



Literacy Connects

A Content Literacy Newsletter from Regional Professional Development Program-Issue XX



Text Preview and Prediction

Now is the perfect time to acquaint students with their textbooks. Broadly speaking, a textbook can be any book used in the classroom; this might include novels, reference books, or other works of nonfiction which may or may not be designed exclusively for schools (articles, journals, magazines, etc.). With modifications, this strategy can be used with any type of reading material not only to introduce and reinforce how to use text features, but also to help students understand the importance of previewing and predicting BEFORE reading. We often assume students are familiar with text features, but this can be a faulty assumption. If you plan to use any type of text in your classroom, teaching students how to use their textbooks effectively is time well spent.

1. Brainstorm with students the features commonly found in a textbook and discuss their purpose: Preface, forward, table of contents, glossary, appendix, index, unit and chapter layout, section objectives, bold and italicized words, pictures, graphs, charts, review section and/or questions, introduction, conclusion, and any other features relevant to your text.
2. Place students in small groups or pairs and have them conduct a scavenger hunt by answering questions about the features of their texts. Following are examples of the types of questions you might use:
 - What is the copyright date of this text?
 - How many units are listed in the table of contents?
 - How many sub sections are found in unit four?
 - What activity is found at the end of each unit?
 - List the objectives for chapter six.
 - List the vocabulary words in chapter five.
 - Define *rational number*.
 - On what pages can you find information about *hypothesis*?
 - What does the index tell you?
 - Preview chapter two by reading the headings, subheadings, objectives, italicized and bold words, and the diagrams. In two sentences or less, predict what chapter two will be about.
3. Discuss with students how text features can help them understand and study more effectively. Teach them how to preview a chapter.
 - a. Discuss the importance of previewing before reading (the importance of building background knowledge, making connections to prior learning and experience, posing questions, and preparing the brain to receive new information).
 - b. Preview the beginning of the chapter by having students:
 - read the title
 - read the subheadings/objectives and turn them into questions (the two-column/T-chart works well for this—questions in the left column; answers during reading in the right)
 - look at the pictures/diagrams and read captions
 - find key words and determine meaning from context
 - predict in writing what they think the chapter will be about

Visit the RPDP website (www.rpdp.net) for a complete selection of *Literacy Connects*.