

Strategy Cards



These cards contain instructional strategies for teacher use within the Gradual Release of Responsibility model (see graphic on back of card). Each card contains a brief description of the strategy and steps to follow when implementing in a lesson. On the backside of the card, ideas are provided to differentiate the strategy to meet the needs of a variety of learners, as well as variations of the strategy.

Gradual Release of Responsibility Model

Teacher Responsibility

Focus Lesson

"I do it"

Guided Instruction

"We do it"

Collaborative

"You do it together"

Independent

"You do it alone"

Student Responsibility

Fisher, D and Frey, N. (2008).

Better Learning Through Structured Teaching: A Framework for the Gradual Release of Responsibility.

Alexandria, VA: ASCD.



2 Cents

Description:

Students in a group have the chance to speak by “putting in their two cents.”

Steps:

1. Place students in small groups.
2. Give a topic for students to discuss.
3. Give each student 2 cents. As they contribute to the conversation, they put a penny in the pot. When their pennies are gone, they are finished speaking.

2 Cents

Differentiation:

- Strategically pair students for peer support.
- Provide sentence frames.
- Post academic vocabulary needed for activity.
- Establish rules/rubric (i.e., “I don’t know” isn’t an acceptable response.)

Variations:

- Use chips, tokens, or cards.



2-Column Notes

Description:

A note-taking strategy for use during a lecture or while reading.

Steps:

1. Draw a vertical line down the middle of a sheet of paper.
2. Record major headings, main ideas or concepts in the left column.
3. Have students record supporting details in the right column.

2-Column Notes

Two-Column Notes	
Main Ideas	Details
Solids	-Have definite shape -Have definite volume
Liquids	-Do not have definite shape -Do not have definite volume

Differentiation:

- Provide partially filled out notes.
- Group students to share and compare notes.

Variations:

- Divide the paper into three columns.
- In the third column, have students draw a picture or graphic that supports the text.
- Have students write questions based on headings in the left column.
- Students may answer questions during and after reading the text.



3-Step Interview

Description:

A collaborative process that requires a two way conversation among four students.

Steps:

1. Give groups of four students a list of questions or topics to be discussed.
2. Assign students in each group a letter (A, B, C, D).
3. Have Partner A interview Partner B and Partner C interview Partner D and record their answers.
4. Have Partner B interview Partner A and Partner D interview Partner C and record their answers.
5. Instruct each partner to tell the other pair key points of what each others' partner said in response to the questions.

3-Step Interview

Differentiation:

- Model the activity with a fishbowl.
- Provide a graphic organizer for note-taking.
- Have ELLs interviewed first so they have a model to follow when asking questions.
- Frontload vocabulary to build students' background knowledge.
- Strategically pair students for peer support.
- Provide sentence frames.

Variations:

- Use as an ice-breaker activity.
- Have students take on different historical or book character personas for the interview.
- Have students compare and contrast their partners' answers using a Venn diagram.



4 Corners

Description:

Students share their knowledge on a given topic by choosing a corner of the room and discussing the topic.

Steps:

1. Give students a choice among four topics, questions or problems.
2. Label the four corners of the room with one of each of the topics.
3. Instruct students to go to one corner of the room based on their choice. Once there, students respond to the prompt, answer the questions, or solve the problems.

4 Corners

Differentiation:

- Provide sentence starters, a word wall, or a word bank and require students to use academic vocabulary.
- Strategically pair students for peer support.

Variations:

- Have students write their choice on a piece of paper before going to a corner.
- Strongly Agree/Disagree: Read a statement to students that is written on the board and have students decide if they agree, disagree, strongly agree, or strongly disagree with the statement. Ask students to move to the appropriate corner of the room. After the pair discussion, each corner group will discuss their position. The class has a group discussion to share their views. Afterwards, students may change their position in the room. A student who chooses to change positions must defend the choice. Students may also write a paragraph or essay about their positions.



4 Square Writing

Description:

A graphic organizer for writing that divides the topic, details, and conclusion into the four squares and includes a center box for the introduction.

Steps:

1. Divide the paper into four squares. Draw a box at the intersection of the four lines. Provide or allow students to select a writing topic. Have them write a topic sentence in the center box.
2. Guide students to write one detail sentence in the top left, top right, and bottom left boxes. Use transition words to create complete sentences.
3. Instruct students to elaborate about each detail by writing at least three explanatory sentences in each of the three boxes.
4. Instruct students to write a concluding sentence in the bottom right box. This statement should be a restatement of the topic sentence. Students should also add a concluding sentence.

4 Square Writing

Detail #1 _____ _____ _____	Detail #2 _____ _____ _____
Detail #3 _____ _____ _____	Conclusion _____ _____ _____

Topic

Differentiation:

- Students may begin with an illustration in each box and move to one sentence per box to make a paragraph.
- Eventually students may write a 5 paragraph essay.
- Provide transitional words and sentence frames.
- Brainstorm details as a class.
- Have students write ideas in bullet form instead of complete sentences.

Variations:

- Play Find Your Partner by cutting 4 Square charts apart and having students match their four quadrants and then write a topic sentence together.



Anchor Chart

Description:

A chart that references key points and is displayed for student use.

Steps:

1. Guide students to select key concepts from a focus lesson.
2. Record input on chart.
3. Display chart for future reference.
4. Refer to chart during instruction and add to the chart as necessary.

