

THEMATIC UNIT

Related to ELA Prototypes



Theme: **Courage to Be Me**

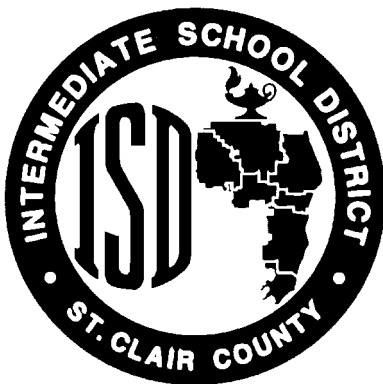
Suggested for: **Middle School**

Developed By:

Barbara B. Neal, Title I Reading
Port Huron Area School District
Nancy Smith Seilheimer
Marysville Public Schools District

Edited by:

Jeff Beal, Language Arts Consultant



499 Range Road
P.O. Box 5001
Port Huron, MI 48061-5001
Phone: (810) 364-8990
Fax: (810) 364-7474
www.sccisd.org

© 2003 Intermediate School District of St. Clair County

All text and pictures on this CD-ROM are copyrighted. Permission is granted to the purchaser to freely copy, in electronic or print form, the materials on this CD-ROM for non-commercial, classroom use only.

~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 guide you through your own thinking.

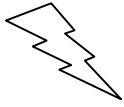
The sequence of instruction would be to introduce the theme through using the Fruyer's Model of concept attainment. Have students write from knowledge and experience. Think through each reading selection using the profundity scale to create a matrix by which cross text questions can be posed and answered.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

Thematically Related Text Sets – Courage to Be Me

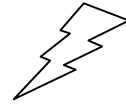
CODE	TITLE	AUTHOR
1, 2	Ellen the Eagle Finds Her Place in the World	From <i>Ackamarakus: Julius Lester's Sumptuously Silly Fantastically Funny Fables</i>
1, 2	Wilma Rudolph	www.biography.com
3	Life Doesn't Frighten Me	Maya Angelou
*	The Oyster	Author Unknown
*	"No-Hair Day"	Jennifer Rosenfeld & Alison Lambert
*	Molly Bannaky	Alice McGill
*	The Eternal Gifts	Jack Schlatter
*	Snowflake Bentley	Jacqueline Briggs Martin
	Sparky	From <i>Bits & Pieces</i> , The Economics Press, Inc. Also from <i>Chicken Soup for the Teenage Soul</i> , by Canfield, Hansen, Kirberger

Code Key:
Suggested Uses

- 1 – Frayer's Model /
Brainstorming the Theme
- 2 – Paired Text
- 3 – Listening
- * – Extension Activities



Brainstorming the Theme



Courage to be me means . . .

- Doing what is right even if it's not popular.
- Standing up for your self.
- When someone does what isn't expected, because they want to try something new. "Going against the grain".
- Trying to figure out who "me" is.

Note: Accept all reasonable responses from students that focus on the definition of the theme.

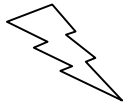
Examples of having the courage to be me . . .

- Rosie the Riveter worked in a "man's" job during WWII.
- Bob wants to be a concert pianist.
- Denise wants to wrestle on the school team, even though her friends tell her it's a boys' sport.
- When all the girls only want to wear dresses because it's the newest fashion, but I still like wearing pants.
- Wilma Rudolph became an Olympic runner, even though she was told she could never run. (This could be added after Reading Selection #1.)
- When Ellen the Eagle decides she really doesn't want to fly, even though all eagles are supposed to fly. (This could be added after Reading Selection #2.)

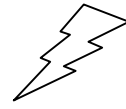
Note: Students should brainstorm events, personal experiences, examples from related text, a person from history, or someone that students know that demonstrate/support the theme.

Circle one example from above that you will write about.

Note: Students select one of the above examples and use as a writing topic. (MEAP Part 1 writing)



Brainstorming the Theme



Having the courage to be me means . . .

-
-
-
-

Examples of having the courage to be me . . .

-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-

Circle one example from above that you will write about.

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.

or gan i za 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.

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 six *A Special Place*)

A Special Place

If you have a special place, you know why I like the stream near my Grandma's house. Whenever I want to get away from everything and just relax, I go there.

When I am there, I feel relaxed. The endless babble of the water, and the ongoing "conversation" of the treefrogs, blend in perfectly with the rustle of the reeds blowing in the breeze.

