

THOUGHTFUL CLASSROOM PORTFOLIO SERIES

Reading for Meaning™

TEACHER PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE

WORKSHEETS • TEMPLATES • EXAMPLES



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THE THOUGHTFUL CLASSROOM™



Dear Thoughtful Educator:

Sometimes the simplest innovations produce the greatest results. Designed by a collaborative of teachers, administrators, and trainers, the all-new **Thoughtful Classroom Portfolio Series** makes the important work of bringing high-impact, research-based instructional strategies into your classroom or school easier than ever before.

Each Thoughtful Classroom Portfolio (and its accompanying booklet of worksheets, templates, and examples) serves as a Planning and Implementation Guide focused on a specific method, strategy, or perspective for improving teacher instruction and student learning. There are four types of Thoughtful Classroom Portfolios:

- **Research-Based Strategies** – Designed specifically to support the important research of Robert Marzano (author of *Classroom Instruction That Works*), Harvey Silver, and Richard Strong, these portfolios help educators study and implement the most up-to-date and effective strategies for improving instruction.
- **The Hidden Skills of Academic Literacy** – Focusing on key skills that significantly affect student performance on state tests and standards, each of these portfolios shows teachers how to approach a different skill in the classroom. Among the skills covered (or soon to be covered) are Thoughtful Vocabulary Learning, Notetaking and Notemaking, and Developing Thoughtful Explanations.
- **Diversity Guides** – These portfolios help teachers develop powerful new strategies for assessing and responding to student differences.
- **Leadership Guides** – These portfolios describe strategies that academic leaders and mentors can utilize to enhance professional learning opportunities in their schools.

At Silver Strong & Associates/Thoughtful Education Press we believe that successful schools are built on a culture of support that encourages teachers to apply new ideas and strategies in their classrooms. We are confident these portfolios will play a significant role in fostering such a culture and that they will help you improve the quality of teaching and learning in your classroom and throughout your school.

Please write us (at suggestions@ThoughtfulEd.com) after you have used this Thoughtful Classroom Portfolio. We would love to hear your ideas and suggestions as we develop new titles and revise current ones.

For a complete list of available Thoughtful Classroom Portfolios, please visit our website at www.ThoughtfulEd.com. Check back often—we are constantly adding new portfolios to this series.

Sincerely,

The Thoughtful Classroom Team

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USING YOUR PORTFOLIO

This Thoughtful Classroom Portfolio was designed to be used as part of a Thoughtful Classroom Learning Club, a collaborative support structure developed by Silver Strong & Associates. Through Learning Clubs, teams of teachers and administrators work together to plan, implement, and evaluate lessons and units to make a difference in student learning.

Our research has consistently shown the value of Learning Clubs in helping teachers not only learn but also apply what they learn in the classroom. However, we realize that not every user of this portfolio is part of a Learning Club. So, here are some simple guidelines for using your portfolio with a Learning Club or solo:

WITH A LEARNING CLUB

1. About a week before your Learning Club meeting, read through the portfolio carefully and come to the meeting with 2 or 3 ideas about how to use the skill or strategy to enhance student learning.
2. At the Learning Club meeting, work with other Learning Club members to develop plans you can use as individuals or as a team.
3. Use the enclosed templates to flesh out your plans and to reflect on what happens when your plans and those of your partners are put into operation. We believe that reflecting on your own and your colleagues' experience can be a powerful tool for effective professional learning.
4. After you and the other Learning Club members have developed and implemented a number of plans using the portfolio, conduct a student work meeting. At the meeting, you and your colleagues will use the *Examining Student Work* component of the portfolio to study the actual effect your plans had on student learning and thinking.

INDIVIDUALLY

1. Review the portfolio carefully. Familiarize yourself with the various panels of the portfolio and the supplemental pages and planning forms.
2. If at all possible, invite a colleague into your learning, planning, and implementation processes. It will always be easier to master a new strategy or technique if you can discuss and test your ideas with another teacher.
3. Use the enclosed templates to flesh out your plans and to reflect on what happened when you put those plans into operation. We believe that self-reflection is a powerful (and often undervalued) tool for effective professional learning.
4. Use the *Examining Student Work* component to study the actual effects your plans had on student learning and thinking.
5. Why aren't you part of a Learning Club? Pull a few teachers together and start one. Get some pizza and let the conversation begin.

