

READING AND STUDY STRATEGIES

**Most of these activities can be completed individually or collaboratively.*

1. Analogies
 - a. Students create analogies to examine concepts within a text
 - b. Students develop the analogy in detail and then defend why their analogy is the strongest possible
2. Annotated Problems
 - a. When problem solving, student divides paper into two columns and completes the problem in the left column.
 - b. In the right column, the student then explains what s/he did and why/she did it.
 - i. This turns into a study guide for future problems and ensures that students understand the concept behind the problem, not just how to “plug and chug.”
3. Author Ad-Libs (Group activity)
 - a. One student creates a list of sentences with key phrases left blank. (Example: Frederick Douglass believes education should be _____.)
 - b. Second student fills in the blanks of each phrase with what they believe a particular author or authors would say.
 - c. Students give a defense of their answers based on textual evidence.
4. Barclay Barrio’s Formula for Making Connections
 - a. This strategy utilizes an organizational chart to identify connections through close reading and then provides a formula for turning that connection into a coherent paragraph.
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.
 - i. This works best when students first write out key terms on post-it notes and then put them together into a web
7. Comprehension Connections
 - a. Students identify text-to-self, text-to-text, and text-to-world connections.
8. 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.
9. Cubing
 - a. Students create cubes from paper. On each side of the cube, they write for 3-5 minutes. The cubes are labeled with the following: describe, compare, associate, analyze, apply, argue (for or against). These cubes then serve as the brainstorming stage for writing a paper.

- b. Alternative: The cubes have only the labels written on them and are used as a dice-like game. Students roll the cube and must write for 3-5 minutes on the topic the upward-facing side of the cube designates.
10. Ethical Choices
 - a. Students identify the pros and cons of an ethical dilemma.
 - b. They then map the pros, cons, and their premises.
 - 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.
11. Idea Maps
 - a. Students create a visual representation of the text according to its rhetorical mode and organization.
12. Infofiction
 - a. This strategy is to be used with historical fiction and historical opinion articles or ideologically biased textbooks (such as those written during the Nazi rule in Germany).
 - b. Students identify information presented as facts. They then create a chart with the following three columns: Information, Page Number, Verification
 - c. Students search for verification of the information presented. If it is verified as factual, they record the verification source in the right column. If it is not, they record it as unverified.
13. 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).
14. 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. (as defined by the rhetorical mode of the text), Examples & Non-examples, Applications.
15. Like/Unlike Matrix
 - a. When addressing a new concept, students complete a matrix demonstrating how the concept is like and unlike familiar concepts.
16. Outlines
 - a. Students outline the text according to its organization and rhetorical mode(s).
 - i. The key to this strategy is that the students must put all information in their own words and create an organizational structure that makes sense to them. In other words, copying pieces of information from the text without much thought about why or how will not be very meaningful for students.
17. Paraphrase X3
 - a. Students paraphrase a key passage three times to explore their understandings and misunderstandings of the passage.
18. Problem-Solving Using Multiple Ways of Explaining
 - a. Students are presented with a 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 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.
19. QAR: The Question/Answer Relationship
 - a. Students use questions from the textbook or those provided through other course materials.
 - 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.
20. 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.
21. So What?
 - a. Students write a few claims they intend to make about a reading. (These may become the topic sentences of their papers).
 - b. Next to each claim, they answer the question *So what?*
 - c. After each answer, they ask and answer the question again until they have uncovered significant connections and inferences from the texts.
22. SQ3R
 - a. See attachment and bookmark
23. 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.
24. Triple Entry Notes
 - a. This is a note-taking strategy that works particularly well for readings in the arts and humanities, but can be applied to all subject areas.
 - b. Students divide their note page into three columns: observation, interpretation, significance.
 - c. Observation: What is in the text (quotes, key words, facts, etc.)
 - d. Interpretation: What the material in the observation column means (paraphrases, explanations).
 - e. Significance: Why this material matters and how it relates to a broader context (connections to other texts & events, questions and challenges to the text, reactions, analysis, etc.)
 - f. Once completed, these notes provide a template for analysis and can easily be translated into a paragraph (introducing the evidence from the observation column, explaining it, and then providing an analysis of it).
25. Values Mapping
 - a. This exercise is meant to help students uncover the implied values promoted by a text.
 - b. Students identify a value they believe the text upholds (value of family, consumerism, etc.).
 - c. Placing this value in the center of a concept map, they organize the textual evidence and examples from the text around it to demonstrate how this value is upheld by the author.

26. Visualizing

- a. Students create visual aids to represent abstract ideas in a text and then explain why they represented the concept in that way.

*All activities adapted from the following sources:

1. Rosenwasser, David, Jill Stephen, and David Rosenwasser. *Writing Analytically with Readings*. Boston, MA: Thomson/Wadsworth, 2008. Print.
2. 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.
3. Activities created for Stacey Artman's (Director of Outreach, Training, and Academic Coaching, Rutgers Learning Centers) classes