

# NONFICTION READING STRATEGIES

## Reciprocal Teaching

Reciprocal teaching refers to an instructional activity that takes place as dialogue between teachers and students regarding segments of text. The dialogue is structured by the use of four strategies: predicting, summarizing, questioning, and clarifying. The teacher and students take turns assuming the role of teacher in leading this dialogue. The Focuscurriculum books are a perfect length to use with reciprocal strategies. All four comprehension strategies should be modeled and used with the Focuscurriculum books at each reading.

### Predicting

- Prior to reading the text, encourage students to skim through the books looking at graphics, headings, and boldfaced vocabulary in order to discuss what the text is likely to be about. Guide incorrect predictions back to the graphics, headings, or vocabulary words. It is essential to get a knowledge base correlated to upcoming content.

### Summarizing

- Summarizing text helps students learn to pull the main ideas from the paragraphs or chapters. Sometimes more than one page must be covered in the Below Level books to form a complete idea. Strategies such as “Key Words,” “Significant Point,” and “Hide and Speak” (explained in the next few pages) all help to practice summarizing.

### Questioning

- After reading a book, students practice generating questions. Questions can be based on personal inquiry, something they are curious about, or based on general knowledge recall. The activity Quiz Maker, is an easy activity that promotes questioning. Students who can construct questions are able to deconstruct questions on standardized tests. It is important for you to model questioning by thinking aloud. Instruct children to use sticky-notes in the margins and note questions as they read.

### Clarifying

- Making sense of a difficult word or passage is known as *clarifying*. Rereading, reading on, and using inferential clues all help students clarify information. To help students who are reluctant to share a personal need to clarify, it helps to ask them to clarify for a younger friend. “If a second grader read this page of the book, what might they need help in understanding?” This allows children to openly discuss, risk-free, the areas that may be misunderstood.

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## Vocabulary Wall

Use the words found in the Focuscurriculum books as word wall words. Keep them posted as the students work through the books. In addition to the words found in vocabulary boxes at the bottom of each page and in the glossary in each book, note key words for which students needed clarification as they read to add to the word wall.

## Hide and Speak

Using the Focuscurriculum books and index cards, have students read a section that is approximately the size of the index card. Cover the text with the index card and then share what that text was about without looking back at the text. This activity works best with partners matched to the same reading level. The index cards also serve as a slide for lower level or distractible readers. If index cards are not available, students can cover the text with their hand.

## Personal Reaction

Ask students to decide on a stopping point as they read a Focuscurriculum book. Instruct students to read silently to their stopping point and share a personal reaction to the text. There is no incorrect response. This is a self-to-text sharing. A personal connection to the nonfiction text increases content retention and understanding.

## Quiz Maker

This activity can be directed to the class as a whole with independent writing or partner writing. Using the Focuscurriculum books, have students read a passage or read to a decided stopping point. After reading the selected text, instruct students to work alone or with a partner to create two questions about the topic. This activity can be geared towards “stumping the teacher.” The questions can also be used for group games such as Jeopardy® or team tally games. The questions can be saved as test review, or you can select ten of the questions and generate a quiz that has been created by the students. All submitted questions must include an answer and a page number indicating where the answer can be found.