

## After Reading Activities

There was a time when after-reading strategies meant that literature students were assigned a three-part essay asking them to “explain why Macbeth is a tragic hero” or “argue and prove that Elizabeth Bennet in Austen’s *Pride and Prejudice* was a woman before her time.” If the after-reading activity was not a three-part essay, it was most likely a multiple-choice quiz in which students were required to answer questions that, arguably, determined what they *did not* know about a text rather than what they *did* know and understand about a text. The value of these kinds of activities is uncertain in developing a student’s reflective understanding of a text. Those days, we hope, are drifting away like a scene in the rearview mirror as we drive away from that time and place. The reading process, according to reader-response theory, unfolds in three stages: pre-reading, during reading, and after reading (Beers, 2000). As we have explained throughout this book, these three phases support students in their preparation for reading a given text. The activities that are in each of these phases guide students through their exploration of a given text and help them develop comprehension skills. The after-reading phase occurs when a student finishes reading a text. During the after-reading phase, readers think about what they knew before they read the text. Then they consider what they learned as they read the text and what personal connections may have been made. Finally, readers link this with their previous knowledge.

After-reading activities prompt students to think reflectively and read between the lines of the text. They carefully consider elements of the text to explore and consider deeper levels of meaning in the text. The after-reading activities prompt students to think about and understand a text. After-reading activities are important because they

- Assist students in extending meaning
- Provide the opportunity for students to question what they don’t understand in the text
- Connect the text to personal experience
- Provide opportunities to visualize the text
- Explore and summarize the text
- Identify key characters; main plot events; and other details, like symbols
- Develop inferences about the text
- Develop final conclusions about the text after careful reflection on what they have read
- Participate in larger discussions about the text and express their opinions about the text in a larger audience
- Identify the author’s point of view and opinions

Exhibit 4.1 shows the after-reading strategies covered in this chapter along with the skill sets addressed by each strategy.

### Exhibit 4.1 Strategies and Skill Sets

<b>During-Reading Strategy</b>	<b>Appropriate for these Learning Styles</b>	<b>Multiple Intelligences</b>
Character Biographies	Auditory	Visual/Spatial Logical/Mathematical Interpersonal
Character Questionnaire	Auditory Visual	Visual/Spatial Logical/Mathematical Verbal/Linguistic Intrapersonal
Character Book Bag	Visual Kinesthetic/Psychomotor	Visual/Spatial Logical/Mathematical Bodily/Kinesthetic Verbal/Linguistic Intrapersonal
Character Postcards	Visual Kinesthetic/Psychomotor	Visual/Spatial Verbal/Linguistic Intrapersonal
Mapping it Out	Visual Kinesthetic/Psychomotor	Visual/Spatial Logical/Mathematical Intrapersonal
Text Timeline	Visual Kinesthetic/Psychomotor	Visual/Spatial Logical/Mathematical Intrapersonal
Making Memories	Visual Kinesthetic/Psychomotor	Visual/Spatial Logical/Mathematical Intrapersonal
Movie Magic	Visual	Visual/Spatial Intrapersonal
Theme Sketches	Visual	Visual/Spatial Intrapersonal
I Saw It	Auditory Kinesthetic/Psychomotor	Bodily/Kinesthetic Interpersonal
Rapping Up the Text	Auditory Kinesthetic/Psychomotor	Musical/Rhythmic Logical/Mathematical Verbal/Linguistic

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