Comprehension Strategies

Making Connections

This document is the first in a series of support materials. It contains a synthesis of material from a variety of on-line and printed sources. It has been designed to support the Northern Adelaide Region Comprehension focus 2010-2012

Debbie Draper, DECS Curriculum Consultant, Northern Adelaide
Making Connections

Comprehension is “making meaning” of texts. Texts, for the purpose of this document, include printed, visual, auditory, digital and multi-media texts.

Students find it difficult to comprehend or make meaning when they lack:

- A repertoire of comprehension strategies
- Background knowledge of the content – including the specific vocabulary
- Knowledge of the structures and features of the text
- A purpose for engaging with the text

Making Connections is a strategy that can assist in making meaning from a text. Students can make connections between:

- Text and self
- Text and text
- Text and world

Please note: the following pages provide examples and ideas that can be adapted for your classroom. The lesson plans, graphic organisers and posters are provided as support materials and are not meant to be used as one-off independent activities. It is expected that all strategies be modelled and made explicit to students before they are able to apply them independently. See “Strategies that Work” Part 1 for rationale and methodology.
Connecting personal experience to texts

What does this remind me of in my life?
What is this similar to in my life?
How is this different from my life?
Has something like this ever happened to me?
How does this relate to my life?
What were my feelings when I read this?
Have I changed my thinking as a result of reading this?
What have I learned?

Are there similarities / differences in ...
My life
My family
My friends
Holidays I have been on
Things I have seen
Feelings I have had
Experiences
A place I have been
Connecting big ideas and themes across texts

What does this remind me of in another book I’ve read?
How is this text similar to other things I’ve read?
How is this different from other books I’ve read?
Have I read about something like this before?

Are there similarities / differences in ...

Genre
Text structure
Author
Topic
Theme
Message
Plot
Character
Fact
Opinion
Information
Vocabulary
Connecting real world happenings to texts

What does this remind me of in the real world?
How is this text similar to things that happen in the real world?
How is this different from things that happen in the real world?
How did that part relate to the world around me?

Are there similarities / differences in ...
Something I have seen on TV
Radio news
A newspaper story
Historical events
Current events
Something I have studied before
Real world happenings – local and global
A conversation
Making Connections Strategy

Rationale:
Schema theory explains how our previous experiences, knowledge, emotions, and understandings affect what and how we learn (Harvey & Goudvis, 2000). Schema is the background knowledge and experience readers bring to the text. Good readers draw on prior knowledge and experience to help them understand what they are reading and are thus able to use that knowledge to make connections. Struggling readers often move directly through a text without stopping to consider whether the text makes sense based on their own background knowledge, or whether their knowledge can be used to help them understand confusing or challenging materials. By teaching students how to connect to text they are able to better understand what they are reading (Harvey & Goudvis, 2000). Accessing prior knowledge and experiences is a good starting place when teaching strategies because every student has experiences, knowledge, opinions, and emotions that they can draw upon.

Keene and Zimmerman (1997) concluded that students comprehend better when they make different kinds of connections:

- **Text-to-self**
- **Text-to-text**
- **Text-to-world**

**Text-to-self** connections are highly personal connections that a reader makes between a piece of reading material and the reader’s own experiences or life. An example of a text-to-self connection might be, “This story reminds me of a vacation we took to my grandfather’s farm.”

Sometimes when reading, readers are reminded of other things that they have read, other books by the same author, stories from a similar genre, or perhaps on the same topic. These types of connections are **text-to-text** connections. Readers gain insight during reading by thinking about how the information they are reading connects to other familiar text. “This character has the same problem that I read about in a story last year,” would be an example of a text-to-text connection.

**Text-to-world** connections are the larger connections that a reader brings to a reading situation. We all have ideas about how the world works that goes far beyond our own personal experiences. We learn about things through television, movies, magazines, and newspapers. Often it is the text-to-world connections that teachers are trying to enhance when they teach lessons in science, social studies, and literature. An example of a text-to-world connection would be when a reader says, “I saw a program on television that talked about things described in this article.”

