

Adolescent Literacy Resources

Agenda for Learning – Structure (a)

Knowing your participants	Learning goals	Instructional strategy	Assessment for, as, and of learning
Who are the participants?	What do I want participants to learn?	How will I help them achieve our learning goals	How will I monitor their understanding?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How ready are participants to move beyond literacy strategies? How much familiarity do participants have with text organization patterns, document structures (list structures), and the different ways of thinking in different disciplines that influence the organization of text? To what extent are participants aware that surface organization of text reflects deep conceptual structures and patterns of thinking? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop conceptual understanding of “structure” Understand basic structures, e.g., list structure Demonstrate awareness of the relationship between text structure and strategy selection Demonstrate awareness of how texts in various disciplines reflect the thinking patterns and structures of that discipline 	<p>Minds On Working in groups, participants use an assortment of functionally unrelated items, e.g., tongue depressor, paper clip, penny, candy, math manipulative, to construct a “functional structure.”</p> <p>Facilitate whole-group sharing and debriefing, highlighting that the structure has parts (components) that have a function (purpose) and that are connected (in some sort of relationship).</p> <p>Analyze a short text, e.g., a news report, or a graphic organizer, e.g., Somebody Wanted-But-So, to identify components, the function of each component, and the relationship between them, e.g., four simple lists, each with a label and with context-specific details, dynamic interrelationship among the columns in that a change in one column causes a change in the other columns.</p> <p>Facilitate a discussion of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> examples of structured information in everyday life, e.g., a telephone book, a catalogue, an invoice, an application form the purposes and benefits of structure, e.g., to increase recall using a memory game in which a person has to remember 20 items—most people find ways to structure the information, e.g., through mnemonics, grouping, or connecting principles implications for learning and instruction, e.g., note-taking or reading. <p>Share learning goals.</p> <p>Action Locate a reasonably complex document, e.g., matrix or table with data in it, preferably electronic.</p>	<p>Assessment for Learning: Check for understanding and comfort level; adjust instruction and support accordingly</p>

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Who are the participants?	What do I want participants to learn?	How will I help them achieve our learning goals	How will I monitor their understanding?
		<p>Create three versions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • data/information extracted from the document; remove all markers of structure and meaning, e.g., bold-face for labels, lists • an empty template that structures the information and gives it meaning • the original document. <p>Display the extracted information and ask what it means.</p> <p>Groups make meaning by using the template to structure the data and create meaningful relationships. Show the complete document as a check for their interpretation.</p> <p>Distribute “Research on the Importance of structure” to each group and copies of the pages in <i>Think Literacy Cross-Curricular Approaches</i> on organizational patterns.</p> <p>On a group Place Mat, each member individually notes important things to know about structure and possible implications for practice.</p> <p>Groups share their thinking, synthesizing comments in a summary in the centre.</p> <p>Consolidation Debrief, having a volunteer record ideas and questions.</p> <p>For the next session, participants bring a typical text, or excerpts of text, used in the subject, in order to identify the text structures.</p>	<p>Assessment for Learning: Use participants’ questions to inform scaffolding for next session.</p>

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Agenda for Learning – Structure (b)

Knowing your participants	Learning goals	Instructional strategy	Assessment for, as, and of learning
Who are the participants?	What do I want participants to learn?	How will I help them achieve our learning goals?	How will I monitor their understanding of critical literacy?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did participants attend the previous session? • Has feedback from the previous session been addressed in instructional planning for this session? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand narrative structure • Understand list structures • Understand the structure of the TIPS 2.0 (Transforming Instructional Practice Samples) template • Demonstrate awareness of research on structure 	<p>Minds On Address issues and questions raised at the end of the previous session. Be explicit about how feedback influenced instructional planning for this session.</p> <p>Point out that both of the lessons in St. Pius X and Woodland videos focus on the structure of narrative – the structure that most adolescents have been exposed to extensively, providing an understanding of students’ exposure to story grammar/mapping/story structure taught in Language and providing a sound foundation for exploring the more varied and often less familiar expository structures.</p> <p>Referring to the structure of television programs, novels, films, etc. review key elements. Identify components stories must have, e.g., setting, characters, and plot.</p> <p>Inform participants that the guided reading groups’ seven sticky notes each correspond to one of the items in Marzano’s narrative frame.</p> <p>View the Woodland Park video with the questions for Guided Viewing in plain view:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What strategies does Debbie use to draw students’ attention to the deep structure of the stories? • How does she give students repeated practice for accountable talk and opportunities to identify structural elements? • Is Debbie focusing on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - author-determined structure (how information is structured in the text) - reader-determined criteria (based on the 	<p>Assessment for Learning: Solicit from participants what they know about narrative structure</p>

