

THEMATIC UNIT

Related to ELA Prototypes



Theme: **Determination**

Suggested for: **Third Grade**

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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 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.

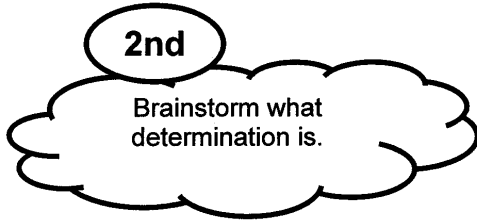
Thematically Related Text Sets – Determination

Code Key: <u>Suggested Uses</u> 1 – Frayer’s Model 2 – Paired Text 3 – Listening 4 – Other
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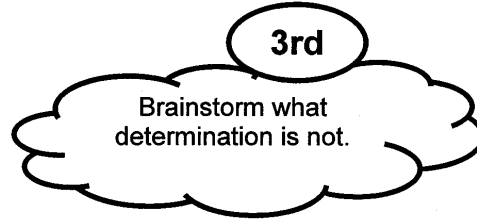
CODE	TITLE	AUTHOR
2	Uncle Jed’s Barbershop	Margaree King Mitchell
2	Keep the Lights Burning, Abbie	Peter and Connie Roop
1	Buzzy the Bumblebee	Denise Brennan-Nelson
1	The Carrot Seed	Ruth Krauss
1	Baseball Saved Us	Ken Mochizuki
1	Amidst the Gold Dust	Julie Danneberg
1	I Hate English!	Ellen Levine
1	Sarah, Plain and Tall	Patricia MacLachlan
3	The Empty Pot	Demi
1	The Story of Ruby Bridges	Robert Coles
1	Make Way for Ducklings	Robert McCloskey
1	A New Coat for Anna	Harriet Ziefert and Anita Lobel
4-Poetry	O	Shel Silverstein-Where the Sidewalk Ends
4-Reader’s Theatre	Helen Keller-A Remarkable Woman	Lisa Blau www.lisablau.com
4-Reader’s Theatre	How Frog Went to Heaven A Tale of Angola	Told by Aaron Shepard www.aaronshep.com
4-Reader’s Theatre	The Crow and The Pitcher	Told by Aaron Shepard www.aaronshep.com
4-Choral Reading	Walking the Daffodil	Rowena Bennett Drama Magazine <i>Plays</i> Vol. 60, No.6

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

Determination is...



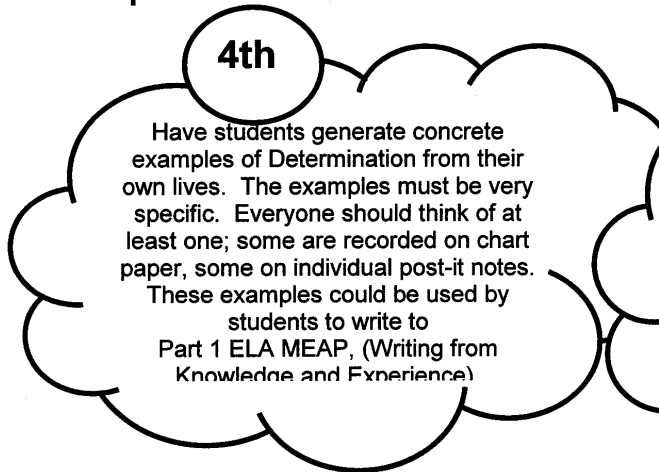
Determination is not...



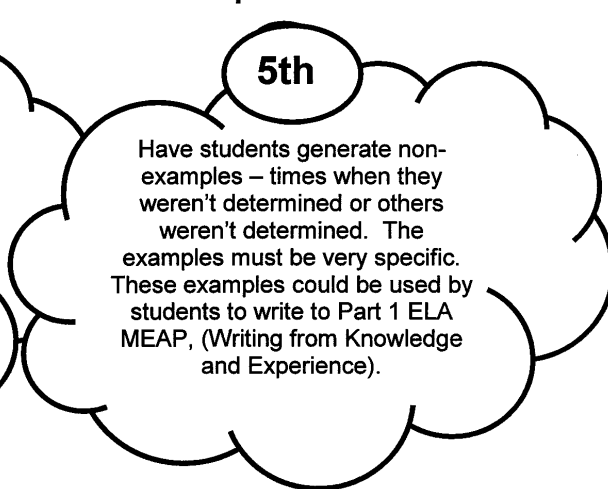
State theme in center oval



Examples:



Non-examples:



- 6th Read a book about “Determination” that is not in the prototype. Have students listen for clear examples and non-examples of Determination. 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 Determination 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

Determination is...

Following your dreams
Hard work
Following through
Being patient
Having confidence
Having courage

Determination is not...

Sticking with what you begin
Giving up
Other people doing things for you
Giving orders
Being afraid



Examples:

I am determined to get an "A" on my spelling test.

