

WICOR Strategies

Writing

Cornell Notes/Focused Note taking

<http://coe.jmu.edu/LearningToolbox/cornellnotes.html>

Responsive Writing

Prompts challenge students to clarify ideas, organize information, and express what they have learned.

Thinking Map to Writing

Extend the learning of Thinking Maps by asking students to do a writing activity with the information from the map (consider levels of Blooms when structuring the writing)

Carousel Writing

While Carousel Writing, students will rotate topics in a small group, for a designated amount of time. With each topic, students will activate their prior knowledge of different topics or different aspects of a single topic through jotting down ideas, until eventually the original topic is back to the original owner, who will summarize the thinking into 1-2 sentences. Prior knowledge will be activated, providing scaffolding for new information to be learned in the proceeding lesson activity.

Exit Ticket

- Before students leave for the day or switch classes, they must complete an exit ticket that prompts them to answer a question targeting the big idea of the lesson.
- Determine what question to pose on the exit ticket.
- Ask yourself: "If I've taught this lesson to my students well, what one question should they be able to answer to prove to me they got the big idea?" Once the big idea of the lesson has been identified, the question can be determined. When creating the question, remember that both students and teacher will benefit most from a question that requires a synthesis of newly and previously learned information and an application of new knowledge in relation to themselves.
- Enter the question on the Exit Ticket template.
- At the beginning of class, distribute the Exit Ticket. Take a moment to describe the directions and expectations for the Exit Ticket. Distributing this at the beginning of the lesson will help students focus on the most important ideas.
- Give students time at the end of the lesson to complete their exit ticket.
- Have students line up at the end of the period and turn in their exit ticket on the way out. Now, students can congregate at the door with a purpose!
- Review the tickets and allow the data to inform future instruction.

MiniQs/DBQs

A document is anything written or printed that provides facts or information, such as a map, a letter, or a photograph. A document-based question

(DBQ) is a question that is about one or more of these written or printed source materials. Some document based questions ask for specific information and can be answered in one or two sentences. Others require the students to take information from several documents and use it in an extended piece of writing or essay. These questions may ask the student to analyze, evaluate, or compare the points of view of two or more documents. The question most often expects the student to use knowledge of history as well as the documents to answer an open-ended question about the subject of the documents. Generally, the more documents used to support an answer, the stronger an essay will be.

Word Walls

Word walls are collections of words. These can be alphabetized, and can be posted in various areas of the classroom. The word wall can be used as a reference when children read and write or engage in word study. There are many types of word walls: high frequency words, content area word walls with vocabulary from any of the content areas; and literature word walls. Word study word walls might focus on words with the same beginning, ending, vowel pattern, rime, or similar meanings. They may look like words posted on the wall, words displayed in a pocket chart, or word lists on paper or a bulletin board. Word walls can be developed from the beginning of the year and should change frequently during the year as words are introduced, learned, and mastered.

Inquiry

Socratic Seminar

Socratic seminars typically consist of 50–80 minute periods. In groups of 25 or fewer, students prepare for the seminar by reading a common text (e.g., a novel, poem, essay, or document) or viewing a work of art. The teacher poses questions requiring students to evaluate options and make decisions. In Socratic seminars, students must respond with a variety of thoughtful explanations: they must give evidence, make generalizations, and tell how the information is represented for them. In other words, they must engage in active learning. When they develop knowledge, understanding, and ethical attitudes and behaviors, they are more apt to retain these attributes than if they had received them passively.

Quick Writes-Discussion

A versatile strategy used to develop writing fluency, to build the habit of reflection into a learning experience, and to informally assess student thinking. The strategy asks learners to respond in 2–10 minutes to an open-ended question or prompt posed by the teacher before, during, or after reading.

Use *before*, *during*, and *after* reading to:

- Activate prior knowledge by preparing students for reading, writing, or a discussion
- Increase background knowledge when shared
- Help students make personal connections
- Synthesize learning and demonstrate understanding of key concepts
- Promote reflection about key content concepts
- Reinforce vocabulary
- Encourage critical thinking
- Provide a purpose for reading
- Organize ideas for better comprehension
- Assess student knowledge on the topic prior to reading

Directions

1. Explain that a Quick Write helps engage students in thinking about a content topic before, during, and after reading.
2. Stress that in a Quick Write, students respond to a question or prompt related to the text by writing down whatever comes to their minds without organizing it too much or worrying about grammar.
3. Select a topic related to the text being studied and define the purpose for the quick write:

Examples:

- Summarize what was learned
- Connect to background information or students' lives
- Explain content concepts or vocabulary
- Make predictions, inferences, and hypotheses
- Pose a question that addresses a key point in the reading selection

4. Tell the students how long they will have to do the writing, typically 2–10 minutes.
5. Use the Quick Write as part of instruction, assessment, and discussion.