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Who are the participants?	What do I want participants to learn?	How will I help them achieve our learning goals?	How will I monitor their understanding of critical literacy?
		<p>students' perception of the class's value system), and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - teacher-determined criteria (based on students' perception of the value system in the classroom?] - Is one of these more critical than the others? <p>Draw a three-circle Venn diagram to show their relationship: one is more important than the others, all equal but separate, two are subsets of the third, all interact dynamically.</p> <p>Action Display the four graphic organizers: Plot Graph, Narrative Frame, Summarization Pyramid, and Somebody Wanted-But-So</p> <p>Debrief:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • connect the discussion to a previous discussion of graphic organizers and structure. • identify which organizers reflect the deep structure of the story and which do not, which are simple and which are more sophisticated. <p>Note which of the organizers contains lists (they all do).</p> <p>Give a mini lesson on simple, combined, intersected, and combined lists, noting the structural components, functions, and relationships.</p> <p>Brainstorm other graphic organizers based on list structure, e.g., KWL and concept maps, and which texts and writing assignments, e.g., note-taking, are based on list structure.</p> <p>Using very short selections from a variety of subjects, model how to use text structure to make meaning while reading, e.g., prose word problem from a</p>	<p>Assessment for Learning: Observe, checking for understanding and providing support, particularly with respect to the Venn diagrams, e.g., showing variations</p> <p>Assessment for Learning: Observe during brainstorming</p>

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Knowing your participants	Learning goals	Instructional strategy	Assessment for, as, and of learning
Who are the participants?	What do I want participants to learn?	How will I help them achieve our learning goals?	How will I monitor their understanding of critical literacy?
		<p>mathematics textbook, a table or figure from a science textbook, directions or instructions from a physical education class. Identify structures and patterns.</p> <p>Consolidation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate a discussion: • How does the structure of the text influence the choice of strategy to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - locate information - hold thinking during reading? • How does the structure of the text influence the choice of note-taking strategies or graphic organizers? • How can you implement or address the topic of text structure? • Which literacy and learning strategies, particularly those in the <i>Think Literacy</i> resources, address the issue of structure? • What are your next steps? <p>Participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • practise analyzing the structural aspects of texts they teach to identify the structures most pertinent to the discipline's way of thinking <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • design a lesson using the TIPS 2.0 template to teach students about using structure for reading or writing <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • analyse the structure of the TIPS 2.0 (Transforming Instructional Practice Supports) template, focusing on the list structures, e.g., parts and functions, and connections, e.g., dynamic relationship between components of the lesson. (See sample lesson.) 	

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The Importance of Text Structure to Learning and Memory

- Research increasingly indicates the importance of being able to identify and use knowledge of structure (RAND, 2003).
- Knowledge of structure is developmental, corresponding to age and grade. Knowledge of the structures of expository text is still incomplete at the end of high school (Goldman & Rakestraw, 2003).
- Understanding of text structure results in increased comprehension and recall (Pressley & McCormick, 1995; Goldman & Rakestraw, 2003; RAND, 2003). Making the structure of a text more evident, e.g., through graphic cues such as bullets, supports comprehension.
- Learners who lack content knowledge rely heavily on text structure for comprehension (Goldman & Rakestraw, 2003; Alexander & Jetton, 2003; RAND, 2003).
- Training in text structure increases performance more than training in signal words (Meyer and Poon, 2004).
- Structure is most helpful when surface structural features correspond to deep conceptual structures, e.g. when actual order of events matches the description of them (Goldman & Rakestraw, 2003). Strategy interventions include self-questioning and summarizing (RAND, 2003).
- Pressley and McCormick (1995) recommend using text structure to abstract the main ideas from text. This skill is essential to summarizing, a macro skill identified by Marzano as one of the most effective learning strategies. Questions, prompts, frames, and graphic organizers can all direct students to text structure.
- A challenge in adolescent literacy is the number and variety of structures that underlie expository and informational text. These are much more varied than narrative structures, both across and within subjects. The challenges are compounded by less familiar content, dense information, unfamiliar vocabulary. Students need explicit instruction in and experience with these texts (RAND, 2003).

