

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES TO PROMOTE ACTIVE AND COLLABORATIVE LEARNING

**Most of these activities can be completed individually or collaboratively. Students can practice these strategies by using them in class to complete a group assignment with the guidance of the peer instructor, and then they can use the same strategies to study independently.*

1. A-RAFTT: a variation of Nancy Vanderventer’s RAFT strategy
 - a. Students identify the attitude (A) and role (R) of the writer, then the audience (A), format (F), topic (T), and themes (T).
 - b. Students critique each element of five elements of the reading.
 - c. Students create their own A-RAFT chart to prewrite for their responses to the reading.
 - d. Extension: Students create an A-RAFT chart of multiple texts to aid in comparing and contrasting, or categorizing, their readings across a theme.
2. Analogies
 - a. Students create analogies to examine concepts within a text
 - b. Students develop the analogy in detail and then present it to the group
 - c. Extension: Students hold a debate to defend why their group’s analogy is the strongest
 - d. To use for assessment: students individually create analogies to explain complicated ideas
3. Annotated Problems
 - a. Group is divided into pairs.
 - b. When problem solving, one student completes the problem. Partner then annotates it by writing in the margins why his/her partner completed the step in that way.
 - c. Students alternate roles for each problem.
4. Expert Testimonies
 - a. Peer instructor assigns a controversial topic to the group
 - b. In groups or individually, students are assigned as “experts” on a particular topic.
 - c. Students use readings distributed by peer instructor or conduct their own research to become the “experts” for each of their assigned topics
 - d. Students either hold a debate, calling on each expert to testify, or collect reports to create a pamphlet on the topic.
5. Big Six
 - a. Students answer the “big six” questions: Who? What? When? Where? Why? How?
6. Clustering
 - a. Students create a cluster (also referred to as a mind map or idea web) to demonstrate how a text is organized by topics and main ideas.

7. Common Error Logs
 - a. Group keeps a record of common errors.
 - b. At the end of each session or before an exam, group compiles ways to avoid these common errors.
8. Comprehension Connections
 - a. Students identify text-to-self, text-to-text, and text-to-world connections. (see attachment)
9. Concept & Evidence Collection
 - a. Students divide their papers into the following four columns: Familiar Concepts, Evidence, New Concepts, Evidence
 - b. After reading, students complete the first two columns by identifying familiar concepts and evidence given to either support or contradict them. Then, students complete the last two columns by identifying new concepts introduced in the reading and evidence that either supports or contradicts them.
 - i. Evidence collected should be found both within and outside of the text.
 - c. This exercise can be used as prewriting for a critique or as brainstorming for a group discussion.
10. Controversy Continuum
 - a. The peer instructor chooses a controversial topic.
 - b. The two extreme positions of this topic are written on the board, one on each side.
 - c. Students review and discuss the readings on this topic either in small groups or as a group.
 - d. Each student writes his/her position as a thesis statement.
 - e. After choosing a position, each student places his/her thesis on the board where s/he believes it belongs on the continuum.
11. Ethical Choices
 - a. Students identify the pros and cons of an ethical dilemma.
 - b. They then map the pros, cons, and their premises (see attachment).
 - c. After completing the map, students examine resolutions to the particular dilemma and propose an argument for why it should be resolved in a particular way or why there is no way of resolving the dilemma to suit all parties.
12. Every Other
 - a. When problem solving, students are divided into pairs.
 - b. Each pair solves the problem by taking turns completing each step.
 - i. For complex problems, the leader may choose to provide a guideline or fill-in-the-blank exercise to support the students' process.
13. Idea Maps
 - a. Students create a visual representation of the text according to its rhetorical mode and organization.