Cris Tovani (2000) offers reasons why connecting to text helps readers:

- It helps readers understand how characters feel and the motivation behind their actions.
- It helps readers have a clearer picture in their head as they read thus making the reader more engaged.
- It keeps the reader from becoming bored while reading.
- It sets a purpose for reading and keeps the reader focused.
- Readers can see how other readers connected to the reading.
- It forces readers to become actively involved.
- It helps readers remember what they have read and ask questions about the text.

**How to Use the Strategy:**
To effectively use this strategy, teachers should spend time modeling for students how to make meaningful connections. The easiest connection to teach is **text-to-self**. Teachers should model text-to-self connections initially with selections that are relatively close to the student’s personal experiences. A key phrase that prompts text-to-self connections is, “This reminds me of....” Next, teachers should model how to make **text-to-text** connections. Sometimes when we read, we are reminded of other texts we have read. Encourage students to consider the variety of texts they have experienced which will help them understand the new selection. Finally, teachers should model how to make **text-to-world** connections. When teachers suspect that students may lack the ability to make meaningful connections, classroom instruction will be necessary to bridge the gap between reading experiences and author assumptions. Building the necessary background knowledge is a crucial means for providing text-to-world support and may be used to pre-empt reading failure. Harvey and Goudvis (2000) caution that merely making connections is not sufficient. Students may make tangential connections that can distract them from the text. Throughout instruction, students need to be challenged to analyze how their connections are contributing to their understanding of the text. Text connections should lead to text comprehension.

Below are some examples of **connecting statements** for students to use as a reference or teachers can use them as **prompts** for classroom discussion.
This part reminds me of....
I felt like...(character) when I....
If that happened to me I would....
This book reminds me of...(another text) because....
I can relate to...(part of text) because one time....
Something similar happened to me when....

Below are some examples of questions that can be used to facilitate student connections:

**Text-to-self:**
- What does this remind me of in my life?
- What is this similar to in my life?
- How is this different from my life?
- Has something like this ever happened to me?
- How does this relate to my life?
- What were my feelings when I read this?

**Text-to-text:**
- What does this remind me of in another book I’ve read?
- How is this text similar to other things I’ve read?
- How is this different from other books I’ve read?
- Have I read about something like this before?

**Text-to-world:**
- What does this remind me of in the real world?
- How is this text similar to things that happen in the real world?
- How is this different from things that happen in the real world?
- How did that part relate to the world around me?

**Ideas for Assessment:**
The Making Connections strategy will help teachers assess how students use prior knowledge to understand text. In terms of informal assessment, teachers can use the organizers to gain insights into students’ connections as they are reading. The use of this simple strategy on an ongoing basis will allow teachers to provide additional (differentiated) instruction and support to students who need additional instruction. In addition, teachers will be able to plan for further instruction. This strategy can be used with varied texts. Another option for assessing this strategy is the Major Point Interview found in *Mosaic of Thought* (Keene & Zimmerman, 1997). This assessment can be given as an interview or in written response form. The Major Point Interview assesses the student’s ability to use the strategy through a series of questions. The students’ answers are scored using a rubric.
### Making Connections
#### Text-to-Self Connections

After reading a book or piece of text, write about how the book is similar or different from your own life by using the questions in the chart.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>In the book</th>
<th>In my life</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Discuss what is happening in the book you are reading.</td>
<td>What does this remind me of in my life?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>What is this similar to in my life?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>How is this different from my life?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Example Entry

**Name:**

**Book/Text:** Alexander and the Zombie Horrors: No Good, Very Bad Day

**Author:** Fabian Wood

**In the book:**

- Discuss what is happening in the book you are reading.

  - The story is about Alexander and the bad day that he had. It started when he woke up with gum in his hair. He got benched on the way to school. The teacher liked other kids' superhero more than his. He found out he had a cavity. He got in trouble for punching his brother.

- Alexander lost his best friend. He found out he was the kids’ 3rd best friend.

- Alexander was having such a horrible day that he wanted to move to Australia. Bad days happen everywhere.

**In my life:**

- What does this remind me of in my life?
  - I sometimes have bad days like the time my grandmother forgot about picking me up from after-school.

- What is this similar to in my life?
  - My best friend betrayed me because he was friends with my enemy who tried to kick me.

