

# THEMATIC UNIT

## Related to ELA Prototypes



Theme: **Individual Rights**

Suggested for: **Third Grade**

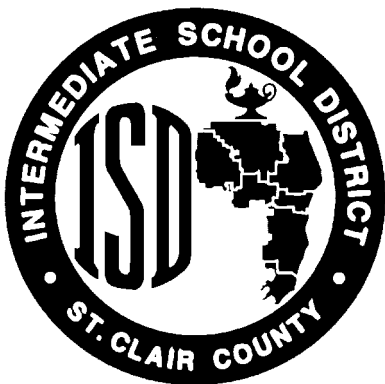
**Developed by:**

Julie McDowell, 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Teacher,  
Yale Community Schools

Deborah Werth, Language Arts Teacher,  
Landmark Academy

**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](http://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 packets are a mirror of what each group of teachers thought 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.

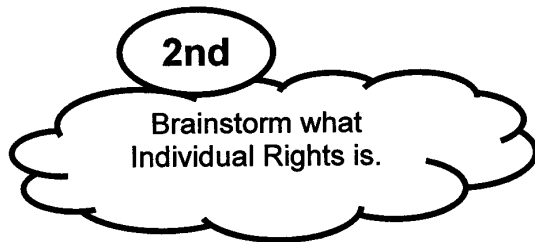
## Thematically Related Text Sets – Individual Rights

|   |
|---|
| <p><b>Code Key:</b><br/> <b>Suggested Uses</b></p> <p>1 – Frayer’s Model<br/>                 2 – Paired Text<br/>                 3 – Listening<br/>                 4 – Other</p> |
|---|

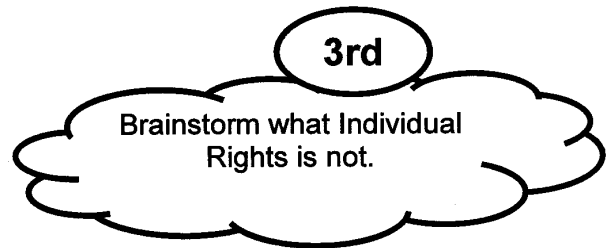
| CODE                  | TITLE   | AUTHOR   |
|-----------------------|---|--|
| 2                     | The Ballot Box Battle   | Emily Arnold McCully   |
| 2                     | Old Henry   | Joan W. Blos   |
| 1                     | The Araboolies of Liberty Street                                  | Sam Swope  |
| 1                     | The Big Orange Splot  | Daniel Manus Pinkwater   |
| 1                     | Tacky the Penguin   | Helen Lester   |
| 4-Readers Theatre     | Eleanor Roosevelt – The First Lady of the World                   | Lisa Blau  |
| 3                     | A Picture Book of Martin Luther King Jr.                          | David Adler  |
| 1                     | Lilly’s Purple Plastic Purse                                      | Kevin Henkes   |
| 1                     | Smoky Nights  | Eve Bunting  |
| 1                     | The Story of Ruby Bridges   | Robert Coles   |
| 4 – History and Plays | Oh, Freedom!  | Casey King and Linda Barrett Osborne   |
| 4 – Poetry            | Singing America Poems that Define a Nation                        | Edited by Neil Philip  |
| 1                     | The Bus Ride  | William Miller   |
| 1                     | Farmer Duck   | Martin Waddell   |
| 4 – Recordings        | Voices of the Civil Rights Movement: Black American Freedom Songs | 1960-1966. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Program in Black American Culture |

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

Individual Rights is...