14. Peer instructor Read-Aloud
 - a. Peer instructor models how to read a particular type of text by reading aloud while providing “asides” to explain how s/he is thinking about the text and how to read it.
15. K-W-L
 - a. Students create a chart to track their knowledge of a topic based upon the texts they have read and continue to read across a theme. The chart has the following categories: What I Know, What I Want to Know, What I have Learned (this last category is completed after reading the current text).
16. Key Concept Strategy
 - a. Students create a chart addressing the key concepts of a topic. They create a box with the following 4 quadrants: Key Concept, Properties/Rules/Processes/etc. defined by rhetorical mode, Examples & Non-examples, Applications.
17. Like/Unlike Matrix
 - a. When addressing a new concept, students collaboratively complete a matrix demonstrating how the concept is like and unlike familiar concepts.
18. Outlines
 - a. Students outline the text according to its organization and rhetorical mode(s).
19. Paraphrase X3
 - a. Students paraphrase a key passage three times to explore their understandings and misunderstandings of the passage.
20. Problem-Solving Using Multiple Ways of Explaining
 - a. Students are presented with a social problem.
 - b. Based on their readings of 2 or more texts, they must provide separate ways of explaining the problem according to the author’s viewpoint. (Usually a paragraph for each text).
 - c. Working from their ways of explaining the problem, students propose varying solutions for each author’s perspective. If students have read diligently, they will be able to identify or infer the different premises upon which each author builds his/her perspective and to create solutions accordingly.
 - d. Students can best prepare for this writing exercise by first creating a cause and effect chart for each author’s explanation and then identifying at what stage in the cause and effect relationship their solution will be applied.
21. QAR: The Question/Answer Relationship
 - a. Peer instructor provides several questions.
 - b. Students answer each question and label their answers as one of the following: Right There (answer is found in the text), Think and Search (answer is in the text but must be pieced together from various sections), You and the Author (author provides some ideas, but student must “fill in the gaps” to answer the question),

and On Your Own (student must apply previous knowledge and/or research to answer the question).

- c. This activity is especially useful with textbooks or other informational texts.

22. Quick Write

- a. At any stage in the comprehension process, students are given a question and must write for a given amount of time without stopping.

23. Reaction Guide

- a. The peer instructor chooses several claims and facts about which the students are likely to have misconceptions.
- b. The students create a chart with the claims and facts in the center column and the following labels above the right and left columns: Before Reading, After Reading.
- c. Before reading, the students record “agree” or “disagree” in the left column next to each statement.
- d. After reading, students record “agree” or “disagree” in the right column next to each statement and provide textual evidence for their responses.

24. Reading Circles

- a. Before reading, students are divided into groups and each member is given a unique role in the group (see attachment).
- b. In groups, each member performs his/her role in order to facilitate the group’s discussion.

25. Round Robin

- a. Leader chooses a topic that is either a complex question or a multi-step process.
- b. Leader poses question to entire group and asks one student to start the discussion with a single sentence or idea.
- c. Students each add one idea or step to what the previous student said.
 - i. Variation for arguable topics: Each student begins with one of the following phrases:
 1. “I agree and add...”
 2. “I disagree because...”
 3. “I mostly agree, but...”
 4. “I agree, but only if...”
 5. “I disagree if...”

26. Scintillating Sentences and Quizzical Quotes

- a. Each student chooses a “scintillating sentence,” one that is particularly poignant or important, or a “quizzical quote,” one that is perplexing.
- b. The students share their choices (either on the board or an online discussion forum) and then use them to direct the group discussion.

27. SQ3R

- a. See attachment

28. The 10 Most Important Words
 - a. Students keep a log of the ten most important words in each reading.
 - b. These logs are then used to identify and discuss themes and connections across texts.
29. Visualizing
 - a. Students create visual aids to represent abstract ideas in a text and then explain to the group why they represented the concept in that way.

*All activities adapted from the following sources:

1. Activities created for the presenter's groups
2. Rosenwasser, David, Jill Stephen, and David Rosenwasser. *Writing Analytically with Readings*. Boston, MA: Thomson/Wadsworth, 2008. Print.
3. Stephens, Elaine C, and Jean E. Brown. *A Handbook of Content Literacy Strategies: 125 Practical Reading and Writing Ideas*. Norwood, Mass: Christopher-Gordon Publishers, 2005. Print.