The aroma of lilacs sweeping in from the yard behind me, settles my worries. Minnows, darting here and there, avoiding the shadow of the kingfisher above, look so timeless. Rocks and pebbles at the bottom

of the water look so shiny in the mid-day sun. Almost like jewels at the bottom of the ocean. Sometimes you can hear a cicada, buzzing in a nearby tree, or see a butterfly, fluttering silently over the surface of the water. Pearly Queen Anne's lace and lavender Forget-me-Nots litter the grass around me. Visiting each one is a bee or butterfly, pollinating busily. Dragonflies glide cheerfully over the water, landing on cattails or reeds.

Though I love this place I cannot stay there forever. I have to go back home. Yet, I can always return when I feel like it.

focus on content

- ✓ on topic
- ✓ develops with concrete details

Voice/style

- ✓ voice-speaking to reader
- ✓ strong word choice
- ✓ uses sense – sounds, smells
- ✓ uses figurative language – simile, metaphor, personification

organization

- ✓ well-organized and developed with details
- ✓ effective introduction
- ✓ conclusion summarizes

con-ven-tion(s)

- ✓ uses standard writing conventions
- ✓ effective use of quotation marks

attributes **grade six**

focus on content

- ✓ focuses on topic or theme
- ✓ use of creative, insightful detail
- ✓ uses supporting details
- ✓ uses definition with examples
- ✓ clarity of thought
- ✓ message is life lesson
- ✓ develops with a personal experience
- ✓ includes lesson or moral
- ✓ sophisticated and consistent use of narration
- ✓ use of anecdotes
- ✓ develops character

organization

- ✓ organization unifies writing
- ✓ flow
- ✓ uses logical sequence
- ✓ strong introduction/conclusion
- ✓ comes full circle (end ties in with beginning)
- ✓ uses good transitions
- ✓ uses sophisticated plot structure (ascending, descending action, resolution)
- ✓ effective introduction
- ✓ conclusion summarizes

Voice/style

- ✓ engages reader
- ✓ shows sense of audience
- ✓ uses variety of sentence structure and length
- ✓ includes mature thinking/tone
- ✓ uses consistent tone
- ✓ uses conversational tone
- ✓ uses imagery
- ✓ evidence of risk-taking
- ✓ uses writer's voice/personal perspective
- ✓ shows originality in style
- ✓ uses sarcasm
- ✓ includes empathy
- ✓ uses humor/emotional appeal/pathos
- ✓ displays sense of humor
- ✓ includes cynicism
- ✓ appeals to senses
- ✓ uses metaphor/simile/personification
- ✓ selects and uses vocabulary effectively
- ✓ uses onomatopoeia/alliteration
- ✓ uses literary allusions
- ✓ uses dialogue, dialect, exclamatory remarks
- ✓ uses rhetorical question
- ✓ uses foreshadowing
- ✓ uses a variety of speech tags: "explained," "screamed," "recited"
- ✓ is reflective
- ✓ sequencing effective to pull reader into story (suspense)
- ✓ uses asides and parenthesis
- ✓ shows significance of topic to writer
- ✓ objective presentation of information
- ✓ summarizes evidence
- ✓ uses vernacular to be authentic
- ✓ expresses opinion
- ✓ uses sentence fragment effectively

con-ven-tion(s)

- ✓ evidence of revision/editing
- ✓ uses standard writing conventions
- ✓ uses correct punctuation and grammar
- ✓ control of mechanics
- ✓ demonstrates skill with paragraphing
- ✓ is consistent with verb tenses
- ✓ correct use of quotation
- ✓ correct use of semi-colon
- ✓ effective use of dashes
- ✓ correct use of ellipses
- ✓ experimentation with parenthesis
- ✓ experimentation with "i.e."
- ✓ experimentation with underlining and capitalization for emphasis

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' 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.)

Sixth Grade

The Secret Valley

Next to the woods on my great-grandma's farm there is a special place for me. The walk to my spot (the first time I went there) was long and hard, but when I finally got there it was worth it. It was the first time I had ever noticed the valley. I had heard my dad talk about it. He said "it's all swamp land," but I decided to look around anyway.

I leapt **strong verb** across a small stream, and landed on both feet. To my right I saw a large patch of plants that looked like bamboo. To my left I saw tall pine trees that looked like soldiers guarding a cave. In front of me I saw a large field with trees speckled **personification** across it like baseball players on a baseball diamond **snapshots, similes**. I walked towards the bamboo. After walking a while I found a small clearing. I stopped to rest on a tree stump. **specific action**

It was so peaceful I could hear the birds chatter and the creek sing **personification**. I could feel the dampness in the air, and the wind on my face. I could smell the blooming flowers, and the apples in the trees. **snapshots: hear, smell, feel**

I got up to go explore again. I found an apple tree and sat down on its low branches. I knew **forecasting** this valley would be my secret place, my secret valley **repetition**. I knew it would be special to me. **thoughtshot** I go there to get away from the world, and to sort out my problems. I love my special place. I love my secret valley.