Critical Thinking Activity

Students work with thought-provoking resources to discuss critical thinking questions among themselves.

Costa's Levels of Questions Activities

Level 1: Basic Input / Gathering Information

Complete	Define	Select
Count	Observe	Recite
Match	Describe	Scan
Name	Identify	List

Level 2: Processing Information

Compare	Explain	Analyze Synthesize
Contrast	Why	Make Analogies
Sort	Infer	
Distinguish	Sequence	

Level 3: Creating Your Own Ideas

Evaluate	Predict	Forecast
Generalize	If/Then	Idealize
Imagine	Speculate	Apply the Principle
Judge	Hypothesize	Problem-Based Learning

Problem-based learning (PBL)

Problem-based learning (PBL) is a student-centered [pedagogy](#) in which students learn about a subject through the experience of creating a problem. Students learn both thinking strategies and domain knowledge.

Working in groups, students identify what they already know, what they need to know, and how and where to access new information that may lead to the resolution of the problem. The role of the [instructor](#) (known as the tutor in PBL) is to facilitate learning by supporting, guiding, and monitoring the learning process.^[2] The tutor must build students' confidence to take on the problem, and encourage the students, while also stretching their understanding.

Visual Discovery

Students view, touch, analyze, and act out images projected. As the teacher asks a series of inquiry questions, students discover key social studies concepts.

The key to a successful Visual Discovery activity is using a few powerful images that represent key concepts of the lesson. The right image will stay in students' minds for months or even years and will serve as a powerful visual referent to help them recall key social studies concepts.

Characteristics of images that that will grab students' attention:

- Images that clearly convey the key concepts you are trying to teach.
- Images that show emotion, drama, or human interaction.
- Images with abundant details that are connected to the reading.
- Variety of images.

OPTIC

OPTIC is an organized approach for teaching students how to read visual or graphic text closely. As noted in *How to Study in College* (2001) by Walter Pauk, the five letters in the word OPTIC provide a mnemonic device to remember the five key elements in analyzing a visual.

O is for Overview

- Conduct a brief overview of the main subject of the visual.

P is for Parts

- Scrutinize the parts of the visual.
- Note any elements or details that seem important.

T is for Title

- Read the title or caption of the visual (if present) for added information.

I is for Interrelationships

- Use the words in the title or caption and the individual parts of the visual to determine connections and relationships within the graphic.

C is for conclusion

- Draw a conclusion about the meaning of the visual as a whole.
- Summarize the message in one or two sentences.

OPTIC can be used with any visual or graphic text, including photographs, diagrams, charts, and fine art.

Collaboration

Philosophical Chairs Debate

1. Read the philosophical statement and decide if you agree or disagree.
2. Sit facing each other across the center of the room depending on your response to the statement.
3. If undecided, sit in the neutral zone so that you can see both sides.
4. Students address each other by their first names.
5. Briefly summarize the previous speaker's points before stating his/her own comments.
6. Think before you speak and organize your thoughts (I have three points to make....first....).
7. After speaking, wait until at least two students speak before speaking again.
8. One speaker at a time, others are listeners.
9. Address the ideas, not the person.
10. Students sitting in the neutral zone must take notes on both sides. If his/her position changes, she may move to the appropriate side and then must state why he/she came to this conclusion.

Jigsaw Activities

Jigsaw is a cooperative learning structure for introducing new content. Students are divided into home teams, small groups of 3-4 students. Students within a home team share in the responsibility of learning content information. The teacher divides the information into smaller parts. Each home team member becomes an expert who teaches the content of the individual part to the whole group.

Interactive Notebook

- Make sure students have appropriate materials.
To create Interactive Student Notebooks, students must bring their materials to class each day.
- Have students record class notes on the right side of the notebook.
The right side of the notebook—the “input” side—is used for recording class notes, discussion notes, and reading notes. Typically, all “testable” information is found here. Historical information can be organized in the form of traditional outline notes. However, the right side of the notebook is also an excellent place for the teacher to model how to think graphically by using illustrated outlines, flow charts, annotated slides, T-charts, and other graphic organizers. There are many visual ways to organize historical information that enhance understanding. The right side of the notebook is where the teacher organizes a common set of information that all students must know.
- Have students process information on the left side of the notebook.
The left side—the “output” side—is primarily used for processing new ideas. Students work out an understanding of new material by using illustrations, diagrams, flow charts, poetry, colors, matrices, cartoons, and the like. Students explore their opinions and clarify their values on controversial issues, wonder about “what if” hypothetical situations, and ask questions about new ideas. And they review what they have learned and preview what they will learn. By doing so, students are encouraged to see how individual lessons fit into the larger context of a unit and to work with and process the information in ways that help them better understand history. The left side of the notebook stresses that writing down lecture notes does not mean students have learned the information. They must actively do something with the information before they internalize it.

