

Getting to Know Testing Fundamentals Lessons

Rationale:

The rationale is the learning objective. The rationale states the basic understanding the students should leave the lesson learning as well as needed background information to help with the understanding.

Preparation:

Each lesson contains a list of the materials and the basic instructions you will need to give a well-presented lesson.

Teaching:

The lesson is the time for explicit whole-class instruction. The lesson has one instructional goal in mind. The substance of the lesson comes from what we know about teaching reading comprehension, from what we know about the critical skills necessary for proficient performance on tests, and from a multi-state analysis of the types of passages and questions presented to students during testing situations.

The following are the teaching parts of the lesson:

1. **Inform** students as explicitly as possible what they will be learning during the lesson, including the necessary background knowledge needed to comprehend the text they will be presented with. This information should be delivered using the language suggested in the lesson in order to maintain consistency through the lesson.
2. **Present** students with the pertinent information relating to the strategy being taught. Here is where students will be presented with the information they will need to independently practice their skills.
3. **Engage** students in the learning. Students will participate in guided practice around the strategies taught. They will engage in a variety of ways. They will be asked to either work individually, in pairs, or in small groups, and to share their learning. They will experience the thinking required to meet the demands of a test.
4. **Practice** linking the lesson to the requirements and format of an actual test. Students will be required to answer questions formatted to match testing material; they will be reading from authentic literature in almost every case.
5. **Additional Support** is provided for students who may need additional guidance in mastering the strategy introduced in the lesson.

Grade 3

Testing Fundamentals

Lesson 2: Looking for and Using Clues in Longer Passages

Rationale: When proficient readers encounter unfamiliar words or phrases, they use context clues to figure out the meanings. Sometimes the clues are spread across paragraphs or pages. Pictures are another source of information. Using all of the information available is important in determining the meanings of new words in tests as well as in everyday reading.

Preparation: Amber on the Mountain
• Transparencies or charts of the following excerpts from the book that begin: "Now Amber had seen..." p.3 of text
"That wasn't to be..." p.10 of text
"Amber had seen..." p.10 of text

Teaching:

Inform
We have been thinking about new words and how readers use context clues to figure out what those words mean. We've "read around" the new word using information from the same sentence and the same paragraph. Sometimes clues are right there, but sometimes readers have to reread pages and examine pictures to find the clues. We'll look at some examples from two books. Then you'll try a test question using what we've practiced together.

Present
Do a brief rereading of Amber on the Mountain before beginning the lesson. Then read aloud the transparency or chart that begins "Now Amber had seen..." "I'm not quite sure" means. I'm going to reread this chart to help me. Listen to my... Listen to my... Listen to my...

Tricks and Traps:
Remember that it is important to use all the information given to you. Pictures are an important source of information. It is pretty clear from this picture that this is a place without alligators and swimming pools. Both those answers have something to do with water, but can't be right if you look at this picture. Vacation might have to do with water, but vacation ditches makes no sense at all. (Add: Remember to use all the information including pictures to your Beating the Test chart.)

Reiterate and Reflect:
Today we practiced reading longer texts and searching the words and pictures for clues to new words. We took all the information we found and put them together like a puzzle to figure out what words and phrases meant.

- Do you think this strategy will help you when you read independently? How?
- What strategy did we talk about today? How can we avoid being tricked when we take a test? How will that help you on a reading test?
- How does that help you as a reader?

Extensions:
You might want to include a similar chart to the one used in this lesson as part of your students' reading response notebooks. Students need practice in synthesizing information this way. Having them use the chart over time will provide the practice needed and keep them thinking about the meanings of new words. Otherwise, young readers sometimes get into the habit of ignoring unfamiliar words and reading right through them.

Suggestions:

- If students need more practice refer to Spectacular Science.
 - "Encounter" p.13 "Wary" can be defined by contextual and picture clues.
 - "Under the Microscope" p. 16 "amoebus, protozoans" can be defined using picture clues.

Teacher Reflection:
As you plan for follow up lessons consider the following:

- Was the lesson effective?
- Which students will need small group instruction to solidify the strategy?
- What would you change if you were to teach the lesson again?
- Do you have any other resources to support this strategy?

Section 1: Finding Word Meanings in Context p.3.3

Tricks and Traps: Explains in more detail what students may encounter on an actual test and how that is related to the strategy instruction outlined in the units of study. The goal is to heighten students' test savvy.

Reiterate/Reflect: Encourages you and your students to think about the important points of the lesson and how the skills taught link directly to test taking. Students will be asked to reflect on the strategies they have learned and how this information will help with related questions on a test. This is essentially a review of what was taught and learned during the lesson.

Extension: This is the part of every lesson when the strategies taught can be tied to other parts of Reading Workshop during the days and weeks following the introduction of a strategy. Many of the ideas in the Extension, and referenced texts, can also be used for independent, guided reading and Writing Workshop.

Suggestions: Included in this section are ongoing activities (such as creating reference charts) that will help keep the learning alive and relevant as you move through the progression of lessons.

Teacher Reflection: Is when you as the instructor take time to consider the impact and effectiveness of the lesson presented.

Appendix: The appendices include the support materials and reproducibles necessary to help with the instruction.