

Chapter Glancing: Scaffolding Readers in Chapter Books



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SOION
SCHOOLS

Reading Chapter Books

- Rite of passage
- Students need help transitioning
- Students need a way to help focus their attention
- Students continually need scaffolding for the chapter books they read



Issues for Adolescent Readers

- Students may not have had adequate instruction in *how to read* the complex format of chapter books
- Students may have had comprehension strategy instruction that focused on *one strategy without practice on how to integrate them*
- Students may have had comprehension strategy instruction using *only short text* with little or no practice with transferring into longer texts



Issue 1: Instruction in HOW chapter books work

- Novels have “...layers of story action and meaning...” (Peterson & Eeds, 1990, p. 26)
 - Complicated storylines, multiple characters, changes in settings, episodes, and conflicts throughout a single text
 - Sophisticated literary techniques such as flashback, foreshadowing, and metaphor that require readers to notice and interact with the story



To be successful:

- Readers must build episodic memory as they connect key text elements to build and sustain meaning over time
- Students lacking knowledge about how to notice and read these elements, often lose desire, persistence, and stamina



Issue 2: Strategy Instruction

- Teachers understand the importance of teaching students what good readers do when they read. Pearson, Dole, Duffy, & Roehler (1992) summarized multiple strategies readers used as they constructed meaning from text
- Books and articles that describe how to help students engage in this kind of thinking (e.g. see Harvey & Goudvis, 2000; Keene & Zimmerman, 1997; Robb, 2000; Tovani, 2000; Miller, 2003; Duffy, 2004)



Focus on one strategy at a time:

- Proficient readers integrate multiple strategies while reading (Duke & Pearson, 2002; Pressley, 2000)
- Therefore, students need demonstrations that help them understand how to apply multiple strategies on chapter books



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- While this focus on one particular strategy initially offers the students support in understanding how that individual strategy functions and influences our reading, it may limit intermediate grade students' understanding and practice of what proficient readers do when they read longer texts



Issue 3: Focus on Short Text

- Demonstrations should be authentic, meaningful, and illuminate real-life problem solving/ how to handle the real life complexity of reading
- In attempts to simplify the complexity of reading, teachers often emphasize a single comprehension strategy when teaching with short text



Our Thinking

- We have noticed that the beginnings of each chapter has important information often overlooked
- We know that continued direct strategy instruction, embedded in authentic text, is crucial to adolescents' reading development
- We believe that studying the opening lines of chapters raises students awareness of this important information & simultaneously fosters strategy integration in longer text



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- Much has been written about the importance of leads in relation to teaching writing (Fletcher 1993, 1999; Murray, 1996; Ray, 1999; Zinsser, 1990)
 - We advocate looking not only at how the opening lines are written but at what the author is saying—studying the content in that first line to uncover information, both subtly and boldly embedded in the text—information that is ripe for analysis



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- Literary scholar Alfred Appel once said that “a great writer will tell you the whole story of the book in the first paragraph if you know how to listen”
 - Students need help learning how to notice and listen to these opening lines
 - Teachers, therefore, need to scaffold students as they read more challenging text and one way to do this is through Chapter Glancing



What is Chapter Glancing?

- Selecting books and looking specifically at the beginnings of chapters (seeing what is there)
- Typing the text—the first 3-5 lines, first full paragraph or wherever the first natural break occurs
- Examine for patterns with students to build momentum and to overview the chapter quickly, showing an accumulation of the entire book over time



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- Chapter Glancing scaffolds children's learning about how chapter books are structured and about the cumulative effect of layered information needed to understand text
 - Teaching children to notice how the chapters connect or how information is presented increases students' understanding



Why type them out?

- Offers a special format—lifts a portion of text out of the book for close examination
- Typed text- focuses attention, no need to look for pages
- Encourages students to think deeply about what the author has shared and they can write or draw on them



Chapter Glancing Tool:

- Using demonstrations on the opening lines or paragraphs of each chapter within a given text, teachers are able to show students how these texts work and how to employ reading strategies while also helping them integrate multiple strategies while reading longer texts



Demonstrations: Noticing and Naming

“Once we start noticing certain things, it is difficult not to notice them again.”

Peter Johnston, 2004, p. 11



Specific Open Ended Questions

- What are you noticing?
- What do you think the author is trying to share with us?
- Why do you think the author wrote / crafted it this way?



Variations & Uses:

- Always introduced as whole class series of mini-lessons with demonstrations:
 - Use in conjunction with current read aloud
 - Form of introduction to guided reading
 - Tool for reflection-looking at writer's craft
 - Does not always require typed text, over time
 - Used for independent reading response



Why We Think Chapter Glancing Works

- It slows students' reading down
- It makes it easy for students to notice “scenery” early on so they can be attuned to changes and shifts in information further in the text
- Allows students to think, ponder and get their thinking in order before beginning the larger reading journey



- Authentic context for strategy instruction and teaching for integration of multiple strategies
- Highlights a manageable bit of a longer text rather than focusing on a short text
- Teaching tool to help teachers quickly and efficiently show students how much information can be gained by carefully reading the beginning of each chapter
- Studying the architecture of a few books can help students read other books on their own

Please Share your Stories

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