

Less COLD Reading!

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Digging Deep into Science Literacy

Brainstorm a minimum of 10 words you associate with the word “genes”.

Combine your words with a three others
and sort your words into categories.

Label your categories.

Reflection

Turn to a partner and discuss:

A typical pre-reading lesson in your classroom:

- Planning involved
- Duration
- Purpose
- Effectiveness

What Counts as Pre-Reading?

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

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

The Dangers of Over-Scaffolding

The pre-reading activity may last longer than the actual reading of the text.

The teacher focuses on something that is not key to the text and misses the difficult, more important aspects.

Students have no reason to read the text.

Teachers make meaning for the students.

If every pre-reading activity is identical, the students become dependent on that approach and miss out on the basic learning experience that reading provides.

Finding the Right Balance

Cold
Reading



Over-
Scaffolded
Reading

Making Decisions

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 addressing?
- How much background has already been covered on this topic?

Pre-Reading Guidelines

Teachers must read the text ahead of time.

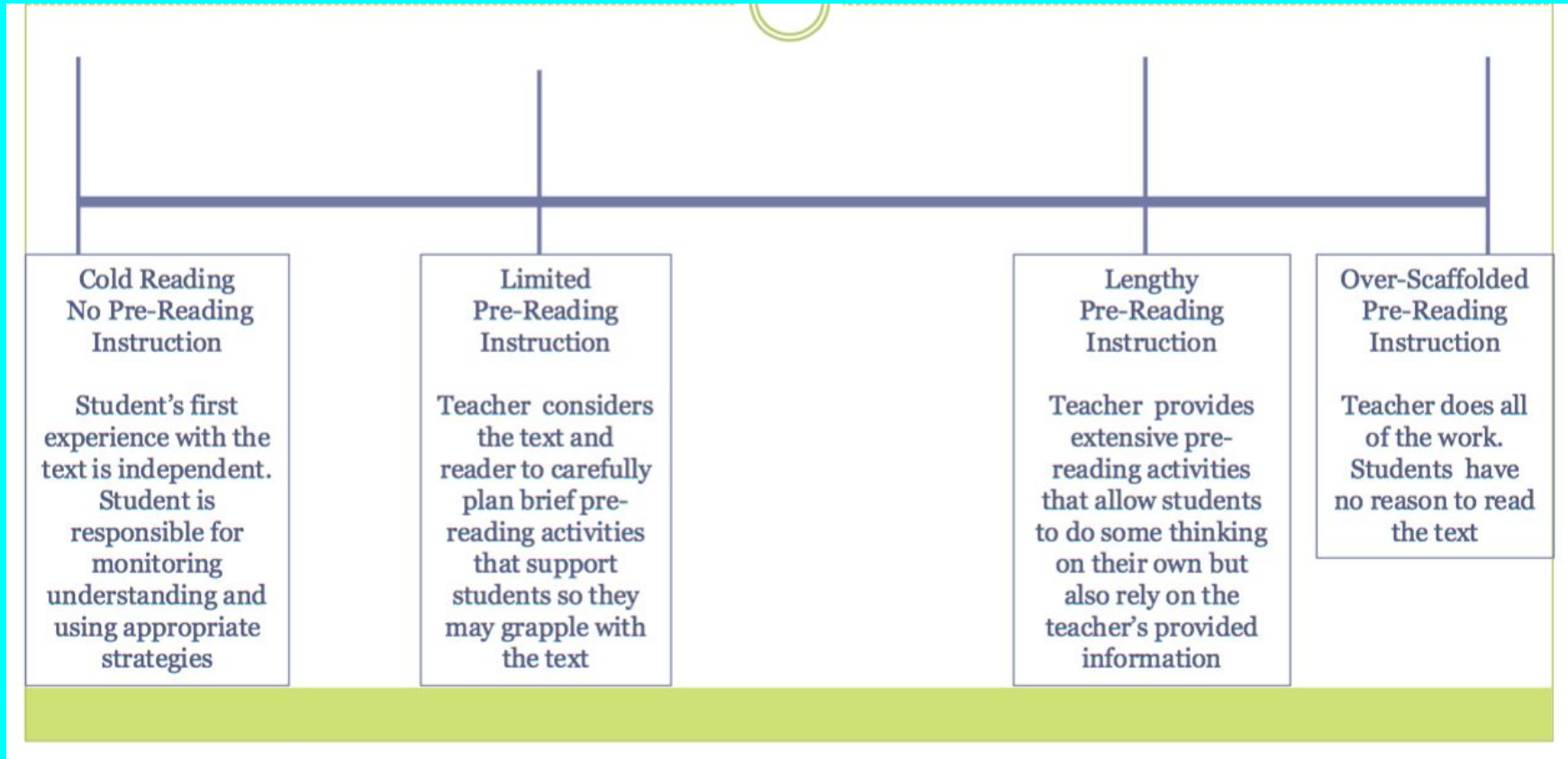
Amount of time spent on pre-reading activity should be brief.

