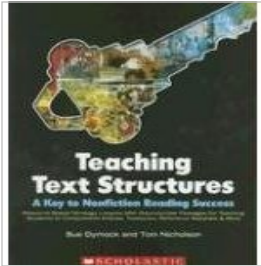


Professional Texts

Informational Text Reading and Writing



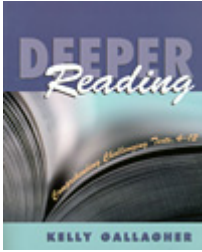
Teaching Text Structures: A Key to Nonfiction Reading Success by Sue Dymock and Tom Nicholson (New York: Scholastic, 2007)

Citing research showing that text structure awareness aids comprehension, Sue Dymock and Tom Nicholson provide resources for teaching students how to develop this awareness and effectively use it. Twenty-five reproducible, high-interest science and social studies passages, originally published for grades 4-6, illustrate common expository text types. There are multiple selections to illustrate each text structure arranged in order of increasing difficulty. Lessons for each passage include reproducible graphic organizers and detailed core teaching ideas that focus on helping students use their knowledge of text structure as a strategy for summarizing key points and seeing the "big picture."



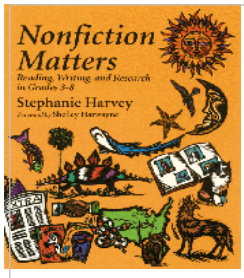
Illuminating Texts: How to Teach Students to Read the World by Jim Burke (Heinemann, Portsmouth, NH, 2001)

According to Jim Burke, "This book is about teaching students what they need to know and be able to do: read a range of texts in various ways for different purposes." Textbooks are among the multiple texts addressed by Burke. Others include the Internet, tests, literature, information, and images. After discussing the challenges of today's textbooks, which Burke calls "five pound textual labyrinths," he considers how we can better use them in the classroom. Many of the same skills required for Internet reading also apply to reading textbooks, with pages so loaded with various elements that they resemble collages. Teachers will find extensive lists of the features commonly found in textbooks and the skills necessary to negotiate the texts successfully. Along with offering research-based strategies for reading textbooks, Burke emphasizes that they should be used only as one part of active teaching and learning in the classroom. He poses twenty challenging questions for teachers to ask themselves about the textbooks and adds rich ideas for projects and conversations that will also involve students in thinking critically about them. A companion website features PDF files useful for helping learners navigate textbooks and take better notes as well as many links to additional sites referenced by Burke. (This review was originally published online in the Nov./Dec. 2006 issue of *In Perspective* magazine. *In Perspective* is available online at <http://www.ohiorc.org/adlit/InPerspective/Issue/>.)



Deeper Reading: Comprehending Challenging Texts, 4-12, by Kelly Gallagher (Portland, ME: Stenhouse Publishers, 2004)

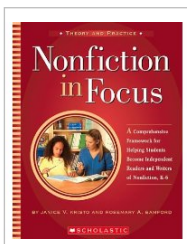
This book provides the active learning strategies that will help students read beneath the surface level. Drawing on twenty years of classroom experience teaching language arts and a solid research base, author Kelly Gallagher shows how to take students from effective "first-draft reading" to meaningful reflection. This resource is a compelling read, filled with practical and engaging strategies such as "literacy dominoes" and "shift charts." Gallagher also includes ways to apply critical thinking skills when teaching informational or "real-world texts." (This review was originally published online in the Nov./Dec. 2005 issue of *In Perspective* magazine. *In Perspective* is available online at <http://www.ohiorc.org/adlit/InPerspective/Issue/>.)



Nonfiction Matters: Reading, Writing, and Research in Grades 3-8 by Stephanie Harvey (York, ME: Stenhouse Publishers, 1998)

"Share your passion." Stephanie Harvey urges teachers. She maintains that demonstrating a deep interest in a topic models a love of learning and inquiry for students. In the first section of the book, "Conditions for Successful Inquiry," Harvey shows how to help students find their own topics and questions. She includes extensive ideas for real world resources and tools to support nonfiction inquiry.

