

# Text Lifting

## Lifting and Reasoning Through a Piece of Text

A useful instructional approach for helping students become aware of their thinking and increase their comprehension when they read is called text lifting. In this approach, the teacher distributes a like-kind piece of text to the students and places a copy on the overhead projector. The teacher shares his thinking and then guides students in sharing theirs. The teacher and the students read the text together and reason through it to better understand.

This process of co-constructing meaning allows for a greater understanding by all. The teacher and the kids practice this together so that they will be better able to do it alone. In this way, the teacher supports readers as they move toward independence. The goal is to develop thoughtful, independent readers who can think through and make sense of a piece of text when reading on their own.

The teacher:

- Gathers the class near the overhead projector.
- Places a piece of text on the overhead and hands out a copy to each student for their clipboards.
- Models his own thinking as he reads -- stopping after he has read a paragraph or section to explain his thinking, the questions he has, the confusions, the amazement -- the wide variety of responses that occur to him as he reads.
- Invites the kids to share their thinking as they read through a section and to reason through the text together as a class.
- Encourages discussion among the kids regarding an idea, question or bit of information that is suggested by a student or the teacher.
- Suggests that the kids turn to each other and talk about a point of interest or confusion.
- Invites the kids to continue with this process in pairs and small groups.
- Confers with pairs and groups to support them in this work.
- Moves around the class, listening in on kids to assess whether this process is helping them reason through the text, construct meaning and enhance understanding.

# Text Lifting: When and Why In Nonfiction Text

## To pick out factual information and respond to it

Reading nonfiction is about reading to learn. The *Facts/Question/Response* (FQR) form supports readers to read, record information and respond to the information as they read. The teacher models her thinking as she reads from the text and responds on a transparency of the FQR., sharing information she discovers along with any questions and other responses she might have. The students follow suit and share their thinking out loud, then record it on their own FQR.

## To notice when we learn something new

When readers read nonfiction, they need to be prepared to learn new information. To help them notice when they learn something new, the teacher lifts a piece of text onto the overhead and models the inner conversation she has with the text when she learns something new. She might say something like, "*I never knew that before*" or "*No kidding*" or "*No way!*" The teacher shares these possible inner voices and encourages the kids to come up with more. When they hear the voice in their head say something like that, they are likely learning something new. The teacher can mark the displayed text with an *L* for Learned and the kids can do the same on their own piece of text when they learn something new.

## To separate what is important information from an interesting detail

In well-written authentic nonfiction, important information is often embedded in rich detail. One of the hurdles of nonfiction reading is sifting what is important from what is interesting. Sometimes information is both important and interesting, but not always. Kids are frequently swept away from meaning by an interesting but less germane detail. A three-column form headed *What's Interesting/What's Important/Both* can be helpful to keep readers closer to meaning. In the text lift approach, the teacher and the kids discuss, sift and negotiate what is the most important information to remember.

## To determine what is important in the text

After practicing learning and recognizing new information, readers can better begin to determine what is most important. We look at text sections that we have marked with an *L* and ask if that is important information or merely new. We reason through the text together and show the thinking process that we go through to evaluate the relative importance of information. We mark the most important information with a \*.