- How is this different from my life?
  - My day isn’t always horrible.
# Making Connections
## Text-to-Text Connections

**Name:**
**Book/Text:**
**Author:**

After reading a book or piece of text, compare how it is similar and different to another book you have read by using the questions in the chart.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In the book</th>
<th>In another book</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discuss what is happening in the book you are reading.</td>
<td>What does this remind me of in another book I've read?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alexander's grandparents gave him and his brothers a dollar. He thought he was rich. He really wanted a walkie-talkie, so his mom told him to save his money. Alexander spent his money on gum, renting a movie, a really big comic which was almost out of his budget, and betting his brothers. In the end Alexander wasted away his money on things he didn't want.</td>
<td>How is this similar to other books I've read?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How is this different from other books I've read?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Compiled by Debbie Draper, 2010
### Making Connections

**Text-to-World Connections**

Name: 

Book/Text: 

Author: 

After reading a book or piece of text, compare how the book is similar and different to the world around you by using the questions in the chart.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In the book</th>
<th>In the world</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discuss what is happening in the book you are reading.</td>
<td>What does this remind me of in the real world?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What is this similar to things that happen in the real world?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How is this different from things that happen in the real world?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

### Making Connections

**Text-to-World Connections**

Name: 

Book/Text: Save a Boy a Gun

Author: Todd Strasser

After reading a book or piece of text, compare how the book is similar and different to the world around you by using the questions in the chart.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In the book</th>
<th>In the world</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discuss what is happening in the book you are reading.</td>
<td>What does this remind me of in the real world?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Save a Boy a Gun is the story of two boys, Brandon and Corey, who hold over 500 students and teachers hostage in the school gym. It is told from the perspectives of people who were in the gym or who knew the two boys. On each page there are facts about guns and school violence. Brandon and Corey were picked on by the jocks because they dressed differently and listened to different music. They were just different from other students. Most of the student body and teachers treated them like aliens.</td>
<td>The story reminds me of the Columbine tragedy that happened in Colorado. Brandon and Corey remind me of Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold. They held students and teachers in the school just much the same way as the book.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brandon and Corey took weapons from their parents and made some weapons of their own. They found ways to make bombs on the Internet.</td>
<td>What is this similar to things that happen in the real world?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In the book, Corey kills himself while Brandon is beaten by the other students.</td>
<td>How is this different from things that happen in the real world?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In real life, Eric and Dylan killed themselves before they could be caught.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Lesson Plans

As teachers, your goal is to move students toward new levels of independence. That's why we like the gradual release of responsibility model.

Remember...

- These are quick activities, not long drawn-out lessons.
- You can use most of them with any text you are reading, all day long — not just during reading time!
- Never ask students to do something you haven't modeled.
- Once students get the hang of these activities, you can use them for independent practice.
- Mix it up — use these with small groups, the whole class, during, partner reading...
- These are all great classroom tools; but remember, the point is the reading! Don't kill the enjoyment of reading with the exercises!

Gradual Release of Responsibility Model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gradual Release of Responsibility Model</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Demonstration</td>
<td>1. I do, you watch.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Gallagher and Pearson, 1983) (Wilhelm, 2001)

Activity 1: Code the Text

Activity: Code the Text

Purpose: To actively engage in reading and to make connections while reading.

1. Using a read aloud and think aloud, demonstrate examples of making text-self, text-text and text-world connections.
2. While reading a selected text aloud, model how to code a segment of the text that elicits a connection by using a sticky note, a code (T-S, T-T, T-W) and a short explanation of the connection. Discuss how these connections strengthen your understanding of the text.
3. Have the students work with a partner to read a short text and code the text.
4. Ask students to share their connections with the whole class. Be sure to focus on how the connections helped them understand the text.

Text - self connections occur when we make connections between personal experiences and the text.

Text - text connections occur when we make connections between other texts in relation to the text we are reading.

Text - world connections occur when we relate the text with what we already know about the world.
Activity 2: Connection Stems

Activity: Connection Stems
Purpose: To encourage reflection during reading; to provide a structure to make connections while reading.

