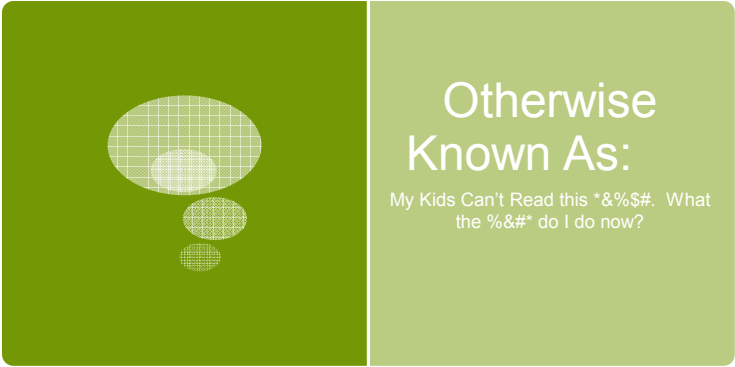


My Kids Can't Read This

A Teacher's Collaboration to Make Content Area Texts More Accessible



Otherwise Known As:

My Kids Can't Read this \*%\$#. What the %&#\* do I do now?

## Agenda



- Why listen to Jen and Cara?
- Think-Pair-Share: Difficult Texts
- Strategy Examples
- Where to go for help
- Reflection on Practical Applications
- Questions

## Our Goals for You:



- Know your own strengths.
- Know when to ask for help.
- Know what resources are available to you.
- Approach difficult text in new ways.

## Why listen to Jen and Cara?



- We've collaborated together since 1994 when we played the integral roles of scientists together in Lil' Abner at Belleville East High School.
- Besides that...we've worked together for the past 9 years in a variety of contexts.
- Thoughts from Jen:
- Thoughts from Cara:

## Think-Pair-Share



- What do you do now when you have a text that you know is too difficult for many of your students?
- Think about your own practice and share with a partner.

### I used to:



- Complain about the book to anyone who would listen.
- Not use it.
- Use it while not giving enough support and just hope for the best...

### Since working with Cara I've learned:

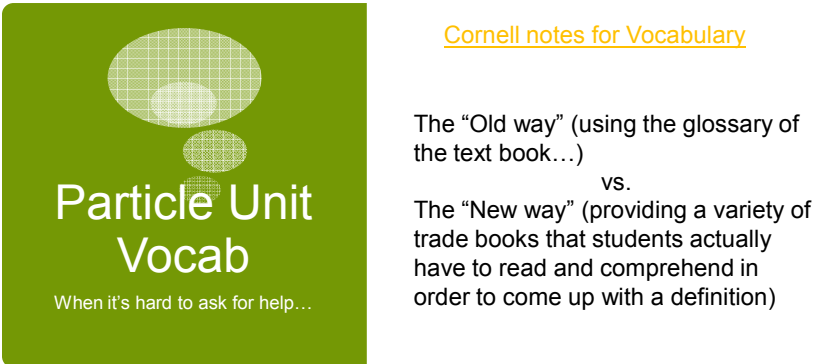


- That I should teach **THROUGH** not **AROUND** the text!
- That it's OK to ask for help!
- That teaching for **DEPTH** is a thousand times better than teaching for **BREADTH**.
- That yes, sometimes you have to work a little bit harder to make texts accessible to all readers.
- That you should never choreograph your own number in a HS musical.



So how can we make this work for you?

Some practical examples



**Particle Unit Vocab**


When it's hard to ask for help...

[Cornell notes for Vocabulary](#)

The "Old way" (using the glossary of the text book...)

vs.

The "New way" (providing a variety of trade books that students actually have to read and comprehend in order to come up with a definition)




## When the Book Gives too Much Help

Uh-Oh...are they even going to read anything besides the bold words?

If you were an 8<sup>th</sup> grade struggling reader, what would you put for the definition of basin?

- Areas of subsidence and regions with low elevation are called **basins**. Sediments eroded from mountains accumulate in basins.



## Strategies for making them ACTUALLY read the text in a vocabulary lesson.



- Work with a partner and write what you THINK is a good definition on a white board.
- Brainstorm with a partner a real world example or a way to remember the term and put it on a white board
- Show the white board to your teacher BEFORE you write it down in your notebook!

Reinforce what  
your ELA teachers  
are doing!

Highlighting, main ideas, details and summarizing!

## Scaffolding Highlighting Skills



- [The Atmosphere](#)
- [The Ozone Layer](#)
- Be transparent! Let them know what you think is worth highlighting and why.
- Let them practice in a small group and have them write it down on white boards first.
- Let them practice with a partner and write it down on white boards first.
- Give them multiple opportunities to try it on their own.
- Give them feedback!