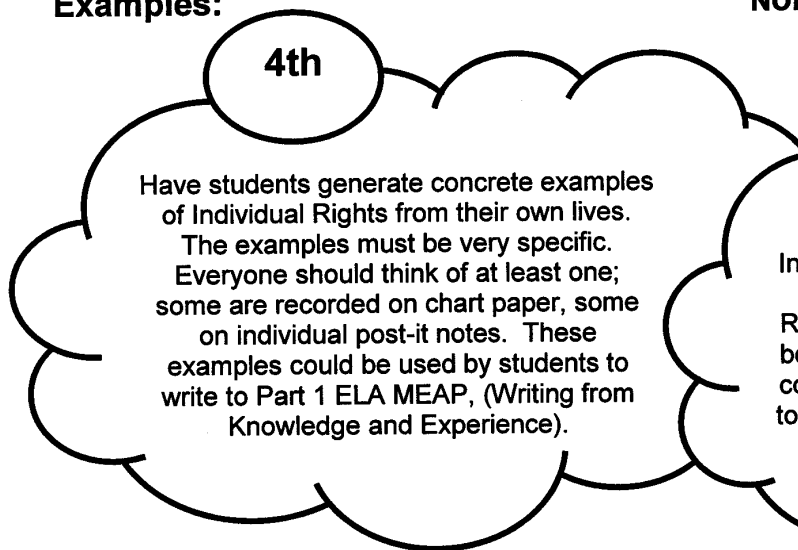
Individual Rights is not...



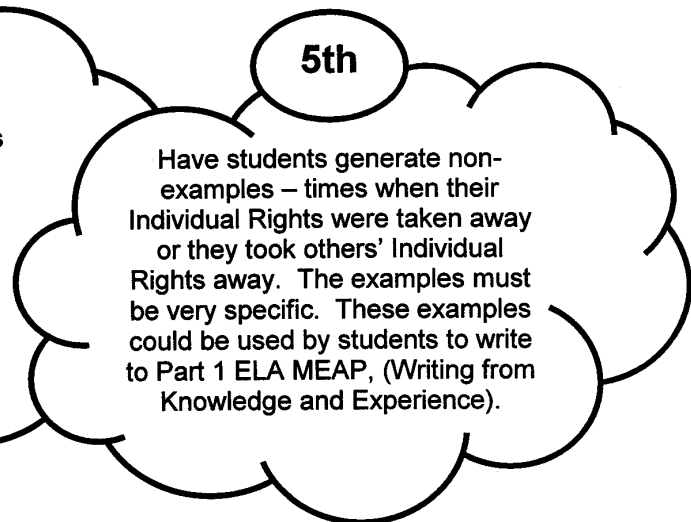
State theme in center oval



Examples:



Non-examples:



6<sup>th</sup> Read a book about "Individual Rights" that is not in the prototype. Have students listen for clear examples and non-examples of Individual Rights. Use names and situations specific to the reading selection, when recording the examples.

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

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

9<sup>th</sup> Have students listen for clear examples and non-examples of Individual Rights during part three of the prototype to record on the chart.

10<sup>th</sup> 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

## Individual Rights is...

Making your own choice  
Freedom  
Living your life your way  
Being able to vote  
Selecting your own career

## Individual Rights is not...

Telling others what to do  
Choosing what you want  
Being allowed to vote  
Being self-reliant



### INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS

## Examples:

I can choose my own career.  
I can vote for whomever I want to.  
I am free to live wherever I want.

## Non examples:

I am told where I will live.  
Not being able to vote.  
Not being allowed to choose on my own.

...from *The Big Orange Splot*, by Daniel Manus Pinkwater

## Examples:

Daniel paints his house like a rainbow.  
He built a tower on top of his house with a clock.  
All of the neighbors changed the colors of their houses.  
The neighbors followed their own dreams.

## Non examples:

The neighbors told him he had to paint his house.  
The neighbors told him that his house had to be the same.  
Strangers said that their street was not neat.