A-RAFTT Chart

TEXT					
A ATTITUDE OF AUTHOR					
R ROLE OF AUTHOR					
A AUDIENCE					
F FORMAT OF WRITING					
T TOPIC					
T THEMES					

Comprehension Connections

After reading the text, examine the three types of connections described below by completing this worksheet.

Text-to-Self Connections are the connections you make between the text you read and your own experiences and/or beliefs. These connections are important because they help you to better understand the value of the text and to better examine your own potential biases.

Text-to-Text Connections are the connections you make between various texts (books, articles, essays, films, dramas, etc.). These connections should demonstrate how one text supports, contradicts, frames, or expands the other. These connections will help you to examine multiple facets of a topic and to better understand the topic as part of a larger discourse.

Text-to-World Connections are the connections you make between the text and events, phenomena, beliefs, or experiences in the world. These connections help to place the text you read in context of the lived experiences of individuals and societies. They also help to demonstrate the value and applications of the text.

Title of Text: _____

Text-to-Self

1. Complete this sentence: This text connects to my...

- A. ... experience of _____
- B. ... beliefs regarding _____
- C. ... attitude toward _____
- D. ... profession, because _____
- E. ... cultural identity, because _____
- F. Other: _____

2. Quote or paraphrase three key passages that demonstrate this connection.

- A. _____

- B. _____

C. _____

3. Complete this statement: This connection was _____ me because _____ . (Examples: *This connection was surprising to me because I did not expect dissimilar cultures to have similar values.* OR *This text was emotionally difficult for me because I did not want to admit that I shared this undesirable trait with the author.*)

Text-to-Text

1. Complete this sentence: This text connects to _____ [title] by _____ [author] because...

- A. ... it complicates his/her idea that _____
- B. ... it contradicts his/her claim that _____
- C. ... both authors agree that _____
- D. ... both authors were responding to _____
- E. ... it expands upon the idea that _____
- F. Other: _____

2. Quote or paraphrase three key passages that demonstrate this connection.

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

3. Complete this statement: This connection was _____ me because _____ . (Examples: *This connection was surprising to me because I did not expect dissimilar cultures to have similar values.* OR *This text was emotionally difficult for me because I did not want to admit that I shared this undesirable trait with the author.*)

Text-to-World

1. Complete this sentence: This text connects to _____ because...

- A. ... it is similar to _____
- B. ... it demonstrates an alternative to _____
- C. ... it occurred before/ during/after _____
- D. ... it exemplifies _____
- E. Other: _____