I am determined to get my Master's Degree finished.

Julie and Debbie are determined to help the students raise enough money for a peace garden at their school.

Non examples:

Haley did not follow through on her dream of playing the violin.

Ray did not practice his spelling words and gave up on the test.

Jeff gave up his position on the team because it was too hard.

...from *The Carrot Seed*, by Ruth Krauss

Examples:

The little boy planted a carrot seed and was determined that it would come up.

The little boy pulled weeds around the seed and sprinkled the ground with water.

The carrot came up one day, just as the little boy had believed it would.

Non examples:

The little boy's mother said the carrot would not come up.

The little boy's father told him it would not come up.

The little boy's brother said that it would not come up.

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

Determination is...

Determination is not...



Working Together

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 information from the book. This 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 three (A Special Place)

My Grandma and Grandpa Harris' cabin

Every summer my family goes to my Grandma and Grandpa Harris' cabin.

The cabin is about a hundred miles away from Houghton Lake. We like to go to Arnie's art and craft store, look at boats, go to get ice cream and go to Houghton lake and swim.

Every morning we'd wake up and look for deer in the yard. (The cabin is almost in the woods.) Almost every morning we see some.

Then I'd usually go back to sleep.

Then around 8:00 I wake up, all excited and I would smell the yummy eggs, bacon, toast, and pancakes. I'd say to myself, "Well off to another great day, and boy does breakfast smell good!" Then I would run out for breakfast.

After breakfast we'd start a little campfire. We would walk out in the dewy woods and get firewood.

About 20-30 yards out into the woods is an icky swamp. But it's cool! The swamp

is much more different than the woods that it's in.

If it's hot during the afternoon we would go swimming in the shimmering lake. When we get there we'd stare at the water sparkling in the sunlight. After I get my goggles on I jump in the water, and it's cold!

I yell I run out and wrap my towel around me. After a long swim we'd go get ice cream, go to Arnie's art and craft store, or look at beautiful boats, jet skis, and snowmobiles.

In the woods sometimes we pick fresh, lovely, wildflowers, and set them on the table.

At night we start another campfire and have yummy s'mores.

Going to my Grandma and Grandpa Harris' cabin makes me feel good inside because of all of the fun things we do together.

So that's my real story about my special place.

focus on content

- ✓ maintains focus
- ✓ develops with details

Voice/style

- ✓ good voice
- ✓ uses thoughtshots
- ✓ uses descriptive language
- ✓ uses some dialogue

organization

- ✓ sequences with beginning, middle, and end
- ✓ wonderful ending (but, delete the last sentence)

con-ven-tion(s)

- ✓ good use of conventions

grade three (A Special Place)

The Best Place I Know

Places are very important to every one including me. My favorite place has to do with school, unice, huh?

The school playground is my favorite place in the world! This is a place where I can play, exercise, chat, help people, make friends, practice math and sometimes play soccer with Jody, Ashley and Shaina.

This is one playground out of atleast one thousand, and this is the playground I like the most. The playground is a large play space with

a slider, jungle-jim, rings, climbers, swings, bars, soccer field, and a some sort of house in the sand pit.

Out of all my favorite activities, I enjoy playing with my friends Jody, Erin, Kayla, Kayli, Shaina, Ashley, and grand friend, Debbie.

My friends are always there for me and will not let me down.

The Play ground seems as if it is mine. Though its not even near being mine, but it still will feel as if it is because I love it.

focus on content

- ✓ focuses on topic
- ✓ develops with relevant details

organization

- ✓ organized with beginning, middle, and end
- ✓ use of paragraph form
- ✓ use of comparison
- ✓ effective lead

Voice/style

- ✓ style is emerging
- ✓ humor
- ✓ effective use of descriptions
- ✓ figurative language - simile

con-ven-tion(s)

- ✓ effective use of conventions
- ✓ commas in a series

attributes **grade three**

focus on content

- ✓ sticks to topic/clearly focused
- ✓ effective use of examples
- ✓ attends to details
- ✓ demonstrates original ideas
- ✓ title relates to the piece
- ✓ makes inferences and uses abstract thinking
- ✓ presents a problem and solves it
- ✓ gives definition
- ✓ includes picture to extend meaning
- ✓ shows sophisticated thinking
- ✓ developed through anecdote

organization

- ✓ includes introduction, middle, conclusion
- ✓ shows clear sense of organization/sequencing
- ✓ beginning and ending linked
- ✓ logical progression of ideas
- ✓ closes with definite and logical ending
- ✓ uses more defined story structure
- ✓ uses transitional words for chronological sequence
- ✓ sentences flow one to another