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

**Individual Rights is...**

**Individual Rights is not...**



**Individual Rights**

**Examples:**

**Non examples:**

# Writing From Knowledge and Experience

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

These resources will provide you with:

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

# *attributes of* **writing**

---

## **Note**

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

### **Focus on Content and Ideas**

**Organization**

**Voice/Style,**

**and**

**Conventions.**

### **focus** on content

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

### **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 half a mile away from Houghton Lake. We like to go to Annie'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 rested 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 sunscreen 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 Annie's art and craft store, or look at beautiful boats, jetskis, 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)

## convention(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 some-  
times 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, Felbie.  
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

## **organiza·tion**

- ✓ 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 faviot 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 faviot 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 faviot place but I knew I did. So that's how it became my faviot 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 Cronkcrights. When we got their we went 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 screming 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 screming 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 switch who gets 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 on their own. 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 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**  
**Individual Rights**  
**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><u>Old Henry</u> by Joan W. Blos</p> <p>Henry</p>                            | <p>Henry moves to the neighborhood.</p> <p>He refuses to fix up his house.</p> <p>He moves to Dakota</p>  | <p>It had all the things he wanted.</p> <p>He wants to live this way.</p> <p>He acts this way so that he won't receive fines, letters, or have unhappy neighbors.</p>            | <p>It is right because it is his right to do so.</p> <p>It is right since it is his individual right.</p> <p>It is wrong because he let others force him out.</p>  | <p>He is content with what he has.</p> <p>He lived in his house the way he wanted to.</p> <p>Relief from the pressures of the neighbors but becomes lonely.</p>   |   | <p>Everyone is entitled to live the way they want</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Individual rights</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Acceptance of Others/ Tolerance</p> |  |
| <p><u>The Ballot Box Battle</u> by Emily Arnold McCully</p> <p>Mrs. Stanton</p> | <p>Mrs. Stanton teaches Cordelia how to ride a horse.</p> <p>Mrs. Stanton promises her father to be all that her brother was after his death.</p> <p>Mrs. Stanton jumps on the wagon to vote.</p> | <p>To help her and because Cordelia feeds her horse.</p> <p>Because her father was so unhappy when his only son died.</p> <p>She is determined that it is her right to vote.</p> | <p>It is right because they help each other.</p> <p>It is right because she is trying to make her father feel better.</p> <p>It is right because she wanted to make a change that would enable all citizens to vote.</p> | <p>She gets friendship and companionship.</p> <p>She went to school with boys and won an academic award.</p> <p>She is ridiculed by men, but discovers more determination to stand up for her rights.</p> |   | <p>Individual Rights</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Courage</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Determination</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Equality</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 “OLD HENRY” AND “THE BALLOT BOX BATTLE”**

**Q. Did Old Henry and Mrs. Stanton do the same kinds of things? How were their actions similar or different?**

A. No, Old Henry kept to himself and did not care what other people thought. Mrs. Stanton is very vocal and wants to be respected as a citizen and not just seen as a woman.

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

A. Old Henry’s reason for acting this way is that it does not bother him that his house is in disrepair. Mrs. Stanton’s reason for acting this way is that she wants to change women’s rights.

**Q. Did you agree more with the way Old Henry acted or the way Mrs. Stanton acted? Why?**

A. We agree with Mrs. Stanton because she showed courage and stood up for what she thought was right.

**Q. Did Old Henry and Mrs. Stanton get the same thing for their actions? Why or why not?**

A. They did not get the same things for their actions. Henry got fed up and left. Mrs. Stanton played an important role in the women’s equal rights movement.