1. After reading a text aloud, show students a sentence stem and think aloud about the process you use for completing the sentence stem. Use the text and personal experiences to explain your thinking.

2. As you read aloud, encourage the students to use the sentence stems to participate in the discussion.

3. Give students a complete set of connection stems. Have students read another short text with a partner and use the connection stems to facilitate their discussion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>That reminds me of...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I remember when...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have a connection...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An experience I have had like that...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt like that character when...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If I were that character, I would...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Activity 3: Double Entry Journal

Activity: Double Entry Journal
Purpose: To provide a structure for reading response, to make decisions about significant aspects of text, and to reflect on personal connections to the text.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Double-Entry Journal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Text</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key event, idea, word, quote, or concept:</th>
<th>Connections:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>


Text - self connections occur when we make connections between personal experiences and the text.

Text - text connections occur when we make connections between other texts in relation to the text we are reading.

Text - world connections occur when we relate the text with what we already know about the world.
Activity 4: Drawing Connections

Purpose: To use visual representation to express connections.

1. Demonstrate how to draw visual representations (pictures, lines, shapes) to communicate connections with text.

2. Read a section of text and think aloud about a connection you can make. Model creating a visual representation of your thoughts. Then think aloud as you write a sentence or paragraph explaining the connection you made.

3. Read another section of the text to the students and ask them to create visual representations of their connections to the text. Next, have them write a sentence or paragraph explaining their connection. Finally, have them share their drawings and explain their connections in small groups.

Lesson variation: Use the Connection Bridge graphic organizer for this activity. Write the text title in the left bridge flag and draw the connection in the right bridge flag.

Activity 5: Is it a Meaningful Connection?

Activity: Is it a meaningful connection?
Purpose: To distinguish between connections that are meaningful and relevant and those that are not.

1. Tell students that you will be recording their connections as you read aloud.
2. Read aloud text and record the students’ connections (text-self, text-text, and text-world connections) on chart paper.
3. Explain to students that some of the connections helped us to understand text. Explain that responses that helped us understand the text get a star.
4. Review the connections. As your students try to determine if a connection will receive a star, ask questions like these:
   - Does that help us learn more about the story?
   - Can you tell us why you think that is meaningful?
   - What can we understand from that connection?
   - How does the connection help you understand?
5. Discuss how these meaningful connections supported our understanding of the text. Remind students that when they are making connections, they should stop and ask themselves how the connection helps them understand the text.

| Text - self connections | occur when we make connections between personal experiences and the text. |
| Text - text connections | occur when we make connections between other texts and the text we are reading. |
| Text - world connections | occur when we relate the text with what we already know about the world. |

Day 1: Essential Question
What is a WOW page?

Lesson/ Activity
Explain to students what a WOW page is. A WOW page in a book is a page that gives you some kind of reaction or feeling. It can be a feeling, what you hoped would happen, or remind you of something else. You have to react to the page.

Model marking the page in Wild About Books by Judy Sierra (previously read aloud when I opened the classroom library-you can use any previous read...)

Please note: these unit utilise specific texts—it is provided as a model and can be adapted using texts that are suitable for your own students. The first unit is designed for early years and the second for primary years.

Making Connections Units
Downloaded from http://www.mandygregory.com/makingconnections_mini_lessons.htm
aloud). React to the page with the poem that the animals are writing. React how I thought it was funny and I loved the author’s play on words.

Model the again with the page in *Library Mouse* (read aloud when we started Writing Workshop) of how Sam puts the mirror in the box to show we by Daniel Kirk are all authors- I was surprised at how Sam solved his problem.

Model writing WOW and posting it in a page. Give student post its for their boxes and ask students to mark their wow pages. We will share these tomorrow.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EQ: What does connect to a book mean?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Remind students about their WOW pages from yesterday. Ask students if they found any WOW moments in their books.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tell students I found the perfect wow in the story *Lily’s Plastic Purse* by Kevin Henkes. Read aloud the story. Model the WOW page of when Lily was begging the teacher for forgiveness. Make a personal connection about how hard that must have been for Lily.

Relate it to making up to a friend and how difficult it was to reconcile after so many years of not being friends. Define this as a text to self connection.

