

LEVELED TEACHING POINTS

What is this document?

Below is a list of teaching points/aims/objectives for moving students from one level to the next. It is based on Fountas and Pinnell's breakdown of literary features in books at each level **and the Coalition of Essential Schools Five Habits of Mind (Using Evidence, Making Connections, Exploring Significance, Finding Alternatives, and Formulating Points of View)**. Teachers can use these teaching points to plan whole class, small group and individual lessons. Hopefully this will influence big picture planning if goals include moving students to grade level by the end of each year.

By the end of 6th grade – X

By the end of 7th grade – Y

By the end of 8th grade – Z

When is this work happening?

- Pull groups of the same level for work on the rug/small group
- Whole class instruction through read aloud, shared reading
- Individual conferences using the student's leveled text
- Guided groups around a particular skill regardless of level (students at different levels could still struggle with similar issues)

Teaching points for T level:

(more historical fiction)

Characters

- Readers follow the **significant** actions of major and minor characters and see how they fit into the sequence of events in the bigger story
- Characters get more complex and realistic, good readers should be able to:
 - identify the character's **point of view** and,
 - evaluate the choices that characters make
 - discuss **alternatives** to the characters' choices

Structure

- Readers have to infer where and when the story takes place: look at small clues in the details that service as **evidence** for their ideas about the setting
- Good readers track how the character's personal plot arc/conflict is **connected** to and influenced by the world around them and how this gets resolved
- Good readers can identify the conflict in the world of the book (the greater **significant** issue in the character's life) and how it does or does not get resolved.
- Readers have to keep track of the fact that chapters may stop and start in different places/settings
- Good readers can synthesize multiple genres of writing like quotes, poetry, letters to to **gather more evidence** about the story

Text-to-World

- Strong readers can identify the **significant universal** issues in the book based on the conflicts the characters face
- Strong readers need to identify the references that are not familiar (ex. historical time period) by
 - Visualization – try to see it in your head by using **connections** to prior knowledge
 - Investigation – know when you have to look outside the book

- Strong readers make **sophisticated text-to-world connections** by identifying, evaluating and responding to similar feelings, issues and conflicts in the world beyond the text

Language

- Sometimes words and phrases can have multiple and non-literal meanings, good readers make meaning of this language by identifying what the words mean, thinking about what they may imply, thinking about **what their significance is to the story** and how they help the author tell the story.
- Sometimes writers use language and dialects from other places in the world, good readers are able to identify author's purpose for using the language (character development, building setting) and infer what they mean using the context of the story
- Readers can examine author's use of commas to make longer sentences and emphasize meaning.

Teaching points for U level:

(tracking character changes)

Characters:

- Major character and minor characters can have their own stories called sub-plots that fit into the **larger narrative or story**.
 - Good readers recognize **significant** patterns, similarities and differences to **make connections between the** subplot(s) and the larger story and/or themes of the book
- Characters develop over longer stretches of the book as **evidenced by changes in their point of view and the points of view of the characters around them**
 - Because characters develop over longer stretches of the book, good readers should expect their **point of view** about characters to be challenged by:
 - new information being revealed over the course of the *whole* book
 - **knowing more about the character than the character knows about him/herself**

Structure:

- Authors use symbols to represent the **significant ideas or themes** in their stories, good readers identify obvious symbols and connect them to the **author's point of view** about the character and the story
- Good readers evaluate the **significant** moral dilemmas present in the text and **make connections from the text about the world around them (Good vs. Evil)**.

Language:

- Authors use figurative language such as metaphor and simile **as an alternative to explicit language**. Good readers can identify language that is not literal, visualize the intended description and connect it back to the story
- Readers approach compound and multi-syllabic words by breaking them down with a focus on prefixes, suffixes and roots

Teaching points for V level:

Characters:

- Good readers can synthesize the way different characters **connect** to a common theme rather to the common plot

Structure/Content:

- Historical fiction and biography at this level will require pre-reading and investigation of the who, what, where, when of the time period and **point of view** of the author to fully comprehend the content, character, conflict, and story as a whole
 - Readers need to be aware of possible text features such as prefaces and glossaries that support specific content knowledge
 - Readers make meaning of historical fiction (envisioning, identifying realistic **points of view**) by making **connections** between their investigations and the setting, conflicts, and characters in their book.
 - In fiction or fantasy, strong readers will be aware of significant and metaphoric settings (ex. what can characters do/can't do in certain spaces, what certain spaces represent for the characters)
- Good readers can recognize flashbacks by identifying changes in setting, time, character behaviors, plot, flow of action, and how the text looks (italics, elipses, new chapter, etc)
 - Good readers can identify the information that the flashback gives and incorporate that into their understanding of the character, the plot, and theme.

