Teaching the Common Core and English Language Proficiency Standards:
Lesson Frameworks for Teaching Students to Determine Word Meanings in Literary and Informational Text

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Chapter 10

Text Features Scavenger Hunts

CCSS Standards in a *Text Features Scavenger Hunt* Lesson

Text Feature Scavenger hunts are fun but they are also teaching students critical skills they need to read and understand informational text.

Reading Standard 5, Informational Text:

- Know and use various text features to locate key facts or information in a text (1st, 2nd).
- Use text features and search tools to locate information relevant to a given topic efficiently (3rd).

Reading Standard 7, Informational Text:

- Explain how specific images contribute to and clarify a text (2nd) .
- Use information gained from illustrations and the words in a text to demonstrate understanding of the text (3rd).
- Interpret information presented visually, orally, or quantitatively and explain how the information contributes to an understanding of the text in which it appears (4th).

(The main purpose of a *Text Features Scavenger Hunt* is to teach students how to use the special text features and visuals which are integral to informational text.)

Reading Standard 4, Informational Text:

- Determine the meaning of words and phrases in a text relevant to a grade 2 topic or subject area (2nd).
- Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases in a grade-level text, topic or subject area (3rd, 4th, 5th).

Language Standard 4: Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases by using context clues, analyzing meaningful word parts and consulting general and specialized reference materials, as appropriate (anchor).

(Focusing attention on "bold words" and having them either consult the glossary or figure out the meaning from the text helps students meet reading standard 4 and language standard 4.)

Speaking and Listening Standard 1:

- Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about grade level topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups (K, 1st, 2nd).
- Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups and teacher-led) on grade level topics and texts building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly (3rd, 4th, 5th).

(The *Text Feature Scavenger Hunt* lesson framework uses a combination of small-group (trio) and teacher-led collaborative conversations with diverse partners to discuss various aspects of the content of the text.)

Look at any piece of informational text—a magazine article, a textbook chapter, a Gail Gibbons book and you will see many features you don't see in stories, poems or plays. The most noticeable feature of informational text is a variety of visuals—drawings, photos, maps, charts, graphs and diagrams are common features of informational text. The next thing you will probably find are headings that signal the main ideas of each section and, sometimes, sub-headings. Within the text, you will notice some bold words. These are important vocabulary terms that are often defined in the text and sometimes further clarified in a glossary. Most informational text contains many words students may not how to pronounce and in parenthesis next to some words, there is a handy guide to that words pronunciation (pro-NUN-see-a-shun). If the text is divided into chapters, you can probably find a table of contents in the beginning and an index at the end which will let you quickly locate specific information in that text.

With all these helpful features, students should be more successful at reading informational text than they are at reading stories. Most of us know the opposite is true. Most elementary students comprehend stories better than they comprehend information text. How can that be? Most likely, the explanation is simple. Most children don't know what all these helpful features are for or how to use them. Text Feature Scavenger Hunt Lessons are designed to teach students to make maximum use of all the special features they find in informational text. In order to complete the hunt, they have to use all the features a particular piece of informational text contains.

Here is an example of a *Text Features Scavenger Hunt* lesson in a social studies class. The students were about to read a chapter on the era of the Great Depression. First, they will go on a scavenger hunt, learning from the visuals and other special features of the text. This is the first scavenger hunt so Mr. Y begins by having teams scavenge for things in the classroom and then the students scavenge for things in the text.

Introduce the Concept of a Scavenger Hunt.

Mr. Y begins the lesson by asking students who has gone on a scavenger hunt. Only two students have done this. They share their experiences and explain that you have to find things and you only a limited amount of time. The team that finds the most things wins the scavenger hunt.

Next, Mr. Y asks if anyone can guess why we call it a scavenger hunt. One student volunteers that some animals are scavengers. Using examples students relate to—raccoons rummaging in trashcans, vultures eating roadkill, Mr. Y leads the students to realize that a scavenger is someone who finds things and eats or collects them. [TIP Seize every opportunity to build meanings for words and you will increase the size of all your student's vocabularies!]

