfair grades while working in groups. The problems relate as Martha's teacher wanted to falsify grades, so that a student with a more prominent family could win the schools scholarship jacket. This is similar to how the teachers, in some cases, give bad grades to everyone working on a group project due to the lack of effort on a few students' part.

The second story, *The Southpaw*, deals with fairness of groups. The main characters, Richard and Janet were friends that had gotten into a fight. The fight was about Richard not letting Janet play on his baseball team. At the end they became friends again due to compromises on both their parts and Janet gets to play on his team.

Both stories have a lot in common. The issue that is in both stories was that there were one or more people who decided that an unfair way was the right way. For example, Martha was not going to get the jacket because her teacher Mr. Boone wanted to give it to the girl from the more prominent family. At the beginning of *The Southpaw*, Richard would not let Janet play on his team because she was a girl. All of these acts were not fair just like students not being allowed to choose their own groups. These stories remind me of a time when I got an unfair grade on a group project in social studies. Everyone had separate things to do as part of the group; however, the grade was based on the group project. If one member's grade was low, everyone's grade was lowered. And, that is exactly what happened. A group member missed several spelling errors on their part of the project and everyone's grade went down. This was not fair grading for a group project. From these stories I learned that groups chosen fairly will usually work and if groups are chosen for students is will most likely end with unfair grades. Once again, I agree that students should have the right to exclude others from their group.

Sincerely,

A Concerned Student

Related Language Arts Activities:

Before, During and After Prototypes

Teacher Suggestion page

These ideas may be used for a variety of texts. Use your judgment and incorporate them as you find appropriate.

- **Think – Aloud:** This is a great comprehension strategy to use with many texts. Skills include: predicting, making connections, interpreting, visualizing, making personal connections, inferring, and monitoring comprehension (using fix-up strategies to address confusion and repair comprehension). Attached you will find a blank format to use with your students, and also a form that includes instructions. *Improving Comprehension With Think-Aloud Strategies*, by Jeffrey Wilhelm, Ph. D. contains valuable information about this strategy.
- **Soap Box:** This is a terrific activity to use when students are studying a story or novel in which the characters hold strong opinions. The Soap Box activity allows students to step into a character’s shoes in a meaningful manner. Students gather around a box or chair. They should give their full attention to the speaker. The speaker chooses a character to portray and must try to convince the others to agree or disagree with his or her opinion. The students are encouraged to play devil’s advocate as they react to the speaker. Listening students may also take on the role of other characters or those with different interpretations of a character and may step up to the box to speak. This activity provides students with the opportunity to explore a deeper understanding of a character and text.
- **Word Theater:** Students choose two or three interesting vocabulary words from a specified text. They then create a written plan / script detailing how they can communicate the meaning of the words without speaking. The students will then perform for the whole class or a small group who must try to guess each of the words.
- **Cubing:** This helps review a topic or can be used to compare and analyze a theme. (*50 Literacy Strategies*, by Gail E. Tompkins.)
- **Double-Entry Journals:** Have students divide paper into two columns. Use quotes from a character in the story and then have the students make a connection to their own lives. (*50 Literacy Strategies*, by Gail E. Tompkins.)
- **Create a Venn diagram.**
- **Write a letter to the author** letting he/she know how their book has changed your life.

“THINK-ALOUD”

(A strategy for comprehension)