Anchor Chart

Differentiation:

- Use Think-Pair-Share for chart input.
- Have students create their own Anchor Charts.
- Use sentence frames.
- Illustrate recorded items.

Variations:

- Provide interactive opportunities for students to use information on the charts.

Anticipation Guide



Description:

A strategy used before reading in which the teacher provides students with general statements related to the topic.

Students agree or disagree with the statements.

Steps:

1. Write four to six statements about key ideas in the text, some true and some false. Include columns following each statement for students' responses (i.e., True/False or Agree/Disagree).
2. Introduce the text and share the guide with the students. Model the process of responding to the statements.
3. Read each of the statements and have students mark their responses.
4. Provide the opportunity for discussion.
5. Read the text aloud or have students read the selection.
6. Bring closure to the reading by revisiting each of the statements.

Anticipation Guide

Differentiation:

- Allow students to Think-Pair-Share before responding to the statements.
- Read the text aloud and stop at places in the text that correspond to each statement.

Variations:

- Use as an introduction to a unit of study, then revisit after the unit is complete to assess students' learning.
- Add a column for revisiting the guide after the material has been read. Allow students to change their responses based on the reading and justify their answers.
- Add a space for students to indicate where they found their justifications (i.e., page number and paragraph number).

Appointment Clock



Description:

Students make appointments with other classmates to discuss and exchange ideas on a specific topic or question.

Steps:

1. Give each student a sheet with various times listed or a clock face with lines. The number of times depend on the number of appointments you want each student to schedule (i.e., 9:00, 12:00, 3:00, 6:00 for four appointments).
2. Allow time for the students to circulate and schedule appointments with classmates. Have students record each appointment on their sheets.
3. Allow time throughout the day for students to work with a partner (i.e., tell the students to meet with their 12:00 appointment).

Appointment Clock

Differentiation:

- Strategically pair students for peer support.
- Provide sentence frames.

Variations:

- Instead of using times, use days of the week or a calendar.
- Create an appointment clock for students to keep and use throughout the year.



Barrier Game

Description:

Students interact and use language to give and receive instructions to complete a task.

Steps:

1. Instruct students to sit back-to-back (or facing each other with a barrier in between).
2. Give the first student an envelope with pictures (any subject area) that are prearranged in a specific order.
3. Give the second student the same pictures cut apart.
4. Instruct the first student to describe the placement of the pictures.
5. Instruct the second student to arrange the pictures per the first student's description.
6. Allow students to collaborate, verifying their papers.

Barrier Game

Differentiation:

- Provide sentence frames.
- Strategically pair students for peer support.

Variations:

- Give each student in the pair the cut-out pictures. Students take turns placing the pictures in any order and describing to their partners.
- Ask a student to describe a picture to his/her partner and have the partner draw based on the description.
- Tape a vocabulary word on a student's back. Have other students describe the word. Students guess which word is on their backs.
- Provide students with a nine-square grid and vocabulary words/pictures on cards, strips, etc. Students give directions for placement of the vocabulary terms. (i.e., "Place the word/definition ____ in the middle square. Place the word/definition ____ above the word ____.")



Block Party

Description:

Students form triads and discuss questions related to the same topic three different times. Students complete a collaborative or independent task based on their discussions.

Steps:

1. Give each student three index cards. Post three questions for students to discuss.
2. Have students form a triad. The triad discusses the first question and takes notes on one index card.
3. Have students form a new triad and discuss the next question, taking notes on the second index card.
4. Have students form a third triad and discuss the third question, taking notes on the last index card.
5. After returning to seats, students complete a collaborative or independent task based on their discussions (i.e., reflection, summary, three key points, similarities and differences, etc).

Block Party

Differentiation:

- Strategically pair students for peer support.

Variations:

- Use to compare solutions to math problems.
- Change the group numbers and amount of rotations.

Canned Questions



Description:

The teacher uses a variety of questions at different levels of Bloom's Taxonomy to create discussion and understanding of the lesson.

Steps:

1. Create lower and higher level questions (according to Bloom's and based on previous learning) related to the lesson.
2. Write questions on strips of paper and place in a can. Label or color code the questions based on level of difficulty for your reference.
3. Pull a question and have all students answer in groups. Then, students will share their answers with the class. (See Numbered Heads.)
4. Repeat step 3 until all questions have been answered and discussed.

Canned Questions

Differentiation:

- Allow students to collaborate in small groups or pairs.
- Encourage students to create their own questions.
- Allow students to illustrate the answer to their question.
- Encourage students to use complete sentences and academic vocabulary.

Variations:

- Give a can to each group to answer and discuss.
- Have groups write questions using the levels of Bloom's Taxonomy and exchange them with another group.

Carousel/Gallery Walk



Description:

Students walk around the room with a specific task as they view student-created work.

Steps:

1. Display student work or questions/prompts around the room.
2. Have students walk around the room with a specific task (i.e., making notes, scoring with a rubric, using post-its to give feedback, etc.) as they view each item.
3. Groups continue through each station.

Carousel/Gallery Walk

Differentiation:

- Strategically pair students for peer support.
- Provide visual aids if necessary.
- Allow students to respond with pictures.
- Provide sentence frames.
- Provide a rubric to guide students' observations.

