USING STRATEGIC TEACHING TO PROMOTE HIGH LEVELS OF ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT AND STUDENT LEARNING

Research Based Support for Adolescent Learners
A STRATEGIC TEACHING OVERVIEW
SHELBY COUNTY SCHOOLS
2.18.10
What Is Strategic Teaching?

- Strategic teaching IS NOT: just for reading and language arts classes.
- **Strategic teaching IS:** best practices designed to increase student achievement in ALL content classes.

- Strategic Teaching IS NOT: just for struggling readers.
- **Strategic Teaching IS:** for all students regardless of their reading abilities.

- Strategic Teaching IS NOT: something that you do once a week or on every other Thursday.
- **Strategic Teaching IS:** part of every lesson, every day.

- Strategic Teaching IS NOT: something your principal came up with to torture you.
- **Strategic Teaching IS:** based on scientific research about adolescent learning.
5 Components of a Strategic Lesson

1. One or more daily outcome(s) based on state standards

2. Two everyday instructional practices: chunking (breaking text, lectures, video, etc. into small, manageable pieces) and student discussion of concepts

3. Three parts to a purposeful lesson structure: using connected BEFORE, DURING, and AFTER literacy strategies

4. Four steps to explicit instruction: “I Do”, “We Do”, “Y’all Do”, and “You Do”

5. Five components of active literacy: read, write, talk, listen, and investigate (T.W.I.R.L)
STEP BY STEP GUIDE FOR DEVELOPING A STRATEGIC LESSON

**STEP 1**

**Determine the Outcomes**

- Decide what it is the students will be able to do today as a result of this lesson.
- Ensure that the outcome(s) of the lesson moves the students closer to mastery of content standards.
- Decide on assessment(s) that will be used to determine if outcome has been met.

**STEP 2**

**Plan a BEFORE Strategy**

Consider the **purposes** of before strategies:

- activate prior knowledge
- build background knowledge
- generate questions
- make predictions
- discuss vocabulary
- establish a purpose for reading/lesson

Consider the **content** of the lesson:

- Is it a new concept to most of the students? If so, choose a strategy that will allow students to build some background knowledge about the concept.
- Is it a review or continuation of content that students are familiar with? If so, choose a strategy that will allow students to activate prior knowledge.
- Is there vocabulary in the lesson that may interfere with comprehension for some students? If so, choose a strategy that will involve discussion of unfamiliar words.
- Are there particular parts of the content that need to be emphasized? If so, choose a strategy that draws attention to important concepts.

Reflection:

Think about the strategy and purpose(s) of this part of the lesson. Are they connected and related to the daily outcome(s)?
STEP 3
Plan a DURING Strategy

Consider the purposes of during strategies:
- engage with the text
- verify and formulate predictions
- summarize text
- self-monitor comprehension
- construct graphic organizers
- use mental imagery
- integrate new information with prior knowledge

Consider the content of the lesson:
- Is the text challenging to comprehend? If so, choose a during strategy that will require students to stop periodically as they read and self-monitor comprehension.
- Is the text structure unfamiliar or challenging to some of the students? If so, use a graphic organizer to help students organize information from the text.
- Is there a large amount of text to be read? If so, chunk the text and choose a during strategy that will allow small groups of students to read portions of the text and share important information with the entire class.
- Is there a lecture planned for the lesson? If so, chunk the lecture and choose a during strategy that will allow students to process smaller amounts of information at one time.
- Is there a video planned for the lesson? If so, chunk the video and choose a during strategy that will allow students to process smaller amounts of information at one time.

Reflection:
Think about the strategy and purpose(s) of this part of the lesson. Are they connected and related to the daily outcome(s)?
STEP 4

Plan an AFTER Strategy

Consider the purposes of after strategies:
- reflect on the content of the lesson
- evaluate predictions
- examine questions that guided reading
- respond to text through discussion
- respond to text through writing
- retell or summarize

Consider the content of the lesson:
- Does the content of the lesson build upon previous learning? If so, choose a strategy that allows students to make connections and evaluate new information in light of previous learning.
- Does the content lend itself to visual representations? If so, use a graphic organizer as a format for organizing information and concepts.
- Does the content contain challenging vocabulary? If so, choose a strategy that will lead to student ownership of important vocabulary.
- Is the content open to interpretation? If so, choose a strategy that will promote discussion and critical thinking.