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 character’s understanding of the theme with the other character’s 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.

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?
<p>"Ellen the Eagle Finds Her Place In the World" by Julius Lester</p>	<p>Ellen didn't want to learn to fly. Ellen tries to tell the ranger she doesn't want to fly like an eagle. Ellen becomes the mascot for the post office.</p>	<p>She was afraid. She doesn't want to be like other eagles. She really didn't want to fly.</p>	<p>** acceptable for all 3 actions Right, we need to be true to ourselves. Wrong, all eagles are supposed to fly.</p>	<p>Ellen was pressured into learning to fly. She gets to go home with the ranger. Ellen finds a job where she doesn't have to fly.</p>		<p>Everybody is good at something. Or Standing up for yourself makes you happy. Or It is courageous to be yourself.</p>	
<p>"Wilma Rudolph"</p>	<p>Wilma takes her braces off. Wilma wins 3 Olympic Gold Medals. Wilma founded the Wilma Rudolph Foundation.</p>	<p>To practice walking She wanted to achieve her dream. To make a contribution to sports</p>	<p>Right, she wanted to walk Wrong, she wasn't following doctor's orders. Right, she worked towards a goal. Right, she shared her life lessons.</p>	<p>She became physically stronger. Wilma achieved a personal victory. The knowledge that she was helping others.</p>		<p>It is sometimes difficult to overcome obstacles and achieve your dreams. Or Believing in yourself accomplishes great things. Or Persistence leads to accomplishments.</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?
<p style="text-align: center;">Come Back <u>Salmon</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Chapter 2: <i>Operation Pigeon Creek</i></p>							
<p style="text-align: center;">An excerpt from <u>Eleanor Roosevelt</u> By: William Jay Jacobs</p>							

CROSS TEXT QUESTIONS FOR “ELLEN THE EAGLE FINDS HER PLACE IN THE WORLD” AND “WILMA RUDOLPH”

Q. Did Ellen and Wilma do the same kinds of things? How were their actions similar?

A. They both overcame expectations and obstacles to achieve personal dreams.

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

A. Wilma wanted to exceed expectations by overcoming her physical challenges. Ellen went against expectations to be true to herself.

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

A. They both got self-satisfaction in achieving personal dreams, which led to happiness.

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

A. They learned it is sometimes difficult to overcome obstacles and achieve your dreams.

Q. Do you agree or disagree that the theme of these two stories is “be true to yourself?”

A. We agree.

Related Language Arts Activities:

Before, During and After Prototypes

Extension Activities

The following suggestions provide additional ways to use the theme related text.

- Have students do a Quick Write on the theme, *The Courage to be Me*. Ask students to write continuously for no more than five minutes. They should focus on interesting ideas and make connections between the topic and their own lives. Have students share their Quick Writes in small groups. This activity is a way to help students focus on exploring and developing ideas. The emphasis is on content not mechanics. This entire activity should be completed in 20 minutes.
- Use Inner Voice reading strategy for the poem “The Oyster.” Have students read each stanza in the poem and ask them, “What is your inner voice saying about this?” Have students write their response on the right side of the page. Have students continue reading each stanza and writing their inner voice thoughts. When completed, ask students to respond to the short answer questions at the bottom. Have students share their answers.
- Read *Snowflake Bentley* and *No-Hair Day*. Then practice scenario writing using the scenario and question provided. Use the “House” organizer to help students organize the paragraph.
- Use reading strategy questions for *Molly Bannaky*. Have students complete a “chart” with their responses.
- Use the *Quotables* activity to enhance text-to-self comprehension. Have students share their responses with the class.
- Have students complete the “Believing and Achieving” writing activity.

The Oyster

Author Unknown

Inner Voice – Write your thoughts after reading each stanza.

There once was an oyster
Whose story I tell,
Who found that some sand
Had got into his shell.
It was only a grain,
But it have him great pain.
For oysters have feelings
Although they're so plain.

Now, did he berate
The harsh workings of fate
That had brought him
To such a deplorable state?
Did he curse at the government,
Cry for election,
And claim that the sea should
Have given him protection?

No -- he said to himself
As he lay on a shell,
Since I cannot remove it,
I shall try to improve it.
Now the years have rolled around,
As the years always do,
And he came to his ultimate
Destiny – stew.

