

I too am beginning a focus on the reading strategy of questioning and reading for answers. This will include a look at literal versus inferential questions through the use of Blooms taxonomy though the students will refer to these as "thin or thick questions". I send out monthly newsletter and thought that portion of it might be of interest to ya'll! By the way - I teach a Grade 4/5 split in British Columbia!

"Good Readers Ask Questions" blackline is how I am introducing the "questioning" strategy this year. First I will ask my students if they remember the story of "The Three Little Pigs" - we will read it if necessary! Then she will ask each student to write down at least 3 questions that a teacher might ask to check if the students read and understood the book. Next students will share their questions with their learning partners and discuss similarities/differences... Next we will discuss how there are different levels of questions and she will introduce the category of Knowledge and ask students who believe that they have an example of a knowledge level of question to share it - we will look at similarities between all knowledge questions and answers then they will receive this handout where we will write a couple of samples. We will continue through the other categories (likely the next day...) in the same manner. Past experience tells us that we will have many Knowledge and Comprehension questions and perhaps no examples of the others, so we will have to generate examples. Once we have examples of each, we will discuss what good readers do and which kinds of questions are actually helping a teacher see if a student is a good reader or not. We will discuss how some of these types of questions are "thin" - they require literal level understanding and not much more. While others are "thick" - are the types that show connections, new ideas and inferences. We are working towards starting Book Clubs, and Book Clubs only work if readers show themselves to be independent thinkers and workers - so good readers must show their teacher that they can ask themselves questions that are "thick" as well as appropriate "thin" questions to make sure they are on track with understanding the storyline.

"Question Quilt" - After the students are familiar with the idea of "thick and thin" questions - we will use this question quilt pre, while and post reading. The first book I am going to model this with is "The Truce of the Forest Fire" by Ted Ashlee found in the Impressions Anthology "Thread the Needle". I chose this because my students should find it very easy to make connections with a short novel we read before Christmas break entitled "The Year of Fire" by Teddy Jam and I want to reiterate the importance of making connections as we introduce questioning! Pre reading I will tell them the

title and ask what kinds of questions they ask themselves - what category - we will write samples together on a chart that looks like this handout. I will try to have one example in each category... Then we will read the story - while reading I will stop and give examples of questions I am asking myself and invite my students to stop me when they have questions - we will add these to our "quilt". Finally, Post reading we will add any additional questions we have. We will repeat this process with several other short stories/picture books together with gradual release as appropriate. To assess the student's understanding the types of questions, I will cut out strips of 6 different colours of paper - then ask students to write a knowledge question of the yellow one, comprehension on the orange, application on the green and so on - then when we put the questions up on our chart we should see a colour block quilt. When my students are ready to use this independently with their Book Club choice of book, each student will be expected to complete a quilt once a week and then answer 3 thin and 1 thick question of their choice from their quilt. I think there are too many squares on the sample that I am posting, therefore, will probably make it so there are 4 squares under each of the first three columns and only 2 squares under the final 3. They will be able to work with the other members of their Book Club to generate questions - but may not work together to answer them! I will provide a modified QAR (Question Answer Response) for the answers. On the modified form I will provide a column for indicating whether the question is thin or thick. You can find a sample of a QAR on both CDs as well as on our Language Arts samples page at <http://time4teachers.com/Samples/LanguageArts.htm> E-mail me in a couple of weeks if you would like to see the final one I come up with!

"Book Club Contract" - This contract will be completed and signed by all people noted. I find setting the guidelines out clearly for students and parents helps to alleviate any questions that may arise later.

"Book Club Guide Cue Card" - This cue card is glued into our Book Club duotang and is referred to at the prior to every Book Club meeting.

"Thinking Spot" - During Book Clubs students use these to jot down notes that they wish to discuss with the members of their book club. They may write down connections, predictions, questions, feelings, word selection by the author... the expectation is that every member of the book club will have 3 items to discuss with their group each week.

"Thick and Thin Projects" - During Book Clubs I will hand this out for students to select a project to complete to demonstrate their comprehension

of the book. Students will be required to complete 1 project per book and may not complete the same project twice. Each student will be expected to complete at least 3 different books during Book Club this term.

"Book Club Meeting - Self Evaluation" - At the conclusion of each Book Club meeting the group will complete a group evaluation, then each individual will complete this self-evaluation form. There is also a similar form for the group and group leader to complete.

All of this month's samples can be found at
<http://time4teachers.com/ThisMonthPage.htm>

I hope you find this helpful/interesting...

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