Marzano's (2001) Narrative Frame (p. 35)

- Who are the main characters and what distinguishes them from others?
- When and where did the story take place? What were the circumstances?
- What prompted the action in the story?
- How did the characters express their feelings?
- What did the main characters decide to do? Did they set a goal? What was it?
- How did the main characters try to accomplish their goals?
- What were the consequences?

A Brief Note on Mosenthal and Kirsch's Research on Document Structure

- Mosenthal and Kirsch describe four kinds of lists that structure documents. The critical difference between a string of items and a list is that various types of lists structure the information, meaning that the relationships between the items are explicit. In continuous prose, these relationships are signalled by words and phrases such as first, an example of, however, and similarly.
- The document literacy research of Mosenthal and Kirsch identifies list structures as the most fundamental of text structures. These structures are taxonomic (categorize items into lists that stand in relation to one another). Conceptually, lists group related items based on critical attributes which are encapsulated by the label, or heading. These simple, combined, intersected, and nested lists have implications for teaching students how to read descriptive informational forms such as tables, catalogues, schedules, maps, schematics, diagrams, and forms.

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Agenda for Learning – Generative Questions

Knowing your participants	Learning goals	Instructional strategy	Assessment for, as, and of learning
Who are the participants?	What do I want participants to learn?	How will I help them achieve our learning goals?	How will I monitor their understanding?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is participants' understanding of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - types of questions, e.g., closed and open - purpose/function of question types, e.g., to demonstrate understanding, clarify, probe, extend, provide students a range of entry points, scaffold movement toward higher thinking, stimulate thinking (making connections, making inferences) - complexity (difficulty) levels of questions - sense of self-efficacy, e.g., controlling purpose and difficulty level, responding appropriately to answers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand what comprehension questions are (i.e. as opposed to generative questions used as heuristics or scaffolding questions): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - how they focus on kinds of requested information - how teachers can strategically control difficulty level - why teachers use them • Understand what generative or open questions are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - how they differ in purpose and focus from traditional comprehension questions - what their purpose/function is - what the challenges are - what the benefits are 	<p>Minds On By three methods we may learn wisdom: first by reflection, which is noblest; second, by imitation, which is easiest; and third by experience, which is the bitterest. (Confucius) Participants share their thinking about the quote in a Think-Pair-Share. Read aloud two short, narrative texts, e.g., the classic and the fractured versions of the fairy tale, The Three Little Pigs.</p> <p>Action Provide a selection of traditional and fractured fairy tales. Grouped according to interest, participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • answer comprehension questions across a range of difficulty • sort questions according to level of difficulty • compose comprehension questions across a range of difficulty (suggestion: provide question words as prompts, e.g., who, what, how many, when, where, how, why) • compare/contrast comprehension questions to generative questions, e.g., question prompts, using a T-Chart. <p>Consolidation Facilitate a discussion of the Questions for Thinking about Generative Questions. (See p. 25) Participants complete an Exit Card, e.g., 3-2-1, Start-Stop-Continue</p>	<p>Assessment for Learning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observe: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - clarity of questions (requested information) - sorting by level of difficulty (criteria) - understanding demonstrated in T-chart construction - depth of discussion • Exit Card

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Fractured Fairy Tales

Fractured fairy tales are imaginative, contemporary retellings of traditional tales in which the expected pattern is disrupted, e.g., through a change of setting, point of view, or plot development. The result is often humorous or satiric. For more, see session outline for Critical Literacy.