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>[Before Reading]</p> <p>2. Set Purposes for Reading (Preview the text by looking at the book’s title, author, content, genre, and readability.)</p> <p>Title: Author:</p> <p>Prompts:</p> <p>“The title makes me think that this is going to be about...”</p> <p>“The photographs make me think that this will be about...”</p> <p>“The comments on the back make me think that...”</p> | <p>[Shortly after beginning to read]</p> <p>3. Connect Personally (Show how you use your own experience to help make meaning.)</p> <p>Prompts:</p> <p>“This is like _____”</p> <p>“This reminds me of _____”</p> <p>“This could help me with _____”</p> |
| <p>[Further into the beginning of the story]</p> <p>4. Monitor Comprehension</p> <p>Prompts:</p> <p>“What questions do you have about this selection?”</p> <p>“This is (not) making sense because _____”</p> | <p>[Further into the beginning of the story]</p> <p>5. Making Inferences</p> <p>Prompts:</p> <p>“How does [name of character] feel in the beginning of the story?”</p> <p>“How does [name of another character] feel?”</p> |
| <p>[In the middle of the story]</p> <p>6. Visualize (Show how you take the sensory and physical details the author gives you and expand them in your mind’s eye to create an image or a scene.)</p> <p>Prompts:</p> <p>“Draw one scene from the story and label it.”</p> <p>“In my mind’s eye...”</p> <p>“I imagine...”</p> <p>“I see...” or “I have a picture of.”</p> | <p>[At the end of the story]</p> <p>7. Making Inferences</p> <p>Prompts:</p> <p>“How does [name of character] feel at the end of the story?”</p> <p>“How does [name of another character] feel now?”</p> |
| <p>[At the end of the story]</p> <p>8. Determining Importance</p> <p>Prompt:</p> <p>“What is the most important idea of the last page of this story?”</p> | <p>[Upon completion of the story]</p> <p>9. Use Fix-up Strategies to Address Confusion and Repair Comprehension. (Problems with text can be addressed by: rereading; reading ahead; review previous ideas; replace an unknown word with one they think makes sense; look up an unknown word in the dictionary; change their ideas or visualizations.)</p> <p>Prompt:</p> <p>“When you came to a part you couldn’t understand, what strategies did you use?”</p> |

“THINK-ALOUD”
(A strategy for comprehension)

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>1. Set Purposes for Reading</p> <p>Title: Author:</p> <p>“The title makes me think that this is going to be about...”</p> | <p>2. Connect Personally</p> <p>“This reminds me of...”</p> |
| <p>3. Monitor Comprehension</p> <p>“What questions do you have about this selection?”</p> | <p>4. Making Inferences</p> <p>“How does [name of character] feel in the beginning of the story?”</p> <p>“How does [name of another character] feel?”</p> |
| <p>5. Visualize</p> <p>“Draw one scene from the story and label it.”</p> | <p>6. Making Inferences</p> <p>“How does [name of character] feel at the end of the story?”</p> <p>“How does [name of another character] feel now?”</p> |
| <p>7. Determining Importance</p> <p>“What is the most important idea of the last page of this story?”</p> | <p>8. Use Fix-up Strategies to Address Confusion and Repair Comprehension.</p> <p>“When you came to a part you couldn’t understand, what strategies did you use?”</p> |

Cubing

While cubing, students ponder a topic from six points of view. The name “Cubing” is appropriate, due to the fact that cubes have six sides. The six sides to cubing are as follows:

1. Describe the topic, such as shape, color and size.
2. Compare the topic to something else. Think about the similarities and differences.
3. Associate the topic to something else and tell why the topic makes you think of this.
4. Analyze the topic and explain how it is made.
5. Apply the topic and tell how it is used.
6. Argue; take a stand, for or against the topic. List the reasons for your argument.

Use these simple steps when utilizing the cubing exercise:

1. Choose a topic.
2. Divide the students into six groups; invite each group to look at the topic from one of the six points of view. (Each student in the group can create his or her own point of view, if you wish, each six member group can create it's own cube.)
3. Students should think about ideas within the point of view of the group. Do a drawing or outline of ideas that were collectively gathered.
4. The students now will share their ideas with the class and attach their group ideas to a box. (Students may choose to construct a cube by folding and gluing cardboard or paper into a box.)

Application: Cubing can be used for across-the-curriculum thematic units. Middle and Upper grades can cube topics such as Antarctica, endangered animals, the Underground Railroad, and the Nile River. Cubing is also useful in analyzing the characters in a story. A group of students wrote this cubing about Annemarie, the girl who helps to hide her Jewish friend Ellen in *Number the Stars* (Lowry, 1989).