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

A. They both learned that they have their own individual rights.

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

A. Henry and his neighbors also learned that sometimes you might have to compromise to get what you want.

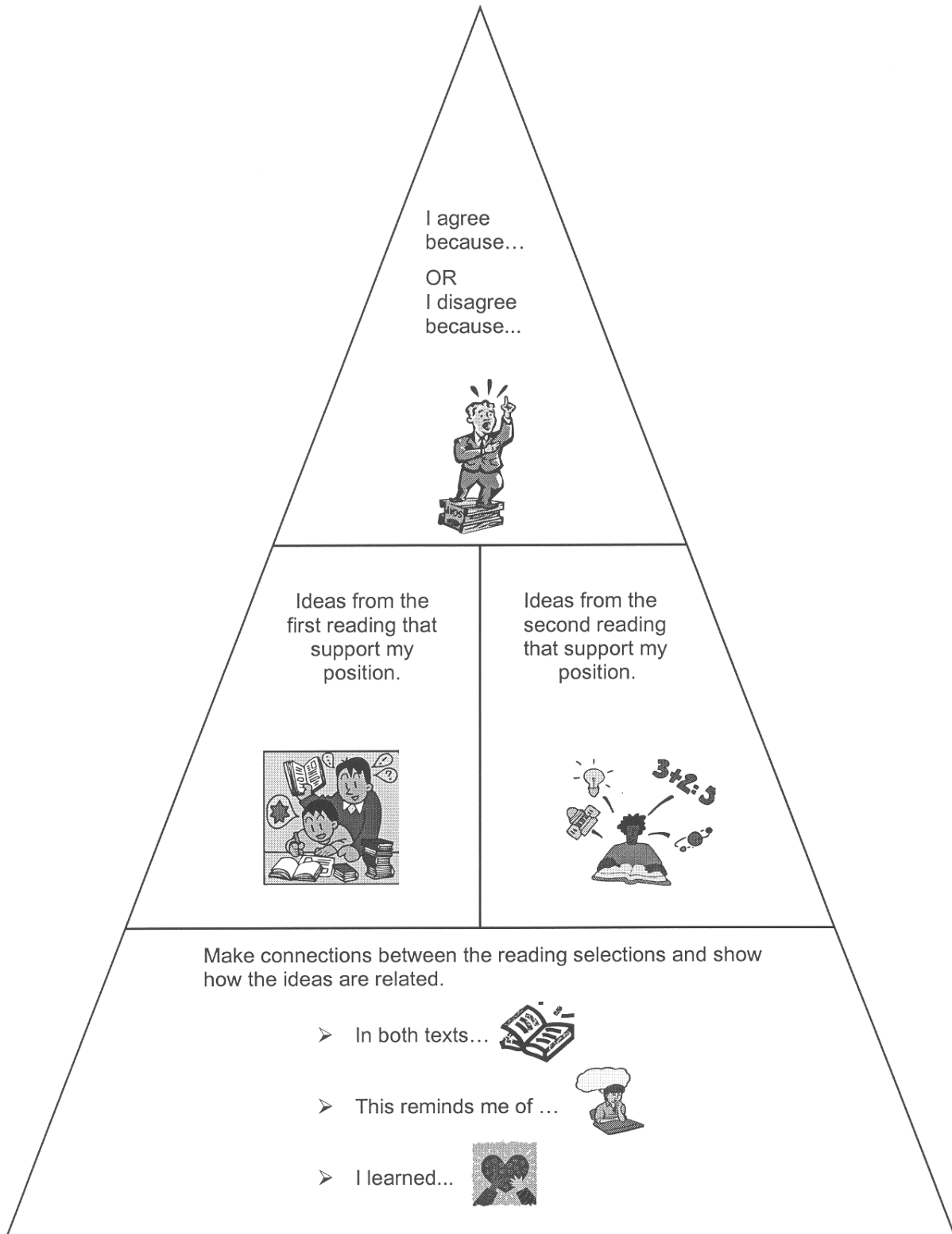
**Q. Do you agree or disagree that the theme of these two stories is “Individual Rights?”**