Reflection:
Think about the strategy and purpose(s) of this part of the lesson.
Are they connected and related to the daily outcome(s)?

STEP 5

Plan for Assessment of Outcome(s)

How will the lesson outcome(s) be assessed?
Consider:
- Work products
- Separate assessments
- Exit slips
- Observational data
## Review the Finished Lesson Plan

Check the lesson using the following observation guide. 

**Strategic Lesson Observation Guide**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Outcome(s)

**Before**

**Strategy**

**Purpose(s):**
- activate prior knowledge
- build background knowledge
- generate questions
- make predictions
- discuss vocabulary
- establish a purpose for reading
- other

**Comments/Questions**

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### During

**Strategy**

**Purpose(s):**
- engage with the text
- verify and formulate predictions
- self-monitor comprehension
- construct graphic organizers
- summarize text
- use mental imagery
- integrate new information with prior knowledge
- other

**Comments/Questions**

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### After

**Strategy**

**Purpose(s):**
- reflect on the content of the lesson
- evaluate predictions
- examine questions that guided reading
- respond to text through discussion
- respond to text through writing
- retell or summarize
- other

**Comments/Questions**

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BEFORE</th>
<th>DURING</th>
<th>AFTER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Purpose:</td>
<td>Purpose:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strategy:</td>
<td>Strategy:</td>
<td>Strategy:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Procedure:</td>
<td>Procedure:</td>
<td>Procedure:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A SAMPLE, NON-EXHAUSTIVE LIST OF LITERACY STRATEGIES TO PROMOTE STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

BEFORE, DURING, AND AFTER STRATEGIES

The following is a description of a variety of strategies that provide student engagement while focusing on student comprehension of content material. These strategies should move the learner toward academic literacy by providing multiple opportunities for them to engage in dialogue, read and write in a variety of situations, investigate relevant and meaningful concepts, and justify their thought processes. **This list is by no means all inclusive.** Teachers may use other strategies as long as they are appropriate for the content of the lesson, and they accomplish the purposes set for the strategies. It is also important to remember that strategies may be modified to meet the needs of the learners.

**Note:** More strategies are presented during the formal strategic teaching training.

**Quick Write**
**Purposes:** (1) introduce a concept and connect this concept with prior knowledge or experiences and (2) allow students to discuss and learn from each other
**Procedure:**
1. Introduce a single word or phrase to the class.
2. Students copy the concept on index cards.
3. Students are given two minutes to write whatever comes to their minds relative to the concept. They may write freely using single words, phrases, sentences, etc.
4. After time is called, students may volunteer to share their thoughts on the subject.

**Say Something**
**Purposes:** (1) make connections with texts during reading and (2) enhance comprehension of written material through short readings and oral discussions
**Procedure:**
1. Choose a text for the students to read and have them work in pairs.
2. Designate a stopping point for reading.
3. Have students read to the stopping point and then “say something” about the text to their partners.
4. Repeat steps 2 and 3 until they finish reading the text.

**ABC Brainstorm**
Purposes: (1) activate prior knowledge about a major topic and (2) allow students to build background knowledge about a topic through discussion with other students.
Procedure:
1. Present the topic of the brainstorm to the students.
2. Students list all the letters of the alphabet down a sheet of paper, leaving room beside each letter to write out the rest of a word or phrase.
3. Students work individually thinking of as many words as they can that are associated with the topic and write the words beside the appropriate letters.
4. After a few minutes, let the students pair up or work in small groups to fill in blank letters they have not yet completed.
5. Allow students to share with the entire class possible terms for the different letters of the alphabet.

