Triple R Teaching

Hello, this is Anna Geiger from Reach All Readers, and this is almost the end of my

"Reach All Readers" coming on July 23rd, 2024. Today I'm sharing a simple activity that you can do with your students to help them improve comprehension of a text through writing.

Before I get into it, I want to share a quick endorsement for the book from my friend, Lindsay Kemeny, whom you know as the author of "Seven Mighty Moves," an excellent, excellent book for teachers learning about the science of reading. She wrote, "Anna's clear and concise writing makes complex topics easy to understand. Packed with valuable info, her book is a go-to resource for elementary teachers and deserves a spot on your bookshelf." Thank you so much, Lindsay.

Now I'd like to go into this very quick, simple way that you can help your students understand the texts they read better.

Research tells us that writing about content material increases student learning in social studies, science, math, and language arts, and students comprehend text better when they write about it. But I want to be clear that you can start off by doing the writing yourself as long as your students are active participants in the process - they tell you what to write, they answer questions, they talk to a partner and then you call on someone.

When this is a process that you're all sharing, you can absolutely have them "write about the text" by helping you write about the text. It's all about the I Do, We Do, You Do model. Don't initially think you have to dive into having students do their own writing. Start by modeling it with them.

I did this activity recently with a group of third graders. We did a sentence expansion activity. First we choral read a passage about a particular topic. One was about the wolverine, another one was about mother pigs that live in the wild. After each passage, I presented a very short sentence related to the text, and then we expanded that sentence using what we knew from the text.

For example, with wolverines, my sentence was, "Wolverines hunt." Then I said, what kind of wolverines? They used information from the text to describe the wolverines, mostly by their color. Then I said, what do wolverines hunt? They looked at the text and they listed all the things that wolverines hunt. Then I said, how do they hunt? Again they referred to the text and we talked about how they hunt with their claws. Then we put all that information together into a single sentence. "Brown wolverines hunt mammals and other small animals using their claws." And that was it; it was just a very simple activity.

I was doing all the writing in front of them on a dry erase board, and every time I added new information, we would read the new sentence. First we read, "Brown wolverines hunt." Then we read "Brown wolverines hunt small mammals and birds." Then we read "Brown wolverines hunt small mammals and birds by using their sharp claws."

Gradually, you can have your students do the writing in pairs as you move around the room and support them, and eventually they can do this on their own. You would provide that simple sentence, then provide all those other sentences that they're going to have to answer to add more information, and then they can put it into a final complete sentence.

That's just one way that kids can respond to their reading in writing. There are so many other ways, and I share quite a few in chapter nine of my book, Linking Reading and Writing. You can pre-order the book "Reach All Readers" anywhere books are sold online, Amazon, Barnes & Noble, Target, B-A-M, or Thriftbooks. Thanks so much for considering, and I'll talk to you next time!

That's all for this episode of Triple R Teaching. For more educational resources, visit Anna at her home base, reachallreaders.com, and join our teaching community. We

Teaching.