Variations:

- Gallery Walk: Students rotate through stations to view their peers' responses.
- Have each group share with the entire class the highlights or three ideas/concepts from the last poster they viewed.
- Other visuals may be used in lieu of student-created work (i.e., photographs pertaining to a topic, quotations, math problems, chart paper with questions or prompts, etc.).
- Post questions or topics across the top of the poster and have groups list two or three ideas or responses on the chart using different colored markers or pens.



Cartoon Strip

Description:

Students create or complete cartoon strips to share their own story or to demonstrate comprehension.

Steps:

1. Give students blank comic frames or strips with pictures and no text.
2. Provide students with a rubric to guide their work.
3. Allow students to demonstrate their comprehension of content using the comic strip format.

Cartoon Strip

Differentiation:

- Strategically pair students for peer support.
- Partially fill in comic strip with language frames or sentence starters.
- Provide students with vocabulary words and have them include a set number in their cartoon strip.

Variations:

- Have groups create a comic strip, assigning a different colored pen/marker to each group member.
- Provide students with a completed comic strip in random order and have them sequence the story.
- Use to retell a story, historical event, timeline, scientific process, steps in an experiment, or personify a mathematical concept.
- White-out the text of popular comic strips and have students recreate dialogue using a select number of academic vocabulary words.
- Have students dramatize or take turns reading the frames aloud to the class.

Collaborative Poster



Description:

A group-generated poster that reflects all students' learning.

Steps:

1. Provide students with a rubric to guide poster design.
2. Group students and assign each group member a different color marker so that each students' contribution is evident.
3. Have students work together to create a poster based on recent learning.

Collaborative Poster

Differentiation:

- Strategically pair students for peer support.
- Allow students to illustrate their contributions.

Variations:

- Use Whip Around Share to help students generate ideas before creating the poster.
- Require students to include a key quote and an illustration (symbol or drawing) from the reading.
- Do a Carousel/Gallery Walk of the completed posters. Students may provide feedback to their peers using the rubric.
- Use in math to have students take turns completing steps of a problem.
- Use in writing as students respond to a prompt.



Concept/Word Sort

Description:

Students sort words or concepts based on commonalities, relationships, or other criteria to extend their thinking and understanding.

Steps:

1. Select targeted vocabulary from the content for students to sort.
2. Instruct students to sort vocabulary into categories.

Concept/Word Sort

Differentiation:

- Strategically group students for peer support.
- Use a “closed sort” by providing the categories for the students.
- Label words or concepts with pictures.

Variations:

- Have students add additional words into the categories and write justifications.
- Allow students to write a story or a paragraph from each category of words.



Conga Line

Description:

Students stand face-to-face in two lines to share knowledge and understanding of a given topic or concept.

Steps:

1. Direct students to form two lines facing each other.
2. Have students in one line ask a question or give information to their face partner.
3. Direct one line to move one person to their right, with the end person moving to the opposite end of the line.
4. Continue the "conga line" until complete.

Conga Line

Differentiation:

- Provide sentence frames.
- Strategically pair students for peer support.
- Provide students with response boards.

Variations:

- Play music as the line shifts.

Couch Potato/ Aerobics Instructor



Description:

Students take on roles as either a couch potato or an aerobics instructor to pair and discuss academic content.

Steps:

1. Give each student an aerobics instructor or couch potato card.
2. Instruct Couch Potatoes to remain in their seats and Aerobics Instructors to move around the room and choose a Couch Potato.
3. Ask each pair to discuss their response to a prompt for a set amount of time.
4. Instruct students to switch partners to discuss the same or a different prompt.
5. Repeat as necessary.

Couch Potato/ Aerobics Instructor

Differentiation:

- Strategically pair students for peer support.
- Provide sentence frames.
- Post needed vocabulary with pictures.

Variations:

- Use picture cards that relate to unit of instruction (i.e., quarter notes/quarter rests, explorers/settlers, apple trees/apples, protons/neutrons, positive numbers/negative numbers).
- Add more picture cards so that students create groups of three or four.

Envelope/ Definition Relay



Description:

Students work in groups to match definitions with vocabulary words.

Steps:

1. Post an envelope with each vocabulary word written on it.
2. Group students, numbering students in the groups and assigning each group a color.
3. Place a set of definition cards printed on the group's assigned color face down in the middle of each group.
4. Have student #1 draw the first definition from the stack and read the definition to the group. Group members decide in which envelope to place the definition in. Student #1 places the definition in the envelope. Game proceeds with student #2. Then student #3...and so on.
5. Tally each group's points based on the number of definitions correctly placed.

Envelope/ Definition Relay

Differentiation:

- Strategically pair students for peer support.
- Provide illustrations to match definitions.

Variations:

- Have groups write a sentence using the word before adding the definition to the envelope.

Fly Swatter/Fast Finger



Description:

Students point to or “swat” the answer to a question posed by the teacher.

Steps:

1. Post vocabulary words on the board randomly.
2. Place students into two teams. Have teams make a line facing the board.
3. Say the word or read the definition.
4. Have the first person in each line attempt to “swat” the correct word. Whoever is the quickest receives a point for their team.
5. Have students go to the end of the line after they have competed.

Fly Swatter/Fast Finger

Differentiation:

- Vary the difficulty of questions according to student need.
- Match students of similar levels to be opponents.

Variations:

- Fast Finger Game: play in partners at seats and instead of slapping a word, the students point to the word and keep track of their scores.
- Have students pronounce the word, use in a sentence, or define.
- Create a time limit for the students at the starting line.

