

Resources for All Pre-Reading Projects

Picture Books

Picture books provide students with a visual and auditory representation of the text they will be reading. Because of the simplicity of language and the superior artwork of many picture books nowadays, reading picture books with text related to the theme of canonical literature can provide students with an initial understanding of the theme of the text before starting to read the classic. Using picture books can also provide your classroom with a bridge for auditory and visual learners. As a graduate student and full-time classroom teacher, Katie thought her professors were nuts when they advocated the use of picture books in a high school classroom. She thought the students would laugh her to the curb of the street if she used picture books in her classroom. Once Katie heard the message over a half a dozen times or so, she decided that she would try it. Following is a list of picture books that Katie found helpful to use as a pre-reading strategy:

DK Books. (2000a). New York: DK Publishing.

Eyewitness Books. (2000b). New York: Children's Press (CT).

Adams, S. (2005). *The outcast who became England's queen.* Washington, D.C.: National Geographic Society.

Davidson, R. P. (2003). *All the world's a stage.* New York: Greenwillow Books.

Hopkinson, D. (2005). *Saving strawberry farm.* New York: Greenwillow Books.

Mannis, C. A. (2003). *The queen's progress.* New York: Viking Books.

Miller, W. (2001). *Rent party jazz.* New York: Lee & Low Books.

Peacock, C. A. (2004). *Pilgrim cat.* Morton Grove: Albert Whitman & Company.

Shange, N. (2004). *Ellington was not a street.* New York: Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing.

Williams, M. (1998). *Tales from Shakespeare.* Cambridge: Candlewick Press.

Anticipation Guides

Katie first used anticipation guides after her attendance at a mandatory professional development session during her first year of teaching. Reading specialists from the district where she taught explained the merits of anticipation guides. In a nutshell, anticipation guides are great pre-reading tools for the following reasons:

- They *preview* key themes and ideas that will be presented in the upcoming text.

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- They provide opportunities for students to draw on their prior knowledge and experiences, or schema.
- Students have the opportunity through anticipation guides to recognize the effects of their point of view in formulating their opinions of the text.
- Student comprehension of a selected text can be increased because of what the guides accomplish.

Katie soon discovered that anticipation guides aid students in understanding the linguistically complex text that is commonly found in the classics. Here are some tips for the creation of an anticipation guide, as well as a sample guide.

Tips

- Create statements that relate to the text that the students are about to read. These statements could be about the themes, ideas, and characters that will be presented in the text. Generally, ten statements are manageable for the students in an anticipation guide.
- The students choose either *agree* or *disagree* after each statement.
- When good readers pick up a text, they generally anticipate what the reading will be about.

However, struggling readers do not generally anticipate when they read, and the anticipation guide can help them develop this skill. Remember this as you prepare anticipation guides for your students. The statements appear in Exhibit 2.15, and a generic template is shown in Exhibit 2.16. When Katie's students used the anticipation guides, they reported to her that they had a better sense of what the text was about. They said that it was easier to understand the text because they knew what it was about before they read it. An eleventh-grade student, Van, whose first language was not English, said, "I like the anticipation guides because when I know what the story might be about, it is much easier for me to understand Shakespeare's language."

Exhibit 2.15 Anticipation Guide for Shakespeare's *Macbeth*

Sample Anticipation Guide

Anticipation Guide for Shakespeare's Macbeth

Directions: In the space before each statement, put an "X" to indicate whether you agree or disagree with the statements that follow. Be prepared to defend your response with specific details and explanation. Once you have read the text, go back and reevaluate your response to the statements.

Agree	Disagree	Statement
		1. Power generally corrupts those who possess it.
		2. Ambition is a good thing.
		3. A person's immoral choices always come back to haunt the person.
		4. Having the ambition to achieve a personal goal is honorable.
		5. Physical courage is easier to achieve than moral courage.
		6. Seeking revenge is sometimes necessary to gain justice.
		7. Evil breeds even more evil.
		8. Lying is OK sometimes.
		9. Eventually, justice always prevails.
		10. Family members generally take care of each other at difficult times.

Exhibit 2.16 Anticipation Guide Template

Name:

Period:

Anticipation Guide

Title:

Agree	Disagree	Statement
		1.
		2.
		3.
		4.
		5.
		6.
		7.
		8.
		9.
		10.

Pre-reading activities have the great potential to develop struggling readers' skills so that they can better comprehend and understand difficult text. In the next chapter, we will continue to present lessons, strategies, and ideas for students *during* the reading of the literature classics.