Four-Corner Discussion

- Write a controversial statement on the board for all students to see.
- Then have them write on a piece of paper whether they strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with the statement and why. No consulting with their neighbors on this one - just their opinion.
- Once they have done this, have them go to corners of the room based on their responses (in other words, all the strongly agrees to one corner, the agrees to another, etc.).
- Give them some time to talk with others of the same feeling, to choose a spokesperson and to devise a case to present to their classmates in the interests of winning people over to their corner. In their conversation, they usually end up rereading the text for evidence, using a dictionary to look up words, and making a list of reasons why they are right.
- Once they are ready, each spokesperson presents the group’s case to the class while they listen quietly.
- Then give them time at the end to ask questions or challenge other groups.
- Finally, close by asking them to think about what they have heard and then move to a new corner if they were swayed by another group’s presentation. This activity really gets them involved and interested. Plus it lends itself to close reading.

Fishbowl

This is a protocol in which several students sit in an inner circle and the rest of the class is watching their discussion from the outside. The inner circle is referred to as the “fishbowl” because of the way they are being observed. A specific topic would be addressed with specific rules about how the students are to conduct their conversation. The rest of the class is asked to give their observations at a specified point for the fishbowl to consider as they continue their discussion.

Gallery Walk

Gallery Walk is a discussion technique that gets students out of their chairs and into a mode of active engagement. The advantage of the method is its flexibility and the variety of benefits for students and instructor alike. A Gallery Walk can be conducted with computers (a “Computer Run”), with pieces of paper on tables, or with posted chart paper. It can be scheduled for fifteen minutes (a “Gallery Run”) or for several class periods. For students it’s a chance to share thoughts in a more intimate, supportive setting rather than a larger, anonymous class. For instructors, it’s a chance to gauge the depth of student understanding of particular concepts and to challenge misconceptions.

Think-Pair-Share

This strategy, a problem is posed, students have time to *think* about it individually, and then they work in *pairs* to solve the problem and *share* their ideas with the class. Think-Pair-Share is easy to use within a planned lesson, but is also an easy strategy to use for spur-of-the-moment discussions. This strategy can be used for a wide variety of daily classroom activities such as concept reviews, discussion questions, partner reading, brainstorming, quiz reviews, topic development, etc. Think-Pair-Share helps students develop conceptual understanding of a topic, develop the ability to filter information and draw conclusions, and develop the ability to consider other points of view.

Experiential Exercise/Simulation

Through the use of movement and introspection, students capture a moment or feeling that is central to understanding a particular concept or historical event. Experiential exercises bring to life key concepts so that students experience them physically and emotionally. Whether students are working on an assembly line, being taxed against their will, or creating a web of global trade, these memorable simulations make abstract concepts concrete and meaningful. Experiential exercises should be used selectively.

Organization

Binders

Organization must be explicitly taught to students. There are many methods of organizations and once students have mastered a particular method, they may find a different method that they prefer. But, it is essential that they learn at least one method well. AVID Center focuses on the 3-ring binder as that method. Providing students 1 minute at the end of class to organize their materials in their binders will make a huge difference in binder effectiveness. 3-hole punches should be available if papers are not pre-punched.

Binder Organization: Main Sections (in this order): AVID, English, Reading, Math, Social Studies, other electives

Requirements for each section

- Assignment sheet
- Class Information
- Notes
- Current work

Agendas

Students must learn to keep track of their time, commitments, and due dates. To encourage this, model this at the beginning of class, at the end of class and build in time for students to calendar items. Hold them accountable weekly for up-to-date agendas.

Wall Calendars

Wall calendars in classrooms can be an effective tool for all teachers to model organization. Assign students to list homework/tests/due dates for assignments from all classes. Great tool to use in advisory classes.

Learning Logs

An alternative to note taking, learning logs can be used by students to summarize their learning in a particular class. They can address the overall lesson, what they learned, answer the Essential Question, or something else. These should be included in the correct section of their binders.

Reading

Frayer Vocab Squares

To promote vocabulary development and student thinking

Using the Frayer Model, students will activate their prior knowledge of a topic, organize knowledge into categories, and apply their new knowledge to the compartmentalized structure.

