Evidence-Based Facilitator Guide: Improving Intermediate Literacy

Recommendation 3: Extended Discussion of Text Meaning and Interpretation

September 2020
An important insight

“Texts young adults are asked to read in postsecondary settings, including community colleges, the workplace, and the military are significantly more demanding than high school textbooks.”

(Williamson, 2008)
The literacy challenge is real
1 in 4 children in America grow up without learning how to read
Overall, 53 percent of fourth-graders read recreationally “almost every day” compared with only 20 percent of eighth-graders.

(Planty et al. (National Center for Educational Statistics), 2009)
Students who don't read proficiently by third grade are four times likelier to drop out of school

(Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2011)
A close relationship between illiteracy and crime

“Eighty-five percent of all juveniles who interface with the juvenile court system are functionally illiterate.”

(WriteExpress Corporation)
Teaching reading: If not me, then who?

“Learning to read is critical to a child’s overall well-being. If a youngster does not learn to read in a literacy-driven society, hope for a fulfilling, productive life diminishes.”

G. Reid Lyon

Former Chief of the Child Development and Behavior Branch of the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development
Why focus on improving literacy instruction?

The teacher is the most important factor in student learning. If not me, then who?
Good instruction is powerful

“Good instruction is the most powerful means of developing proficient comprehenders and preventing reading comprehension problems.”

(Snow, 2002)
Idaho Content Standards
Idaho’s four key shifts in English language arts (ELA)/literacy standards

1. Students will build knowledge and academic language through a balance of content-rich, complex nonfiction and literary texts.

2. Students will participate in reading/writing/speaking that is grounded in evidence from a variety of texts across the curriculum.

3. Students will use digital resources strategically to conduct research and create and present materials in oral and written form.

4. Students will collaborate effectively for a variety of purposes while also building independent literacy skills.
Grades 6–12 literacy in history/social studies, science, and technical subjects (examples)

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.4**
Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.10**
By the end of grade 8, read and comprehend history/social studies texts in the grades 6–8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

(National Governors Association Center for Best Practices & Council of Chief State School Officers, 2010)
Vertically aligned standards (example)

READING STANDARDS FOR LITERATURE
KEY IDEAS AND DETAILS
Standard 2

| CCRA.R.2 | Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas. |
| RI.4.2   | Determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize the text. |
| RI.5.2   | Determine two or more main ideas of a text and explain how they are supported by key details; summarize the text. |
| RI.6.2   | Determine a central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments. |
| RI.7.2   | Determine two or more central ideas in a text and analyze their development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text. |
| RI.8.2   | Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to supporting ideas; provide an objective summary of the text. |

(National Governors Association Center for Best Practices & Council of Chief State School Officers, 2010)
Skilled readers

What are some essential components of being a skilled reader?
Scarborough’s reading rope

![Diagram of Scarborough's reading rope model](image)

**Simple view of reading (SVR)**

**Word Reading**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strong</th>
<th>Poor</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adequate WR</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adequate LC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Poor WR</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adequate LC</td>
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**Language Comprehension**

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<tr>
<td>Poor WR</td>
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<tr>
<td>Poor LC</td>
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</table>

**WR x LC = C**

WR: Word recognition (phonological awareness, decoding, and encoding skills)

LC: Language Comprehension (skills related to language comprehension)

- $1 \times 1 = 1$
- $0 \times 1 = 0$
- $1 \times 0 = 0$

*(Gough & Tunmer, 1986)*
A collection of the best available evidence

The Institute of Education Sciences (IES) Practice Guide

(Kamil et al., 2008)
Five recommendations for improving literacy

1. Provide *explicit* vocabulary instruction
2. Provide *direct* and *explicit* comprehension instruction
3. Provide opportunities for *extended discussion* of text meaning and interpretation
4. Increase student *motivation and engagement* in literacy learning
5. Make available *intensive and individualized* interventions for struggling readers provided by trained specialists

(Kamil et al., 2008)
Recommendation 3: Provide opportunities for extended discussion of text and interpretation

Targets for today

» Understand how extended discussion improves comprehension
» Observe (by watching a video) how a teacher facilitates discussions and examine any implications for our own teaching practices
» Describe two or more formats that will facilitate extended discussions
» Practice a discussion protocol and apply it to current core materials
What’s working in your classroom?
What effective strategies, resources, and activities do you use to teach vocabulary?
Research demonstrates when students have extended time for engaged conversation about text, they comprehend better, and increase their autonomous comprehension and writing skills.

(Lawrence & Snow, 2011)
Effective discussions

Discussions that are particularly effective in promoting students’ comprehension of complex text are those that focus on building a deeper understanding of the author’s meaning or critically analyzing and perhaps challenging the author’s conclusions through reasoning or applying personal experiences and knowledge.

(Kamil et al., 2008, p. 21)
Why discuss?

- Content learning
- Language and literacy
- Thinking skills
- Psychological aspects
- Socio-cultural aspects
How?

▷ Prepare for discussions
▷ Ask questions
▷ Provide a task or a discussion format
▷ Develop and practice protocols
Develop a purpose
Co-design protocols and expectations with students
Setting up protocols: Creating a culture of collaboration
Video reflection

- How would you describe the classroom climate? What did you notice about how Mr. Berryman prepared students for collaboration?
- How was the purpose and focus of the discussion communicated?
- What was the role of the teacher during student collaboration? How did he monitor and support student learning?
- How did students listen and respond to each other? How did this support their learning?
- What did you find especially effective in this video that you might implement in your classroom?
Feedback on learning: Deconstructing word problems in math
Feedback on learning during student collaboration

» How did the purpose and focus of groups in each video differ?