"Soon we are going to scavenge for information in a chapter we will read later this week. But we are going to begin by doing a quick scavenger hunt in our classroom. Please gather in your reading trios and I will give you a list of things I want you to find in the classroom. You will have three minutes to find as many of the items on the list as you can and write what you found on this sheet. The team that finds the most items will win the scavenger hunt."
The students assemble themselves into trios. [TIP: Three is the magic number for small-group work in elementary classrooms. If the group size is too large, some students spend time vying for control of the group and other students just sit and let the bossy ones do the work!]

Mr. Y hands each trio a Classroom Scavenger Hunt Sheet and sets the timer for three minutes.

Classroom Scavenger Hunt You have three minutes to find and write the name of an object that matches the description.		
something green _____	something opaque _____	something made of cloth _____
something rectangular _____	something oval _____	something taller than Mr. H _____
something you can see through _____	something that can move _____	something white _____
something made of glass _____	something growing _____	something breakable _____
something alive _____	something brown _____	something you can put things in _____
something made of wood _____	something liquid _____	something you can't move _____
something red _____	something you can read _____	something you can eat _____

something you can write on _____	something smaller than your thumb _____	something that can talk _____
something made of plastic _____	something rough _____	something you can turn off _____
something 8 inches long _____	something shiny _____	something you can't reach _____

When the timer signals that the three minutes are up, Mr. Y tells students to finish writing the item they were on and then together they tally up the score. The winning team found 17 things in 3 minutes. As they cheer, they want to know if they get a prize. "Bragging rights," responds Mr. Y.

Set Lesson Purpose

Mr. Y begins the lesson by showing students several pages of a chapter book they have recently read and several pages from the social studies book.

"I know you haven't had time to read these pages but which one do you think is a story and which one is information?"

The class quickly decides that the one with no pictures is the story and the one with "all the pictures" is information. Mr. Y then flips through the pages of the social studies text and asks them besides pictures, what else is different about the informational text. She leads her students to notice that the social studies text contains maps, charts, bold words and headings.

"We call these special things that informational text has but story text doesn't usually have informational text features. Today we are going to look at this chapter in our social studies book and see how much we can learn from these special text features. We are going to go on a scavenger hunt in our book and see how much information we can find just by focusing on pictures, captions, graphs, charts, bold words and other special features of informational text."

I Do and You Watch

Mr. Y hands out one copy of the social studies book to each trio and asks them to turn to page 368. (TIP: Hand the book to the least able reader in the trio. There is status in holding the book!)

"Now we are going to go on a scavenger hunt in our social studies books. We are going to use the visuals and other features of the book to find answers to questions. Just as in our classroom scavenger hunt, you will have a limited amount of time—20 minutes-- and probably won't be

able to find everything. At the end of 20 minutes, we will come together and see what you found and determine the winner." I am going to do a few for you to get you started and then the 20 minutes will start."

Mr. Y hands the Great Depression Scavenger Hunt to one student in each trio. (TIP: Hand the sheet to the most able writer. The writing will go much more quickly!)

Great Depression Scavenger Hunt

Use the visuals and other special text features to answer these questions. Indicate where you found the answers. You have 20 minutes to find as many answers as you can. Your team will get one point for every correct answer and another point for writing where you found the answer.

Question	**Your Answer**	**Where did you find answer?**
What instrument did Louis Armstrong play?		
What was the name of the dog on RCA's label?		
What was the name of a Charlie Chaplin movie?		
How many Ford cars were sold in 1920??? In 1929??? (2pts.)		
What new buildings were built in New York City in the 1920's?		
What year had the most business failures?		
About how many people lost their jobs in 1933?		
What 5 states were in the Dust Bowl region? (5 pts.)		
Which president began the New Deal programs?		
In what year did Charles Lindbergh fly across the Atlantic?		
What is the 5th step in assembling a car in Henry Ford's factory?		