Voice/style

- ✓ demonstrates strong sense of voice (use of humor, varied vocabulary and skillful word choice)
- ✓ develops more sophisticated sentence structure
- ✓ evokes emotion
- ✓ emerging sense of style
- ✓ wows the reader
- ✓ creates a picture with words
- ✓ creates "slice of life"/realistic
- ✓ use of third person is effective
- ✓ uses variety of sentence structure
- ✓ uses showing sentences not just telling sentences
- ✓ shows conviction
- ✓ weaves facts into fiction
- ✓ uses introductory adverbial clauses
- ✓ uses technical vocabulary
- ✓ uses fantasy genre effectively
- ✓ personalizes
- ✓ develops narrative imaginatively
- ✓ uses dialogue
- ✓ builds suspense
- ✓ creates picture through imagery
- ✓ uses descriptive vocabulary
- ✓ uses strong verbs
- ✓ uses poetic language
- ✓ uses sound effects
- ✓ uses thoughtshots
- ✓ uses snapshots
- ✓ explodes a moment
- ✓ involves the reader
- ✓ effective use of humor

con-ven-tion(s)

- ✓ developing awareness of grammar and mechanics
- ✓ evidence of proofreading and editing
- ✓ demonstrates developing sense of paragraph (topic, sentence, conclusion)
- ✓ accurate use of capitalization and punctuation
- ✓ spells most words conventionally
- ✓ takes risk with spelling of difficult words
- ✓ edits and spells high-frequency words correctly
- ✓ correct usage and agreement of pronouns
- ✓ correct use of punctuation for dialogue
- ✓ uses legible handwriting: cursive and manuscript
- ✓ uses an expository format
- ✓ evidence of mapping/brainstorming
- ✓ uses topic sentence/supporting details

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.)

Second Grade

My favirot place is Chicago **naming** . I like to go shopping at the american girl store. My apartment room wasn't all that big. But I still liked there apartments. I think Chicago has a lot of entertainment. Like dolphin shows. But when I stayed there I didn't want to leave. Why? Because I was so use to hearing the taxies and the trains going by **snapshot-sound** . There was nice air that blew against my face and hair. When I put my hand up high and walked at the same time it felt like I was being blowen away **specific actions** . I thought like it was almost a permanet home **simile** to me even though I was on vacation **thoughtshot** . Sometimes I got so used to it I said home sweet home or mom dad can we live here like stay forever. But they would always say. No! I had a weary feeling in my stomach. That this is the place I'll live when I grow up **foreshadowing** . I couldn't help of thinking of what I thought. So then the day came to leave my favirot place **compressing time** . I was very sad but I had to go home nobody in my family was as sad as me. I don't think they called it there favirot place but I knew I did. So that's how it became my favirot place **effective conclusion** .

Third Grade

The Friendship Trick

(prompt: Friendship)

One day I heard my dad say we were going to Ceter Point **naming** with our best friends the Cronkrights. When we got their we whent on some rids. Then our firnd decided to go on the Geminy. I Thought it looked big But they told me it was a calm ride. When we started down the first hill my friend Adam who was riding with me started telling me what the ride was rilly like. I curled up by my Adam with a chile down my spine **snapshot** . Adam was trying to calm me down. I clushed my hands on his shirt **snapshot** as if ther was no chain holding the roller coster **explode a moment, simile** . I was screaming at the top of my lungs as my friend worked so hard calm me down. On the thried hill I was laying on Adam crying and screaming like we were going to crash **humor** . On the finel drop I started to calm down. When we got off I was still cyring and everyone looked at me in fright as if the same thing would happen to them **specific action, comparing** . When we got back together with our parents I was still frightend. They asked me wats wrong. I told them what happened and they felt bad. Sometimes he trickes me But we are still friends **effective ending** .

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 process 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 on work alone. The teacher’s job becomes one of facilitator and evaluator. As they are working, you wander from group to group monitoring the 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.

Thematically Related Text Sets Determination Profundity Matrix-Teacher Example

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>Uncle Jed's Barbershop</p> <p>By: Margaree Mitchell</p> <p>Uncle Jed</p>	<p>He travels around the county to cut hair.</p> <p>He loans the money he saved to open a Barbershop to Sarah Jane for an operation.</p> <p>He opens a Barbershop on his seventy - ninth birthday.</p>	<p>He was the only black barber in the county.</p> <p>He could not stand to see anything happen to Sarah Jane.</p> <p>He finally saved enough money.</p>	<p>He was right because everyone could use his services.</p> <p>He was right because the money paid for the operation to save her life.</p> <p>He was right because it is his dream to own a Barbershop.</p>	<p>He was able to earn money to open a Barbershop.</p> <p>He gave up some of his savings.</p> <p>His community accepted and respected him as a barber and a person.</p>	<p>Follow your dreams</p> <p>Or</p> <p>Acceptance</p> <p>Or</p> <p>Giving of yourself</p> <p>Or</p> <p>Hard work pays off</p> <p>Or</p> <p>Be determined to follow through</p>		
<p>Keep the Lights Burning Abbie</p> <p>By Peter and Connie Roop</p> <p>Abbie</p>	<p>She tells her father she is afraid to care for the lighthouse by herself.</p> <p>Abbie lights the lighthouse lights for the ships.</p> <p>She cares for her family for five days.</p>	<p>She had never cared for the lighthouse alone before.</p> <p>The lights will guide the ships away from danger.</p> <p>Her father was away and could not return because of the storm.</p>	<p>It was wrong to feel afraid because she had done each of the jobs before.</p> <p>It was right because she followed father's directions.</p> <p>It was right because the family was in danger. She was the only one able to help.</p>	<p>She had to learn to become confident.</p> <p>She learned responsibility.</p> <p>She learns about survival and gains courage.</p>	<p>Never underestimate your ability</p> <p>Or</p> <p>Finding courage in time of danger</p> <p>Or</p> <p>Becoming confidence</p>		

