

Creating Active Readers
Kate Cunningham
Pocahontas Middle School
Seventh grade

Mrs. Cunningham's students are competent and confident with many reading comprehension strategies and the text, *The Black Pearl*, by Scott O'Dell is within their independent reading level. Therefore, she can widen her focus and require: writing, inferring, discussing, predicting, questioning, clarifying, and summarizing all in the same lesson.

Writing

Mrs. Cunningham begins the lesson with a writing assignment, and she clarifies the requirements before the students begin.

Assisting and Complimenting

As the students write, Mrs. Cunningham circulates to give assistance and praise.

Inferring and Discussing

As Mrs. Cunningham's students discuss the protagonist's feelings, they are really making inferences based on what they've read and comprehended previously in the book.

Reviewing Strategies

Even though Mrs. Cunningham knows that most of her students are competent summarizers, she plans some additional instruction in summarizing. First, she reviews to find out what they already understand.

Giving Instructions for Summarizing

Mrs. Cunningham gives her students three strategies they can use while summarizing.

Three Strategies for Summarizing

MacroRules by Brown and Day

1. Delete trivia
2. Delete redundancy
3. Superordinate
4. Find the topic sentence
5. Create the topic sentence

RAP by Katims and Harris

Read

Ask yourself a main idea question

Put your answer into your own words in complete sentences

Somebody...wanted...but...so

Notice how she checks for understanding and links the new ideas with what the students already know.

Reading

Mrs. Cunningham reads the first part of the chapter aloud, and pauses to help her students recognize mood changes and metaphors. Students finish the chapter independently.

Reading Roles

Students will read, discuss, and assume four different roles based on **Reciprocal Teaching** by Palinscar and Brown:

Summarizer

Questioner

Clarifier

Predictor

Discussing and Writing

Mrs. Cunningham reviews the roles for **Reciprocal Teaching** with her students before they get into their discussion groups. She reminds them to discuss what they have read before they write.

Demonstrating Comprehension

After reading, discussing, and writing, the students take turns assuming their **Reciprocal Teaching** roles for the group.