Find Someone Who/ Interactive Bingo



Description:

Students share information as they complete a checklist of attributes or a bingo card.

Steps:

1. Give students a sheet of questions.
2. Have students “find someone who” can answer one question and write the person’s name and response.
3. Have students find a new person to answer each question.

Find Someone Who/ Interactive Bingo

Differentiation:

- Strategically pair students for peer support.
- Adapt questions and the number of squares to meet student needs.
- Use illustrations with text.

Variations:

- Use a bingo card format.
- Use as an ice breaker for students to get to know each other.
- Use with academic content to allow students to find other students who can answer content questions.



Find the Fib

Description:

Students work together to figure out which two statements are true and which statement is false.

Steps:

1. Divide the students into groups.
2. Provide each group with a set of cards with three statements about a topic on each card. One statement is false and two statements are true.
3. Allow the groups to collaborate and decide which statement is false.

Find the Fib

Differentiation:

- Strategically pair students for peer support.
- Provide sentence frames.
- Use Numbered Heads Together.

Variations:

- Give each group a different set of three cards. After a set time to find the fib, rotate the cards.
- Have students write their own set of “Find the Fib” statements.
- Have the students explain which word in the statement makes the statement true or false.
- Complete as a whole group activity where the teacher says the statements aloud and the students collaborate to find the fib.
- Allow students to respond to statements using Thumbs Up/Thumbs Down or Response Boards.
- Put true/false signs on different sides of the room. Students move to the answer that they agree with and discuss why they chose that answer.
- In math, provide three problems and answers. Ask students to find the incorrect answer by working out the problem.

Find Your Partner/ Mix and Match



Description:

Students must interact to find a partner who has the corresponding card.

Steps:

1. Give half of the class question cards.
2. Give the other half of the class answer cards.
3. Allow students to find matching cards by asking each other questions.

Find Your Partner/ Mix and Match

Differentiation:

- Provide pictures on cards.
- Display content vocabulary.
- Provide language frames for students to use as they question each other.

Variations:

- Have students match vocabulary words with definitions, matching statements, math problems with answers/steps, or pictures with captions.
- Require students to use social greetings when comparing cards to encourage oral language.
- Shuffle cards to allow students to find a new partner.
- Students may work with their partner to complete another assigned task.



Fishbowl

Description:

A few students model a skill or task while other students observe the process.

Steps:

1. Select two or more students to be in the “fishbowl.”
2. Instruct the rest of the students to sit around them and watch as you instruct the students inside the “fishbowl.” Provide an observation sheet for the observers to complete.
3. Guide the conversation and highlight key strategies for observers.
4. Review the key information the “fishbowl” addressed.

Fishbowl

Differentiation:

- Allow “fishbowl” participants to “phone a friend” or seek help from other “fish.”
- Allow time for “fishbowl” participants to discuss, question or practice prior to conducting “fishbowl.”
- Provide sentence frames to aid discussion prior to participating in the “fishbowl.”

Variations:

- Allow the observers to select a particular student to watch during the “fishbowl” to keep the observers actively participating.



Foldable

Description:

Student-constructed visual aid that organizes, displays, and arranges information.

Steps:

1. Determine the appropriate foldable for the content.
2. Model construction of the foldable.
3. Guide students as they create their own foldables.
4. Guide students as they organize, display, and arrange the information on their foldables.

Foldable

Differentiation:

- Display information in written and/or visual form.
- Strategically pair students for peer support.

Variations:

- Jigsaw information for the foldable. Each student fills in a different section then returns to their original group to complete their foldable.
- Save foldable to review concepts and vocabulary.

Frayer Model/ Four Square Vocabulary



Description:

A graphic organizer that contextualizes vocabulary through an illustration, a sentence and a definition.

Steps:

1. Determine the vocabulary/ concept(s) .
2. Have students divide paper into four quadrants.
3. Have students write vocabulary word/concept in the upper-left quadrant.
4. Provide vocabulary instruction and/or instruct students to read a related article.
5. Have students complete the graphic organizer by completing an illustration, a sentence, and a definition in each of the remaining quadrants.

Frayer Model/ Four Square Vocabulary

Word	Illustration
Sentence	Definition

Differentiation:

- Strategically pair students for peer support.
- Frontload vocabulary with visuals/realia.

Variations:

- Have students use their paper to teach vocabulary to others.
- Have students include examples and non-examples in a box.
- Add antonym to the back of the card.
- Play Find Your Partner by cutting Four Square Vocabulary charts apart and having students match their four quadrants and then write a topic sentence together.

Generative Sentences



Description:

Students must place vocabulary terms in specific locations within a sentence.

Steps:

1. Choose a vocabulary word for the students to use and choose the position for the placement of the word in the sentence (i.e., use the word "describe" as the 3rd word in a sentence).
2. Have students create a sentence using the given term in the chosen position.

Generative Sentences

Differentiation:

- Strategically pair students for peer support.

Variations:

- Have words on cards to manipulate into sentences.
- Roll dice for placement of word.
- Have students write sentences on individual dry-erase boards.



Description:

Generating
Interaction
Between Schema
and Text is a
summarizing
strategy in which
students read text
and determine the
main idea.

