CHECKING FOR UNDERSTANDNG STRATEGIES

Summary Poem Activity:

• List 10 key words from an assigned text.

• Do a free verse poem with the words you highlighted.

• Write a summary of the reading based on the words you highlighted.

Invent the Quiz

• Write 10 higher-order text questions related to the content.

Pick 2 and answer them in half a page.

The 411

• Describe the author’s objective.

Opinion Chart

• List opinions about the content in one half of a T-chart,and support your opinions in the right column.

So What? Journal

• Identify the main idea of the lesson. Why is it important?

Rate Understanding

Teacher Observation Checklist

Explaining

• Explain the main idea using an analogy.

Evaluate

• What is the author’s main point? What are the arguments for and against this idea?

Describe

• What are the important characteristics or features of the main concept or idea of the reading?

Define

• Pick out an important word or phrase that the author introduces. What does this word or phrase mean?

Compare & Contrast

• Identify the theory or idea the author is advancing. Then identify an opposite theory. What are the similar.

Question Stems

• I believe that because\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

• I am confused by\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .

Mind Map

• Create a mind map that represents a concept using a classmate with the link to your mind map.

Intrigue Journal

• List the five most interesting, controversial, or resonant ideas you found in the readings. Include page #s and a short rationale (100 words) for your selection.

Advertisement

• Create an ad, with visuals and text, for the newly learned concept.

5 Words

• What 5 words would you use to describe? Explain and justify your choices.

Muddy Moment

• What frustrates and confuses you about the text? Why?

Collage

• Create a collage around the lesson’s themes. Explain your choices in one paragraph.

Letter

• Explain in a letter to your best friend.

Talk Show Panel

• Have a cast of experts debate the finer points of.

Study Guide

• What are the main topics, supporting details, important person’s contributions, terms, and definitions?

Illustration

• Draw a picture that illustrates a relationship between terms in the text. Explain in one paragraph your visual representation.

KWL Chart

• What do you know, what do you want to know, and what have you learned?

Sticky Notes Annotation

• Use sticky notes to describe key passages that are notable or that you have questions about.

3-2-1

• 3 things you found out, 2 interesting things, and 1 question you still have.

Outline

• Represent the organization of by outlining it.

Anticipation Guide

• Establish a purpose for reading and create post-reading reflections and discussion.

Simile

• What we learned today is like.

The Minute Paper

• In 1 minute, describe the most meaningful thing you’ve learned.

Interview You

• You’re the guest expert on *60 Minutes*. Answer:

1) What are component parts of ?

2) Why does this topic matter?

Double Entry Notebook

• Create a two-column table. Use the left column to write down 5–8 important quotations. Use the right column to record reactions to the quotations.

Comic Book

• Use a comic book creation tool like Bitstrips to represent understanding.

Tagxedo

• What are key words that express the main ideas? Be ready to discuss and explain.

Classroom TED Talk

Podcast

• Play the part of a content expert and discuss content related issues on a podcast, using the free Easypodcast.

Create a Multimedia Poster

Twitter Post

• Define in under 140 characters.

Explain Your Solution

• Describe how you solved an academic solution step-by-step.

Dramatic Interpretation

• Dramatize a critical scene from a complex narrative.

Ballad

• Summarize a narrative that employs a poem or song structure that using short stanzas.

Pamphlet

• Describe the key features of in a visually and textually compelling pamphlet.

Study Guide

• Create a study guide that outlines main ideas.

Bio Poem

• To describe a character or a person, write

a poem that includes:

Line 1) First Name

Line 2) 3–4 adjectives that describe the person

Line 3) Important relationship

Line 4) 2–3 things, people, or ideas that the

person loved

Line 5) 3 feelings the person experienced

Line 6) 3 fears the person experienced

Line 7) Accomplishments

Line 8) 2–3 things the person wanted to see happen

or wanted to experience

Line 9) His or her residence

Line 10) Last name

Sketch

• Visually represent new knowledge.

Top 10 List

• What are the most important takeaways, written with humor?

Color Cards

• Red = Stop, I need help.

• Green = Keep going, I understand.

• Yellow = I’m a little confused.

Quickwrite

• Without stopping, write what most confuses you.

Conference

• A short, focused discussion between the teacher and

student.

Debrief

• Reflect immediately after an activity.

Misconception Check

• Given a common misconception about a topic, students explain why they agree or disagree with it.

Go-around

When a one-or two-word answer can show understanding, self-or group assessment, or readiness for a task, teachers ask students to respond to a standard prompt one at a time, in rapid succession around the room.

Whiteboards

Students have small white boards at their desks or tables and write their ideas/thinking/answers down and hold up their boards for teacher and/or peer scanning.

Hot Seat

The teacher places key reflection or probing questions on random seats throughout the room. When prompted, students check their seats and answer the questions. Students who do not have a hot seat question are asked to agree or disagree with the response and explain their thinking.

Fist-to-Five or Thumb-O-meter

To show degree of agreement, readiness for tasks, or comfort with a learning target/concept, students can quickly show their thinking by putting their thumbs up, to the side or down; or by holding up (or placing a hand near the opposite shoulder) a fist for 0/Disagree or 1-5 fingers for higher levels of confidence or agreement.

Glass, Bugs, Mud

After students try a task or review a learning target or assignment, they identify their understanding or readiness for application using the windshield metaphor for clear vision. Glass: totally clear; bugs: a little fuzzy; mud: I can barely see.