What is the first major heading in this chapter?		
What is the last major heading in this chapter?		
Use the index to decide on what page you will find information about:		
Herbert Hoover		
Clarence Birdseye		
Henry Ford		
Find 3 bold words and write their glossary definition.		
Here are the pronunciations for three words. Write the word and the page on which you found it.		
ur-buh-nuh-ZAY-shun		
in-dus-tree-uh-luh- ZAY-shun		
byu-RAH-kruh-see		

Mr. Y reads the first question aloud and then says.

"I see a picture of Louis Armstrong at the top of page 369 and he has a trumpet. I will write *trumpet* in this box and P. 542 in the next box.

Question	**Your Answer**	**Where did you find answer?**
What instrument did Louis Armstrong play?	trumpet	photo, p 542

“You don’t have to go in order on a scavenger hunt and I see the answer to another question right here so I will fill that one in.”

What is the first major heading in this chapter?	New Forms of Expression	P. 542

“The writer in each trio should fill in these two answers on your sheet. Now, help me do two more and then I will turn you loose to find the rest of the answers.”

I Do and You Help

“Who can find the answer to the second question? Someone quickly locates the photo of the dog and reads the caption that accompanies the photo. Mr. Y and writer in each trio fill in this answer.”

What was the name of the dog on RCA’s label?	Nipper	caption, p. 543

“Good, now go to the very bottom or the sheet. The word is written the way it is pronounced. We need to find that word and figure out what it is. Help me find it. The word and page are quickly found and everyone records this answer.”

byu-RAH-kruh-see	bureaucracy	p. 549

You Do it Together and I Help

“You have 20 minutes to find as many answers as you can. The time begins now!”

The students quickly and eagerly get busy finding answers and writing them down. Mr. Y circulates and reminds one trio that they also need to include the page # where they found the information. For 20 minutes, the classroom is filled with “good noise” as students work to beat the clock.

The Class Debriefs

The timer sounds and Mr. Y lets students finish the one they are writing and then demands that all pencils be put down. Together the class checks the answer to each question looking at the visual or special feature that provided the answer. Each team totals their points and after those points are double-checked by Mr. Y. There is a three-way tie and three teams cheer and enjoy their bragging rights.

Students Apply What They Have Leaned

To help students apply what they have learned, Mr. Y asks each student to construct one new question that can be answered using the visuals or special features. Mr. Y picks a few of these and reads them to the class and everyone hunts for the answers.

Planning a *Text Feature Scavenger Hunt* Lesson

To plan the lesson, choose a piece of informational text you want students to read and create questions that will direct their attention to all the special features this text contains. Decide how long you will give students to hunt—giving them a little less time than you think they need to create a sense of urgency. If your students do not know what a scavenger hunt is or have never been on one, engage them in a "real" scavenger hunt for "real things" that can be found in your classroom/school before doing the *Text Features Scavenger Hunt*.

Teaching a*Text Feature Scavenger Hunt* Lesson

1. Tell students the purpose of the lesson. If this is the first Text Features Scavenger hunt they have gone on, show them some story text and informational text and help them to notice the special features of informational text. Tell them that you can learn a lot of information just by focusing on these special features.

2. Put your students in trios. Give each group one copy of the text they will use for the hunt and one scavenger hunt sheet. Hand the sheet to your most fluent writer so that they won't be slowed down by writing the answers. (You might want to hand the book to the least fluent reader in the group. Holding the book conveys status!)

3. For the first several scavenger hunts, use the "I Do and You Watch" and "I Do and You Help" procedures to model for students what you want them to do and get them off to a successful start with the activity.

4. Set a timer and have students work together to find the answers and record the answers and where they found them. Circulate and provide help to teams as needed.

5. When the time is up, go over the answers and where the answers were found. Talk about each feature and how it is helpful when you focus on that feature to answer a question. Have teams tally their points. Check the tallies of the winning teams and reward them with "bragging rights."

6. Have students apply what they have learned by asking students to individually construct one more question. Choose a few of these to have classmates solve as time permits.

Text Feature Scavenger Hunt Lessons Across the Year

When your observations of the teams as they do the scavenger hunts indicate that everyone understands how to use the various text features, fade out the "I Do and You Watch" and "I Do and You Help" steps. When almost all the students understand how to use the various text features, have students complete a *Text Features Scavenger Hunt* independently. Use these assessments to determine which students need more instruction on which features.