A. We agree.

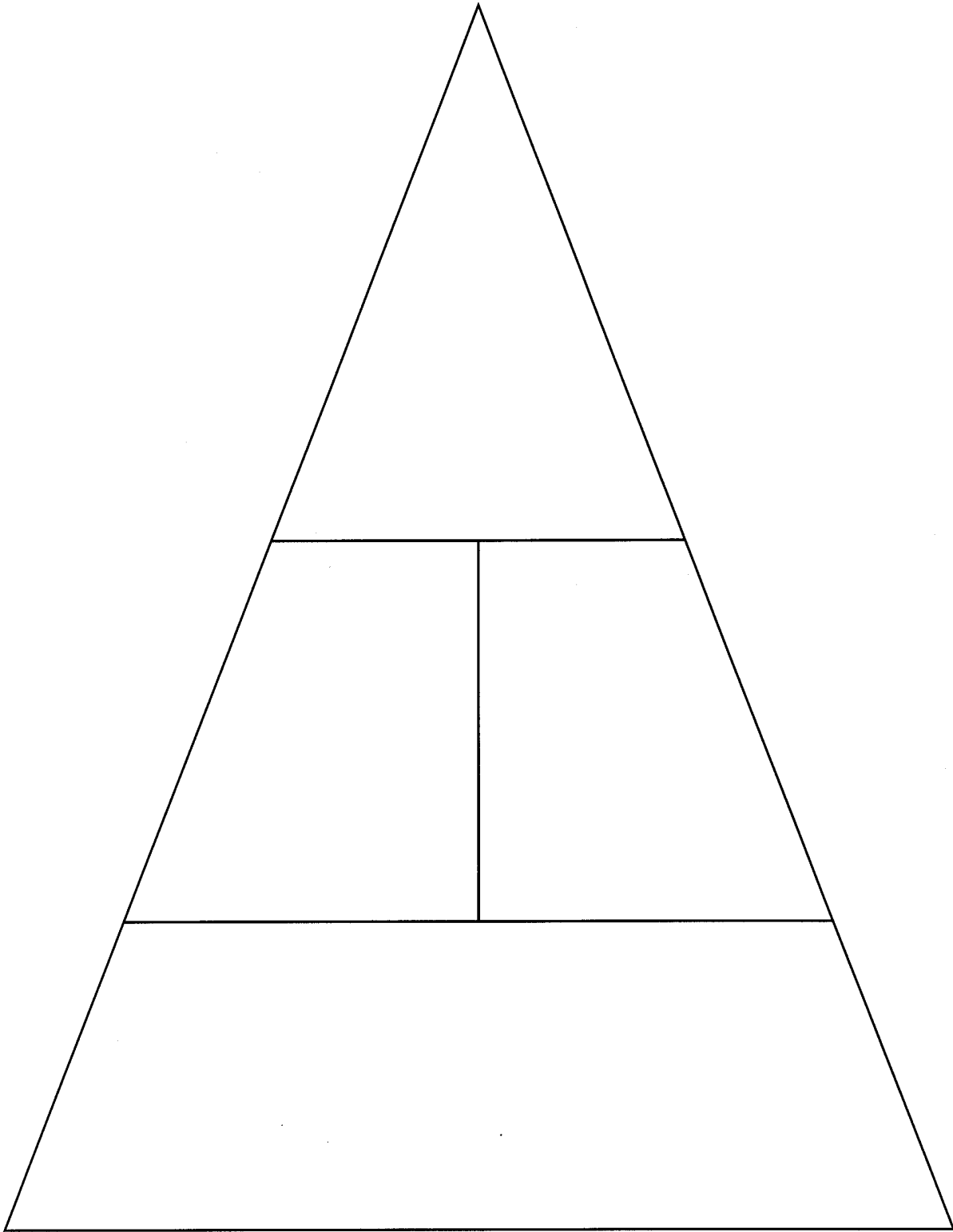
**Simple Graphic Organizer  
to Help Students  
Organize Writing Ideas  
for Writing in Response  
to Reading**

# Writing in Response to Reading (Part 2)

## Individual Rights



## Writing in Response to Reading (Part 2) Individual Rights



**Related  
Language Arts  
Activities  
to do  
Before, During and After  
Prototypes**

# Extension Activities

## Theme: Individual Rights

### Prewriting-Part 1 Writing from Knowledge and Experience

- Create a collaborative book. Each student contributes one page on their idea or gives an example of how they have had to exercise their individual rights in their own life. This activity focuses on student's prior knowledge.
- Teacher models a "Think Aloud" about a time when they have exercised their individual rights. (*Think Aloud Strategies*, by Jeff Wilhem) (See Worksheet 1)
- Complete a flow diagram to show why it is important to have individual rights. Flow charts are useful for showing cause and effect.

