

Grade – Eighth

Standard: Reading

Skill: Functional Texts – Read to determine the relevance and importance of functional information.

Context: These texts include reading materials such as directions, schedules, maps, diagrams, internet websites, and explanations for doing something or getting somewhere. They provide basic information readers need to accomplish day-to-day tasks. Overriding strategies for making the most effective use of such texts are to skim, looking for information that serves a specific need, *or* to read carefully, considering and evaluating the usefulness of all details as in following directions.

Instructional suggestions: (Created to be user-friendly, teachers should be able to read these ideas and put them into practice in their classroom.)

- Have students create a platform statement (as to how they'll create a difference in the world) based on research using the 5 W's. Have students create a piece of functional text such as a brochure. Create criterion for content and format to set a purpose/intent for each section of the piece.
- Collect and reproduce samples of a variety of functional text to create a classroom/grade level library. This will enable teachers to more readily expose students to functional text.
- Obtain brochures from a local attraction to serve as a model for students. Students create their own travel guide/brochure to include information they've gathered from a travel log, guest speaker, etc. Brochures could include map(s), directions, a travel log, and/or other relevant information.
- Do a Think-Pair-Share. Students ask each other questions about the relevance of information found in a functional piece.

- Have students complete a “web quest” in which they practice finding specific information on a website.
- Teachers develop questions based on “most likely” or “best” answers (similar to test questions).
- Ask students to compare and contrast the different types of functional text. Look at the information available in different types of functional text and determine which meets a particular need. (For example: You are planning an event. Which type of functional text would you use to promote your event? What information would need to be included?)

Grade – Eighth

Standard: Reading

Skill: Functional Texts – Read to select and apply relevant information for a given task.

Context: These texts include reading materials such as directions, schedules, maps, diagrams, internet websites, and explanations for doing something or getting somewhere. They provide basic information readers need to accomplish day-to-day tasks. Overriding strategies for making the most effective use of such texts are to skim, looking for information that serves a specific need, *or* to read carefully, considering and evaluating the usefulness of all details as in following directions.

Instructional suggestions: (Created to be user-friendly, teachers should be able to read these ideas and put them into practice in their classroom.)

- Collaborate with content area teachers to incorporate functional reading skills into their classes.
- Be aware of prereading clues in and around the text to activate prior knowledge. (I.e. look at the direction box, title, subtitle, any graphics, etc.)
- Have students read different types of functional texts, and write and answer questions about the text with a peer. Students should also have an opportunity to answer teacher generated questions.
- Students read a type of functional text and dictate their summary of each section to a peer while reading/skimming. The partner records their response on paper. Have a

discussion about strategies for skimming to identify areas of text they need for a given task or scenario. This will build the students' metacognition.

- Have students practice applying information from functional texts to their own lives by creating plans for a tour, itinerary, invitation, persuasive letter, project, or grocery/packing list. (I.e. students create a recycling program at their school based on the information provided by the local recycling center.)

Grade – Eighth

Standard: Reading

Skill: Expository Texts – Read to understand a text’s major points and supporting details.

Context: These texts include such things as textbooks, encyclopedias, biographies, public documents, print news media, internet websites, interviews, scientific explanations, and historical and political analyses. These are usually read to learn new information that increase a reader’s understanding of some topic.

Instructional suggestions: (Created to be user-friendly, teachers should be able to read these ideas and put them into practice in their classroom.)

- Have students use sticky notes to identify main idea and supporting details. This skill should be practiced across the content areas.
- Take a current event or science article from the internet and have students pull out the main idea and supporting details. To emphasize the relevancy of details and build metacognition, ask students to identify why the details are important to the piece. What would be missing if certain details were not included in the piece? Have students rate details in order of importance.
- Have students read a newspaper or magazine article and highlight with two different markers the main idea and supporting details. This will teach them to distinguish between the two.
- Integrate the above method into science and social studies classrooms.
- Have students read paragraphs and passages in which the main idea is not explicitly stated, but is implied. Have discussions with students about what those main ideas are.

- Provide a variety of expository text types for students.
- Create graphic organizers for students with main idea at the top with supporting details beneath in quotations.

Grade – Eighth

Standard: Reading

Skill: Expository Texts – Read to understand the text’s organization and how that organization serves the writer’s purpose.

Context: These texts include such things as textbooks, encyclopedias, biographies, public documents, print news media, internet websites, interviews, scientific explanations, and historical and political analyses. These are usually read to learn new information that increase a reader’s understanding of some topic.

Instructional suggestions: (Created to be user-friendly, teachers should be able to read these ideas and put them into practice in their classroom.)

- Take a one page piece of text, cut it apart, and have students put it together. Students must recognize transitions and topic sentences within text, as well as various organizational structures.
- After teaching organizational structures, have students sort and label books based on their structures.
- Have students read several paragraphs and make notes in the margins to identify the main idea. Students can also summarize the main idea or author’s purpose verbally with a peer.
- Collaborate with content area teachers to incorporate expository reading skills into their classes.
- Teach students to recognize and incorporate various organizational structures into their writing using text examples as models. Include key transitional words appropriate to the organizational style.
- Have students act-out or experience a chronological organizational structure. Students write about the

experience in chronological order and compare their writing to classmates' and other chronological examples.

- Be aware of prereading clues in and around the text to activate prior knowledge. (I.e. look at the direction box, title, subtitle, any graphics, etc.)
- Have students write about one topic, but organize their writing in various ways. Break students into groups based on organizational structure. Students share their writing within and between groups to model how to approach writing to one topic in multiple ways.
- Examine how information is organized on a website or in a district handbook and discuss why it is laid out that way.
- Examine and discuss the author's purpose (i.e. purpose of each paragraph/stanza as it contributes to the organization of the piece); use a variety of texts and other mediums.

