

HOW TO USE THE LESSONS, EXCERPTS, AND GRAB AND GO PAGES

Key terms are defined for easy understanding.

You post these prompts and make copies for students' notebooks. The goal is for students to work independently, and these prompts provide structure while also moving students to be metacognitive.

LESSON 1

Ask and Answer Questions

Textual Evidence: Not all evidence is created equal; students need to choose those pieces of evidence (words, phrases, passages, illustrations) that provide the best proof of what they are asserting about the text.

PROMPTS FOR ASKING AND ANSWERING QUESTIONS

- What happens in this story, play, or poem?
- How is the author pulling me into the story? Making me curious? Where is the energy/tension coming from?
- As I read, what are the *why, when, how, who, where*, and what questions that arise? How can I answer them?
- What inferences can I make and what specific details help me?
- When I reread, can I find details to answer questions that begin with *Who, What, Where, When, Why, and How*?
- When I reread, can I find details that support "bigger" thinking about theme or character motivation?

Available for download at <http://resources.corwin.com/evidencebasedwriting-fiction>

BEST THE TEST

Test questions are designed to have one right answer, despite the fact that authentic reader questions seldom do. While we want students exploring real questions, we need to familiarize them with the testing genre. Teach your students to:

- Read test questions carefully. Highlight key words.
- Ask yourself: Is the question asking for more than one example? Is it a multi-step question?
- Mark multiple-choice answers that are obviously wrong "OW" to visually rule them out.
- Recognize "distracter" answers designed to trip you up. (It's the answer that if you're not paying attention looks right; it might repeat a word from the end of the text.)
- Prior to testing, devote a lesson to analyzing released test questions. Have students work in groups and create two-column charts labeled "Our Questions" and "Test Maker Questions," and have them record what they notice about the different types.
- Limit test prep! Short doses over a period of time go a long way versus every day, all day.

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This section explicitly states how the lessons address test-taking skills and provides ideas to introduce students to the genre of standardized tests.

This section explains what you need ahead of time—both the materials and the key points in texts.

LESSON PREP

- Choose a book that lends itself to asking both literal and inferential questions. I use Chris Van Allsburg's *The Stranger* in this lesson. Familiarize yourself with the text and flag pages that lend themselves to asking questions (pp. 5, 7, 9, 15, 19, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25).

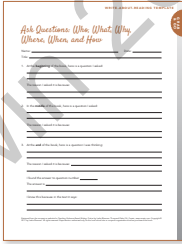
INTRODUCE IT

- Distribute prompts to students and/or display them on a wall as an anchor chart.
- Also create your own anchor chart with the prompts.
- Create a second anchor chart labeled with "Purpose: Asking Questions" and the book title.
- Ask students to open their reading journals to record their thinking.
- Write "Before" on the chart and tell students that readers ask questions before reading, even if it's just nanosecond wonderings about the title. Show the book cover and model and jot some of your questions. Have students copy the chart and write "Before" and jot at least three questions of their own.
- Have students turn and talk. Add a few of their questions to the chart.
- Now write "During" on the chart and tell students that readers ask questions while they read as their thinking is evolving.

- Read aloud *The Stranger* or whichever text you are using, stopping at flagged pages. Model your questions, jotting them on the chart, and then turn over the work to students. That is, each time you pause in your read-aloud at a spot you've flagged, they are to jot a question and then share it with a partner.
- Remind students to pay attention to the pictures when applicable. (Pages 22 and 24 of *The Stranger* have great question-provoking pictures.)
- When you finish the book, write "After" on the chart. What questions do you still have? (Who was the Stranger?) Have students write an answer on their paper and discuss. (Students often answer "Jack Frost" or something similar.)
- Go back to the text a second time (this could be on another day). Look at the questions students posed and have them find details that help to answer that question.
- After revisiting, discuss new thinking and how asking questions led students to their answer.
- Revisit the questions a third time—coding them L for answered *literally*, I for answered *inferentially*, and NA for *not answered* on the anchor chart. Have students code their own questions.
- Write about reading:** Co-construct a response to "Who was the Stranger?" using questions and evidence from the text so students get a feel for how this work helps one write a well-supported, well-reasoned response to text.

This section offers a quick view to find more resources.

For students who may need more structure or support, download Ask Questions: Who, What, Why, Where, When and How at <http://resources.corwin.com/evidencebasedwriting-fiction>.



Any books by Chris Van Allsburg: *The Garden of Abdul Gasazi* and *The Wreck of the Zephyr* are two of my favorites after *The Stranger*. His books always leave the reader hanging at the end.

Eve Bunting's books are also great. I especially like *Gleam and Glow* and *Walking to School*.

The poem "Jack Frost" is a great companion piece to *The Stranger*.

Each Kindness
by Jacqueline Woodson

If you want to compare and contrast books and movies, *Jumari* is a great film to compare to Van Allsburg's picture book.

Video interview with Chris Van Allsburg: <http://www.readingpodcasts.org/books/interviews/vanallsburg>

To learn more about Chris Van Allsburg: <http://tombbooks.com/chrisvanallsburg>

Here is a short plan to follow, which begins with guided practice, includes student collaboration, and involves literature pieces in the book or readily available elsewhere. This section always incorporates a "Write About Reading" section.