Sample Comprehension Questions

The Three Little Pigs	The True Story of the Three Little Pigs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Of whom are the little pigs afraid? • How many little pigs are there? • What is the first little pig like? • How did the wolf destroy the first little pig's house? • Why did the wolf destroy the first little pig's house? • What is the outcome of the story? • What is the moral of the story? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where is A. Wolf when he tells his story? • To whom is he speaking? • Why did he go to the three little pigs' homes? • What evidence does A. Wolf provide that he's telling the truth? • What is another story, in print or in film, in which the main character is a rascal?

Complexity (Difficulty) Levels

These questions are arranged in order from least to most difficult based on type of requested information rather than on the kind of action required to answer, e.g., "identify" or "explain," or on the strategy required to find/create the answer. For more information, see

- The interactive video and accompanying facilitator's guide on question structure: *One Approach to Questions: Question Structure: A Four-Step Strategy*, available online in the EDUGAINS Library, <http://www.edugains.ca>
- Literacy Task Assessment Guide by Julian Evetts and Michel Gauthier, <http://www.ibd.ab.ca/files/Literacy-task-assessment-guide.pdf>

Questions could also be arranged according to (the new) Bloom's Taxonomy. For more information on this approach, see Bennett, B., and Rolheiser, C. (2002). *Beyond Monet: The art and science of instructional integration*. Ajax, ON: Bookation.

Sample Generative Questions

The True Story of the Three Little Pigs	Generative Questions for Metacognition
<p>What do you predict will happen to A. Wolf?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are you convinced of his innocence? Why or why not? • What do you know about the Canadian legal system that would be applicable to A. Wolf's situation? • What pattern do you see in the endings to fractured fairy tales? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did you learn? • How did you learn it? • How well did you learn it? • Why is what you learned important? • How will you use what you learned?

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Questions for Thinking about Generative Questions

- If, as research suggests, answering comprehension questions doesn't teach students to develop comprehension strategies, what is the purpose of comprehension questions?
- How do generative questions encourage higher-order thinking, engagement, curiosity, and development of literacy skills?
- How do generative questions support the development of literacy skills?
- What are favourite question prompts? Are they generative?
- How do I frame generative questions?
- How can I use generative questions to make students' thinking visible?
- How can I use generative questions to encourage fearless speaking and listening?
- What are the challenges in posing generative questions?
- What are the implications of this to my practice?
- How can I respond to students' answers with appropriate levels of challenge and support, e.g., with probing or clarifying questions or with a series of scaffolded questions?
- How can I model, explicitly teach, and give students guided practice in posing and responding to each other's generative questions?

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Agenda for Learning – Metacognition

Knowing your participants	Learning goals	Instructional strategy	Assessment for, as, and of learning
Who are the participants?	What do I want participants to learn?	How will I help them achieve our learning goals?	How will I monitor their understanding?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are participants ready to move beyond strategy instruction to metacognitive knowledge? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand that metacognition involves reflecting on their practice, setting professional goals, and adjusting practice strategically to reach those goals 	<p>Minds On Introduce Ritchhart’s “red thread” metaphor (See p. 31) Show the Woodland Park video chapter, referring to Observation Protocols. Participants select 1-2 protocols to practise during viewing. Participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> infer from Debbie’s words and actions what her “red thread” might be reflect on the priorities and passions of their own practice. <p>Conduct a mock think-aloud of instructional planning for the remainder of the session.</p> <p>Action Groups of four collaboratively create a K-W-L (Know-Wonder-Learned) chart and complete the K and W for “Metacognition.” Share W questions in the whole group, working to clarify the type of information requested, and distinguishing between closed and open questions. Distribute a different research connection to each group member. In a Save-the-Last-Word-for-Me strategy, group members read aloud their research connection, listen to responses from others in the group, and provide their own response on what it means, what the implementation challenges and benefits are, and what the implications are for practice. Groups refer to the Metacognition cards and on the K-W-L chart, refine questions and add information to L column.</p>	<p>Assessment of Learning: The K-W-L task involves self-assessment and provides an opportunity to discuss how strategy use by students is influenced by students’ theory of learning.</p>