**X Marks the Spot**
Purpose: engage with the text
Procedure:
1. Teacher puts key on the board:
   - X = Key point
   - ! = I get it! I can explain this!
   - ? = I don’t get this
2. Teacher models the procedure for students using first chunk of text.
3. Students practice using this procedure independently
   * copied text may be written on directly, but sticky notes work well in books

**Five Word Prediction**
Purposes: (1) encourage students to make predictions about text, (2) activate prior knowledge, (3) set purposes for reading, and (4) introduce new vocabulary
Procedure:
1. Select five key vocabulary words from the text that students are about to read.
2. List the words in order on the chalkboard.
3. Clarify the meaning of any unfamiliar words.
4. Ask students to write a paragraph predicting the theme of the lesson using all of the words in the paragraph.
5. Allow volunteers to share their predictions.
6. After completing the lesson, ask the students to use the same words to write a summary paragraph.

**Anticipation Guide**

**Purposes:** (1) set purposes for reading texts, (2) activate prior knowledge, and (3) help make connections with the text

**Procedure:**
1. Analyze material to be read. Select major ideas with which students will interact.
2. Write the ideas in short, clear declarative statements with some of the statements being true and some of the statements being false.
3. Put statements in a format that will elicit anticipation and prediction.
4. Discuss students’ anticipations and predictions before they read the text.
5. Students read the text to confirm or disconfirm their original responses.
   After reading, students revisit their predictions and modify, if necessary.

**Example:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>____</td>
<td>____</td>
<td>____</td>
<td>____</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_____</td>
<td>_____</td>
<td>1. Bats use their ears to help them see _____</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_____</td>
<td>_____</td>
<td>at night.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_____</td>
<td>_____</td>
<td>2. The mudskipper is a fish that can _____</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>climb a tree.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


**Exit Slips**

**Purposes:** (1) reflect on content of lesson

The exit-slip strategy requires students to write responses to questions you pose at the end of class. Exit slips help students reflect on what they have learned and express what or how they are thinking about the new information. Exit slips easily incorporate writing into your content area classroom and require students to think critically.

There are three categories of exit slips (Fisher & Frey, 2004):

- Prompts that document learning,
  - Ex. Write one thing you learned today.

**Coding the Text**

**Purposes:** (1) make connections while reading and (2) actively engage in reading

**Procedure:**
1. Using a think aloud (verbalizing your thoughts as you read), model for the students examples of making connections. These may include text-self, text-text, or text-world connections.

2. While reading aloud, demonstrate how to code a section of text that elicits a connection by using a sticky note, a code (T-S = text-self, T-T = text-text, T-W = text-world), and a few words to describe the connection.

3. Have the students work in small groups to read a short text and code the text. Have them share their ideas with the class.

4. Encourage the students to code the text using sticky notes to record their ideas and use these as a basis of small and large group discussions.


**GIST (Generating Interactions between Schemata and Text)**

Purposes: (1) reflect on the content of the lesson (2) summarize the text (3) differentiate between essential and non-essential information

Procedure: The task is to write a summary of the text in 20 words or less. The words capture the “gist” of the text.
1. Teacher models the process by drawing 20 blanks on the board.
2. Teacher thinks aloud as (s)he begins to complete the 20 blank summary.
3. Students work with a group or partner to complete a GIST for the next chunk of text. Students will eventually be asked to create independent GISTs.

**Carousel Brainstorm**

Purposes: This strategy can fit almost any purpose developed

Procedure:
1. Teacher determines what topics will be placed on chart paper. 2. Chart paper is placed on walls around the room. 3. Teacher places students into groups of four. 4. Students begin at a designated chart. 5. They read the prompt, discuss with group, and respond directly on the chart. 6. After an allotted amount of time, students rotate to next chart. 7. Students read next prompt and previous recordings, and then record any new discoveries or discussion points. 8. Continue until each group has responded to each prompt. 9. Teacher shares information from charts and conversations heard while responding.

** This strategy can be modified by having the chart “carousel” to groups, rather than groups moving to chart.

**Note:** More strategies are presented during the formal strategic teaching training.