Pre-reading activity should stimulate curiosity.

Pre-reading activity should not reveal information that the students should acquire on their own.

Pre-reading activities should focus on words and concepts the students are not likely to know or be able to determine from context.

Amount of Interaction Before Reading



Practical Application/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 Categories:**
 - No Pre-Reading
 - Limited Pre-Reading
 - Lengthy Pre-Reading
 - Over-Scaffolding

Practical Application/Scenario 2

- **Text:** “The Cost Conundrum: Healthcare 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
 - Over-Scaffolding

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

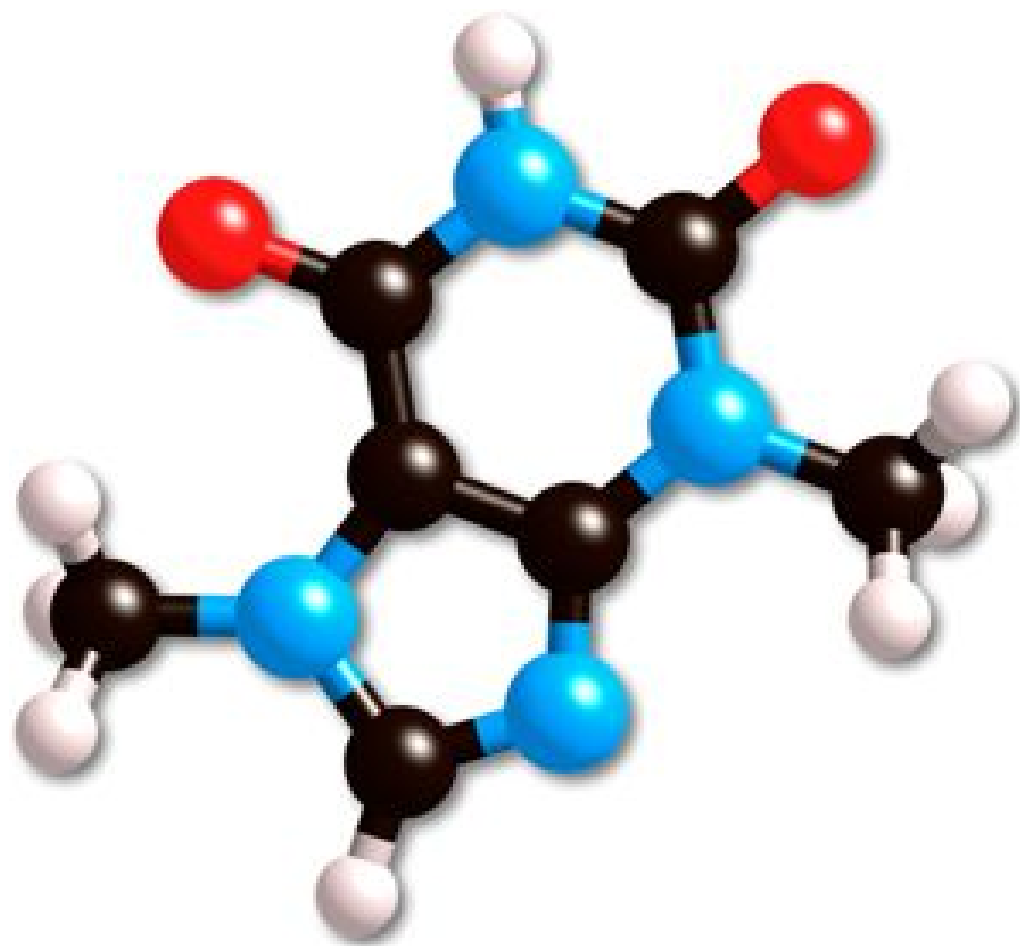
____ levels of meaning/purpose

____ structure/organization

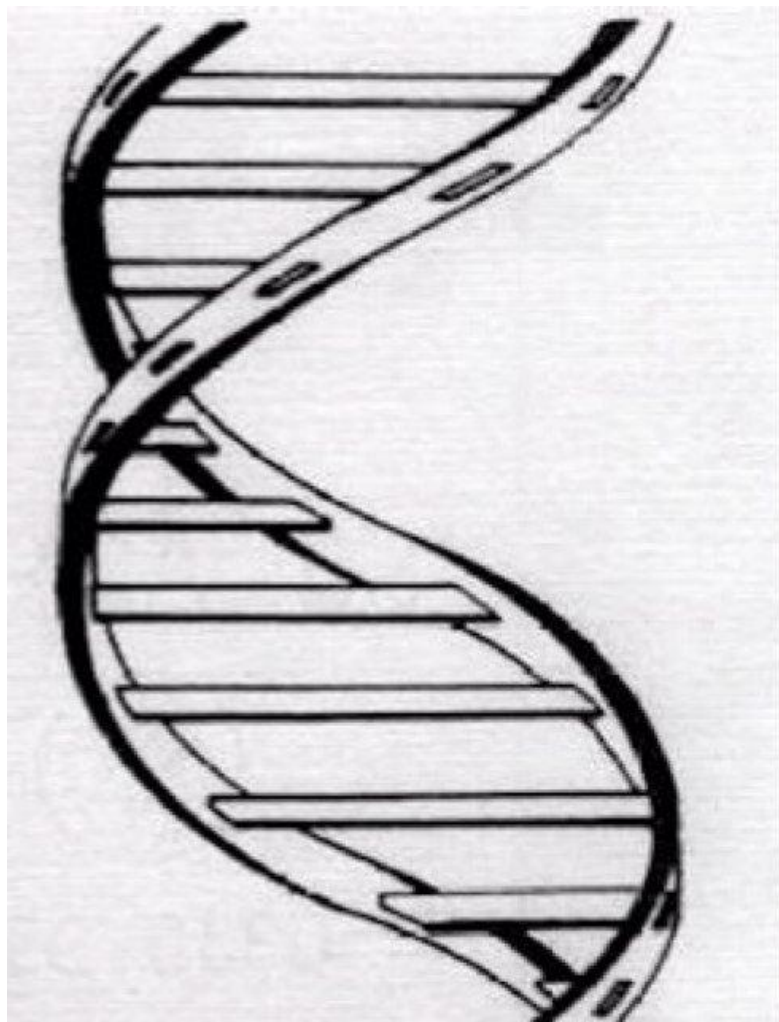
____ illustrations/graphics

Purpose:

Introducing the Text







Picture Questioning

The teacher shows a set of pictures that are found in the material to be learned or a set of pictures that relate to the material to be learned. When the teacher flashes each picture, students write a question that they have about the picture.

Setting a Purpose for Reading

Bold Print Guess

The teacher asks students to select a set number of bold print section headers or words found in the material. For each bold print word or section that the students find, the students write a one sentence prediction of what they think will be discussed in that section or with the term.

Exploring Prior Knowledge

List Group Label

List: Determine a word or phrase that connects to your reading or unit of study that students will have some familiarity with already. Ask students to brainstorm a minimum of 10 words they associate with the word.

Group: Put students in pairs or groups and ask them to combine their individual lists. While they do this, they should create categories for similar words on everyone's lists and group their words into these categories.

Label: Students should determine an appropriate label for each group they have created.

The Hershey-Chase Experiment

Choose two words that go together.

skeptical

gene

bacteria

bacteriophage

cultures

virus

cell

radioactive

isotope

protein

DNA

Possible Sentences

1. List 8 to 10 important vocabulary from the text.
2. Asks students to select a pair of words from the list and write a sentence that might appear in the text.
3. Pick several students to write their sentences on the board.
4. Encourage discussion about these sentences.
5. Have the students read the text to determine the accuracy of their sentences.
6. Ask for additional sentences based on the information from the text.
7. Students can copy accurate sentences for further study.

Probable Passages

1. Choose 8 to 15 keywords from the text students will read.
2. Determine categories into which students should sort the words.