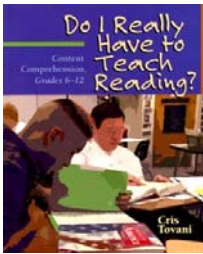
Harvey then moves on to "The Nitty Gritty." This section explains the differences between reading narrative and expository text and zeroes in on specific reading strategies for nonfiction. The ideas for teaching students to determine what's important and then synthesize and organize their thinking are especially valuable. Along with general research guidelines, there are plenty of suggestions for helping students conduct primary and secondary research. The last section of the book discusses crafting nonfiction writing with voice in a variety of genres and also offers ideas for assessing and managing inquiry projects. (A study guide for the text, prepared by the author, can be found online at <http://www.stenhouse.com/pdfs/0072guid.pdf>).



Nonfiction in Focus: A Comprehensive Framework for Helping Students Become Independent Readers and Writers of Nonfiction, K—6 by Janice Kristo and Rosemary Bamford (New York: Scholastic, 2004)

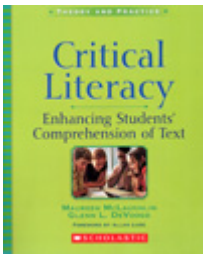
Janice Kristo and Rosemary Bamford offer a comprehensive framework for the teaching of nonfiction reading and writing. Organized by levels of scaffolding, detailed examples show how each instructional method in the framework can be used at various grade levels. Particularly useful are the extended transcripts of model lessons using teacher think alouds with

instructional read alouds. Starting with the first chapter entitled "What's All the Fuss About Nonfiction?" the entire text is brimming with clear guides for understanding how non-fiction works. There is a thorough discussion of the genre and how to create text sets and mentor sets. Helpful charts explain features for determining accuracy, organizational structures, style of writing, access features, and visual information. A wide array of before, during, and after reading and writing strategies are presented. The engaging ways to involve students in nonfiction reading, writing, and inquiry include suggestions for discovery circles and complete guidelines for writing their own nonfiction books. Appendices supply assessments and checklists for developing and evaluating nonfiction instruction and bibliographies for recommended books and magazines. Although the text was developed with grades K-6 in mind, middle school teachers will also find this text an extremely useful handbook for designing strategic, explicit informational text instruction.



***Do I Really Have to Teach Reading? Content Comprehension, Grades 6-12* by Chris Tovani (Portland, ME: Stenhouse, 2004)**

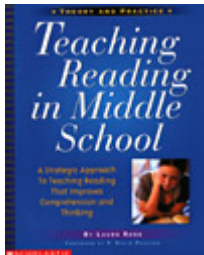
A busy author and national consultant, Chris Tovani continues to teach high school full-time. In addition to her own classes, she works daily with content-area teachers who want to help their students understand difficult texts. She finds that teachers of different content areas read their texts differently. Throughout this warm, thoughtful book, Tovani encourages teachers to trust their own voices, reassuring them that they know more about reading instruction than they think. Noting that teachers are the best readers of their own course content, Tovani shows teachers how to use that expertise by modeling their own reading processes as the basis for strategy instruction. Teachers will find specific suggestions for helping students set their own purposes, ask their own questions, mark texts thoughtfully, and hold their thinking to remember and reuse. An appendix provides twelve reproducible guides including "Comprehension Constructors" and a "Highlight and Revisit" form. Brimming with classroom vignettes, student work samples, suggestions for powerful group work, and practical ideas for assessment, this book will inspire teachers as they create proficient readers in all subject areas. (This review was originally published online in the February 2006 issue of *In Perspective* magazine. *In Perspective* is available online at <http://www.ohiorc.org/adlit/InPerspective/Issue/>.)



***Critical Literacy: Enhancing Students Comprehension of Text* by Maureen McLaughlin and Glenn L. DeVoogd (New York: Scholastic, 2004)**

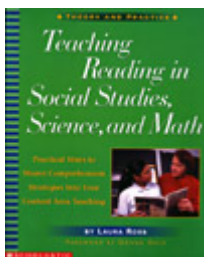
Maureen McLaughlin and Glenn DeVoogd first "demystify" critical literacy for the reader by clearly defining the term and sharing some essential theoretical underpinnings. They offer a framework and model lessons for guiding students to "comprehend with a critical edge." Although the classroom examples in the book are drawn from elementary and middle schools, high school teachers will also find it a worthwhile

resource for planning instruction that requires students to read with a critical stance. Appendices include a glossary of critical literacy terms, an annotated list of useful trade books, and a list of websites to use for additional information about critical literacy and as resources in lessons. (This review was originally published online in the Nov./Dec. 2005 issue of *In Perspective* magazine. *In Perspective* is available online at [http://www.ohiorc.org/adlit/InPerspective/Issue/.](http://www.ohiorc.org/adlit/InPerspective/Issue/))



