

Hello Parents...

As time continues to tick and we move forward with curriculum in 5th grade, I like to keep you aware of our discussions, learning adventures and topics that are being covered in the classroom. In our classroom work, I have been noticing that some students are still showing signs of comprehension difficulty. Some of the obstacles to reading comprehension that I have noticed are:

- confusion about the meaning of words and sentences
- difficulty connecting ideas in a passage
- omission of, or glossing over, inability to locate details to answer comprehension questions
- difficulty recognizing the difference between significant information and minor details
- lack of concentration during reading

As a result, We have been working on informational and literary text structure

We will continue our weekly Time For Kids Routine after I have introduced and practiced how to respond to **text dependent questions in the literary text that we have been reading ...Esperanza Rising.*

Students will be practicing answering comprehension questions in class **and for homework related to Esperanza Rising and other passages by using a graphic organizer called: **RACCESS** . This graphic organizer is in alignment with what the 6th grade teachers are using in reading. It is a graphic organizer that will guide them to go back to the text to either **paraphrase** or use a **direct quote** to support the "claim" or answer that they generated in their response. **A copy of the graphic organizer is included in this packet.** I will be giving them the opportunity to practice using both pencil/paper and online experiences.*

Three BIG Reasons Text Structure is Important

What exactly is text structure? **Simply put, text structure is the way in which the author has organized the information in the text...Text organization**

1. **Comprehension.** It gives readers a specific purpose for reading. Different kinds of texts are organized differently because they are to be read differently. We don't read a letter the same way we read an instruction manual. Our purpose for reading directly affects our comprehension. The text structure is a signal to our brain to read the text in a certain way.
2. **Comprehension.** It helps the reader understand what is important in the text. Authors usually organize their text so that readers can clearly see what is important or isn't important. (With non-fiction, they also use text features to do this.)
3. **Comprehension** (notice a theme?). Knowing the text structure helps readers to comprehend, looking for important topics and ideas so that they can retell and summarize the text. Once a student understands what the overall text structure is, he is better able to retell the story or summarize the text because he uses the structure of the text to guide his retelling. For example, a good retelling of a story includes the events in sequence; starting with the introduction, moving on towards the climax, and finishing with the resolution. When summarizing a non-fiction text that compares and contrasts whales and sharks, we want young readers to summarize the text by using a compare/contrast kind of structure.

Fiction Text Structure (The Structure of a Story -Esperanza Rising)

1. **Beginning**→ Introduction of the characters, setting and the main problem
 2. **Middle**→ There is a rise in action as the main character tries to solve the problem, more problems and obstacles may be introduced as well. The climax takes place as the character faces the problem head-on and makes his decision.
 3. **End**→ There is a fall in action, as the problem is solved. "Good guys" usually win and bad guys don't.
2. As we are reading **ESPERANZA RISING**, we will be able to identify the **FICTION STORY ELEMENTS** that include:
- Characters: main characters & supporting characters
 - Setting: when and where did the story take place
 - Problem or Conflict: usually introduced early on; can be external or internal
 - Plot: the rise and fall of action
 - Solution or Resolution: how the problem or conflict is solved
 - Point of View: 1st person (main character telling story; use of "I" and "me") or 3rd person (narrator telling story; use of "he/she", "him/her")
 - Theme: More than the topic of the story, the "message" the author is trying to send through the use of the story

Non-Fiction Text Structure (ex. Time For Kids)

I introduced when we started our TIME FOR KIDS reading routine. We examined each of the 4 text structures listed and had examples to show.

Four Examples of Non-fiction Text Structure

1. **Sequence or Time Order**– When the text is written in a chronological order or special sequence. When teaching to retell fiction, we often tell kids to retell the story in order. Sequence or Time Order structure requires the same. Some examples include a recipe book, directions to playing a game, an autobiography or biography.
2. **Compare and Contrast**– A text that compares and contrasts two subjects, such as alligators and crocodiles.
3. **Cause & Effect***– A text that is based off a cause and effect scenario, such as listing the causes and effects of endangered animals or hurricanes.
4. **Problem & Solution***– Problem and solution should be somewhat familiar to readers who have studied fiction texts based on a problem and solution text structure- although problem and solution text structures with non-fiction can be a little less obvious.

Text Features within Non-Fiction

In addition, we will be exploring non-fiction text and its **text features (things like charts, photographs, captions, maps, etc.)**. Because authors use these visual aids to portray what is important, I want the students to see how they play into the organization of the text. Many times, kids skip right over these features, so I want to zero in on them for a bit.

WORK HABITS

Another area students can be focusing on is...**polishing up their work habits**. We are currently at the 5 week marking period and have another five weeks to go before the 3rd quarter comes to a close.

Here are some TIPS to share with your child that relate to the *Strive for Five* expectations I have in my classroom!

Getting Organized & Good Work Habits

Students must begin to develop good work habits including preparing for schoolwork, organizing time and effort, and developing effective study skills. As children continue into middle school and high school their success depends, to a large degree, on refining and sustaining these work habits. Time management, organizational skills, and efficient study skills become especially important by this stage.

Students who are able to develop and maintain good work habits are in a position to succeed – to learn what needs to be learned, and to become confident students. As children continue into middle school and high school their success depends, to a large degree, on **refining and sustaining these work habits. Time management, organizational skills, and efficient study skills become especially important** by this stage.

Getting started on assignments in school and at home requires students to engage their attentional abilities. Students must be alert to the task at hand, possibly shifting focus to a new activity, and have the mental effort necessary to initiate the task.

Question: Is your child able to get started on homework assignments, reports, or projects on his own?

Problem: Student doesn't know how to get started on homework assignments, reports, or projects

Possible Solution: students who have a strong sense of "step-wisdom" – knowing how tasks or activities can be broken down into a series of steps, will be able to determine the first step needed to get started on an assignment.

Question: Does your child take an appropriate amount of time to complete the task at hand, such as doing a homework assignment or studying for a test?

Problem: Student rushes through his work, not taking the time necessary for a thorough job. Student takes an excessive amount of time to complete his work.

Possible Solution: Help students understand the relationship between how long they should maintain focus, and how much time will be required to do a task well. For example, teach students to analyze a task or assignment in advance, and to estimate the time needed to complete it.

Question: Is your child able to meet deadlines related to schoolwork and to adhere to schedules that have been set?

Problem: Student has difficulty making deadlines, e.g. getting assignments in on time. Student has trouble following a schedule, e.g. remembering what to do for school or when to do it

Possible Solution: Talk with students about procrastination. Encourage them to think about why they or others may procrastinate. Do they fail to manage time wisely, are they uncertain of priorities, goals and objectives, or perhaps, are they overwhelmed by the size or complexity of tasks? Make a checklist. Create a visual calendar.

Question: Is your child able to sustain his level of effort throughout a task until the assignment is completed, such as when doing a homework assignment or a classroom activity?

Problem: Student gives up easily, or shuts down before the homework or schoolwork is completed.

Possible Solution: Help students learn to temporarily "park" ideas that are bothersome or distracting, so they can focus on the activity or assignment at hand. For example, suggest that students set aside a specific time each day to deal with such problems or concerns. Then, as they work, have students keep a pad of paper nearby, for jotting down distracting thoughts and ideas. This helps students know that their thoughts won't be forgotten, and allows them to return their focus to the immediate activity.

Attached to this packet, there are book orders. If you wish to order, the deadline is Friday March 20, 2020.

Thank you for your time and attention. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact me.

Mrs. Cichocki