**Thematically Related Text Sets
Determination
Profundity Matrix**

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 “UNCLE JED” AND “KEEP THE LIGHTS BURNING ABBIE”

Q. Did Uncle Jed and Abbie do the same kinds of things? How were their actions similar or different?

A. No, Uncle Jed and Abbie did not do the same kinds of things. Uncle Jed did things because he was determined to open a barbershop. Abbie did things out of survival for herself and her family.

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

A. Uncle Jed’s reasons for many things are that he enjoys helping others and his determination to have his own business. Abbie’s reason is that she has to take care of the family while her father is away because she is the only one capable of doing so.

Q. Did you agree more with Uncle Jed’s actions or Abbie’s actions? Why?

A. We agreed with both. They both were determined to do what was best for all.

Q. Did Uncle Jed and Abbie get the same thing for their actions? Why or why not?

A. Uncle Jed had to wait to attain his ultimate goal of opening a barbershop, but with determination was finally able to. Abbie became more self-confident and responsible. She also learned about survival and gained courage.

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

A. They both learned that determination is needed in accomplishing their goals.

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

A. Both learned the same lesson.

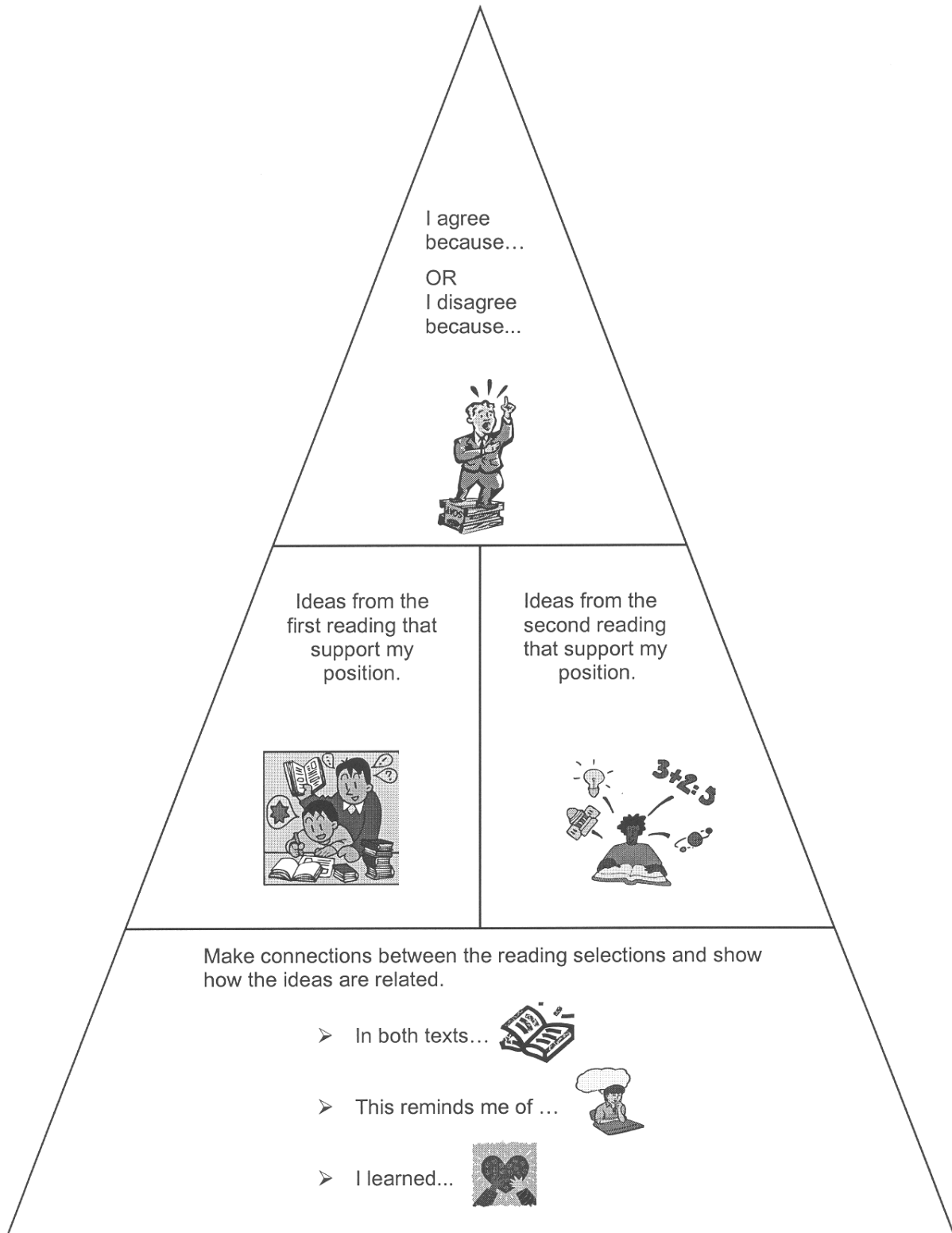
Q. Do you agree or disagree that the theme of these two stories is “determination?”