***Teaching Reading in Middle School: A Strategic Approach to Teaching Reading That Improves Comprehension and Thinking* by Laura Robb (New York: Scholastic, 2000)**

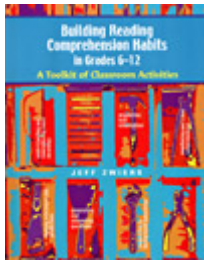
With her teacher-friendly voice, Laura Robb carefully lays a compelling research base, interspersed with classroom examples, that emphasizes three areas important for productive middle school reading programs: strategic reading; motivation and involvement; and a workshop environment. After explaining the distinction between skills and strategies, Robb advocates using an approach which helps students develop flexible reading strategies through practice with a variety of real books and reading materials. She offers detailed mini-lessons that include teacher modeling and guided practice for strategies to prepare students before reading, guide self-monitoring during reading, and support reflecting after reading. A useful list of prompts such as "What story details helped you create a mental picture?" is also supplied to help students internalize the strategies. The strategy checklists provided for students and teachers and the reading strategy interview questions can help keep the focus on the strategizing process. This wise and complete guide to teaching reading in middle school also features "how-to" chapters on assessing reading, connecting students to books, and using a reading workshop format. In his foreword, P. David Pearson says, "Robb's book goes a long way toward providing middle school teachers with a clear account of how to make research-based practice a classroom reality." Chock-full of lessons, templates, forms, bibliographies, and student work, this book truly delivers. (This review was originally published online in the April 2007 issue of *In Perspective* magazine. *In Perspective* is available online at [http://www.ohiorc.org/adlit/InPerspective/Issue/.](http://www.ohiorc.org/adlit/InPerspective/Issue/))



***Teaching Reading in Social Studies, Science, and Math: Practical Ways to Weave Comprehension Strategies into Your Content Area Teaching* by Laura Robb (New York: Scholastic, 2003)**

Laura Robb's first chapter is entitled "Rethinking Content Area Reading." Throughout her book, she guides readers on that journey, frequently inviting them to pause and reflect upon their own practices. She addresses the challenges to building a constructivist classroom where learning is an active process. Robb shows how to teach responsively by tuning in to students' strengths and weaknesses and then scaffolding instruction to support

students as they learn. She proposes a three-part learning framework and provides abundant examples of key practices to use before, during, and after learning. Each strategy lesson contains the following components: "How It Helps You," "Purpose," "Materials," "Guidelines," and, finally, a detailed "Strategy Snapshot" drawn from an actual classroom. The easily accessible format includes pictures, text boxes that highlight tips and key information, and student work samples. Although Robb's rich model lessons are drawn from grades 3-8 classrooms, high school content-area teachers will find them easily adaptable. (This review was originally published online in the February 2006 issue of *In Perspective* magazine. *In Perspective* is available online at <http://www.ohiorc.org/adlit/InPerspective/Issue/>.)



***Building Reading Comprehension Habits in Grades 6-12: A Toolkit of Classroom Activities* by Jeff Zwiers (International Reading Association, Newark, DE, 2004)**

Jeff Zwiers urges teachers to use MoMaMu (movement, manipulatives, and music) techniques to boost learning and comprehension in the prereading, during-reading, and postreading stages. He presents over eighty techniques such as "Prediction Basketball," "Sorry, I Lost My Headings," and "Summarizing Training Camp" to help students engage in active "minds-on" reading. The activities are organized around the six comprehension habits they support: (1) organizing text information by sculpting the main idea and summarizing, (2) connecting to background knowledge, (3) making inferences and predictions, (4) generating and answering questions, (5) understanding and remembering word meanings, and (6) monitoring one's own comprehension. Handy reference tables further group these activities by the reading stages and content areas for which they are best suited. Attractive reproducibles are supplied as needed. Offering much more than a kit of assorted activities, Zwiers provides theoretical and practical information on each of the reading habits. One chapter even features a "crash course on reading comprehension." Important instructional habits for teachers, such as building academic language to facilitate comprehension, are also highlighted. Appendixes include examples of multiple-meaning words and a convenient list of prefixes, suffixes, and roots.