Easy Reading Activities to Engage Students

Serena Chu-Mraz
2 Truths and a Lie!

1.) I am going to Spain in 5 days.

2.) I lived in Mexico for two years.

3.) I hate spicy food.
What are some problems students have with reading?

- Don’t like reading
- Read too slowly
- Limited vocabulary
- Lack of comprehension
- Lack of critical thinking
- Don’t read enough
- Don’t connect to the reading
Vicious Cycle of the Poor Reader

- low comprehension
- slow / poor reader
- less vocabulary
- frustration
- read less
Virtuous Cycle of the Good Reader

- good reader
  - enjoys reading
  - reads more
  - more vocabulary
  - higher comprehension

- good comprehension
  - good reader
  - enjoys reading
  - reads more
  - more vocabulary

Strategies to help struggling readers:

1. Connect reading to prior knowledge
2. Use graphic organizers
3. Do close readings
4. Encourage critical thinking
1. Connect Reading to Prior Knowledge

Pre-reading activities:

- KWL chart
- Give one, get one
- Mind-mapping
- Pre-reading quiz
**KWL Chart**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>W</th>
<th>L</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>What I know</td>
<td>What I want to know</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

How many of you have used a KWL chart before? Raise your hand!
### Give One – Get One

**Topic:** San Francisco

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>San Francisco has cable cars.</th>
<th>San Francisco is located in the state of California.</th>
<th>It is a peninsula.</th>
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Chinese New Year

- Chinese zodiac
  - Year of the horse
  - Dragons & tigers are important animals

- Superstitions
  - Red color is lucky

- Traditional foods
  - Lucky food:
    - Grapefruit
    - Noodles
    - fish
  - Dragon dance

Lucky food:
- Grapefruit
- Noodles
- fish
Pre-reading quiz

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Before reading</th>
<th>Chinese New Year</th>
<th>After reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Dis-agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. It is unlucky to cut your hair before Chinese new year.
2. You should clean your house before Chinese new year.
3. The panda bear is one of the animals in the Chinese zodiac.
4. Chinese people wear white during new year’s celebrations.
5. “Lucky money” is given to young people in red envelopes during Chinese new year.
2. Use Graphic Organizers

- Venn diagram
- 2-column chart
- 4-column chart
- Storyboard
- Vocabulary cards
Children should be paid to attend school.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
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Conclusion:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main ideas</th>
<th>Key vocabulary</th>
<th>Important quotation</th>
<th>Comments/questions</th>
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</table>
Using Flash Cards for vocabulary development:

Front of flash card:

pompous
**Back of vocab. flashcard:**

**Word:** pompous

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adj.</th>
<th>self-important, arrogant</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My date last night thought he was amazing, but I found him to be a <strong>pompous</strong> jerk.</td>
<td>![Sad Face]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*My date last night thought he was amazing, but I found him to be a pompous jerk.*
3. Close Reading

- Engaging with the text 3 times
- Think Aloud
- Annotation
- Reader’s Bookmark
First Read

- Students read with pencil in hand
- Circle vocabulary words
- Underline or star important points
- Use symbols to mark reading
Second Read

- Teacher reads text out loud to model fluent reading
- Students follow along with their finger or pencil
- Discuss first impressions and notes
Third Read

- Teacher models Think Aloud and annotation
- Students do Think Aloud and annotation in pairs
Think Aloud

Chinese New Year is celebrated all over the world. In China, it's a time when families take holidays and get together. They gather at each other's homes for visits and meals, and often have a special feast on New Year's Eve.

Before the new year, it is a tradition to clean house to sweep away all the bad luck from the old year. Often, at midnight on New Year's Eve, people open all the doors and windows to let the old year leave.
Think Aloud

Chinese New Year is celebrated all over the world. **In China, it's a time when families take holidays and get together.** They gather at each other's homes for visits and meals, and often have a special feast on New Year's Eve.

Before the new year, it is a tradition to clean house to sweep away all the bad luck from the old year. Often, at midnight on New Year's Eve, people open all the doors and windows to let the old year leave.

The new year is a time to start fresh.

Large meal? What do they eat?

My country also has traditions for New Year’s
### Reader’s Bookmark

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I think...
I wonder...
I notice...

This reminds me of...
This is confusing because...
I like this part because...

I think the character is feeling ____ because...
I think ______ will happen next because...

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4. Encourage critical thinking

- Ask open-ended questions
- Inner-outer circles
- Four Corners Activity
Ask open-ended questions

Questions should encourage students to think deeply about the text:

- Why did_________?
- What does __________ remind you of, and why?
- Do you admire the main character’s actions? Why or why not?
Ask follow-up questions to facilitate discussion

- What makes you say that?
- What happened in the reading that makes you say that?
- Do you agree with what _____ said? Why or why not?
Inner-Outer Circles or Conversation Line
Inner-Outer Circles or Conversation Line

Possible discussion questions:

- Which character in the book did you most identify with, and why?
- What was your favorite part of the book?
- What do you think will happen in the next chapter?
- Would you recommend this book to others? Why or why not?
There is very little racism in my country.
Four Corners Activity

- Kids should be paid to attend school.
- Animal testing should be banned.
- The government should put an additional tax on soda to fight obesity.
Four Corners Activity

- Let’s try it! What do you think?

People who litter (throw trash on the ground) should have to pay a fine.
Four Corners Activity

What are some other controversial sentences that you could use for the Four Corners activity?
Reflection

What are your thoughts, comments, and questions about today’s webinar?
Thank you!

(image: www/examiner.com)

Serena Chu-Mraz