Text Coding

Text coding (Harvey & Goudvis, 2007: Tovani, 2000) is an annotation system that students use to capture their thinking while reading. As students catch themselves in the act of a specific comprehension process, they can apply codes to the text.   Text coding keeps the reading process interactive and reminds students that reading is active thinking.
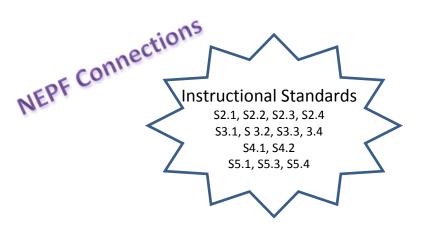
PROCEDURE

1. Introduce the text coding symbols shown on the chart. Explain each symbol.
2. Demonstrate coding on a projected text: read the text aloud and think aloud while stopping periodically to show students how you use codes to mark your reactions. Include a word or two to help you remember what the code means.
3. Next, have students text-code the rest of the article themselves.
4. Circulate, confer, and assist individuals.
5. Pairs discuss: *Compare the codes you used as well as your reactions connected with them. Pay special attention to the parts you both noticed yet marked different codes.*
6. Share whole group by asking: Who used a check mark somewhere in the text? Where? What were you thinking? Who used a star? For what? Who used an eye? What were you seeing?
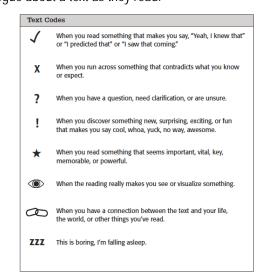
Advantages

*Text coding while reading is a powerful strategy that helps students retain their thinking and create a personal understanding of the author's message.

*Students come to realize that comprehension is the result of the interplay between an author's words and the reader's thinking.

* Students become accustomed to listening to their inner dialogue about a text as they read.

NEPF Connections

Instructional Standards
S2.1, S2.2, S2.3, S2.4
S3.1, S 3.2, S3.3, 3.4
S4.1, S4.2
S5.1, S5.3, S5.4

Text Codes

✓	When you read something that makes you say, "Yeah, I knew that" or "I predicted that" or "I saw that coming."
X	When you run across something that contradicts what you know or expect.
?	When you have a question, need clarification, or are unsure.
!	When you discover something new, surprising, exciting, or fun that makes you say cool, whoa, yuck, no way, awesome.
★	When you read something that seems important, vital, key, memorable, or powerful.
◉	When the reading really makes you see or visualize something.
∞	When you have a connection between the text and your life, the world, or other things you've read.
ZZZ	This is boring, I'm falling asleep.