A. We agree.

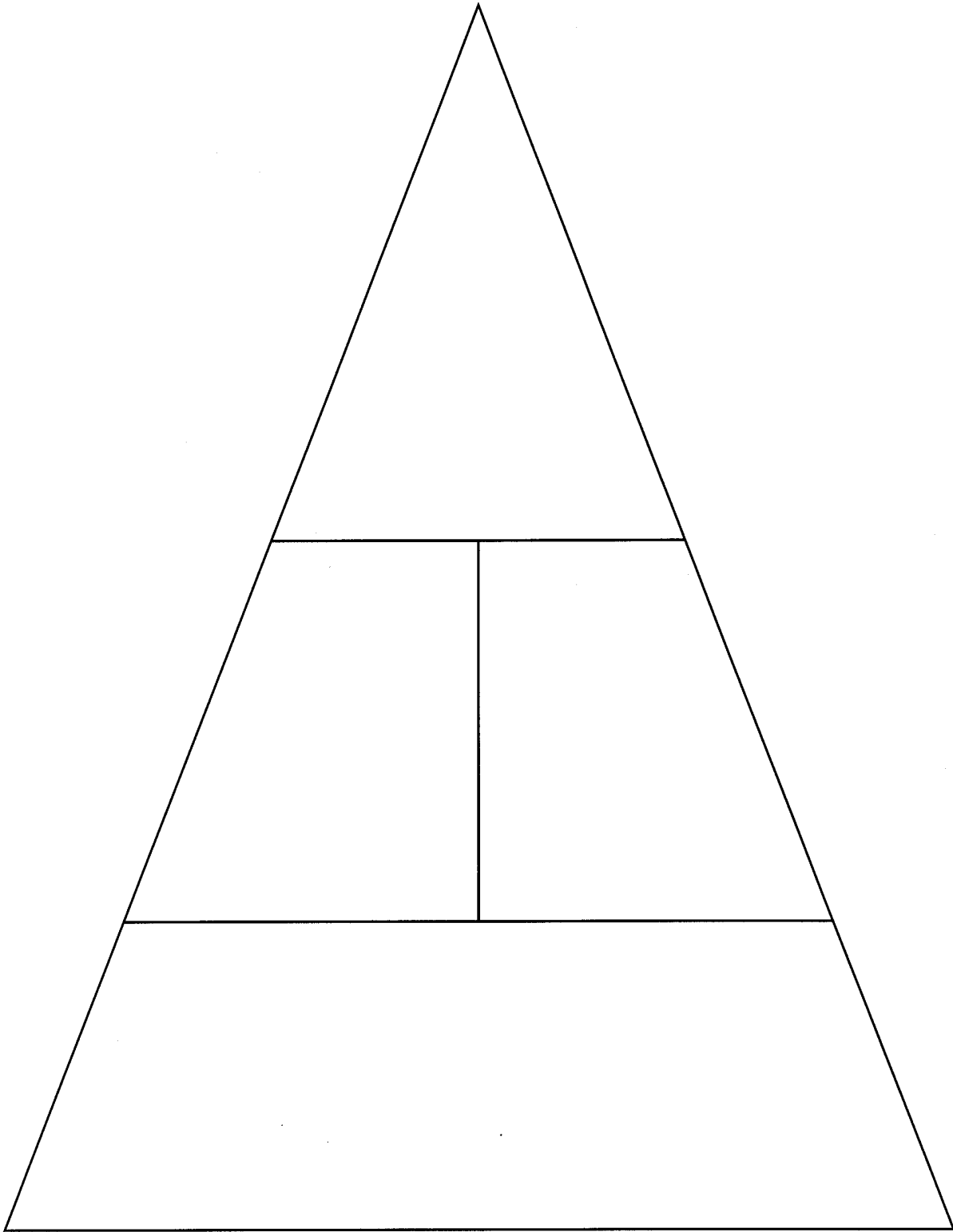
**Simple Graphic Organizer
to Help Students
Organize Writing Ideas
for Writing in Response
to Reading**

