

ELA Strategies for Grades 7-12

Vol. 1 Issue 7
September 2022

Instructional Strategies

Rotating Trios

This strategy provides the opportunity to generate ideas and allows students to interact with their peers. Prepare questions prior to the lesson. Students form (or you assign) trios and gather in a large circle or square formation. Provide a question and have each trio discuss, allowing each person to respond within their trio. After a few minutes of discussion, ask trios to assign a 0, 1, or 2 to its members. Ask #1s to rotate one trio clockwise, the #2s to rotate two trios clockwise, and the #0s to remain in their current spot. Provide another question, possibly more difficult. Continue rotating trios and ask as many questions as you like!

Front-End Scaffolding that Supports Close Analytical Reading

We often hear that front-end scaffolding should be reduced when asking students to read analytically. However, there are several opportunities that support the close analytical reading process:

- Use learning targets to help students understand the purpose.
- Provide visual cues and read the passage aloud before students read independently.
- Annotate in the margins to define words or concepts.
- Chunk long readings into shorter sections.
- Provide an audio or video recording.
- Provide a handout so students can write on the text.

Assessment Strategies

Peer Critiques

This technique gives students an opportunity to use and share their voice and encourages students to hear and use feedback. The purpose is to learn and improve their work. Create a peer critique contract with students before attempting this technique. Discuss what they want to gain from the critique and what behaviors are acceptable to achieve the desired goal. Promote positive behavior such as:
Treat peers with respect.
Balance constructive feedback and complimentary feedback.
Give specific examples of what works well and what could be improved.
Use positive language and avoid vague or hurtful language.

Countdown

At the end of class try Countdown as a formative assessment to determine if students grasped the day's material. The strategy consists of students creating three lists.

- First** - list three ideas or concepts you learned today
- Second** - list two ideas or concepts that surprised you today
- Third** - list one thing you want to do based on what you learned today



Classroom / Time Management Strategies

Make Mistakes

Allow yourself to make a mistake, own it, and use it as a teachable moment. We all make mistakes and every student needs to see their teacher make a mistake, accept the mistake, and then model what to do afterwards. No one is perfect! A mistake is a learning opportunity, and your classroom can be a safe place to show vulnerability. By modeling appropriate behavior, you will encourage students to fix their mistakes and learn from the experience.