### First Reading Selection Activities Part 2A

*Old Henry*, by Joan W. Blos

- Write predictions before reading. (See Worksheet 2)
- Encourage students to respond to *Old Henry* using think, pair, and share strategies.
- Visual responses: create / draw pictures of before or after a situation that shows how people exercise their individual rights. (See Worksheet 3)
- Write a daily newsletter about Old Henry's refusal to improve his lot. How are his individual rights being affected? (See Worksheet 4)
- Write a letter to the local community leaders to find out about your community's ordinances.
- Vocabulary activity: students will list synonyms, homonyms, or antonyms found in the story and define or illustrate them. (See Worksheet 5)

### Second Reading Selection Activities Part 2 A

*The Ballot Box Battle*, by Emily Arnold McCully

- Write predictions before reading. (See Worksheet 2)
- Teacher reads the story to students. Students create a story map identifying story elements. Select a memorable portion of the story. Use Reciprocal Questioning. Students will think more deeply and critically about actions of Mrs. Stanton. (*50 Literacy Strategies*, by Gail E. Tompkins.) (See Worksheet 6)

- Vocabulary activity-Students will make up a reading game (such as BINGO) with vocabulary words from the story.
- To help students reflect and think deeply, draw an open mind portrait of Mrs. Stanton. 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 7)

### **Applying Ideas to a Task Part 2 B**

- Students will compare *Old Henry* to *The Ballot Box Battle* 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 8)
- Brainstorm projects or situations in which individual rights are necessary. (See Worksheet 8)
- Create a scenario in which each student has different individual rights and has to defend them. Divide students into groups and assign roles.
- Have a Grand Conversation with students describing how other’s individual rights should be protected. 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.)
- Identify problem situations and solutions that may arise when considering everyone’s individual rights.
- Hold a debate on how our world is a better place when we recognize each other’s individual rights?
- Explore how individual rights affect economic, social, and cultural rights.
- 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.)

### **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**

- Visit local Judicial Office
- Related videos
- Set up a field trip to the Local Branches of Government. Example: Mayor's Office, School Board, etc.
- Create a Choral Reading to the poem, "I, Too," by Langston Hughes.
- Create an art project of a historical event or a poster.
- Children will write a wide variety of poems about individual rights. Such as haiku, cinquain, limericks, acrostics, and free form.