Writing in Response to Reading (Part 2)

Individual Rights



Writing in Response to Reading (Part 2)
Individual Rights



Related Language Arts Activities:

Before, During and After Prototypes

Extension Activities

Theme: Determination

Prewriting-Part 1 Writing from Knowledge and Experience

- Create a Flip Book that illustrates how students have used determination in their lives.
- Build a Story Square that shows beginning, middle, and end. This strategy helps students understand sequencing. (See worksheet 1)
- Design a bookmark that uses words that describe determination.

First Reading Selection Activities Part 2A

Keep the Lights Burning, by Connie Roop

- Do a Book Walk. Have students generate questions from the Book Walk and list them on chart paper. After reading the story go back to the chart and check if questions were answered.
- Complete a heart of the retelling journal. Work with a partner and retell key points. Identify important details. Complete the chart reflecting the main ideas. (See Worksheet 2)
- Visual Responses- Create a list of your responsibilities and compare/contrast them to Abbie's.
- Complete "If I Were the Author" worksheet. This will help students think about the author's point-of-view. (*Revisit, Reflect, Retell*, by Linda Hoyt) (See Worksheet 3)
- Create a Thumbnail Sketch. Students will review a text write five sentences to summarize the most important thoughts. They will then work with a partner and come to a consensus and create a group summary.
- Make connections to Abbie's story to another book, life experience, or to the world. (See Worksheet 4)

Second Reading Selection Activities Part 2A

Uncle Jed's Barbershop, by Margaree King Mitchell

- Develop a timeline. The use of timelines organizes information in chronological sequence.
- Complete a Think Abouts. Students illustrate what they are thinking about during the reading and then draw what the text told them. (See attached worksheet) (See Worksheet 5)
- Draw a slide show that shows the pivotal points in which Uncle Jed puts his dream on hold because of unforeseen circumstances.
- To help student reflect and think deeply, draw an open mind portrait of Uncle Jed. You can use several mind pages to show a characters mind at pivotal points in the story. (*50 Literacy Strategies*, by Gail E. Tompkins.) (See Worksheet 6)

Applying Ideas to a Task Part 2B

- Students will compare *Keep the Lights Burning* to *Uncle Jed's Barbershop* with the strategy cubing. Cubing helps review a topic or can be used to compare and analyze the theme. (*50 Literacy Strategies*, by Gail E. Tompkins.) (See Worksheet 7)
- Use Double-Entry Journals. Divide paper into two columns. Use quotes from Uncle Jed and make a connection to their own lives. (*50 Literacy Strategies*, by Gail E. Tompkins) (See Worksheet 8)
- Have a Grand Conversation with students describing how Uncle Jed may have felt about having to start over again. Hold additional conversations about how Abbie felt while protecting her family. Students sit in a circle and interpret and reflect on their feelings. This strategy encourages dialogue between students. (*50 Literacy Strategies*, by Gail E. Tompkins.)
- Create a Venn diagram, compare and contrast two main characters. (See Worksheet 9)
- Use chart paper and create a t-chart labeled general and specific details. As you read each story create a list. This strategy helps students identify specific wording to create detailing in their writing. (*Craft Lessons*, by Ralph Fletcher and Joann Portalupi.)
- Use Reciprocal Questioning that requires students that ask questions that relate to the text and the students own lives. (*50 Literacy Strategies*, by Gail E. Tompkins) (See Worksheet 10)

Listening Activities

- Invite students to make an audiotape of a poem or story on individual rights.
- Have students illustrate while listening to the selection.
- Have students complete a Directed Reading-Thinking Activity. This strategy is used to help increase student's ability to make predictions. It also helps students become familiar with the prediction-confirmation cycle. (*50 Literacy Strategies*, by Gail E. Tompkins)

Additional Enrichment Activities

- Write a letter to the author and tell them how the book changed your life.
- Make a Choral Reading of the story *The Little Engine That Could*.
- Children will write a wide variety of poems about determination. Such as haiku, cinquain, limericks, acrostics, and free form.
- Invite a local hero to speak to the students about following through with determination.
- Perform a Reader's Theater.

Story Square

Character, Setting	Beginning
Middle	End

Heart of Retelling Journal

Prediction	
Vocabulary	
Understanding	
Interpretation	
Connections	

If I Were the Author

Name _____

Date _____

Book Title _____

Author _____

Things about this book/story that I would be proud of

Things about this book/story that I would change

Things I learned about the author's style of writing that I could use in my own writing

If I were to talk about this book with a friend, I would be sure to point out

Making Connections

This story reminds me of another book.....