Each lesson includes two Grab and Go reproducibles to share with students. One is a mentor text for students to annotate and write about, and the second is a Write-About-Reading template or task to provide additional writing. This “How To” page offers specific instructions on executing and extending the student practice.

HOW TO USE THE GRAB AND GO PAGES

- Distribute to students copies of Back Up Your Thinking on page 19 and the Gary Soto poem on page 20.
- Either in small groups, with a partner, or independently, students read and annotate the poem, using the same process you just modeled.
- Next, provide a focus question for students or allow them to pose their own question and record it in the center of the Back Up Your Thinking template.
- Students record their thinking on sticky notes as they reread the poem.
- Next, they use these notes to complete the Back Up Your Thinking template.
- Finally, students write a short response. (They can use the co-constructed response you did as a model.)
- **On another day:** Students can select a poem or a short text and use the same process to practice citing evidence and writing about it.
- **Ongoing:** You can reuse this excerpt and write-about-reading template for other purposes and in any of the lessons in this book.

SAMPLE TO SHARE WITH STUDENTS

What is the relationship between Liz and her father?

Liz didn't know her father very well since at the beginning of the book Liz is in the car and it says, 'I sit shyly in the front seat of the car next to the stranger who is my father, my legs pulled up under the too-large wool shirt I am wearing. I practice his name to myself, whispering it under my breath. Daddy. Daddy. Saying it feels new. The war has lasted so long. He has been gone so long. Finally I look over at him timidly and speak aloud. 'Daddy,' I say, 'I've never gone hunting before. What if I don't know what to do?' 'Well, Liz,' he says, 'I've been thinking about that, and I've decided to put you in charge of the crow call. Have you ever operated a crow call?' They talk more as they ride, but it's obvious that her father has a sense of humor because he winks at Liz when the waitress at the diner thinks she's a boy because of the oversized shirt her father bought. He asks what's her favorite food and orders the cherry pie for her for breakfast. At this point you can see that they are getting to know each other. They continue to laugh together as they drive. Liz is 'uneasy' with her father being a hunter--she's not used to it--as they walk through the woods. When she says, 'Daddy,' I ask shyly, 'were you scared in the war?' it leads to a good conversation between them . . . At the end they are becoming dad and daughter because the story ends with 'Then I put it into the pocket of my shirt and reach over out of my enormous cuff, and take my father's hand.'

There are completed classroom samples to share with your students as benchmarks.

Students learn by doing, so these Write-About-Reading templates scaffold their collaborative and independent work as they reread and interpret texts. These pages can also be used in other lessons in this book, or you can tweak them to fit your instructional needs.

WRITE-ABOUT-READING TEMPLATE

GRAB & GO

Ask Questions

Name: _____ Date: _____
Title: _____

Directions:


- Record your questions on this page as you read through your independent reading book.
- When you finish, revisit the book and your questions and think about how your thinking changed as you read.
- Tie it all together by writing about how your thinking changed.

Questions before reading:

Questions during reading:

Questions after reading:

How my thinking has changed, and why:

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6 SECTION 1 • EVIDENCE

This book includes 25 excerpts or complete pieces by top authors.
You can use them for multiple purposes in this book's lessons and beyond.

GRAB
& GO

EXCERPTS TO WRITE ABOUT

Number the Stars

by Lois Lowry

- ▶ In Chapter 1, titled "Why Are You Running?" we meet Annemarie, her little sister Kirsti, and Annemarie's friend Ellen as they are racing home from school in Copenhagen. They are stopped by a soldier who speaks German and asks them why they were running. After asking the girls other questions and inspecting their schoolbags, the soldiers allow them to go home, cautioning the girls not to run.
- ▶ As you read this, think about what questions you have and why. Write your questions in the margin. For example, why are the soldiers simply part of the landscape to Kirsti, but scarier for the other girls?

[pp. 5–6]

When they were almost home, Ellen whispered suddenly, "I was so scared."

"Me too," Annemarie whispered back.

As they turned to enter their building, both girls looked straight ahead, toward the door. They did it purposely so that they would not catch the eyes or the attention of two more soldiers, who stood with their guns on this corner as well. Kirsti scurried ahead of them through the door, chattering about the picture she was bringing home from kindergarten to show Mama. For Kirsti, the soldiers were simply part of the landscape, something that had always been there, on every corner, as unimportant as lampposts, throughout her remembered life.

"Are you going to tell your mother?" Ellen asked Annemarie as they trudged together up the stairs. "I'm not. My mother would be upset."

"No, I won't either. Mama would probably scold me for running on the street."

- ▶ Think about the question you asked. What in the text helped you ask that? Highlight the words, lines, or sentences. Think about your question. Is it about character, setting, the problem, or something else?
- ▶ But it was too late—Kirsti had already told their mother about the incident. This time notice the questions the characters ask. Jot your thinking about why these are important in the margins.

[pp. 6–7]

"Annemarie, what happened? What is Kirsti talking about?" her mother asked anxiously.

"Where's Ellen?" Mrs. Rosen had a frightened look.

"Ellen's in your apartment. She didn't realize you were here," Annemarie explained. "Don't worry. It wasn't anything. It was the two soldiers who stand on the corner of Osterbrogade—you've seen them; you know the tall one with the long neck, the one who looks like a silly giraffe?" She told her mother and Mrs. Rosen of the incident, trying to make it sound humorous and unimportant. But their uneasy looks didn't change.

(Continued)