Connect this back to the idea of a WOW page because some WOW pages are also connections- they remind us of something in our own life.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q: What does connect to a book mean?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Review yesterday how we made a connection with a WOW page. Redefine that a connection reminds you of something and redefine. Create an anchor chart defining a connection as when a piece of text reminds you of something else. Reread the connection orally. Note how when I say it I have to talk about two things: what happened in the book (text) and what happened to me (self). I cannot just write about what happened to me. Model how to then write the connection with the following text frame:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Text to Self:**

In the book (*title*) ____________________________________. This reminded me of when __________________.

Review *Lily’s Plastic Purse* by Kevin Henkes with a picture walk. Ask students to share any text to self connections orally. Guide them to use the format as they speak to make sure the connection is clear AND concise. If time allows choose 1-2 student connections and add them to the anchor chart.

Ask students to continue to look for WOW pages. Challenge them to look for a text to self connection.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EQ: What are text to text connections?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EQ: What are text to text connections? Review text to self connections. Ask students if they found any t2s connections when they did their WOW pages. Students can share.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Read aloud the story *Chester’s Way*. Explain to students that these two books really remind me of something. In both books the main character changes. In *Lily’s Plastic Purse*, Lily lover her teacher and then changes when the teacher hurts her feelings. This reminds me of the book *Chester’s Way* because Chester and Wilson avoided and didn’t like Lily, but changed when she saved them.

Define this as a text to self connection. Add what a text to self connection is to the anchor chart. Model adding this to the anchor chart.

Ask student to share orally t2t connections and add to chart. Expect surface connections.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EQ: What are text to text connections?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reread the connection orally. Note how when I say it I have to talk about two things: what happened in the book (text) and what happened in the other</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
books (text). I cannot just write about what happened in one book if I want someone to understand and know EXACTLY what I am talking about. Model how to then write the connection with the following text frame:

Text to Text
In the book (title) ___________________________. This reminds me of the book (title) because ______________.

Ask student to share orally t2t connections between the books and add to chart. Guide them to use the format as they speak to make sure the connection is clear AND concise. If time allows choose 1-2 student connections and add them to the anchor chart.

6  EQ: What is a connection?
Review with students the connections we have learned about. Review the text frame.

Show student the text frame worksheet. Read aloud the story Wemberly Worried by Kevin Henkes. Tell students to make some connections in their heads, but we are not going to share them aloud just yet. After reading it, dismiss students to their seats where they will write the most important connection they made to this story using the text frame worksheet. Encourage them to illustrate their connections. Then bring children back for share time to share connections.

7  EQ: Why are connections important?
EQ: What are connections?
Review the anchor chart with student’s responses from yesterday. Introduce how some connections help us understand the story better than others. As a class number the response 1- it helped me understand the story better or 2- it didn’t help us.

The whole reason we do WOW pages or connections is because it makes us understand the book better. Reading is thinking- if our WOW or connection does not help us think about the BOOK (not our friend who also has a red shirt). Usually these help us when it helps us with what we think will happen next (prediction), why the character did something (this can actually be the beginning of inference) or how a character is feeling.

8  EQ: What does compare and contrast a story mean?
Read aloud the story Owen by Henkes. Introduce (or hopefully review it as the kids should have seen it already) the Venn Diagram.

Model how to compare and contrast yourself with a book. Tell students that compare is how you are alike and contrast is how you are different. Label the Venn Diagram

Model writing at least one connection on the bottom.
9 EQ: What does compare and contrast a story mean? Read aloud the story Chrysanthemum by Henkes. Introduce (or hopefully review it as the kids should have seen it already) the Venn Diagram.

Model how to compare and contrast two books. Remind students that compare is how they are alike and contrast is how you are different. Label the Venn Diagram.

Model writing at least one connection on the bottom.

Review yesterday’s Venn diagram. Ask students what part of the chart has connections? What kind of connections would these be? They should see the middle has text to text connections. Show students how to turn this into the text frame.

Model writing at least one connection on the bottom.

9 Model writing at least one connection on the bottom.

10 EQ: What does compare and contrast a story mean? Review connections and how they help us as readers Add making connections to the CAFE menu.

