

Reading Strategy – Comprehension – OWLing!

Strategy: OWLing (**O**bserve-**W**onder-**L**ink)

Objective: To teach students a strategy to aid in reading comprehension reader response through making observations (**O**=observation), asking questions (**W**=wonder) and making connections (**L**=link).

Overview: This strategy is a comprehension strategy that embraces reader-response theory by encouraging students to respond to reading and create and share their own understandings of the text. Students make “observations” and write “I wonder...” statements in guided reading groups during pre-reading. During independent reading, the students make connection (“links”) to self, other texts, and the world. In addition, they continue to write and discuss “I wonder...” statements as they progress through the text.



Texts: Rabbit Race by Ben M. Baglio, The Secrets of Droon: The Riddle of Zorfendorf Castle by Tony Abbott, Turn on the Light, Thomas Edison! By Peter and Connie Roop, The Great Shark Escape by Jennifer Johnson, A-to-Z Mysteries: The School Skeleton, and Into the Rainforest: The Jeff Corwin Experience by Jane Hammerslough.

Grade: This strategy can be used with grades 2-5 in guided reading groups and can be used for fiction and nonfiction texts. The texts chosen above for this presentation, however, are all leveled at the 3rd grade reading level.

Sources: Guiding Reading Basics (2003) by Lori Jamison Rog, www.readinglady.com (click on “comprehension”), Mosaic of Thought (2007) by Susan Zimmerman, 7 Keys to Comprehension: How to Help Your Kids Read It and Get It! (2003) by Susan Zimmerman and Chryse Hutchins, www.enchantedlearning.com/crafts/animals/owl/

Procedures (as adapted):

Pre-Reading:

1. **O=Observations** - The teacher begins by gathering a guiding reading group of 4-6 students. The group receives one copy of the selected text and a copy of the OWL graphic organizer. The first student takes the text and the graphic organizer. He/she makes an observation based upon visual review of the text and writes it on the graphic organizer. The student shares their observation with the group and then passes the book and graphic organizer to the next person who repeats the process. Students continue to pass the book/graphic organizer until everyone has had an opportunity. Observations should be factual such as “This book is titled...” “The author of this book is...” “The main character of this story is...” “The setting of this story is...” “This book was written in {year}...” Students can make these observations by looking at the pictures, the cover, the table of contents, the back cover, etc.

Reading Strategy Presentation - Laura Weakland – Reading 310 – 6/3/08

2. *W=Wonder* – Students continue the same process as with observations, but this time as they pass the book around, they make a “I wonder...” statement and write it on the graphic organizer. The student shares their observation with the group and then passes the book and graphic organizer to the next person who repeats the process. Students continue to pass the book/graphic organizer until everyone has had an opportunity. These “I wonder...” statements are usually who/what/where/when/why/how statements of something they question about the story. At the conclusion of the process, the teacher makes a copy of the graphic organizer for each student with all of the students’ observations and “I wonder ...” statements. The teacher then models how to “link” (make connections) as they read. The teacher explains the types of connections readers make as they read: text-to-self, text-to-text and text-to-world. The students now independently read the text.

During Reading:

1. *L=Link* – Students read independently and make connections as they read. They add these connections to the L (link) section of the graphic organizer.
2. *W=Wonder* – Students continue to make “I wonder...” statements and to revisit their previous statements. Students share their connections and “I wonder...” statements in their guided reading group discussions.

Post Reading:

1. *L=Link* – At the end of the guided reading session with this text, all copies of the book are put away except for one. The students conclude their guided reading group session on this book in the same manner as they started. Students pass the book around from one to another and share a “link” they made.
2. {*optional*} Students create a paper plate craft owl to display their O=observations, W=wonders, and L=links they made with pertaining to this text. Students transfer their observations, wonders, and links from the graphic organizer to their paper plate owl. The owls can then be displayed in the classroom for other students and parents to see/read. Or as another option, students can create their owl craft in a more generalized way explaining the strategy and each element in detail (O. W. L) and how it is used to aid in comprehension. These owls could be displayed a reminder to the students of how to use the strategy for future use.