## You want me to write a what? In Science Class?



### Author Credit/Title

**PALE**  
Title: Making safety issues (NCEEP - ON SAFETY REPORT)  
Full Name: Steve  
Date: Ken Roy, 25 / March 20 09, p.18, (811 words)

### 6/29/2012

### Full Text: COPP/BRITT 2010 National Science Teachers Association

Batteries commonly used in flashlight and other household devices produce both gas and a number of zinc-carbon compounds. The amount of gas produced is affected by the battery's design and charge rate. A dangerous level of hydrogen gas can be produced if battery types are mixed, terminals are damaged, terminals are of different ages, or batteries are stored incorrectly. The hydrogen gas can cause the battery compartment to rupture, allowing the hydrogen gas to mix with oxygen. This mixture of gas can cause a powerful explosion in the vicinity of a spark or open flame. However, when used properly, batteries are quite safe for classroom use. To reduce the risks associated with batteries, consider the following guidelines:

1. Use caution when linking dry cell batteries. Doing so increases voltage when done in series, and amperage when done in parallel.
2. Do not mix when working with rechargeable batteries. They can get very hot if they short circuit or are recharged with an incompatible charge.
3. Keep your batteries out of the sun.
4. Never mix different brands of batteries.
5. Never mix new and old batteries. The newer batteries can charge the older batteries and effect a voltage reversal with volatile results.
6. Purchase only manufacturer-recommended products and accessories. Beware of inexpensive substandard batteries that might not meet U.S. safety standards.
7. Never smeltize (e.g., crush or puncture) batteries. Hazardous chemical leakage can occur.
8. Never store batteries in equipment for a long period of time. Doing so can cause chemical leakage.
9. Never try to recharge batteries that weren't designed to be rechargeable.
10. Never use or discharge batteries when they no longer can open an equipment, remove them.
11. Never use rechargeable devices in small batteries or remove them from equipment. This can cause equipment damage, faulty damage, and personal injury.
12. Never go for batteries that are too hot. Discard batteries that are swelling or leaking, or are signs of any other and other potential safety issues.
13. Ask for help about materials and equipment to dispose of when proper.

(811) 11/29/2012 10:00:00 AM

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- Make cross-curricular connections as often as possible.
- Example: Read this, write a 3 sentence summary and give your summary an EXCELLENT title.
- Discuss the differences between the main idea and details.
- Share your "results" with ELA teachers when possible.



## Make Reading Interactive!



- [The Case of the Warming Planet](#)
  - Make students stop and process the information!
  - Feel free to insert “mini-lectures” into a reading activity.
  - Have them divide, conquer and collaborate.
  - Let them show their knowledge in creative ways.
- [Electricity Timeline](#)
  - Have them read short sections and come up with titles
  - Have them process what is easy and difficult about the text
  - Have them relate the text to what you have been doing in class
- [Sun-Earth-Moon Stations](#)
  - Have them show their knowledge through drawing
  - Have them “act-out” their knowledge
  - Have them come up with “Big Ideas”

## Be Transparent: Not all books are created equal.



- Find texts that are at different levels.
- Strategically have students read them and discuss the strengths and weaknesses of each text. (I call this Book Wars)
- This allows the reader to analyze what they need and want out of a text.
- As they read, have them process what NEW information they are learning. ([DRTA example](#) and [Relationship Guided Reading](#))

## Allow Choices: Why don't you try this?



- You can read this by yourself
- With a partner
- Or in this small group with me
  
- Strategically choose students for your group when necessary.
- Allow others to sit “near” your group to eavesdrop if needed.

## Fixing Big Fox...knowing what's appropriate based on the assigned reading



### Before Reading

- **B**old
- *I*talics
- **G**raphics

### During Reading

- **F**acts
- **O**pinions

### After Reading

- e**X**cellent Summary sentence

I like to call this one: “Why yes, I am trying to show you that you aren’t as smart as you think you are...” Otherwise known as “Read and Re-read!”



Want to really annoy your “smart kids”? Try this...

- Choose a relatively short passage and identify some key questions that students can answer.
- Have them read the text, close it and try to answer the questions without looking back. Ha! Most of them won’t be able to do it!
- Allow them to re-read it then return to the questions after closing the text again. Repeat as needed.
- KNOW YOUR STUDENTS! Watch for signs of frustration and provide scaffolding.

## First Draft Reading



- Have I given my students a focus?
- Are they willing and able to embrace confusion?
- Can my students monitor their own comprehension?
- Do my students have fix-it strategies to assist them when their comprehension begins to falter?
- Strategies
- *Gallagher, 2004*

## Second Draft Reading



- What does it say?
- What does it mean?
- What does it matter?

Humpty Dumpty

Say/Mean Chart

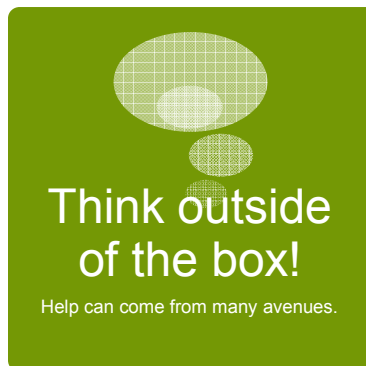
Timelines with questions and predictions

Literary Dominoes

Flip Side Chart

Positive/Negative Chart

[Explanations](#)



## Resources to Consider



- Collaborate! (literacy coach, grade level partner, ELA teachers)
- Find out what your school library has to offer: Sweet talk your librarian into stocking up on trade books related to your curriculum!
- Be Proactive: Write DonorsChoose or Splash Grants for classroom books.

## We're rooting for you!



- Ticket out the Door:
- What are some specific strategies that you can incorporate into your units that will make texts more accessible to your students?
- What do you want to try and why?