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		<p>Refer back to the Minds On Think-aloud, and facilitate a brief discussion of metacognitive self-assessment and assessment tools.</p> <p>Participants mentally self-assess their practice of the Observation Protocol(s) and either re-commit to practising the same protocol(s) or select another protocol to consciously practice.</p> <p>Participants view the video, using the Before, During and After organizer, p. 35 and identify samples of evidence of instruction in metacognition.</p> <p>Consolidation Groups adjust the information in the W and L columns of their K-W-L chart.</p> <p>Groups explore the “Questions for thinking about Metacognition.”</p> <p>Debrief, noting pressing issues, e.g., assessment and evaluation, questions, and next steps.</p> <p>Participants write on their Literacy CPR card what their “red thread” is, ideally, and strategically plan one action that will move them towards living their “red thread” in their classrooms.</p>	<p>Assessment of Learning: Mental Likert scale Traffic light (See Assessment cards)</p> <p>Assessment of Learning: Literacy CPR card</p>
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Ritchhart’s “Red Thread”¹

Ron Ritchhart (2002), who was introduced to the red thread as a metaphor in a variety of cultures for connecting, binding, and uniting, uses the image to talk about a teacher’s priorities, passions, and guiding principles. He relates an anecdote about a research project in which a teacher was asked what students would identify as most important to the teacher. Although the teacher predicted that students would identify the teacher’s commitment to learning, students said that the most important thing was that the students bring their pencils to class. After hearing students’ interpretations, the teacher changed her typical opening question to “What’s your responsibility as a learner?” (pp. 181-182, 238-239)

¹ Ritchhart, Ron (2002). *Intellectual character: what it is, why it is important, and how to get it*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

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Examples of Metacognitive Questions

- Why?
- What do I have to do? Do I understand the task?
- What am I trying to accomplish? Do I have clear goals?
- What else have I done that might help me to be successful in this task?
- What resources, people, or materials can help me be successful?
- What knowledge and skills do I have that will help me be successful?
- What are my options and alternative approaches?
- How much time do I need?
- How well did my choice work?
- How close am I to my goal?
- What other strategies or approaches might move me closer to my goal?
- What might I keep or change?
- What are possible next steps?

Questions for Thinking about Metacognition

- How and why should I teach students to think about their thinking?
- How can I teach students to set realistic goals and make plans to achieve them?
- What literacy strategies and structures help students monitor their learning and understanding?
- How can I help students to reflect on their progress and to plan next steps?
- How do I use strategy instruction to help students think about thinking and learn about learning?
- How do I help students see the connection between metacognitive thinking and their ability to use strategies effectively?
- How do I help students take ownership of their own learning?

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Characteristics of the Metacognitive Classroom	Time Code	Evidence from Debbie’s classroom
<p>To learn most effectively, students understand what available strategies are, what their purposes are, and how they can effectively select, use, monitor, and assess their use of these strategies (Graham and Harris,1993)</p>		
<p>Israel (2007) suggests that goal setting and setting a purpose for a task is “an effective starting point for getting your students to think metacognitively” and critically (31).</p>		
<p>It is also important for students to talk about their thinking and to build a thinking vocabulary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do I have to do? • What other things have I done that might help me to be successful in this task? • What are my options and alternative approaches? • How close am I to my goal? • What other strategies or approaches might move me closer to the target? 		

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Characteristics of the Metacognitive Classroom	Time Code	Evidence from Debbie's classroom
<p>Making the discussion of metacognitive knowledge part of the everyday discourse between students and between students and teacher will raise the awareness of their own metacognitive knowledge and increase their skill (Pintrich, 2002).</p>		
<p>Types of research-based metacognitive assessments include interviews, surveys, inventories, and think-alouds. These are well established approaches to assessment. For example, think-alouds are “respected measures of assessing cognitive ability based on the work of Ericsson and Simon (1984/1993) and are commonly known as verbal reports of cognitive thought” (Israel, 71).</p>		
<p>Typically students learn metacognitive skills while they are involved in learning something else.</p>		
<p>Students can think aloud while reading a text, be prompted to think aloud at strategic points, and give a retrospective report immediately after reading (Israel, 2007, 72).</p>		

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	Before	During	After
	E.g., preparing for learning, goal setting, and planning; having and applying self-knowledge	E.g., selecting strategies, monitoring and self-regulating (controlling) learning, applying feedback	E.g., reflecting, self-assessing, and planning next steps
Evidence from Debbie's classroom			