Red Light, Green Light

Students have red, yellow, and green objects accessible (e.g. popsicle sticks, poker chips, cards), and when prompted to reflect on a learning target or readiness for a task, they place the color on their desk that describes their comfort level or readiness (red: stuck or not ready; yellow: need support soon; green: ready to start). Teachers target their support for the reds first, then move to yellows and greens. Students change their colors as needed to descry ibe their status.

Table Tags

Place paper signs/table tents in three areas with colors, symbols or descriptors that indicate possible student levels of understanding or readiness for a task or target. Students sit in the area that best describes them, moving to a new area when relevant. L.

Sticky Bars

Create a chart that describes levels of understanding, progress or mastery. Have students write their names or use an identifying symbol on a sticky note and place their notes on the appropriate place on the chart.

Learning Line-ups

Identify one end of the room with a descriptor such as “Novice” or “Beginning” and the other end as “Expert” or “Exemplary”. Students place themselves on this continuum based on where they arewith a task or learning target. Invite them to explain their thinking to the whole class or the people near them.

Human Bar Graph

Identify a range of levels of understanding or mastery (e.g. beginning/developing/ accomplished or Confused/I’m okay/I am rocking!) as labels for 3-4 adjacent lines. Students then form a human bar graph by standing in the line that best represents their current level of understanding.

Admit and Exit Tickets

Any relevant questions, prompts, or graphic displays of student thinking can be captured on a small sheet of paper and scanned by the teacher or other students to determine a student’s readiness for the next step or assess learning from a lesson. Teachers may use admit slips as a “ticket to enter” a discussion, protocol or activity. These may also be used as “tickets to leave.”

Presentation Quizzes

Whenever peers present, other students may think they are not responsible for the information. Pair student presentations and sharing with short quizzes at the end of class.

Catch and Release

When students are working on their own, they often need clarification or pointers so that they do not struggle for too long of a period or lose focus. A useful ratio of work time to checks for understanding or clarifying information is seven minutes of work time (release), followed by two minutes of teacher-directed clarifications or use of one of the quick- check strategies (catch).

Four Corners

“Four Corners” is an interactive way for students to demonstrate their thinking, or solidify new information about a topic.

Procedure:

1. Determine a question for students to consider

2. Create 4 choice sheets, each with a different word or phrase that responds to the question

3. Post each of the 4 choice sheets in a different corner (or area) of the room

4. Pose the question to students, and direct

them to respond, or ‘vote,’ by moving to one of the four corners

5.Once students are in corners, ask them to talk with other students in their corner about why they chose that response

Milling to Music

“Milling to Music” is a Checking for Understanding Technique where students can share their thinking, class work, or homework in an interactive way with their peers. This activity is similar to Musical Chairs, except there are no chairs and no one gets ‘tagged-out.’

While the music is playing, students should dance around to move throughout the room; when the music stops, each student will share his/her thinking or work with the student closest to her/him. Have students do this twice, so they have the opportunity to share with two peers.

Tic-Tac-Toe/Think-Tac-Toe

A collection of activities from which students can choose to demonstrate their understanding. It is presented in the form of a 9 square grid similar to a Tic-Tac-Toe board and students may be expected to complete from 1-3 in a row. Activities vary in content, process, process, product which can be tailored to address Demonstration of Knowledge levels.

3 Minute Pause

Provides a chance for students to stop, reflect on concepts and ideas that have been introduced, make connections to prior knowledge or experience, and seek clarification.

* I changed my attitude about……
* I became more aware of…..
* I was surprised about…….
* I felt……..
* I related to…….
* I empathized with……..

A,B,C Summaries

To promote academic language, each student in the class is assigned a different letter of the alphabet. They must select a word starting with that letter that is related to that topic being studied. These words can be placed on a unit based word wall.

One Question, One Comment

Following a reading passage, students are asked to create one questions and one comment generated from the reading. In class, students will either meet in small or whole class groups for discussion.

Onion Ring

Students form inner and outer circles facing a partner. The teacher asks a question and the students are given a set amount of time to respond to their partner. Next, the inner circle rotates one person to the left. The teacher asks another question and the cycle repeats.

Socratic Seminar

Students ask questions of one another about an essential question, topic, or selected text. The questions initiate a conversation that continues with a series of responses and additional questions.

Newspaper Headline

Create a newspaper headline that may have been written for the topic students are studying. Capture the main idea of the event.

Gallery walk

Teams generate ideas on a given topic and post/write on large topic paper. Teams then rotate, while one person remains to explain and answer questions about the topic.

Think, Pair, Share

Teacher gives students directions. Students formulate individual responses, and then turn to their partner to share answers.

Think, Write, Pair, Share

Students think individually, write their thinking, and then pair with a partner to discuss.

RSQ2

In two minutes,(R) students recall and list in rank order the most important ideas from the previous days lesson. (S) in two minutes, they summarize those points in a single sentence. (Q) students list two (2) questions they still want answered.

I have, who has?

Teacher makes two sets of questions (one set of questions related to unit being studies, one set containing the answers to the questions). Distribute answer cards to students, and either the teacher or a student, reads the question cards to the class.

Say Something

Students take turns leading discussion in a cooperative group on sections on a reading or a video clip.

Flag-it

Students use this strategy to help them remember information that is important to them. They will “flag” their ideas on a sticky note.