1. Brainstorm a list of ideas related to your topic.
2. Have students read a selection or participate in an activity related to your topic.
3. Pass out a blank copy of the Frayer Four-Square Model.

4. Using their brainstormed words and new knowledge of a topic, students will group their words into one of four categories: Essential Characteristics, Non-essential Characteristics, Examples, and Non-examples.

5. Have students add additional words to the Frayer Model until all four categories are substantially represented.

SQ3R

This is a method of tackling a reading assignment for students of all levels of experience. The SQ3R method suggests a plan for surveying a given assignment, questioning the author's purpose, reading the assignment in its entirety, reciting the lesson in some note-taking format, and reviewing the assignment for understanding. Suggested steps of this method include:

- Before you read: SURVEY THE READING
- While you are surveying: QUESTION THE PURPOSE
- When you begin the assignment: READ STRAIGHT THROUGH
- After you have read: RECITE THE LESSON
- An ongoing process: REVIEW THE LESSON

If all of the materials from a reading assignment have been organized, regular review of your study materials will eliminate the need to "cram" before a test. When preparing for a cumulative test, review of all of your previous study materials will assist in seeing broad relationships, overarching themes, and change over time.

KWL

Many teachers think they know how to use a KWL chart, but instead, often misuse this powerful learning tool. Used correctly, it helps students make connections between their prior knowledge or initial understandings and new information they will be learning. It allows students to generate questions that interest them within the boundaries dictated by the curriculum and/or the teacher.

Jigsaw

The cooperative learning strategy known as the "jigsaw" technique helps students create their own learning. Teachers arrange students in groups. Each group member is assigned a different piece of information. Group members then join with members of other groups assigned the same piece of information, and research and/or share ideas about the information. Eventually, students return to their original groups to try to "piece together" a clear picture of the topic at hand.

Think-Alouds

Think Alouds help students learn to monitor their thinking as they read an assigned passage. Students are directed by a series of questions which they think about and answer aloud while reading. This process reveals how much they understand a text. As students become more adept at this technique they learn to generate their own questions to guide comprehension.

Begin by modeling this strategy. Model your thinking as you read. Do this at points in the text that may be confusing for students (new vocabulary, unusual sentence construction). Then introduce the assigned text and discuss the purpose of the Think Aloud strategy. Then develop the set of questions to support thinking aloud (see examples below).

1. What do I know about this topic?
2. What do I think I will learn about this topic?
3. Do I understand what I just read?
4. Do I have a clear picture in my head about this information?
5. What more can I do to understand this?
6. What were the most important points in this reading?
7. What new information did I learn?
8. How does it fit in with what I already know?

Literary Circles

This is a collaborative and student-centered reading strategy. Students begin by selecting a book together then are introduced to the four jobs in the Literature Circles: Discussion Director, Literary Luminary, Vocabulary Enricher, and Checker. The teacher and student volunteers model the task for each of the four roles, and then students practice the strategies. The process demonstrates the different roles and allows students to practice the techniques before they are responsible for completing the tasks on their own. After this introduction, students are ready to use the strategy independently, rotating the roles through four-person groups as they read the books they have chosen. The lesson can then be followed with a more extensive literature circle project.

APPARTS

The acronym APPARTS provides students with prompts that gives them a format for dissecting and analyzing primary sources. Once students are comfortable using this strategy they will have a valuable analytical tool.

Author: Who created the source? What do you know about the author? What is the author's point of view?

Place and time: Where and when was the source produced? How might this affect the meaning of the source?

Prior knowledge: Beyond information about the author and the context of its creation, what do you know that would help you further understand the primary source? For example, do you recognize any symbols and recall what they represent?

Audience: For whom was the source created and how might this affect the reliability of the source?

Reason: Why was this source produced, and how might this affect the reliability of the source?

The main idea: What point is the source is trying to convey?

Significance: Why is this source important? Ask yourself "So what?" in relation to the question asked.

SOAPS

SOAPStone can be used as an introductory strategy for primary source analysis. It can be used to build fundamental skills for AP work: developing arguments; analyzing points of view, context, and bias; and assessing issues of change and continuity over time. The elements include:

Speaker: Who or what delivers the message of the passage? (This may not always be the author.)

Occasion: Where and when was the passage produced?

What was happening there at that time?

Audience: For whom was the document produced?

Purpose: Why was the document produced?

Subject: What is the main topic of the document?

Tone: What feeling or attitude does the document express?

This strategy can be used to analyze political cartoons, posters, photos, artistic representations, or almost any other primary source.