Ask students to choose either one or two Kevin Henkes books. They are going to create a Venn diagram comparing the book to themselves or another Kevin Henkes book- their choice. Show students the Venn diagram sheet and have them write at least one connection on the bottom. This will be the final assessment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Essential Question</th>
<th>Lesson/ Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 1 | EQ: What is a WOW page? | First Mini Lesson/ Reading Focus Lesson: Explain to students what a WOW page is. A WOW page in a book is a page that gives you some kind of reaction or feeling. It can be a feeling, what you hoped would happen, or remind you of something else. You have to react to the page.

Model marking the page in *Rough Faced Girl* and discussing how I felt when the girl first said she could see the invisible being-, surprised but not sure if I believed her. He was after all, the Invisible Being and the two sisters had already failed.

Model the again with the page in *The Talking Eggs* by San Soucci of how I thought it was funny when the chickens were running around all colored with crazy legs, scared when the old lady took off her head and surprised with the solution in the story.

Model writing WOW and posting it in a page. Give student post its for their boxes and ask students to mark their wow pages. We will share these tomorrow.

---

| 1 | EQ: What is a WOW page? | Show students how to store their WOW pages after they have read the ENTIRE book. Open up to the next blank page in the reader’s notebook. Put the date in the top right like always. At the top left of the page write the title of the book. A piece of tape (show how to tear off a small piece) may be needed to lay across the post it lengthwise (show them how to do this) so the post it doesn’t fall out of the notebook.

Between mini lessons students will be meeting in guided reading groups or a self selected Daily Five. Students may choose from Read to Self, Read to Someone, Listen to Reading, or Working on Writing. Please see Mrs. Gregory’s Guided Reading Book binder for individual guided reading lesson plans.

wow pages. We will share these tomorrow.

---

| 2 | EQ: What does connect to a book mean? | Remind students about their WOW pages from yesterday. Ask students if they found any WOW moments in their books.

Tell students I found the perfect wow in the story *Thank You, Mr. Falkner* by Patricia Polacco. Read aloud the story. Model the WOW page of when Patricia was struggling to read. Make a personal connection about how hard it was for me in school with math.

Define this as a text to self connection.

Connect this back to the idea of a WOW page because some WOW pages are also connections- they remind us of something in our own life.

---

| 3 | Q: What does connect to a book mean? | Review yesterday how we made a connection with a WOW page. Redefine that a connection reminds you of something either in your life or even another book. Create an anchor chart defining a connection as when a piece of text reminds you of something else. Mark example connections on the anchor chart from the post it notes yesterday.

Reread the connection orally. Note how when I say it I have to talk about two things: what happened in the book (text) and what happened to me (self). I cannot just write about what happened to me.

Model how to then write the connection with the following text frame:

**Text to Self:**

In the book (*title*) _____________________________. This reminded me of when _______________.

Review *Thank You, Mr. Falkner* by Polacco with a picture walk. Ask students to share any text to self connections orally. Guide them to use the format as they speak to make sure the connection is clear AND concise. If time allows choose 1-
| EQ: | What are text to text connections? | EQ: | What are text to text connections? Review text to self connections. Ask students if they found any t2s connections when they did their WOW pages. Students can share.

Read aloud the story *Thunder Cake* by Polacco. Explain to students that these two books really remind me of something. In both books the main character changes. In Thank You, Mr. Falkner, Trisha couldn’t read and really struggled until Mr. Falkner helped her. In *Thunder Cake* the little girl was terrified of thunderstorms until her grandmother helped her.

Define this as a text to self connection. Add what a text to text connection is to the anchor chart. Model adding this to the anchor chart.

Ask student to share orally t2t connections and add to chart. Expect surface connections.

Have students be marking any connections on post it notes in their books from book boxes and then taping in reader’s notebooks when they are done.

| EQ: | What is a text to text connection? | Review with students the connections we have learned about. Review the text frame.

Show student the text frame worksheet. Read aloud the story *Chicken Sunday* by Polacco. Tell students to make some connections in their heads, but we are not going to share them aloud just yet. After reading it, dismiss students to their seats where they will write the most important connection they made to this story using the text frame worksheet. Encourage them to illustrate their connections. Then bring children back for share time to share connections.