Describe: Annemarie is a Danish, Christian, ten-year-old girl. She has blond hair and blue eyes and is very intelligent, athletic, and is a good friend.

Compare: Ellen and Annemarie are both intelligent Danish girls, and they are both good friends. They are both good students as well. They are different because Annemarie has blond hair and Ellen has brown hair. Annemarie is thinner than Ellen and she can run faster than her. They are also of different religion, which is the biggest difference in this particular story. During WWII religion was a factor in the safety of Ellen and the struggles of Annemarie.

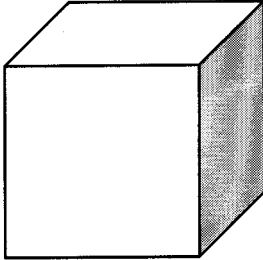
Associate: Annemarie is just like the rest of us. She would fit right in with our class.

Analyze: Annemarie is a normal girl but she had to be brave because of the war, if we lived through a war we might become strong like Annemarie. If a friend is in trouble you should try to help them. Sometimes this might be dangerous.

Apply: It is a very smart thing to do, to pretend to be dumb. During the war, it can be dangerous if you know too much.

Argue: Annemarie decided to be brave. She could have left Ellen to take care of herself but she didn't. Ellen had to be brave, if she hadn't, she would have been sent to a concentration camp or she could have been killed.

Cubing (make a box)



| | | |
|------------------------|-------------|--------------|
| | Apply it | |
| Argue (for or against) | Describe it | Associate it |
| | Compare it | |
| | Analyze it | |

Double Entry Journals

A double entry journal is a special type of journal for reading in which there are two columns. On one side students write information from a book that they are reading. In the other column they write personal thoughts about the information from the selection. It is possible that the students will relate the information to their own lives and have a reaction to the verses. They may even question or have some other form of connection to the writings. A fifth graders reading journal is given as an example below.

Procedure

Writing a double entry journal.

1. The students should divide the pages in their reading logs into two columns. Label the left "Quotes" and the right column "Comments" or "Thoughts".
2. While the students are reading or just after reading , ask them to write down one or many interesting pieces of information in the left hand column of their journal.

| Quotes | Thoughts |
|--|---|
| Chapter 1 I tell you this is the sort of House where no one is going Mind what we do. | It reminds me of a time I Stayed with my Uncle Tom in Texas. He had a huge House. |
| Chapter 5 "How do you know" he asked "that your sister's story is not true?" | I always used to hide when I little and my parents always had to find me. I used to play make believe and pretend I was under cover for the FBI |

3. Ask children to read the information again and then write the reasons for choosing the information that they chose. Sometimes it works well if the students share their information with a reading buddy. Then they can write down their thoughts in the right column.

Application

These journals can be used for other reasons as well. The students can also use them for taking notes on the story and in the right column they would write their perception of the reading selection.

They could title it “Reading Notes” And “Questions” in the other column. These notes can be taken as they read or just after reading. After talking about the story the students can add discussion notes to their journal, all of the rest of the class information and thoughts.

Young Students can use this type of journal as a means of predicting what will happen in a story. Label the Left column “Predictions” and the right column “ Outcome”. On the left side the student can draw or write about what they predict will happen and do the same with the outcome “ what really happened?”

Double Entry Journal

| Quotes from the story | Connection to my life |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| | |

Teacher Suggestion Page – Fairness

- *Old Henry*: Have students write the mayor’s response to Henry in poetic form.
- *A Picture Book of Harriet Tubman*: Have students work in groups of two. One student will be “Harriet” and the other student will interview her. Share the interviews with the class.
- *Kids At Work*: Have students select a photo and write their reaction to it.
- *Molly Bannaky*: Have student’s compare / contrast slaves and indentured servants.
- *Chief Joseph’s Speech*: Have students research the Trail of Tears.
- *Craft Lessons Teaching Writing K-8*, by Ralph Fletcher and Joann Portalupi. This book contains strategies that can be used with the following text: “Faithful Elephants” Page 76.