3. Tell students that the Unknown Words category is only for terms the group has no idea about – if they have a sense that a word should go in a certain category, they should place it there.
4. Also, determine beforehand if you want students to use all of the words in their gist statement, or only a certain portion. Assure them that if their gist statement doesn't match the reading, or if they categorize words incorrectly, that is okay. The point is to make categorizations and predictions prior to reading, and then to use the reading process to check their thinking against the text.
5. Remind students to complete the “To Discover” section at the end, noting specific questions that have arisen as a result of identifying unknown words or considering the gist statement.

Contextualizing the Text

Go Find

The teacher assigns students to find an Internet document that includes information about an upcoming learning experience or topic. The teacher requires that the document includes certain specific pieces so that students cannot simply choose the first choice on the search. The teacher may require pictures, charts, graphs or some particular piece of information within the document that the students are supposed to find for the assignment. The objective is that students go out on their own and find information concerning a topic or concept to be learned.

Previewing for Structure and Content

Find It

Students are given a list of vocabulary words or specific information that will be part of the learning experience. The words or list are placed on the left column of a two column note format. The students are then told to go find the page in a book where the word or information is found. The page number must be listed under the word or topic found in the left column. In the right column the student makes a guess of what the word means or how the information relates to the topic being studied.

Quick Look

The students are given a set amount of time and then are told to look at each page that they will read. The students are reminded not to read, but to *look at* the pages. When finished, the teacher tells students to close all material so they cannot see it. The teacher then asks students to give quick “gut responses” to what they saw. The teacher lists the responses on a board or paper in front of the class.

Providing “Tips” Before Reading

Look for Unknown Words

The teacher tells students to look at the pages and to write down any word that they do not know. The teacher gives students a brief amount of time because the intent is that students “look for” words and not read. The teacher then asks students to list words that they found. All words are placed on the board. The teacher tells students the meaning of some words. In the case of other words, the teacher tells students that there are ways to find the meaning as they read if they use context clues.

Reflection

What will you do to change the way you approach pre-reading?

How will you determine if a pre-reading activity is necessary?