And the small grain of sand
That had bothered him so
Was a beautiful pearl
All richly aglow.
Now the tale has a moral;
For isn't it grand
What an oyster can do
With a morsel of sand?

What couldn't we do
If we'd only begin
With some of the things
That get under our skin.

What is the message of this poem? _____

What evidence from the poem supports your interpretation?

What lesson have you learned from this poem?

How can you apply what you have learned to your life?

The following story was published in the 1997 edition of *Chicken Soup for the Teenage Soul*. Alison Lambert graduated from the University of Pennsylvania in June 2000. She is currently living in New York City.

No-Hair Day

By Jennifer Rosenfeld and Alison Lambert

If you are turning 16, you stand in front of the mirror scrutinizing every inch of your face. You agonize that your nose is too big and you're getting another pimple - on top of which you are feeling dumb because your hair isn't blonde, and that boy in your English class has not noticed you yet.

Alison never had those problems. Two years ago, she was a beautiful, popular and smart eleventh-grader, not to mention a varsity lacrosse goalie and an ocean lifeguard. With her tall, slender body, pool-blue eyes and thick blonde hair, she looked more like a swimsuit model than a high school student. But during that summer, something changed.

After a day of lifeguarding, Alison couldn't wait to get home, rinse the saltwater out of her hair and comb through her tangles. She flipped her sun-bleached mane forward. "Ali!" her mother cried, "What did you do?" She discovered a bare patch of skin on the top of her daughter's scalp. "Did you shave it? Could someone else have done it while you were sleeping?" Quickly, they solved the mystery - Alison must have wrapped the elastic band too tightly around her ponytail. The incident was soon forgotten.

Three months later, another bald spot was found, then another. Soon, Alison's scalp was dotted with peculiar quarter-sized bare patches. After diagnoses of "it's just stress" with remedies of topical ointments, a specialist began to administer injections of cortisone, 50 to each spot, every two weeks. To mask her scalp, bloody from the shots, Alison was granted permission to wear a baseball hat to school, normally a violation of the strict uniform code. Little strands of hair would push through the scabs, only to fall out two weeks later. She was suffering from a condition of hair loss known as alopecia, and nothing would stop it.

Alison's sunny spirit and supportive friends kept her going, but there were some low points. Like the time when her little sister came into her bedroom with a towel wrapped around her head to have her hair combed. When her mother untwisted the towel, Alison watched the tousled thick hair bounce around her sister's shoulders. Gripping all of her limp hair between two fingers, she burst into tears. It was the first time she had cried since the whole experience began.

As time went on a bandanna replaced the hat, which could no longer conceal her balding spot. With only a handful of wispy strands left, the time had come to buy a wig. Instead of trying to resurrect her once-long blonde hair, pretending as though nothing had been lost, Alison opted for a shoulder-length auburn one. Why not? People cut and dyed their hair all the time. With her new look, Alison's confidence strengthened. Even when the wig blew off from an open window of her friend's car, they all shared in the humor.

But as the summer approached, Alison worried. If she couldn't wear a wig in the water, how could she lifeguard again? "Why? Did you forget how to swim?" her father asked. She got the message.

After wearing an uncomfortable bathing cap for only one day, she mustered up the courage to go completely bald. Despite the stares and occasional comments from less-than-polite beachcombers - "Why do you crazy punk kids shave your heads?" - Alison adjusted to her new look.

She arrived back at school that fall with no hair, no eyebrows, no eyelashes, and with her wig tucked away somewhere in the back of her closet. As she had always planned, she would run for school president, changing her campaign speech only slightly. Presenting a slide show on famous bald leaders from Gandhi to Mr. Clean, Alison had the students and faculty rolling in the aisles.

In her first speech as the elected president, Alison addressed her condition, quite comfortable answering questions. Dressed in a T-shirt with the words "Bad Hair Day" printed across the front, she pointed to her shirt and said, "When most of you wake up in the morning and don't like how you look, you may put on this T-shirt." Putting on another T-shirt over the other, she continued. "When I wake up in the morning, I put on this one." It read, "No-Hair Day." Everybody cheered and applauded. And Alison, beautiful, popular and smart - not to mention varsity goalie, ocean lifeguard and now, school president with the pool-blue eyes - smiled back from the podium.

Applying Ideas to a Task: A Practice Scenario

Answer the question in the following scenario. You may use personal experiences that support your ideas, but you must use key ideas and generalizations from the two reading selections, *Snowflake Bentley* and *No-Hair Day*. Support your response using the theme of these two selections, *Courage to be Me*.