Steps:

- 1.** Ask students to read a selected piece of text.
- 2.** Instruct students to summarize what they have read in 20 words or less.
- 3.** Instruct students to draw 20 blanks on their paper, one blank for each word.
- 4.** Allow time for students to write their G.I.S.T. on their paper.
- 5.** Allow students to share their G.I.S.T. with the class.

G.I.S.T.

Differentiation:

- Strategically pair students for peer support.
- Provide a list of vocabulary words.

Variations:

- Challenge students to rewrite their summary in 15 words, 10 words, and then to 5 words.
- Group students to read each others' G.I.S.T. statements and work collaboratively to write a group statement.
- Use Numbered Heads Together to have students share their G.I.S.T. statements.

Golden Line Response



Description:

Students read a piece of text, select one line that resonates with them and share it with the group.

Steps:

1. Have students read a piece of text and select one line, sentence or phrase that resonates with them.
2. In groups of four, instruct the first student to share their Golden Line. Other members respond with a question, comment, extension, or connection without further discussion.
3. Have the first student explain why they selected that line.
4. Repeat steps 2 and 3 with all group members.

Golden Line Response

Differentiation:

- Strategically pair students for peer support.
- Provide sentence frames.

Variations:

- Students choose a line of text they need clarified or with which they disagree.

Graphic Organizer



Description:

A visual display that shows the relationship between facts, terms, and/or ideas.

Steps:

1. Determine graphic organizer to be used or allow students to choose appropriate organizer.
2. Model and guide students in using each organizer before having them complete one.
3. Discuss the graphic organizer to review the relationships of information.

Graphic Organizer

Differentiation:

- Strategically pair students for peer support.
- Provide sentence frames and visuals.
- Allow students to become comfortable with one type of organizer before introducing another.

Variations:

- Also referred to as knowledge maps, concept maps, story maps, cognitive organizers, advance organizers, concept diagrams, etc.



I Have/Who Has

Description:

Students read and answer questions from cards. Each card has an answer and poses a new question to be answered.

Steps:

1. Give each student a card with a picture, statement, question, math problem, vocabulary word, etc. Each card has an answer and a new question.
2. To begin, choose a student to read his or her card.
3. Instruct students to listen for the answer to that card. The student who has the answer then reads his or her card entirely. Continue until the last card is read which loops back to the first student and completes the game.

I Have/Who Has

**I have 24.
Who has 2×8 ?**



**I have 16.
Who has 5×9 ?**

Differentiation:

- Strategically pair students for peer support.
- Give students more than one card as a challenge.

Variations:

- Use to solve equations, review vocabulary words or match a picture and a caption.
- Consider using a stopwatch to time the class game. Record the time on the board so that students try to beat the best time.
- Have students create their own I Have/Who Has game to do with the class.

Inside/Outside Circle



Description:

Students stand in two concentric circles to discuss skills or facts related to the lesson.

Steps:

1. Divide students into two equal groups.
2. Have students form two concentric circles with the inside group facing out and the outside group facing inward. Each student should be facing a partner.
3. Have partners respond to a prompt.
4. Instruct one circle to rotate clockwise so that each student faces a new student.
5. Have partners respond to a prompt. Repeat as appropriate for the task.

Inside/Outside Circle

Differentiation:

- Strategically pair students for peer support.
- Provide sentence frames and vocabulary support.
- Form more than one set of circles to differentiate for content difficulty.

Variations:

- Distribute cards that contain vocabulary words. Have partners switch cards before they rotate to the next partner, so students will have to explain the new vocabulary word they just learned.
- Have students rotate seats as they work through questions or problems instead of standing in a circle with the class.



Jigsaw

Description:

Students become experts on assigned content and then teach their team members.

Steps:

1. Divide students into groups and assign each group member a number.
2. Designate areas of the room where like numbers are going to meet (i.e., all #1s will meet together in the back of the room).
3. Have students meet in expert groups to learn new material. Have them determine the key concepts that will be shared with their original group.
4. Instruct students to return to their original group and take turns sharing their mastered information.

Jigsaw

Differentiation:

- Strategically pair students for peer support.
- Assign appropriate level of reading material for students.
- Provide a tool for students to gather information in the expert group (i.e., key questions, sentence frames, graphic organizer or foldable).

Line-Up/Fold-Up



Description:

Students form a single-file line then “fold” so that each student is facing a partner for interaction.

Steps:

1. Determine a topic for students to discuss in pairs.
2. Form a line by placing students based on a predetermined criteria (i.e., height, birthday, ABC order, number order, etc.).
3. Fold line in half by bringing the last person in line to face the first person in line and so on until each student is facing a partner.
4. Allow students to share on one side of the line at a time.
5. Direct one line to move one person to their right, with the end person moving to the opposite end of the line.

Line-Up/Fold-Up

Differentiation:

- Provide a list of academic language to be used in the discussion.
- Provide sentence frames.

Variations:

- Set a time limit for partner sharing.



Novel Ideas Only

Description:

Students brainstorm ideas individually and work in a small group to come up with a common list. Each group adds “novel ideas” to a class list until all ideas are shared.

Steps:

1. Have students brainstorm ideas individually.
2. Allow students to share ideas in a small group and generate a common list.
3. Instruct the groups to draw a line under their list.
4. Instruct all groups to stand up.
5. Have the first group read their list and sit down. Other groups mark off ideas that appear on their list and add new ideas under their line.
6. Have each group add “novel ideas” until all ideas have been reported.