Have students be marking any connections on post it notes in their books from book boxes and then taping in reader’s notebooks when they are done.

| EQ: | Why are connections important? | EQ: | What are connections? Review the anchor chart with student’s responses from yesterday. Introduce how some connections help us understand the story better than others. As a class number the response 1- it helped me understand the story better or 2- it didn’t help us.

The whole reason we do WOW pages or connections is because it make us...
understand the book better. Reading is thinking—if our WOW or connection does not help us think about the BOOK (not our friend who also has a red shirt). Usually these help us when it helps us with what we think will happen next (prediction), why the character did something (this can actually be the beginning of inference) or how a character is feeling.

Have students be marking any connections on post it notes in their books from book boxes and then taping in reader’s notebooks when they are done.

| 8 | EQ: What are text to world connections? | EQ: What are text to world connections? Review text to self and text to text connections. Ask students if they found any t2s connections when they did their WOW pages. Students can share.

Read aloud the story *Aunt Chip and the Triple Creek Dam Affair* by Polacco. Model a connection about adult illiteracy and the book.

Quick Facts
http://www.writeexpress.com/LearnToRead/research/literacystatistics.html

Explain to students that a text to world connection is a connection to something that is happening in the world around us. It could be something on the news like the flooding we had.

Ask student to share orally t2w connections and add to chart. Expect surface connections.

Have students be marking any connections on post it notes in their books from book boxes and then taping in reader’s notebooks when they are done.

| 8 | EQ: What are text to world connections? | Review text to world and text to text connections. Ask students if they found any t2s connections when they did their WOW pages. Students can share.

Read aloud the story *Mr. Lincoln’s Way* by Polacco. Model a connection between bullying, racism and segregation.

Remind students that a text to world connection is a connection to something that is happening in the world around us. It could be something on the news like the flooding we had.

Ask student to share orally t2w connections and add to chart. Expect surface connections.

Have students be marking any connections on post it notes in their books from book boxes and then taping in reader’s notebooks when they are done.

| 9 | EQ: How can I make connections? | Review connections and how they help us as readers. Add making connections to the CAFE menu.

Model for students how to complete the connections worksheet. Show and explain rubric. Have students choose their three best connections (must show at least two different kinds of connections) from their readers notebooks. Turn in for a grade.
These are activities that can be used when using the Making Connections reading strategy.

- **Discuss current events/news** and try to connect to novel or nonfiction text being read.

- **Pair a nonfiction text with fiction text**

- **Bookmarks** – Give students a bookmark with all three types of connections. As they are reading, have students write down their connections in the appropriate place. Use these bookmarks with fiction, nonfiction, and even science/social studies books!

- **Read aloud** – Model using the strategy by thinking out loud.

- **Vocabulary sort** – Give students a list of words from the text. Tell them to sort them into three piles: Words they absolutely know the meaning for and can make a connection to, words they think they have heard before but don’t have anything to connect them to, and words they have never heard before.

- **KWL**

- **Venn Diagrams** – Students can compare themselves to a character (Text-to-Self)
  - main characters from two different books (Text-to-Text)
  - the setting of the story to our own surroundings (Text-to-World)
  - the features of a region compared to where we live (Text-to-World in Social Studies), etc.

![Connections Bookmark]

- **Text-to-Self**
- **Text-to-Text**
- **Text-to-World**
**Connector**

Name: ________________________________

Book: ________________________________

Date: ________________________________

Assignment: pages _____ to _____

**Connector:** Your job is to connect the contents of the reading selection to current or past real world events and experiences. You will also connect the reading to other forms of literature, music, art and/or media.

**Real World Connections:** Relate current reading to real situations.

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

**Experiences:** Relate current reading to real experiences you or others have had.

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

**Literature and Media Connections:** Relate current reading to other books, movies art, television, music and other media.