Language:

- Authors use figurative language such as metaphor and simile
- Good readers can identify language that is not literal, visualize the intended description and **connect** it back to the story
- Readers approach compound and multi-syllabic words by breaking them down with a focus on prefixes, suffixes and roots

Teaching points for W:

Structure:

- Good readers will be able to track a complex plot by **connecting** multiple story lines to build a main plot (Students will be able to assemble a whole story line by comparing, contrasting, and **connecting** multiple **points of view**)
- Strong readers, when getting oriented to new texts, will determine what kind of investigation and pre-reading they need to do in order to understand the **point of view** of the author, visualize the setting, understand how it shapes the **points of view** of the characters, the story, and the conflicts.
- Strong readers can make **connections** between their stories and social issues in the world
 - Strong readers can apply the **connections** they make to social issues beyond the text to make greater meaning of the world around them.

Language:

- Strong readers define archaic words (eg. Sarny's "shirtdress" in Nightjohn) by visualizing the setting and making inference based on the context of the unfamiliar word in the sentence and in the fictional world of the book

- Good readers need push their pace of reading because the texts will be longer and denser - they should still only be taking about a week/and a half to complete a book. (Teacher will need to brainstorm strategies that work for individuals.)

Teaching points for X:

(Introducing archetype; fantasy)

Character:

- Strong readers recognize when characters symbolize or represent **significant universal** themes and ideas (good, evil, etc)
 - Students will be able to identify character archetypes

Structure:

- Good readers will compare texts, film and other vehicles of story to begin identifying archetypes by recognizing the patterns within the stories
 - Hero's journey/quest; loss of innocence; creation; flood
- Good readers can make informed predictions about the story and all its elements by using their knowledge of archetypes as **evidence for their ideas**
- Strong readers need to follow time and space carefully, **connecting the narrative between nuanced and complex transitions.**

Language:

- Good readers recognize that words will have multiple meanings (literal, figurative, symbolic) that **connect** to the larger theme. Good places to look for are proper nouns, quotes and allusions to other texts.
- Good readers self-monitor for understanding when reading more difficult texts and genres by scanning for unfamiliar sentence structure, dialect, archaic language and setting.
 - Good readers engage in pre-reading strategies for approaching difficult texts and new genres by:
 - investigating the content of the text
 - watching a movie from a similar time period
 - reading aloud to activating the voice of the narrator and characters
(This is appropriate for students ready for classics and fantasy)
 - Good readers resort to old decoding strategies for reading harder, archaic or imaginary names and places. In addition they have to determine whether or not they need to know the word for comprehension or they can infer meaning and move forward.

Teaching points for Y:

Structure:

- Strong readers can make **connections** based on common themes and ideas rather than character and plot by noticing similarities with other texts and genres of writing within

- Strong readers can differentiate between **significant** themes that concern young people and **significant** themes that concern the adult world. (War, community, religion and philosophy, etc.)
- Strong readers can recognize satire by analyzing...
 1. The cultural context of when the book was written
 2. How the characters are “perfect” archetypes representing ideas instead of the “real” people
 3. The conflicts that collectively work to highlight the themes, **significant** ideas and the author’s **purpose/point of view** rather than the understanding of characters in the book
 4. The tone of the language of the book
 and can draw conclusions about author’s **purpose /point of view** through the themes represented.
 - Strong readers use terms such as irony and hyperbole in order to discuss and write about satire.
 - **Strong readers can recognize bias by analyzing whose point of view is represented and whose point of view is underrepresented or missing.**

Language:

- Strong readers comprehend very literary language, complex compound sentences that utilize the semi-colon and understand that the subsequent clauses are adding to the idea in the first clause.

Teaching points Z:

- Strong readers make sophisticated inferences and interpretations more often and based on fewer and subtler details, which will be packed into more complex, compound sentences by identifying which details are **significant**.
- (This is building on what was taught at level W)
- Strong readers will determine the level of pre-reading work necessary before engaging in a particular text by using getting oriented strategies. (Eg. reading Twain’s Tom Sawyer vs. reading Woodson’s Melanin Sun)