Novel Ideas Only

Differentiation:

- Strategically group students for peer support.

Variations:

- Make a class list of ideas to post during lesson.
- Require groups to prioritize responses by limiting the number of ideas each group can contribute.
- Use to competitively generate vocabulary by having groups first complete a Vocabulary Prediction Chart.

Numbered Heads Together



Description:

Students work together in pairs or small groups to answer a question. Any group member may be called upon to report the group's answer.

Steps:

1. Place students into groups and assign each group a letter.
2. Assign each student within the group a number.
3. Read the first question aloud to students and have students collaborate within each group to reach a consensus on the answer.
4. Call a number. The student from each table with the corresponding number reviews the answer with group members and prepares to share the answer with the class.
5. Randomly select a letter to determine which group shares the answer with the class. If an answer is incorrect, choose another group to answer.
6. Continue process with all the questions.

Numbered Heads Together

Differentiation:

- Strategically group students for peer support.
- Provide sentence frames.

Variations:

- Use student selectors such as spinners, dice, cards, popsicle sticks, etc.
- Require all students to show their work in writing.
- Use response boards for each group.
- Ask all students with the called number to go to the board to simultaneously record their group's answers.

Observation Charts



Description:

In teams, students observe pictures to preview a new unit of study. Students make predictions, answer questions, or make observations.

Steps:

1. Post charts with pictures or text at various locations around the room.
2. Allow teams of students to rotate from chart to chart. Give them a time limit for each chart.
3. Instruct teams to make an observation, ask a question or make a prediction. All team members must agree about what to write.

Observation Charts

Differentiation:

- Strategically group students for peer support.
- Provide sentence frames for observations (i.e., “I predict...” or “I wonder...”).
- Allow students to illustrate their observations.

Variations:

- Have students return to these posters throughout the lesson or unit and add to the charts as they learn.

Pass the Paper/ Progressive Writing



Description:

Students write for a set period of time about a topic and then pass their writing to the next student, who will read and add to the story.

Steps:

1. Pose a question or topic to write about on a piece of paper.
2. Give students time to think before writing.
3. Set time for 1-2 minutes and have each student write.
4. After the time limit is up, instruct students to pass the paper to the next group member.
5. The next group member reads what has been written and adds to it.
6. Continue passing papers until stories are complete.

Pass the Paper/ Progressive Writing

Differentiation:

- Provide a word bank or sentence frames.
- Allow students to illustrate instead of write.

Variations:

- Have students turn their papers into “snowballs” or “airplanes” and toss them across the room. Each student picks up a paper and continues the story.
- Have students revise the last paper they are passed.
- Have students create a story orally, passing a ball or toy periodically so that each student can add on to the story.



R.A.F.T.

Description:

Students write to a teacher-assigned topic according to the acronym:

R=role;

A=audience;

F=format;

T=topic.

Steps:

1. Consider the unit of study and assign a role.
2. Assign audience (to whom author is writing).
3. Assign format of writing.
4. Assign the writing topic.
5. Give students time to write to the prompt.

R.A.F.T.

Role	Audience	Format	Topic
Moon	Astronauts	Advice Column	What to expect on the moon
Fraction	Whole Numbers	Petition	To be included in the family
Romeo	Parents Everywhere	Infomercial	Understanding teenagers

Differentiation:

- Provide paragraph or sentence frames.
- Use a graphic organizer to brainstorm vocabulary and ideas.
- Provide anchor charts with vocabulary words to use.
- Modify role and format as needed.

Variations:

- Allow students to choose the role, audience, format, or topic.

Reader's Theater



Description:

Students are given a role and a text to act out and read aloud.

Steps:

1. Place students in groups to work with selected scripts and assign students in each group the role they will read.
2. Provide time for the groups to practice reading through the scripts. Circulate around the room and give assistance as needed.
3. Have groups take turns "performing" their script for the class.

Reader's Theater

Differentiation:

- Strategically assign roles.
- Assign non-verbal roles (i.e., sounds, props, or scenery).

Variations:

- Have students write their own scripts in groups and perform them.

Reading in 4 Voices



Description:

Students take turns reading assigned portions of a text in small groups.

Steps:

1. Divide a piece of text by phrases or lines that express a chunk of meaning. Type each chunk in a different font style so that there are four font styles.
2. In groups of four, assign each student a font style and have them read the text aloud, each reading only their font style.

Reading in 4 Voices

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?

Thou art more lovely and more temperate:

Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,

And summer's lease hath all too short a date:

Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,

And often is his gold complexion dimm'd;

And every fair from fair sometime declines,

By chance or nature's changing course untrimm'd.

Differentiation:

- Have students switch parts and re-read to increase fluency. Assign the length of parts based on the level of student ability.
- Read text aloud to students and have students read text again silently before instructing students to read aloud.

Variations:

- Have students summarize, predict, and/or determine importance of the text.
- Instead of typing the text, use highlighters to highlight sections of text into four parts.

Reciprocal Teaching



Description:

Students in small groups are given roles that lead to higher comprehension of text.

Steps:

1. Model strategies of summarizing, questioning, clarifying, and predicting during focus lesson before students assume the roles.
2. Group students and choose appropriate text for each small group.
3. Assign each student in a group a role (Summarizer, Questioner, Clarifier, Predictor).
4. Encourage students to discuss text and teach their small group using the role for which they were responsible.