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Chapter 14

Word Detectives

CCS Standards in *Word Detectives* Lessons

Word Detectives is a lesson framework which teaches students how to use context, visuals and morphemic clues to figure out appropriate meanings for words they encounter in their reading. *Word Detectives* lessons can be used with both narrative and informational text.

Language Standard 4: Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases by using context clues, analyzing meaningful word parts, and consulting general and specialized reference materials, as appropriate (anchor).

Reading Standard 4:

- Determine the meaning of words and phrases in a text relevant to a *grade 2 topic or subject area*.
- Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words or phrases in a text relevant to a *grade (3, 4, 5) topic or subject area*.

(Word Detectives is a lesson framework designed specifically to help students meet these two standards.)

Speaking and Listening Standard 1:

- Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about grade level topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups (K, 1st, 2nd).
- Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups and teacher-led) on grade level topics and texts building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly (3rd, 4th, 5th).

(Word Detective lessons engage students in collaborative conversations on grade level topics and texts with peers in their trios as well as their teacher and peers during whole-class instruction.)

Think about your students who have the biggest vocabularies. Are these also your students who read the most? Students who read the most have the biggest vocabularies and that many of the new words elementary students add to their meaning vocabulary stores come from their reading. Imagine, for example that your students are reading about falcons and they come across the words *eyases*, *ornithologists* and *stoop*. How many of your students would know what these words mean? *Eyases* is a strange word for most adults, many elementary students don't know what *ornithologists* are and their meaning for *stoop* probably calls up an image of someone bending down or the small front porch of a house. What will your students do when they encounter these words while reading about falcons? How many of them, after they read, will be able to explain that eyases are baby falcons, ornithologists are scientists who study birds and stoop is what we call the dive a falcon makes when he dives straight down at 200 miles per hour and grabs his prey right out of the sky!

Students who stop and ask themselves "I wonder what eyases are?" when they encounter that unfamiliar word will be able to figure it out based on the context and the picture of the baby chicks, or " eyases" hatching out of their shells. They will figure out that ornithologists are scientists that study birds and probably add *ornithologist* to their other words in which "ologist" means scientist such as *biologist* and *psychologist*. The description of the falcon doing a stoop and capturing its prey with its talons along with the picture will help them add another meaning of the word *stoop* to their meaning vocabulary stores.

Meanings for the words *eyases*, *ornithologists* and *stoop* and many others can all be figured out if your students use a combination of context, pictures and, for some words, morphology. Unfortunately rather than stopping and pondering the meaning of a new word or an old word with a new meaning while reading, many students just "skip it" and move on. Skipping over words which they don't immediately recognize or connect meanings to is one of the major reasons some students have little comprehension of what they have just read. In addition, every skipped word is a "missed opportunity" to add a new word to their vocabulary banks.

The authors of the Common Core State Standards recognized the importance of vocabulary to comprehension as well as the fact that students need to be focusing on meaning and adding new words to their vocabulary stores. Language Standard 4 specifies that students should "determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases by using context clues, analyzing meaningful word parts, and consulting general and specialized reference materials, as appropriate." Reading Standard 4 requires third, fourth and fifth graders to "determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words or phrases in a text relevant to a (*grade3, 4, 5) topic or subject area*.

Word Detectives is a lesson framework designed to teach students how to use context, picture and morphology (meaningful word parts) to figure out the meaning of new words and to add new word meanings for familiar words, such as *stoop*, while reading.

A Sample Word Detectives Lesson

The students in this class are about to read an informational text about falcons. Mrs. C has looked through the text and chosen nine words for which many of the students will not have meanings including two multi-meaning words for which most students have a different meaning from the meaning used in this text.