## Think Aloud Comprehension Strategies

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <p style="text-align: center;">Before reading...</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>1.SET PURPOSES FOR READING</b></p> <p>(Preview the text by looking at the book's title, author,content, and readability.)<br/>Title:<br/>Author:</p> <p>Prompts:<br/>"The title makes me think that this is going to be about..."<br/><br/>"The photographs make me think that this will be about..."<br/><br/>"The comments on the back make me think that..."</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">...Shortly after beginning to read</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>2.CONNECT PERSONALLY</b></p> <p>(Show how you use your own experience to help make meaning.)</p> <p>Prompts:<br/>"This is like _____."<br/><br/>"This reminds me of _____."<br/><br/>"This could help me with _____."</p>   |
| <p style="text-align: center;">...Further into the beginning of the story</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>3.MONITOR COMPREHENSION</b></p> <p>Prompts:<br/>"What questions do you have about this selection?"<br/><br/>"This is (not) making sense because ___."</p>  | <p style="text-align: center;">....Further into the beginning of the story</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>4.MAKING INFERENCES</b></p> <p>Prompts:<br/>"How does (name of character) feel in the beginning of the story?"<br/><br/>How does (name of another Character) feel?"</p>  |
| <p style="text-align: center;">...in the middle of the story</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>5. VISUALIZE</b></p> <p>(Show how you take the story sensory and physical details the author gives you and expand them in your mind's eye to create an image or a scene)</p> <p>Prompts:<br/>"Draw one scene from the story and label it."<br/><br/>"In my mind's eye..."<br/><br/>"I imagine..."<br/>I see..." or "I have a picture of."</p>           | <p style="text-align: center;">...At the end of the story</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>6. MAKING INFERENCES</b></p> <p>Prompts:<br/>"How does (name of main character) feel at the end of the story?"<br/><br/>"How does (name of another character) feel now?"</p>  |
| <p style="text-align: center;">...At the end of the story</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>7. DETERMINING IMPORTANCE</b></p> <p>Prompt:<br/><br/>"What is the most important idea of the last page of this story?"</p>  | <p style="text-align: center;">...Upon completion of the story</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>8. USE FIX UP STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS CONFUSION AND REPAIR COMPREHENSION.</b></p> <p>(Problem with text can be addressed by: rereading,reading ahead, review, previous ideas; replace an unknown word with one that they think makes sense; look up an unknown word in the dictionary; change their ideas or visualization.)</p> <p>Prompt:<br/><br/>"When you came to a part you didn't understand, what strategies did you use?"</p> |

## Think Aloud Comprehension Strategies

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <p><b>1. SET PURPOSES FOR READING</b></p> <p>Title:<br/>Author:<br/>“ The title makes me think the story will be about...”</p> | <p><b>2. CONNECT PERSONALLY</b></p> <p>“ This reminds me of...”</p>   |
| <p><b>3. MONITOR COMPREHENSION</b></p> <p>“What Questions do you have about this selection?”</p>                               | <p><b>4. MAKING INFERENCES</b></p> <p>“How does, (name of main character), feel at the beginning?”<br/>“How does, (name of another character), feel?”</p>                   |
| <p><b>5. VISUALIZE</b></p> <p>one scene from the story and label it.”</p>  | <p><b>6. MAKING INFERENCES</b></p> <p>“How does (name of main character) feel at the end?”<br/>“How does (name of another character) feel at the end?”</p>                  |
| <p><b>7. DETERMINING IMPORTANCE</b></p> <p>the most important idea of the last page of the story?”</p>                         | <p><b>8. USE FIX UP STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS CONFUSION AND REPAIR COMPREHENSION</b></p> <p>“When you came to a part you couldn't understand, what strategies did you use?”</p> |

# PREDICTIONS

**BEFORE READING**

**DURING READING**

**AFTER READING**

## Visual Responses

### Working Together

Visualize while reading your story.

**Draw a picture before reading:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Draw a picture during reading:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Draw a picture after reading:** \_\_\_\_\_

