



# Schema by Any Other Name

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From Debbie Miller's *Reading With Meaning*

## Schema

Thinking aloud:  
Showing Kids How

Model the process with genuine think-alouds, precise language, and thoughtful responses.

Ask children to recall the words or point out the pictures to provide the rest of the class with a point of reference.

*Thinking through the text together:* Children and the teacher sharing connections to enhance understanding and construct meaning. This type of discussion allows for real opportunities for construction meaning, reflection, and insight.



## Basic Framework

Mini-lesson 15 to 20 minutes

Large block of time to read, respond and confer, 45 to 50 minutes

Time to share, 15 to 20 minutes

The basic readers' workshop format is a framework for both strategy instruction and the gradual release of responsibility.

## Suggested books:

*The Relatives Came* by Cynthia Rylant.

*Fireflies* by Julie Brinkloe

*My Grant-Aunt Arizona* by Gloria Houston

*Koala Lou* by Mem Fox

*The Snowy Day* by Ezra Jack Keats

*Chrysanthemum* by Kevin Henkes

*Hazel's Amazing Mother* by Rosemary Wells

*Ira Sleeps Over* by Bernard Waber

*Amazing Grace* by Mary Hoffman

*Oliver Button is a Sissy* by Tomie dePaola

*I Know a Lady* by Charlotte Zolotow

*Roxaboxen* by Alice McLerran

## Mini-Lessons

Schema mini-lessons:

1. **Text-to-self connections.** Thinking about what you already know is called *using your schema*, or using your background knowledge. **Pg. 57** using *The Relatives Came* by Cynthia Rylant.
2. **Make meaningful text-to-self connections, Pg. 59** (gently redirect)
3. **Anchor Chart** using *Hazel's Amazing Mother* by Rosemary Wells. (text-to-self connections) **Pg. 60-61**
4. **Releasing responsibility: Small group work Pg. 61** using *Ira Sleeps Over* by Bernard Waber.
5. **Text-to-Text Connections** using a Venn Diagram and *Amazing Grace* by Mary Hoffman and *Oliver Button is a Sissy* by Tomie dePaola. **Pg. 63**
6. **Second text-to-text mini-lesson** using *Now One Foot, Now the Other* by Tomie dePaola and *The Two of Them* by Alikei. **Pg. 65**
7. **Text-to-World Connections Pg. 66** using *Smokey Night* by Eve Bunting.
8. **MENTAL FILES lesson Pg. 67-68** to activate, build, and revise schema. (See anchor chart on Pg. 68)

## Strategies

Eye-to-eye and knee-to-knee discussions.

“When I’m holding the book up like this, I’ll be reading. When the book is down on my lap like this, I’ll be thinking out loud.”

Be explicit and show children how.

## Anchor Charts

Make the thinking permanent and visible.

Allow connections from one strategy to another.

Help to clarify a point.

Builds on earlier learning and “holds” thinking.

Remember a specific lesson in future discussions.