Grade – Eighth

Standard: Reading

Skill: Expository Texts – Read to understand how the information in the text fits into broader topics and issues.

Context: These texts include such things as textbooks, encyclopedias, biographies, public documents, print news media, internet websites, interviews, scientific explanations, and historical and political analyses. These are usually read to learn new information that increase a reader's understanding of some topic.

Instructional suggestions: (Created to be user-friendly, teachers should be able to read these ideas and put them into practice in their classroom.)

- Have students study games, sports, toys, music, etc. to recognize how relationships change over time.
- In math, have students take a process or equation and apply it to another task. For example, if students were asked to build a fence around their house or landscape their yard, they would need to be able to use perimeter and area measurements.
- Study novels for cultural activities that were taking place at the time the author wrote the novel. How do those interact as themes within the novel? Can students draw connections between those themes and the events of the time period?
- Have students read an article and make connections between text events and their own lives and current events.
- Have students practice making inferences and supporting those inferences with clues from the text.
- Have students practice making connections (text-to-text, text-to-self, text-to-world) using expository texts.
- Have students read legislation, school handbooks, etc.

Grade – Eighth

Standard: Reading

Skill: Narrative Texts – Read to recognize and understand an author’s development of flashback and foreshadowing, personification, and tone as basic story elements.

Context: These texts include stories, poems, novels, plays, and essays that are read to learn about people, to vicariously experience the characters and settings, to escape to imaginary places and times, and to become absorbed in adventure and fictional events, and various problems and solutions that structure the plots of these texts.

Instructional suggestions: (Created to be user-friendly, teachers should be able to read these ideas and put them into practice in their classroom.)

- Have students make posters of each element of literature. Students include an illustration, example, and definition of each element. Have a gallery walk with students and discuss how each element is represented on the posters.
- Word Walk- bring in words typical of various elements. Mix up the words and scatter them on the floor. Assign students an element and have them find a word on the floor that they associate with the element. Then have students explain their thinking.
- Great read alouds with foreshadowing and flashback:
 - The Pigman by Paul Zindel
 - The Pigman’s Legacy by Paul Zindel
 - Holes by Louis Sachar
- Use poetry to identify and discuss flashback and foreshadowing, personification, and tone. Have students create their own poetry and short stories using these elements.

Grade – Eighth

Standard: Reading

Skill: Narrative Texts – Read to understand how the plot of a story develops as a series of high points and/or how it can be depicted as a problem and its solution.

Context: These texts include stories, poems, novels, plays, and essays that are read to learn about people, to vicariously experience the characters and settings, to escape to imaginary places and times, and to become absorbed in adventure and fictional events, and various problems and solutions that structure the plots of these texts.

Instructional suggestions: (Created to be user-friendly, teachers should be able to read these ideas and put them into practice in their classroom.)

- Have students use story plot graphic organizers to analyze text or as a prewriting strategy for writing. The graphic organizer should lead the student from the beginning through the plot, building to the climax or high point of the story, and finishing at the ending or conclusion.
- Present students with a controversial subject and ask them to pose a solution with a short response.
- Have students compare and contrast stories, novels, and movies (i.e. fairy tales and fractured fairy tales). Have students identify how the plots are similar and different. Ask students how they would adapt the plot structure to serve a specific purpose.
- Use poetry to explore beginning, middle and end of poem.

Grade – Eighth

Standard: Reading

Skill: Narrative Texts – Read to understand the theme of a story and how the author develops it.

Context: These texts include stories, poems, novels, plays, and essays that are read to learn about people, to vicariously experience the characters and settings, to escape to imaginary places and times, and to become absorbed in adventure and fictional events, and various problems and solutions that structure the plots of these texts.

Instructional suggestions: (Created to be user-friendly, teachers should be able to read these ideas and put them into practice in their classroom.)

- Teach students to recognize how characters' beliefs, personalities, motivations, actions, relationships and other literary elements relate to and develop theme.
- Develop a vocabulary of theme words with students (examples: perseverance, tolerance, fear, honor, friendship, etc.). Teach students to go beyond a “one word” explanation for theme into a more in-depth explanation of the author's lesson for the reader.
- Compare and contrast themes across novels (e.g. The Diary of Anne Frank, Journey to Topaz by Yushiko Uchida, Farewell to Manzanar by James D. Houston, etc.)
- Have students come up with a different title for a piece based on the theme. Distinguish for students that a title is not a theme.
- Have students read children's books. Discuss theme and author's craft to develop the theme. Have students read stories aloud to younger students and ask them questions related to theme.

- Connect a theme to students' lives. For example, ask students to think about a time when they were honorable, and then write about the experience.
- Working with a variety of text, focus on having students make connections such as text to text, text to self, and text to world to develop schema. (Example: using music lyrics from different eras, discuss how the theme of the music reflects the times.)
- Identify theme in a variety of texts:
 - Ask students to list their favorite songs and use the lyrics of those songs to introduce theme in poetry.
 - Have students write a response supporting the theme with examples from the text.
- Help students to visualize themes. (Example: Use gallery walks with pictures, books, and other imagery to discover themes.)
- Use Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol to explore themes within each stage of the story (past, present, future).
- Using a herring bone diagram to explore theme with the theme written on the backbone and evidence from the text written on the rib bones.