Purpose Setting

Mrs. C begins the lesson by showing everyone the cover of the book and engaging students in a general discussion about falcons. Students share what they know about these fascinating birds. The class joker adds that Falcons are a football team in Atlanta. Mrs. C seizes on this comment to talk about the fact that many words have more than one meaning and asks students how they know this book is about the large birds called falcons and not a football team. The students realize that the picture on the cover clearly signals that the word, *falcons*, in this context refers to birds. Mrs. C then sets the purpose for the lesson

"As you read about falcons you are going to meet many words which you may not have meanings for as well as some multi-meaning words like *falcons* where you have to figure out

which meaning fits the context or learn a new word." Here are nine words we are going to focus on. Before reading, we are going to pronounce the words but not talk about their meanings. We call this lesson framework *Word Detectives* because you are going to be detectives and use clues from the pictures, context and related words you know to figure out the appropriate meanings for these words. Mrs. C then displays these words and has everyone pronounce them:

ornithologist eyries stoop alarmed fledglings

eyases DDT plentiful scrape

Several students suggest that they know what some words (*alarmed*, *scrape*, *stoop*) mean but Mrs. C says that just like *falcons*, these words might have other meanings and they will need to use the clues to figure out what the appropriate meanings are in this context.

Mrs. C then arranges the students in trios and hands the book to one member of the trio who quickly sits in the middle and holds the book so that everyone can see. [TIP Students work together and interact more when they have just one copy of the text. Handing the book to a struggling reader gives that student an important job to do and confers status on him or her.]

I Do and You Watch

Mrs. C grabs some small tiny sticky notes and tells the students what she is going to do.

"I am going to read the first four pages and look for any of these nine words. When I find them, I will write them on these notes and place them right next to where I found them. If I find any of the words more than once, I will use another sticky note so that I can mark all the clues to what the word might mean."

Mrs. C reads these pages aloud and puts a sticky note on the word *stoop* and two sticky notes to mark the two times the word *ornithologists* occurs. When she finishes reading these pages, she thinks aloud about what the words mean.

"Ornithologists is easy, the sentence has the meaning right here when it says "Ornithologists, or bird experts." Ornithologists occurs again when it explains how they began to solve the problem. I think ornithologists are scientists who study birds." I know that "ologist" usually means a scientist, like a biologist and a psychologist."

"*Stoop* only occurs once but I can figure out what it means because it explains that the falcon dives straight down at 200 miles an hour and grabs its prey out of the air and that this dive is called a stoop. There is also an awesome picture of a falcon flying with a smaller bird in its talons. This is a new meaning of *stoop* for me."

I Do and You Help

Mrs. C then hands out tiny sticky notes to all the trios.

"I need your help with the next four pages. Read them and use these sticky notes to mark any places where you see any of the nine words. Once you have all the words on these pages marked, you can help me explain what you think they mean."

The students read and quickly find the word *plentiful* used once and *DDT* used five times. They mark them and then tell Mrs. C where to find these words.

"The book tells us that birds of prey eat mice and other animals and keep them from becoming too plentiful. Who can help me explain what *plentiful* means?"

The students explain that without birds of prey, there would be too many mice and other little animals and *plentiful* means there are a lot. Mrs. C writes the word, *plenty*, and helps them see the morphemic connection between these two meaning-related words. [TIP Linguists estimate that for every word you know the meaning of there are six other words you can understand if you notice the morphological relationships. Seizing every opportunity to point out morphological relationships between words will help your students rapidly increase the size of their meaning vocabularies!]

Different students read aloud the five sentences in which DDT occurs and concluded that DDT is a poison which was sprayed on crops to kill insects. The falcons were eating the insects and the DDT from the insects was harming the falcon's egg. They were glad to learn that DDT was banned and the falcon eggs were once again producing baby falcons.

You Do It Together and I Help

The trios work together to finish the article, hunting down the other five words and marking each occurrence with a tiny sticky note. Mrs. C circulates and reminds them they needed to not just find the words but use the clues to figure out what the words mean.

The Class Debriefs

The lesson ends with the whole class gathered to share the clues they used to figure out appropriate meanings for *alarmed*, *eyases*, *eyries*, *fledglings* and *scrape*. The class had clearly enjoyed being word detectives and Mrs. C assured them that they would do more *Word Detectives* lessons in the future. She also reminded them that whenever they were reading they can be word detectives.