» What was the role of the teacher in each video during student collaboration?

» How did students use collaborative discussions to deepen their understanding of the lesson concepts?

» What did you find new or interesting in these videos that you might implement in your classroom?
Dialoguing with students “in the moment”
Our turn

» Using handout 2, choose which discipline you would like to role-play.
» Practice the script with a partner.
» Debrief: As the student, how did the teacher’s questions help you learn?
» As the teacher, how did the questions connect to the DOK levels on the DOK wheel we learned about earlier?
Asking questions

LESS POWERFUL          STRONG              MORE POWERFUL

Yes/No    Which    Who    When    Where    What    How    Why    What If

Reporting to one another               Thinking with one another
Academic conversations
## Elaborate and clarify

### Conversation Skills

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Elaborate and Clarify</th>
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### Prompting

- Can you elaborate on ...?
- What do you mean by ...?
- Can you tell me more about ...?
- What makes you think that?
- Can you clarify the part about ...?
- Can you be more specific?
- How so?
- How/Why is that important?
- I'd love to hear more about ...
- How does that connect to ...?
- I wonder if ...
- How so?
- Can you unpack that for me?
- I am a little confused about the part ...

### Responding

- I think it means that ...
- In other words ...
- I believe that ...
- An analogy for this might be ...
- It is important because ...
- It's similar to when ...

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**Source:** Zwiers & Crawford, 2011
Support ideas with examples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conversation Skills</th>
<th>Prompting</th>
<th>Responding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Support Ideas with</td>
<td>Can you give an example from the text?</td>
<td>For example ...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examples (from this</td>
<td>Can you show me where it says that?</td>
<td>In the text is said that ...</td>
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<tr>
<td>text, other texts,</td>
<td>What are some examples from other texts?</td>
<td>One case showed that ...</td>
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<td>the world, and life)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>What is a real-world example?</td>
<td>An example from my life is ...</td>
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<td></td>
<td>What is an example from your life?</td>
<td>For instance, ...</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Are there any cases of that?</td>
<td>According to ...</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What is the evidence for that ...?</td>
<td>An illustration of this could be</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Like what?</td>
<td>On one occasion ...</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Why do you say that?</td>
<td>In this situation ...</td>
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<td></td>
<td>How do you justify that?</td>
<td>To demonstrate, ...</td>
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<td></td>
<td>What does that look like?</td>
<td>In fact, ...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Such as?</td>
<td>Indeed, ...</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What would illustrate that?</td>
<td>... such as ...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Why is that a good example?</td>
<td>Have you ever ...?</td>
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Source: Zwiers & Crawford, 2011
### Conversation Skills

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<tr>
<td>I'm not sure that was clear ...</td>
<td>So, you are saying that ...</td>
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<td>I can't remember all that I said.</td>
<td>Let me see if I understand you ...</td>
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<tr>
<td>How can we relate what I said to the topic/question?</td>
<td>Am I right in hearing you say that ...?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What do we know so far?</td>
<td>In a nutshell, you are arguing that ...</td>
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<tr>
<td>What is your take on what I said</td>
<td>In other words...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don't know. Did that make sense?</td>
<td>What I am hearing is ...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are you hearing</td>
<td>Essentially you think that</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>It sounds like you are saying that ...</td>
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*Source: Zwiers & Crawford, 2011*
Build on and/or challenge a partner’s idea

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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Build On and/or Challenge a Partner's Idea</td>
<td>What do you think about the idea that ...?</td>
<td>I would add that</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Can you add to this idea ...?</td>
<td>I want to expand on you point about ...</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Do you agree?</td>
<td>I want to follow up on your idea ...</td>
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<td></td>
<td>What might be other points of view?</td>
<td>(To challenge)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>What are other ideas?</td>
<td>Then again, I think that ...</td>
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<td></td>
<td>How does that connect to the idea ...?</td>
<td>Another way to look at this could be ...</td>
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<td></td>
<td>I am not sure if this is relevant, but ...</td>
<td>Yet I wonder also if ...</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How can we bring this back to the question of ...?</td>
<td>If ______, then ________</td>
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*Source: Zwiers & Crawford, 2011*
## Synthesize conversation points

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</thead>
</table>
| **Synthesize Conversation Points** | - What have we discussed so far?  
- How should we synthesize what we talked about?  
- How can we bring this all together?  
- What can we agree upon?  
- What main points can we share?  
- What was our original question?  
- What key idea can we take away? | - We can say that ...  
- The main theme/point seems to be ...  
- As a result of this conversation, we think that we should ...  
- How does this sound ...?  
- What if we ...?  
- The evidence seems to suggest that ... |

*Source: Zwiers & Crawford, 2011*
More discussion formats

» Press conference: Make a case
» Role play: Articulate a new perspective, make a case, or solve a problem
» You are the author: Articulate a new perspective
» Debate

» Interview: Articulate a new perspective or solve a problem
» Expert panel: Share expertise or experience
» Talk show/radio show: Articulate a new perspective or make a case
Reflections: Think, write, share

» What information was new? What was a good reminder?
» What implications does this information have for your classroom?
» What is one thing you would like to try with your students?
» How might you use this information when planning a lesson?
References


Annie E Casey Foundation. (2011, April 8). *Students who don’t read well in third grade are more likely to drop out or fail to finish high school* [News release]. https://www.aecf.org/blog/poverty-puts-struggling-readers-in-double-jeopardy-minorities-most-at-risk/


References (continued)


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