This story reminds me of a similar personal experience.....

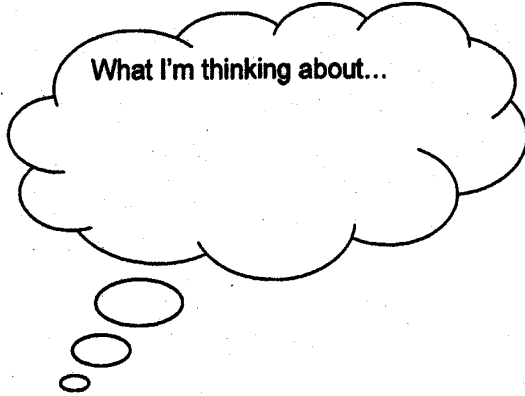
This story reminds me of a similar life experience

Think Abouts

Name _____

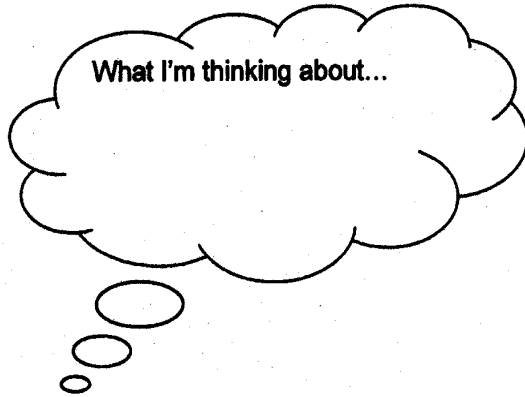
Book Title _____

1. Stop at page _____, paragraph _____.



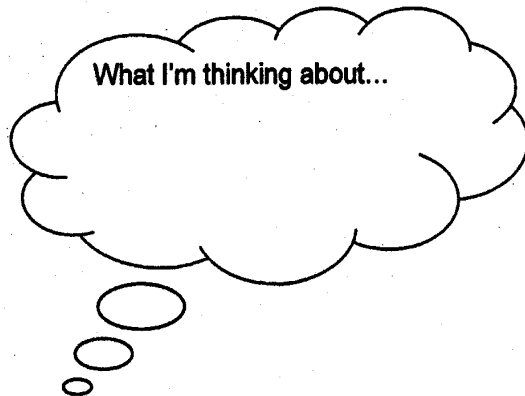
The text told me...

2. Stop at page _____, paragraph _____.



The text told me...

3. Stop at page _____, paragraph _____.



The text told me...

Mind Portraits

Choose three actions. Write about the character actions during three parts of the story. What are their reasons for acting this way?

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 and athletic. She 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 Ellen. 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.

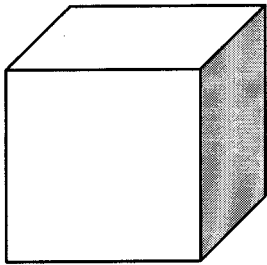
Associate: Annemarie is just like the rest of us. She would fit right in with our class.

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 story	Connection to my life

Grand Conversations

A discussion about a story that includes student exploration of the characters and thoughts and feelings about the book can be acquired with Grand Conversation. The students can face each other and talk more openly in a circle; they can see each other better.

How to conduct a Grand Conversation:

