

Pre-Reading Strategies and the Common Core State Standards



***ENSURING THAT OUR STUDENTS HAVE
OPPORTUNITIES TO
GRAPPLE WITH TEXT
AND
RECEIVE NECESSARY SUPPORTS***



What Counts as Pre-Reading?



Activities designed to help students understand what they are about to read.

- Exploring prior knowledge that is relevant to the text
- Setting a purpose for reading
- Contextualizing the text
- Previewing to get a sense of the structure and content
- Providing students with “tips” before reading

Reflection



Turn to a partner and discuss:

- **A typical pre-reading lesson in your classroom.**
 - Planning involved
 - Duration
 - Purpose
 - Effectiveness
- **How might pre-reading lessons be seen as ineffective?**

Why Conduct Pre-Reading Activities?



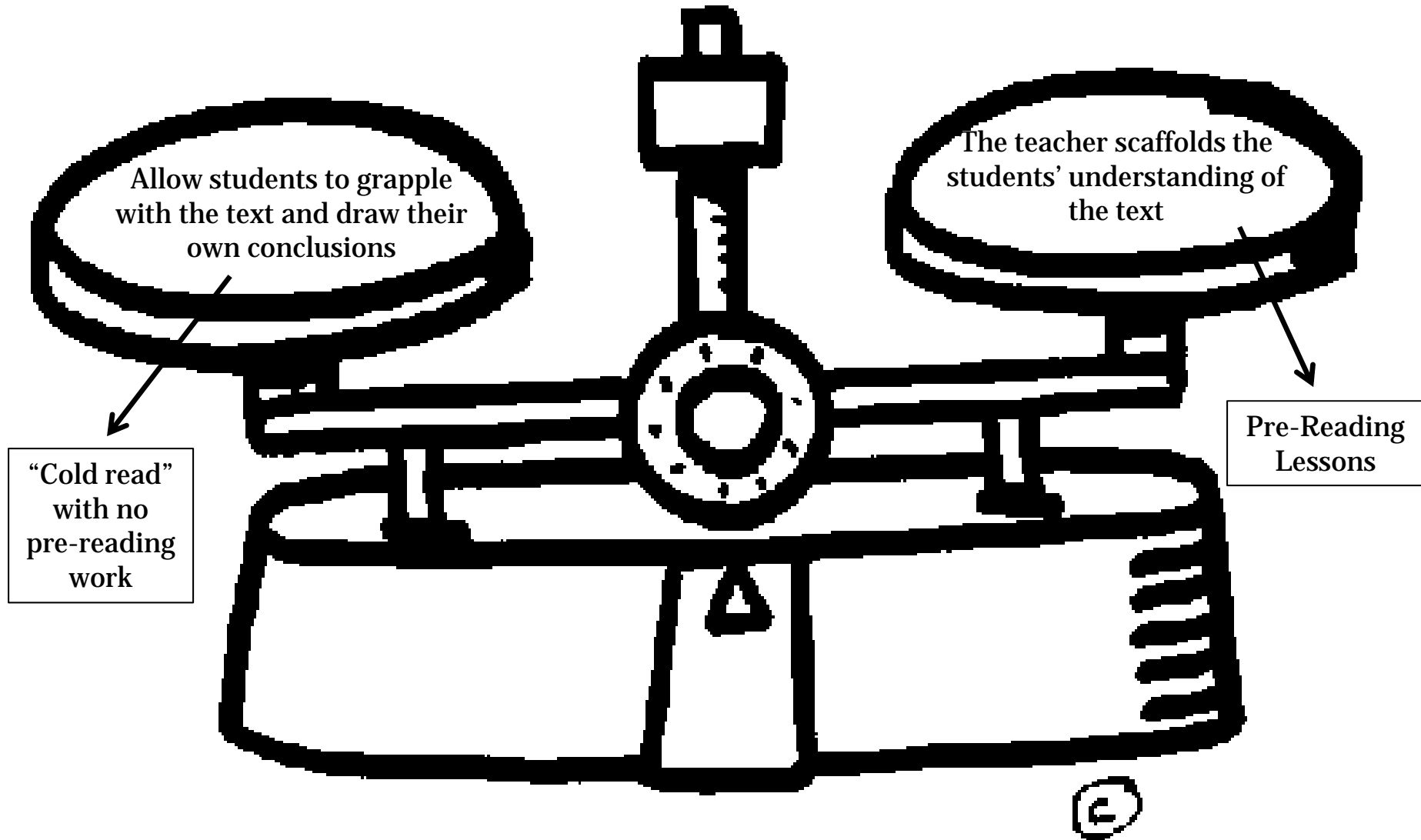
- Encourages students to access background knowledge that is pertinent
- Encourages a preview of text features to get a sense of the structure and content of a reading selection
- Provides context for possibly unknown topics or themes
- Builds students' confidence to delve into complex text
- Engages and interests students

The Dangers of “Over-scaffolding” Prior to Reading



- Students do not have the opportunity to experience the text as the author intended
- The pre-reading activity lasts longer than the actual reading of the text
- The teacher focuses the preview on something that is not key to the text and misses the difficult, more important aspects of the text
- Students have no reason to read the text (the teacher translated the text during the preview)
- Teachers let students off the hook by making meaning for them rather than supporting them to do it on their own
- If every pre-reading lesson is carried out the same way (not adjusting lessons according to the text or students) the students will become dependent on that approach to reading and will miss out on the basic learning experience that reading provides

Finding the Right Balance





Recommended:

**Pre-Reading
Activities
Should Not
Occur Before
*Close Reading
Lessons***

Close Reading Lessons:

- require students to grapple with complex text by answering carefully planned questions that guide them to deep understandings of key ideas through multiple readings of the same passage
 - require the teacher to have a deep understanding of the text
 - require careful teacher preparation

Making Decisions Based on Reader and Task



***Should I conduct a pre-reading lesson,
and if so, to what extent?***

Consider the Reader:

- What is the discrepancy between the student's reading level and text difficulty?
- Does the student lack background knowledge about the topic?