Reciprocal Teaching

Differentiation:

- Choose the reading level of text according to student ability. You may choose various reading texts that present the same information in a different format.
- Assign roles to accommodate students' levels.
- Have students utilize a graphic organizer to record information.
- Provide sentence frames (i.e., I predict that ___).
- Demonstrate with Fishbowl.
- Provide an anchor chart for each role's responsibilities.
- Assign the role of illustrator to allow all to contribute.

Variations:

- Allow students to choose their roles within their groups.
- Allow students with common roles to collaborate before teaching their group.



Sage and Scribe

Description:

Students in pairs take turns being a “Sage” who tells how to perform a task or solve a problem or a “Scribe” who does everything the Sage says step-by-step.

Steps:

1. Put students in pairs and provide each partner with tasks or problems.
2. The Sage gives the Scribe step-by-step instructions to perform the task or solve the problem.
3. The Scribe records the Sage’s solution step-by-step in writing.
4. The students switch roles for the next task/problem. They continue taking turns; each time one person describes and the other records.

Sage and Scribe

Differentiation:

- Strategically pair students for peer support.
- Pair one Sage with several Scribes.
- Provide the Sage with a script.

Variations:

- Have the Sage act out what the Scribe describes.

Semantic Feature Analysis



Description:

A grid to help students explore how concepts or words are related to one another.

Steps:

1. Write targeted vocabulary or concepts in left column of a grid or table.
2. Write characteristics of the chosen words across the top row of the grid.
3. Have students decide if each vocabulary word has the characteristic by marking each box with an appropriate symbol.

Semantic Feature Analysis

Animal	Desert	Mammal	Nocturnal
Tortoise	x	-	-
Bat	x	x	x

Differentiation:

- Allow students to determine the characteristics.
- Provide students with resources (i.e., books, reference materials, or illustrations).
- Provide illustrations on the grid along with the vocabulary and characteristics.

Variations:

- Use as lesson preview, then have students revise to culminate unit.
- Instruct students to write descriptions instead of marking with symbols.



Songs/Chants

Description:

Students learn targeted language and content through rhythm and repetition.

Steps:

1. Write or choose a song or chant that targets the vocabulary of the content you are teaching.
2. Teach the song or chant to the class.
3. Allow students to practice the song or chant.

Songs/Chants

Differentiation:

- Ask students to create their own songs or chants.
- Provide students with visuals or realia.
- Provide students with written lyrics of the song or chant.

Variations:

- Gather pictures or objects that illustrate vocabulary in the song or chant and/or make-up gestures that dramatize the meaning of the targeted vocabulary or phrases.
- Have students perform a play, rap, or movements to demonstrate understanding of targeted vocabulary.
- Use songs to introduce vocabulary, grammar, collocations, cultural/historical issues and idioms.
- Take out words from song lyrics and have students insert other words that would make sense in the phrase.
- Use as a listening activity where students listen to a song and fill in the missing lyrics.

Teach the Text Backwards



Description:

Students complete an application of the content, such as a science lab or other activity before they are asked to discuss the content and read the text.

Steps:

1. Design an activity or application that will activate and build background knowledge (i.e., demonstration, lab, field trip, etc.).
2. Have students complete activity or model the activity for students.
3. Discuss the material with the class and have students answer questions about the activity and the content.
4. Have students read the text last.

Teach the Text Backwards

Differentiation:

- Strategically group students for peer support.
- Provide students with a graphic organizer or foldable to document what they learn, notice, or discover during the activity.

Temperature Check



Description:

Students self-assess their knowledge about specific content using a given rating scale.

Steps:

1. Develop and post a rating scale (i.e., low/medium/high or a percentile scale).
2. Allow time for students to evaluate their own level of proficiency related to a specific skill.
3. Instruct students to post their proficiency level confidentially (i.e., using color-coded sticky notes).
4. Use results to guide instruction.

Temperature Check

Differentiation:

- Allow students to self-assess in pairs.

Variations:

- Have students reassess their understanding at a later time.



Think Aloud

Description:

Teacher models by “thinking aloud” how a skilled learner constructs meaning.

Steps:

1. Establish the purpose of the lesson, select the text, identify key concepts and/or strategies, think of analogies, and identify key language to be modeled.
2. Decide how to activate students’ background knowledge and engage them.
3. Determine stopping points and script the “Think Aloud.”
4. Name the strategy/skill being modeled for the students and explain the purpose and when to use it.
5. Model teacher thinking while the students are engaged in constructing meaning.

Think Aloud

Differentiation:

- Have students practice the skills with partners after the teacher thinks aloud.

Variations:

- Use a variety of resources when thinking aloud.
- Text may or may not be used in modeling the strategy.
- Use post-it notes to mark stopping points and script the Think Aloud.
- Provide students with a graphic organizer or foldable to document what they observe.



TPS (Think-Pair-Share)



Description:

Students are given time to think and/or write about a topic, then share their thoughts with a partner.

Steps:

1. Pair students.
2. Pose a question.
3. Allow students a set amount of time to think of their response.
4. Ask students to share their ideas with a partner.
5. Have students share ideas with another pair or with the whole class.

TPS (Think-Pair-Share)

Differentiation:

- Strategically pair students for peer support.
- Provide sentence frames for partner discussions.