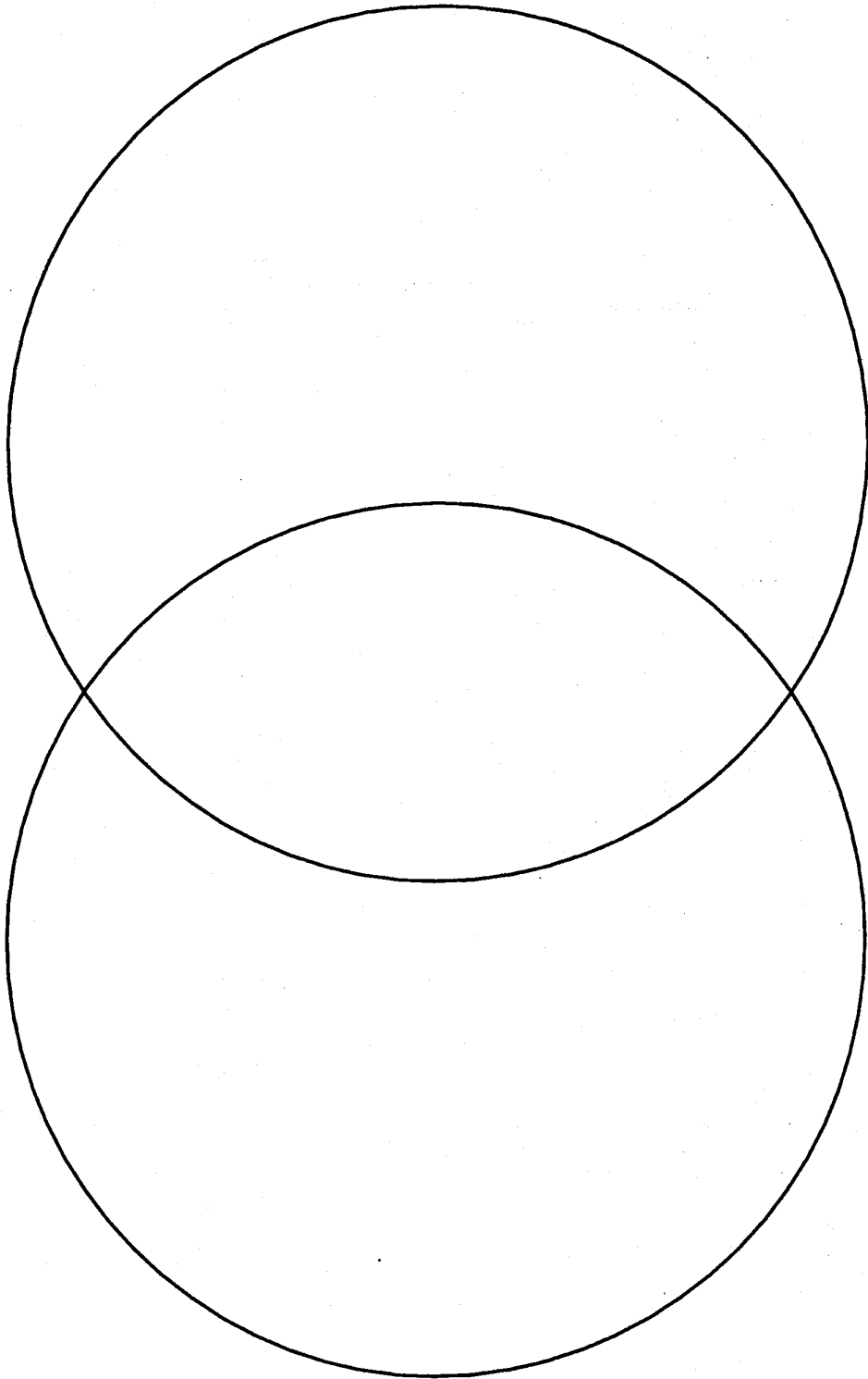
1. Have the class read the story or read the story to the class.
2. The students will respond with a quick write or they may write their thoughts in a reading journal.
3. Bring all the students together in a group to participate in a discussion about the story. Smaller groups may be used.
4. During the discussion the students will share their ideas about the story.
5. Encourage the students to share their thoughts about the illustrations and the characters.
6. Use questions to begin the conversation. "Who would like to begin? What did you think about this part?"
7. Allow them to read from their quick writes or journals.
8. Leave the story available to the students so they may look up a certain point in the story that interested them.

Applying the Grand Conversation:

This procedure only takes about twenty minutes. If a novel is being read, a discussion could follow every chapter. Students should be encouraged to participate but observing others in this process might prompt participation for next time, therefore, no grade is necessary. If a student is more comfortable writing in their reading journal or drawing pictures about the story encourage them to show their work.

Name _____ Date _____

Venn Diagram



Reciprocal Teaching Cards

<p>Card one</p> <p>“Please get ready to read to _____.”</p> <p>(Select a boldface heading or an apparent stopping point in the text.)</p>	<p>Card two</p> <p>“I predict this section will be about _____.”</p> <p>(Discussion leader speaks.)</p>
<p>Card three</p> <p>“Does anyone else have a prediction?”</p> <p>(Encourage group members to speak.)</p>	<p>Card four</p> <p>“Please read silently to the point we selected.”</p>

To use after reading each section:

<p>Card five</p> <p>“Are there any words you thought were interesting?”</p> <p>(Invite group to speak.)</p>	<p>Card six</p> <p>“Are there any ideas you found interesting or puzzling?”</p>
<p>Card seven</p> <p>“Do you have comments about the reading?” (Group response)</p>	<p>Card eight</p> <p>“Summarize in two or three sentences: This was about _____.”</p> <p>(Discussion leader)</p>

[*Adapted from *Revisit, Reflect, Retell*, by Linda Hoyt]

Excellent Resources of Activities That Build Understanding of Themes

Tom Jackson offers three useful resources to encourage active participation. I have used these activities in my classroom and the students not only enjoyed participating, they gained valuable insight into some of life's lessons. These lessons encourage active learning through role-playing, games, demonstrations, and problem solving. Skills taught are transferable to other tasks. Students learn to analyze, draw conclusions, and assume responsibility. These lessons can be used as an anticipatory set for theme in the ELA Prototypes.

Activities That Teach, by Tom Jackson
More Activities That Teach, by Tom Jackson
Still More Activities That Teach, by Tom Jackson

To order any of these books or other materials:

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