2. Quote or paraphrase three key passages that demonstrate this connection.

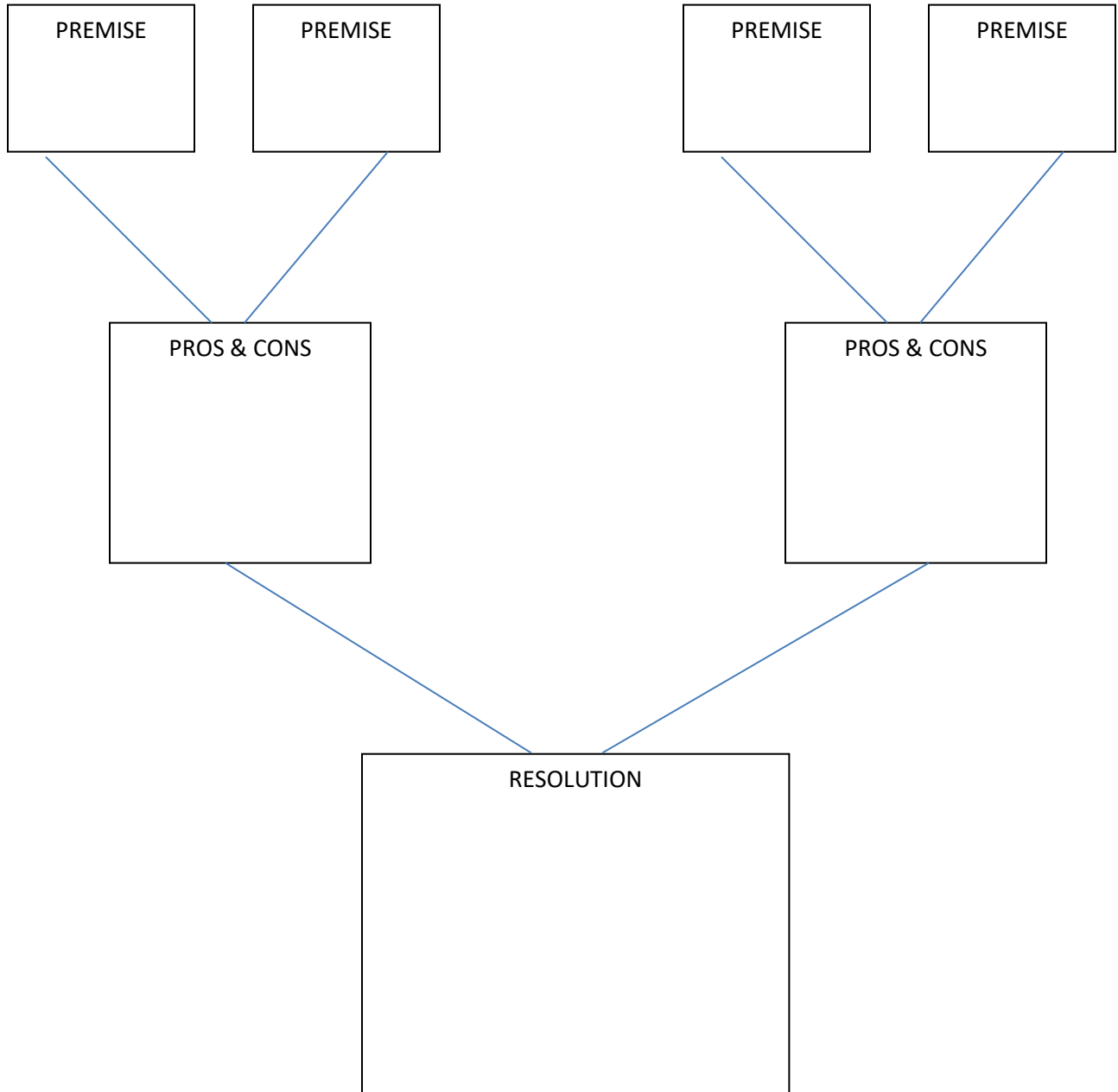
A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

3. Complete this statement: This connection was _____ me because _____ . (Examples: *This connection was surprising to me because I did not expect dissimilar cultures to have similar values.* OR *This text was emotionally difficult for me because I did not want to admit that I shared this undesirable trait with the author.*)

ETHICAL CHOICES



Graphic Organizer for Readings

Title of Work	Theme/Thesis Quoted Verbatim	Who/What?	Does what?	How? (Tropes or Genre)	Why?	Broader Significance	Implication

KWL Reading method

KWL is intended to be an exercise for a study group or class that can guide you in reading and understanding a text. You can adapt it to working alone, but discussions definitely help. It is composed of only three stages that reflect a worksheet of three columns with the three letters

What we K now	What we W ant to know	What we L earned

K stands for **Know**

This first stage may surprise you:

Think first about, then list, what you know about the topic. This advanced organizer provides you with a background to the new material, building a scaffold to support it.

Think of it as a pre-reading inventory.

- **Brainstorm!**
Before looking at the text, think of keywords, terms, or phrases about the topic, either in your class or a study group.
- Record these in the *K* column of your chart until you cannot think of more.
- Engage your group in a discussion about what you wrote in the *K* column.
- Organize the entries into general categories.