Variations:

- Use with Numbered Heads Together.
- TWPS (Think-Write-Pair-Share) – students write about their thinking before they share with a partner.
- TWPC (Think-Write-Pair-Compare) – students use a Venn diagram to compare their thinking with their partner's.

Thumbs Up/Thumbs Down



Description:

Informal assessment method in which students respond by holding their thumbs up or down.

Steps:

1. Pose a question or make a comment about the content being taught.
2. Ask students to decide if it is true/false or if they agree/disagree.
3. Instruct students to respond with thumbs up/thumbs down.
4. Observe students' responses to decide how to continue instruction.

Thumbs Up/Thumbs Down

Differentiation:

- Allow students to talk in groups or with a partner before showing thumbs up/thumbs down.

Variations:

- Have students respond by standing up/sitting down or with red/green colored signs on a stick.
- Allow students to partner quiz each other and justify their answer.

T.P.R. (Total Physical Response)



Description:

Hand gestures, facial expressions, or whole body movements used to help build background knowledge, clarify meaning or review concepts.

Steps:

1. Teach students the gesture, expression or movement that represents a content concept.
2. Use gestures, expressions or whole body movements to act out part of the lesson, vocabulary word, true/false statement, yes/no question or theory.
3. Repeat as necessary throughout the lesson.

T.P.R. (Total Physical Response)

Differentiation:

- Use simple, short gestures, expressions or movements to meet students' needs.
- Pair students to act out gestures, expressions or movements for better understanding.

Variations:

- Allow students to think of gestures, movements, etc.
- Use with a song or chant.

Vocabulary Log



Description:

Student-constructed journal of new content vocabulary.

Steps:

1. Determine column headings (i.e., word, meaning, illustration, sentences, examples/ non-examples, where found, etc.).
2. Have students add to their log as new vocabulary is encountered.

Vocabulary Log

Word	Meaning	Illustration	Sentence
Adapt (v.)	adjust to different conditions		Animals must adapt to survive.

Differentiation:

- Strategically pair students for peer support.
- Provide sentence frames.

Variations:

- In math, change final column to “application.”

Vocabulary Prediction Chart



Description:

Students predict words that they might see in a chosen text.

Steps:

1. Introduce students to the text that will be read by pointing out pictures, bold words and headings.
2. Provide students with a prediction worksheet that has boxes labeled A to Z.
3. Ask students to predict words that might appear in the text without viewing the text. Students write the words in boxes according to the first letter of the word.

Vocabulary Prediction Chart

Differentiation:

- Allow students to skim the text and highlight the words that they think are important.
- Allow students to predict by drawing pictures.

Variations:

- After reading the passage, instruct students to add unfamiliar words to the chart.
- Have students continue to use as they encounter more vocabulary in the lesson.

Whip Around Share



Description:

In groups of four, students take turns responding to a prompt.

Steps:

1. Group students into groups of four.
2. Pose questions or prompts.
3. Have the first student respond with no discussion.
4. Instruct the second student to repeat what the first student said and give a response with no discussion.
5. Instruct each subsequent student to repeat the previous students' responses and add their own response.

Whip Around Share

Differentiation:

- Emphasize charts, labeled graphic organizers and sentence frames students might use in their responses.
- Have students respond to pictures instead of text.

Variations:

- Allow students to collaborate to create a summary statement or illustration of learning.
- When there is more than one question in the prompt, all four students take turns responding to first question. Then continue with responses to second question and so on.
- Conduct a whole class Whip Around as students listen while teacher poses a question or task. Students are given quiet time to think about what they know and record a number of responses. Teacher “whips” around the class allowing as many students as possible to share an idea or answer in 15 seconds or less. Students will not repeat previous responses. If a response has already been given, students can point out similarities in their ideas by using language structures (i.e., “My idea is similar to ___’s idea” or “I agree with ___ that ___”).

Word Wall



Description:

A specified area in the classroom with displayed academic vocabulary or sight words.

Steps:

1. Create a space/area in the classroom labeled "Word Wall."
2. Identify each letter of the alphabet or categories for the word wall.
3. Place vocabulary word cards under the appropriate letter or in the appropriate category.
4. Refer to the word wall as needed throughout the lesson or school year.

Word Wall

Differentiation:

- Find or have students create pictures to display next to the words on the wall.
- Provide a table with realia representing vocabulary from the wall.
- Code content vocabulary/parts of speech by color (i.e., math words in blue/science words in yellow, or nouns in purple/verbs in green).

Variations:

- Have students create their own portable word wall.
- Have separate word walls that are content specific.

Writing to Learn



Description:

Strategies used before, during, and/or after a lesson that engage students in their own learning, in deepening their understanding of a topic/concept, and in developing their thinking skills.

Crystal Ball:

Students predict what they will learn or what will happen next in a lesson.

Dialogue Journal:

A notebook kept jointly between two people, usually a student and a teacher.

Entry Slip/Admit Slip:

Students provide written responses to questions the teacher poses at the beginning of class.

Writing to Learn

Journaling:

- A reflective activity/assessment in which students write about previous learning.

Ticket Out/Exit Slip:

- Students write responses to questions the teacher poses at the end of class to reflect on what they have learned and express what or how they are thinking about the new information.

Yesterday's News:

- Students spend five minutes at the beginning of class writing a note to a student (real or fictional) who missed the previous class. In their note, students explain how one idea is particularly important.