Consider the Task (and Text):

- What particular aspect of learning is the text being used to address? (e.g., What CCSS are being addressed?)
- How much background has already been covered on this topic? (Is this text being used at the beginning or end of a unit? Are we hoping to reinforce or reteach?)

Pre-Reading Guidelines

- 1. Teachers must read the text ahead of time to determine:**
 1. the purpose of the reading lesson
 2. what their students bring to the text
 3. what pre-reading information should be provided
 4. how and when to provide pre-reading lessons to accomplish the purpose
- 2. Amount of time spent on most pre-reading lessons should be brief and brevity should be determined in proportion to the amount and duration of the reading.**
- 3. Pre-reading lessons should stimulate students' curiosity so that there is a desire to read the text.**
- 4. Pre-reading lessons should not reveal information that students could acquire simply by reading the text.**
- 5. Not all pre-reading lessons have to take place before reading. There is a possibility of stopping along the way during the reading to look forward. Thus "pre-reading" could take place after a considerable amount of reading has already been accomplished.**
- 6. Pre-reading lessons can focus on words and concepts that students are not likely to know or be able to determine from context and are needed for understanding the text.**

Re-Examining How We Should Approach Reading Instruction



- To enhance background on a specific topic, ask students to read a group of surrounding pieces in conjunction with a central text in order to fill in knowledge gaps and avoid extensive pre-reading lessons.
- Provide students with the necessary tools or information so that they can wrestle with the text; the lessons should look different depending on the specific text.

Amount of Interaction Before Reading



Cold Reading No Pre-Reading Instruction

Student's first experience with the text is independent. Student is responsible for monitoring understanding and using appropriate strategies

Limited Pre-Reading Instruction

Teacher considers the text and reader to carefully plan brief pre-reading activities that support students so they may grapple with the text

Lengthy Pre-Reading Instruction

Teacher provides extensive pre-reading activities that allow students to do some thinking on their own but also rely on the teacher's provided information

Over-Scaffolded Pre-Reading Instruction

Teacher does all of the work. Students have no reason to read the text

Practical Applications

Scenario 1:

Text: *The Story of Ruby Bridges* by Robert Coles (grade 2-3 text complexity band)

Grade: 3 (last quarter of school year)

Background: Students have had varying levels of exposure to Ruby Bridges and to racial segregation. This text is the first to be used in a biography unit.

Turn and Talk: Which category of pre-reading would you choose for this specific text and class? Why did you choose that category?

Pre-Reading Category:

- No Pre-Reading
- Limited Pre-Reading
- Lengthy Pre-Reading
- Overscaffolding

Scenario 2:

Text: “The Cost Conundrum: Health Care Costs in McAllen, Texas” by Atul Gawande. (grades 11-12 text complexity band)

Course: US Government (grades 11 and 12)

Background: Students will read this text during the first week of the school year. The teacher is using this text to introduce the topic of health care issues. Students in the class will have varying levels of background knowledge.

Turn and Talk: Which category of pre-reading would you choose for this specific text and class? Why did you choose that category?

Pre-Reading Categories:

- No Pre-Reading
- Limited Pre-Reading
- Lengthy Pre-Reading
- Overscaffolding

Being Mindful of Our Own Practices

A Guide to Determine the Need for Pre-Reading

Title: _____

I have read the entire text prior to planning the lesson. ___ yes ___ no *

* If you answered no, in order to proceed, please read the text. Having a deep and familiar understanding of the text is needed to complete this guide.

Level of Difficulty:

When considering the majority of students in my class, this text is:

- ___ significantly challenging
___ slightly challenging
___ readily accessible

Which area(s) might pose a difficulty for students?

- ___ vocabulary ___ syntax ___ knowledge demands
___ levels of meaning/purpose ___ structure/organization ___ illustrations/graphics

Purpose:

Which standard(s) am I targeting with this lesson?

What particular aspect(s) of learning is the text being used to address?

Defining Student Understanding:

What are the topic(s) or concept(s) that most students lack background knowledge about and text does not provide sufficient content?

What are difficult topic(s) or concept(s) that students could use content to understand, therefore I will monitor student understanding?

Determining Pre-Reading Needs:

Based on this pre-reading analysis, does this text necessitate a pre-reading lesson?

___ No, because _____

___ Limited amount of pre-reading because _____

___ Lengthy amount of pre-reading because _____

Reflection



- How can we achieve a balance so that students do more of the cognitive work without “abandoning” them or allowing them to “break down”?
- What will you do to change the way you approach pre-reading lessons?