W stands for **Will** or **Want**

The second stage is to list a series of questions of what you want to know more of the subject, based upon what you listed in **K**.

- Preview the text's table of contents, headings, pictures, charts etc.
Discuss what you want to learn
- List some thoughts on what you want, or expect to learn, generally or specifically.
Think in terms of what you will learn, or what do you want to learn about this.
- Turn all sentences into questions before writing them down.
They will help you focus your attention during reading.
- List the questions by importance.

L stands for **Learned**

The final stage is to answer your questions, as well as to list what new information you have learned. Either while reading or after you have finished.

- List out what you learn as you read, either by section, or after the whole work, whichever is comfortable for you.
- Check it against the W column, what you wanted to learn
- Create symbols to indicate main ideas, surprising ideas, questionable ideas, and those you don't understand!

Expand this exercise beyond K W L:

Add an H!

Stands for **HOW** you can learn more.

- Pose new questions about the topic

How can I learn more or answer questions not answered in my worksheet

These include other sources of information, including: organizations, experts, tutors, websites, librarians, etc.

The SQ3R Method

Survey – Question – Read – Recite - Review

<p>Before you read, <u>S</u>urvey the chapter:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the title, headings, and subheadings • captions under pictures, charts, graphs or maps • review questions or teacher-made study guides • introductory and concluding paragraphs • summary
<p><u>Q</u>uestion while you are surveying:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turn the title, headings, and/or subheadings into questions; • Read questions at the end of the chapters or after each subheading; • Ask yourself, "What did my peer instructor say about this chapter or subject when it was assigned?" • Ask yourself, "What do I already know about this subject?" <p>Note: If it is helpful to you, write out these questions for consideration. This variation is called SQW3R</p>
<p><u>R</u>ead: When you begin to</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look for answers to the questions you first raised; • Answer questions at the beginning or end of chapters or study guides • Reread captions under pictures, graphs, etc. • Note all the underlined, italicized, bold printed words or phrases • Study graphic aids • Reduce your speed for difficult passages • Stop and reread parts which are not clear • Read only a section at a time and recite after each section
<p><u>R</u>ecite after you've read a section:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orally ask yourself questions about what you have just read or summarize, in your own words, what you read • Take notes from the text but write the information in your own words • Underline or highlight important points you've just read • Use the method of recitation which best suits your particular learning style but remember, the more senses you use the more likely you are to remember what you read - i.e.,

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TRIPLE STRENGTH LEARNING: Seeing, saying, hearing- QUADRUPLE STRENGTH LEARNING: Seeing, saying, hearing, writing!!!
<p><u>Review:</u> an ongoing process.</p>	<p>Day One</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After you have read and recited the entire chapter, write questions in the margins for those points you have highlighted or underlined. • If you took notes while reciting, write questions for the notes you have taken in the left hand margins of your notebook. <p>Day Two</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Page through the text and/or your notebook to re-acquaint yourself with the important points. • Cover the right hand column of your text/note-book and orally ask yourself the questions in the left hand margins. • Orally recite or write the answers from memory. • Make "flash cards" for those questions which give you difficulty. • Develop mnemonic devices for material which need to be memorized. <p>Days Three, Four and Five</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alternate between your flash cards and notes and test yourself (orally or in writing) on the questions you formulated. • Make additional flash cards if necessary. <p>Weekend</p> <p>Using the text and notebook, make a Table of Contents - list all the topics and sub-topics you need to know from the chapter. From the Table of Contents, make a Study Sheet/ Spatial Map. Recite the information orally and in your own words as you put the Study Sheet/Map together.</p> <p>Now that you have consolidated all the information you need for that chapter, periodically review the Sheet/Map so that at test time you will not have to cram.</p>

READING CIRCLES

Role: Discussion Director

Name: _____

Group: _____

Reading Assignment: _____ (“ ”)

Page Numbers: _____

Role: Your job is to develop a list of questions that your group might want to discuss about today’s reading. Don’t worry about the small details: your task is to help people talk over the general ideas in the reading and share reactions. Usually the best discussion questions come from your own thoughts, feelings and concerns as you read, which you can list below, *before*, *during*, or *after* your reading. Or you may use some of the general questions below to develop topics for your group.