# 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.

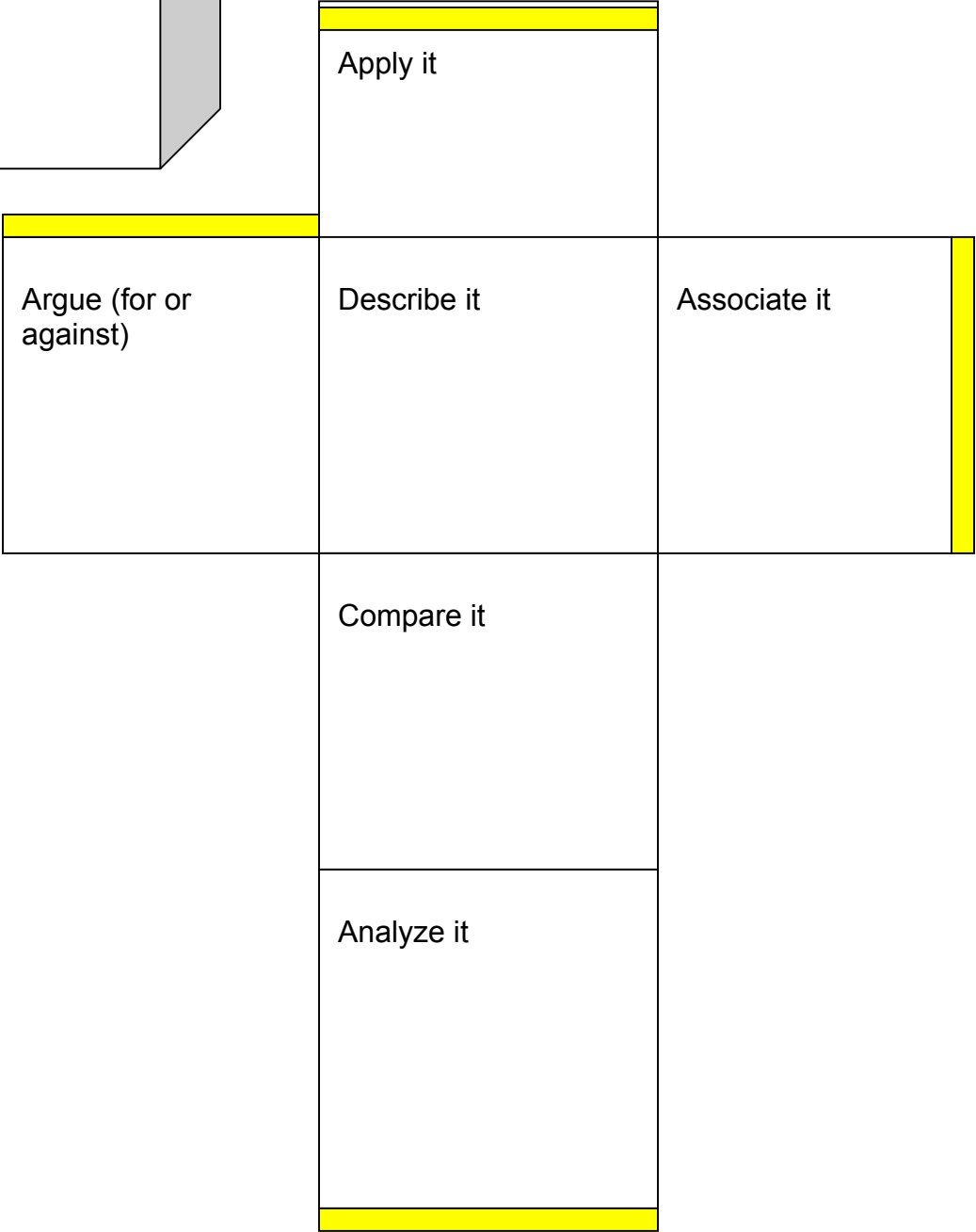
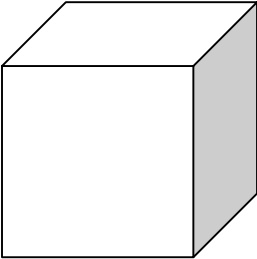
**Associate:** Annemarie is just like the rest of us. She would fit right in with our class.

**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 (creating a box)**





# Vocabulary Skills

After reading search for the following:

Synonyms

Homonyms

Antonyms

# Reciprocal Teaching Cards

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

## To use after reading each section:

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

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

## **Mind Portraits**

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

## I, Too

I, Too, sing America

I am the darker brother.  
They send me to eat in the kitchen  
When company comes,  
But I laugh  
And eat well  
And grow strong

Tomorrow  
I'll be at the table  
When company comes  
Nobody'll dare  
Say to me,  
"Eat in the Kitchen,"  
Then.

Besides,  
They'll see how beautiful I am  
And be ashamed –

I, too, am America

*Langston Hughes*

## 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:

Active Learning Center, Inc.  
3835 West 800 North  
Cedar City, UT 84720  
[www.activelearning.org](http://www.activelearning.org)