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________
Making Connections & Graphic Organisers

Venn Diagram for comparing and contrasting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Direct quotation from the text</th>
<th>This reminds me of...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Double Entry Diary

Chain Links

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text to Self</th>
<th>Text to Text</th>
<th>Text to World</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This reminds me of....
Concentric Circles

KWL Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>K (What I Know)</th>
<th>W (What I Want to Know)</th>
<th>L (What I Learned)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Knew / New Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I Knew this already</th>
<th>This is New to me</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Text to Text - Narrative Connections

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Characters</th>
<th>Setting (time / place)</th>
<th>Complication/s</th>
<th>Resolution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Compiled by Debbie Draper, 2010
# Making Connections to Your Schema

During your reading, use sticky notes to mark sections in the passage where you are having connections. At the end of your reading, go back and select a few various connections to elaborate below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sticky Note</th>
<th>Book Title</th>
<th>Type of Connection</th>
<th>Explain Your Connection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>□ Text to Text</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>□ Text to Self</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>□ Text to World</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

|            |            | □ Text to Text     |                         |
|            |            | □ Text to Self     |                         |
|            |            | □ Text to World    |                         |

|            |            | □ Text to Text     |                         |
|            |            | □ Text to Self     |                         |
|            |            | □ Text to World    |                         |

|            |            | □ Text to Text     |                         |
|            |            | □ Text to Self     |                         |
|            |            | □ Text to World    |                         |

Explain how your connections help you better understand your story.
Making Connections

Children make personal connections with the text by using their schema (background knowledge). There are three main types of connections we make while reading text.

- **Text-to-Self (T-S)** refers to connections made between the text and the reader's personal experience.
- **Text-to-Text (T-T)** refers to connections made between a text being read to a text that was previously read.
- **Text-to-World (T-W)** refers to connections made between a text being read and something that occurs in the world.

It is important to activate children's schema (background knowledge) before, during, and after reading.

Check the website for the following links

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text-to-Self Sheet</th>
<th>Schema Lesson</th>
<th>Making Connections Lessons</th>
<th>Making Connections Cue Card</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Double Entry Journal</td>
<td>Making Connections Page</td>
<td>Text Connections</td>
<td>Making Connections Lesson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text-to-World Lesson 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Build a Connection

Text-to-Self Connections

• When I saw the picture of ______________________ I remembered ...
• This part is like my life because . . .
• This character reminds me of myself because . . .

Text-to-Text Connections

• This book is like ______________________ because . . .
  [title of another book]
• This character is like ______________________ in the book ______________________ because . . .
  [character]
  [title]

Text-to-World Connections

• I saw something like this when I watched/read
  _____________________________. What I know is . . .
  [newspaper, TV, movie]
• This reminds me of something that happened in the real world:
Tic-Tac-Connect

Title: 

Author: 

Choose three connection starters across or down. Write a connection you made for each one.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>My Life</th>
<th>A Book</th>
<th>Story Character</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>🎂</td>
<td>📚</td>
<td>👧🏼</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What I Know</td>
<td>Friend</td>
<td>Place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>👫</td>
<td>🗺️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Thinking</td>
<td>News</td>
<td>Family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>💭</td>
<td>📡</td>
<td>🙌</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Reading Rubric for Making Connections

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Needs Improvement</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Great!</th>
<th>Marvellous!</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Preparation</strong></td>
<td>Rarely prepared with connections to share from the assigned reading</td>
<td>Sometimes prepared with connections to share from the assigned reading</td>
<td>Usually prepared with connections to share from the assigned reading</td>
<td>Always prepared with connections to share from the assigned reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Participation &amp; Active Listening</strong></td>
<td>Rarely shares connections from the assigned reading or reactions to others’ comments about the book</td>
<td>Sometimes shares connections from the assigned reading or reactions to others’ comments about the book</td>
<td>Usually shares connections from the assigned reading or reactions to others’ comments about the book</td>
<td>Always shares connections from the assigned reading or reactions to others’ comments about the book</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Explanation of Connections</strong></td>
<td>Rarely explains how connections help to understand the text</td>
<td>Sometimes explains how connections help to understand the text</td>
<td>Usually explains how connections help to understand the text</td>
<td>Always explains how connections help to understand the text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Variety of Connections</strong></td>
<td>Rarely makes a variety of connections</td>
<td>Mostly makes one kind of connection</td>
<td>Usually makes a variety of connections</td>
<td>Always makes a variety of connections</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comments…