Possible discussion questions or topics for today:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Sample Questions:

- What did you think this reading would be about as you read the title?
- What do you already know about the topic as suggested in the title?
- What general idea was discussed in the reading? Did it match your prediction? Can someone summarize the content of the reading?
- What did you find puzzling, surprising, or disturbing as you read?
- What do you believe is the author’s point?
- Who is the intended audience?
- How would you characterize the writer from the tone of this reading?

Adapted from Daniels, Harvey. *Literature Circles: Voice and Choice in the Student-Centered Classroom*. York, Maine: Stenhouse Publishers, 1994.

Passage Master

Name: _____

Group: _____

Reading Selection: _____

Assignment p. _____ -- p. _____

Role: Your job is to locate special selections of the reader that the group should review. The idea is to help readers notice the most interesting, humorous, puzzling, or significant selections from the text. You decide which passages or paragraphs are worth reviewing and then jot plans for how they should be shared with the group. You can read passages aloud yourself, ask group members to read them, or have the group read silently and then discuss.

Location	Reason for Selection	Plan for Reading
1. P. _____ Paragraph ¶ _____	_____	_____
2. p. _____ ¶ _____	_____	_____
3. p. _____ ¶ _____	_____	_____
4. p. _____ ¶ _____	_____	_____

Possible reason for selection of some passages:

Significant	Informative	Repeated	_____
Surprising	Shocking	Cause-effect	_____
Funny	Descriptive	Powerful	_____
Confusing	Provocative	Ironic	_____

Adapted from Daniels, Harvey. *Literature Circles: Voice and Choice in the Student-Centered Classroom...* York, Maine: Stenhouse Publishers, 1994.

Vocabulary Enricher

Name: _____

Group: _____

Reading Selection: _____ (“ ”) Assignment: p. ____--p. ____

Role: Your job is to note important words that may be new, strange, important, puzzling or unfamiliar. Mark these when you are reading, and then jot down their definition from the dictionary. In the group, help members find and discuss these words and how the author makes special use of them.

p. #, ¶	Word	Definition
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Adapted from Daniels, Harvey. *Literature Circles: Voice and Choice in the Student-Centered Classroom...* York, Maine: Stenhouse Publishers, 1994.

Connector

Name: _____

Group: _____

Reading Selection: _____ (“ ”)

Assignment: p. _____ -- p. _____

Role: Your job is to find connections between the material your group is reading and the world—that is, your experience with the author’s topic, your other readings in either this text or other texts you have read, or other authors who have written about similar topics. It will be interesting to learn if group members make similar or different connections.

Some connections I found between this reading and other readings, experiences I’ve read about, or other authors . . .

1. _____
2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

Connections made by other group members similar to mine:

Connections made by group members dissimilar to mine:

Adapted from Daniels, Harvey. *Literature Circles: Voice and Choice in the Student-Centered Classroom...* York, Maine: Stenhouse Publishers, 1994.

Investigator

Name: _____

Group: _____

Reading Selection: _____ (“ ”) P. _____ --P. _____

Role: Your job is to dig up some background information on any topic related to the reading selection. A good place to start is with the parts the group finds puzzling. Some other background or context may include the following: geography, weather, culture, historical background, information about the author (life, other works), the history and derivation of words or names used in the selection.

Ways of gathering information:

- Introduction, preface, or “about the author” section
- Library sources
- On-line computer search or encyclopedia (no Wikipedia)
- Interviews with others who know the topic
- Other reading you’ve already read about the topic

Our group needs background about

We suggest that the investigator look into the following

Adapted from Daniels, Harvey. *Literature Circles: Voice and Choice in the Student-Centered Classroom...* York, Maine: Stenhouse Publishers, 1994.