To find out more about how to create and conduct a Thoughtful Classroom Learning Club in your school, please visit our website at www.ThoughtfulEd.com

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PLANNING THE LESSON: FIVE EASY STEPS

READING FOR MEANING PLANNING TEMPLATE

1

SELECT A READING FOR YOUR STUDENTS TO READ DEEPLY

2

IDENTIFY THE THEME, MAIN IDEAS, AND KEY DETAILS IN THE READING

Theme:

Main Ideas:

Key Details:

3

DEVELOP 4 TO 8 READING FOR MEANING STATEMENTS

STRATEGIC PRACTICE

READING FOR MEANING – NOTE SHEET

Now that you have completed a sample Reading for Meaning lesson and used it in your classroom, examine and evaluate the lesson's effectiveness by responding to the following questions. Try this exercise with a partner, in a learning club, or by yourself. Use this worksheet for your notes.

Introducing the topic and the text

What was my *hook* to engage my students in this reading?

How well did they respond to this *hook*, and did the *hook* guide them in thinking and diverse thought?

Were my students able to formulate initial responses to the statements? Yes No

Active Reading

How carefully did my students read the passage?

How well did my students collect evidence to support/refute the Reading for Meaning statements?

Discussion

SMALL GROUPS: How well did my students discuss the Reading for Meaning statements, and their responses?

WHOLE CLASS: How well did my students discuss the Reading for Meaning statements, and their responses?

(Did I collect responses from a majority of the students?)

Synthesis

What task did I assign to enable my students to apply the ideas they gathered in the reading?

What was the quality of their responses?

Evaluate

How well did my students evaluate/reflect on their knowledge of the content and the Reading for Meaning process?

STRATEGIC PRACTICE

READING FOR MEANING – NOTE SHEET

Now that you have completed a sample Reading for Meaning lesson and used it in your classroom, examine and evaluate the lesson's effectiveness by responding to the following questions. Try this exercise with a partner, in a learning club, or by yourself. Use this worksheet for your notes.

What? So What? Now What?

WHAT HAPPENED?

What did you observe? What feelings or thoughts do you have about the lesson?

SO WHAT?

What did you learn from this experience? What are the implications of this strategy?

How will students be able to use this strategy?

NOW WHAT?

How can this strategy be applied elsewhere in my teaching? Where do I go from here?

EXAMINING STUDENT WORK

READING FOR MEANING – NOTE SHEET

Examining student work gives us the insight into what our students know and understand, as well as what they still need to accomplish.

Ask yourself the following questions as you examine your student's responses to your **Reading for Meaning** lesson. Use your answers to determine the steps you need to take to further develop the process of effective **Reading for Meaning** in your classroom.

Content:

How well did my students' work demonstrate an understanding of the themes, main ideas, and/or supporting details?

What did they do well, and what do they still need?

Process:

How well did my students respond to different types of statements, and how well did they use evidence to support their positions?

What did they do well, and what do they still need?

Product:

How well did my students apply the ideas and information they gathered to the final product or task?

What did they do well, and what do they still need?

Next Steps:

Based on your evaluation of your students' work, where will you need to go next?

Content – Can you move forward to a new lesson, or are there concepts that need to be retaught?

Process – Can the students easily use this process again, or do you need to reteach the steps?

READING FOR MEANING

SAMPLE LESSONS

One of the powerful aspects of the Reading for Meaning strategy is that you can use it in any subject area and at any grade level. 4 sample lessons are included below.

For additional samples and an in-depth look at the Reading for Meaning strategy, see *Reading for Meaning* (78 pages), published by Thoughtful Education Press, www.thoughtfuled.com.