Scenario:

You are a band student, who really enjoys band. Like most band students, you get good grades and participate in many fun activities outside of school. However, some of your friends have started to call you a “Band Geek” and it’s really starting to bother you. You are considering quitting band.

Scenario Question:

Should you make the choice to quit band? Yes or no? Support your position using ideas and/or examples from the two selections you have just read.

Use examples and details from BOTH reading selections to support your answer. Be sure to show how the reading selections are connected or alike.

When finished writing fill out this checklist:

_____ Did I take a position on the question?

_____ Did I tell why I took this position?

_____ Did I use examples from the two reading selections to support my thinking?

_____ Did I show how the selections are connected or alike?

“House” Organizer

Use the graphic organizer below to organize your response to the scenario question.

State your position

Support from selection #1

Support from selection #2

Connect both selections

Teacher Edition

Molly Bannaky

By Alice McGill

1. Pg. 1 & 2. What connection to yourself, other text, or the world can you make?

2. Pg. 3 & 4. What question do you have about this page?

3. Pg. 5 & 6. How do you think Molly feels now?

4. Pg. 11 & 12. Draw on the reverse side of this paper, or write what you would draw, to show the author's words.

Hint: Read this page to your

Students without showing them

The illustration.

5. Pg. 13 & 14. What do you think of Molly now?

6. Pg. 15 & 16. What is the most important idea on this page and tell why?

7. Pg. 23 & 24. What do you think of Molly now?

Molly Bannaky

By Alice McGill

4. Pg. 1 & 2. What connection to yourself, other text, or the world can you make?

5. Pg. 3 & 4. What question do you have about this page?

6. Pg. 5 & 6. How do you think Molly feels now?

8. Pg. 11 & 12. Draw on the reverse side of this paper, or write what you would draw, to show the author's words.

9. Pg. 13 & 14. What do you think of Molly now?

10. Pg. 15 & 16. What is the most important idea on this page and tell why?

11. Pg. 23 & 24. What do you think of Molly now?

Quotables

Text-to-Self Connections

On the lines below, write down the connections you make between each quote and your own life, other text, or the world. Be as specific as possible.

Courage is an inner decision to go forward in spite of obstacles and frightening situations... Courage faces fear and thereby masters it.... We must constantly build walls of courage to hold back the flood of fear. *Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*

This reminds me of...

Stand with anybody that stands right. Stand with him while he is right and part with him when he goes wrong. *Abraham Lincoln*

This reminds me of...

You gain strength, courage, and confidence by every experience in which you really stop to look fear in the face. *Eleanor Roosevelt*

Sparky

For Sparky, school was all but impossible. He failed every subject in the eighth grade. He flunked physics in high school, getting a grade of zero. Sparky also flunked Latin, algebra and English. He didn't do much better in sports. Although he did manage to make the school's golf team, he promptly lost the only important match of the season. There was a consolation match; he lost that, too.

Throughout his youth Sparky was awkward socially. He was not actually disliked by the other students; no one cared that much. He was astonished if a classmate ever said hello to him outside of school hours. There's no way to tell how he might have done at dating. Sparky never once asked a girl to go out in high school. He was too afraid of being turned down.

Sparky was a loser. He, his classmates...everyone knew it. So he rolled with it. Sparky had made up his mind early in life that if things were meant to work out, they would. Otherwise he would content himself with what appeared to be his inevitable mediocrity.

However, one thing was important to Sparky - drawing. He was proud of his artwork. Of course, no one else appreciated it. In his senior year of high school, he submitted some cartoons to the editors of the yearbook. The cartoons were turned down. Despite this particular rejection, Sparky was so convinced of his ability that he decided to become a professional artist.

After completing high school, he wrote a letter to Walt Disney Studios. He was told to send some samples of his artwork, and the subject for a cartoon was suggested. Sparky drew the proposed cartoon. He spent a great deal of time on it and on all the other drawings he submitted. Finally, the reply came from Disney Studios. He had been rejected once again. Another loss for the loser.

So Sparky decided to write his own autobiography in cartoons. He described his childhood self - a little boy loser and chronic underachiever. The cartoon character would soon become famous worldwide. For Sparky, the boy who had such a lack of success in school and whose work was rejected again and again was Charles Schultz. He created the "Peanuts" comic strip and the little cartoon character whose kite would never fly and who never succeeded in kicking a football, Charlie Brown.

[From Bits & Pieces from *Chicken Soup for the Teenage Soul* Copyright 1997 by Jack Canfield, Mark Victor Hansen and Kimberly Kirberger.]