Literary Arts • Elementary

Learning to Develop Interpretations and Arguments

- Before reading Arnold Lobel's fable, "*The Mouse at the Seashore*," the teacher introduces the story by asking students if they've ever gone to the seashore. After students share their experiences, the teacher explains they will be reading a story about a mouse who leaves home to go to the seashore. She asks students to think about why anyone would want to go to the seashore badly enough to leave home. Students then preview these statements: **1) The mouse thought he ought to go to the ocean. 2) The mouse had no real reason to leave home. 3) When the end is good, even a difficult journey is worth it. 4) The author probably wants us to feel happy for the mouse.**

Before students begin reading, the teacher explains that they will be looking for evidence that supports or refutes each of the statements.

- Students read the fable and collect evidence to support or refute each statement.
- Groups discuss those statements which give them the most trouble. The teacher reviews the statements, then leads a whole-class discussion about the different types of difficulties a reading can present and how good readers overcome them.
- The teacher models the process of writing a thesis essay, showing students how she selects one statement and develops an argument that supports or refutes that statement by using the text to back her argument. Students work in writers' clubs to develop, draft, and revise their own thesis essays.
- Using a rubric, students evaluate their work, including the effectiveness of their group work. They discuss how good readers and writers search for and use evidence to develop their positions.

Math • Upper Elementary

Solving Word Problems

- Students are presented with this word problem: John Simpson is preparing for a yard sale. He wants to sell his six-month-old golf clubs for 2.5 times the original price of \$70.00, and his bicycle for 3.8 times the original price of \$75.00. What is the selling price of these two items?

Before trying to solve the problem, students carefully read the problem and decide if they agree with statements such as: **1) John wants to sell items for more than the original price. 2) More than one operation is necessary to solve the problem. 3) The golf clubs will be selling for twice as much as the bicycle. 4) The most efficient way to solve the problem is by multiplying, then adding.**

- Students meet in groups to discuss their responses, resolve their differences, and develop a plan for solving the problem.
- Students solve the problem and note how their pre-solution plan worked or needed to be revised.
- Students discuss their difficulties with different kinds of word problems and discuss how the process of using the statements to develop a plan affected their performance.

READING FOR MEANING

SAMPLE LESSONS

Life Science • Middle School

Understanding Cold-Bloodedness

- Students examine and decide whether they agree or disagree with these four statements: **1) A reptile's body temperature is the same as the temperature of the surrounding environment. 2) A reptile's body temperature depends on the temperature of the surrounding environment. 3) There are probably more reptiles in Kansas than there are in Canada. 4) Reptiles can be more patient than mammals.**
- Using a reading entitled "How Cold-bloodedness Works," which contains charts, graphs, and illustrations, students collect evidence to support or refute each statement.
- Students discuss the reading in small groups, then participate in a whole-class discussion..
- Students write and illustrate a memoir called "Cold-Blooded Blues: A Day in the Life of a Reptile," personalizing how cold-bloodedness affects the daily life of the animal.
- Using a rubric, students evaluate their work, including the effectiveness of their group work. They discuss how to develop a high-quality analysis of a nonfiction reading that contains charts and graphs.

Social Studies • High School

Interpreting Primary Documents and Historical Perspectives

- Before reading *Memorial of the Cherokee Nation, 1830* in which the Cherokees of Georgia respond to their forced relocation, students examine and respond to these six statements: **1) The authors of this piece believe in the laws of the U.S. 2) For Cherokees, moving west of the Mississippi is preferable to being oppressed in their homeland. 3) All people have the same rights under the Constitution. 4) The authors are afraid that even if they move, the U.S. government will force them to relocate again in the future. 5) Relocation is an inhumane policy. 6) History has shown that all of the Cherokees' fears were justified.**
- Students read the Memorial and collect evidence for each statement.
- Groups and then the whole class discuss the reading, looking for specific passages that shed deep insight into the issue of relocation and the perspective of the Cherokees.
- Students examine their textbook's account of Native American relocation and determine whether it tells the whole story of Native American relocation. Once they have revised and refined their thinking and writing, they send their recommendations for improvement in a letter to the textbook company.
- Using a rubric, students evaluate and reflect on their work and the lesson.



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