"When you read you are always going to find words you don't have meanings for. Even when you are an adult, you will encounter new words. Before I read this, I didn't know what *eyases* and *eyries* were. You are also going to find words you know with new meanings. I didn't know that that awesome fast dive a falcon makes to catch its prey is called a *stoop* or that the next made of rocks is called a *scrape*. You can be a word detective every time you read and use the context, pictures and related words as clues to help you solve word meaning mysteries."

Planning a *Word Detective* Lesson

Look at the text students are going to read. Select 8-10 words students are not apt to have appropriate meanings for which the text includes clues. Include some words for which your students know related words (plentiful, ornithologist) so that students learn to analyze new words for morphemic connections. When possible, include a few words which you didn't have meanings for (eyases, eyries) so that your students see that even adult readers need to use clues

in the text to figure out meanings for words. Include words your students probably have meanings for but which have different meanings in the text (stoop, scrape).

Teaching a *Word Detective* Lesson

1 Tell students the purpose of the lesson. Many students think that everyone else just knows the meanings of all the words they read. When these students encounter an unfamiliar word in their reading, they "skip it" and move one. Breaking the "skip it" habit is critical to student reading growth. Students who skip over new words miss many opportunities daily to add words to their meaning vocabularies. The vocabulary deficit grows as they progress through the grades. Students need to know that everyone encounters new word meanings while reading and authors provide clues you can use to figure out word meanings.

2 Display the words you have chosen and have everyone pronounce them. Do not let anyone suggest any meanings for words. If students tell you they know what a word such as *stoop* means, respond that they will find out if the meaning they know is the meaning in this text or if there is another meaning.

3 Use the "I Do and You Watch" and "I Do and You Help" procedures for several words to model for students how you use clues to help you determine appropriate meanings. When possible, include in these modeling steps words with morphemic clues and words for which your students have one meaning, but not the appropriate meaning.

4 Have students work in trios (You Do it Together and I Help) to complete the reading and figure out appropriate meanings for the rest of the words. Give each trio just one copy of the text and a bunch of tiny sticky notes. Have students mark the targeted word every time it occurs. Circulate and make sure they are not just marking words but talking about what the words mean and what clues helped them solve the word mystery.

5 Convene the class and discuss meanings for all the words the trios worked on. For each word, have students read the context in which the word occurred and explain how this context provides clues, explain any ways the visuals in the text helped and explain any morphemic connections.

6 Conclude the lesson by pointing out that all readers need to be word detectives whenever they read. Review with students how they used context, pictures and morphemic connections as clues to the meanings of words. Share with students any words you didn't have appropriate meanings for (*eyases*, *stoop*) before reading the text.

Word Detectives Lessons Across the Year

Observe your students as they work together in their trios. Fade out your modeling and their help as you notice they understand how to use context, picture and morphemic clues to figure out appropriate meanings for words. When your formative assessments indicate that most students can use these clues to figure out appropriate meanings, have them complete the task independently (You Do and I Watch).

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Chapter 15

Ten Important Words

CCS Standards in a *Ten Important Words* Lesson

Determining the most important words in an informational text is important because these key words convey most of the meaning and main ideas about the topic. When teachers always choose the words, students learn the word meanings but what do they do when reading on their own? *Ten Important Words* teaches students how to focus on important words and ideas in informational text.

Language Standard 4: Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases by using context clues, analyzing meaningful word parts, and consulting general and specialized reference materials, as appropriate (anchor).

Reading Standard 4:

- Determine the meaning of words and phrases in a text relevant to a *grade 2 topic or subject area*.
- Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words or phrases in a text relevant to a *grade (3, 4, 5) topic or subject area*.

(*Ten Important Words* is a lesson framework designed specifically to help students meet these two standards.)

Writing Standard 2: Write informative/explanatory texts

- in which they name a topic--supply some facts about the topic and provide some sense of closure–use facts and definitions to develop points and provide a concluding statement or section (1st).
- in which they introduce a topic, use facts and definitions to develop points and provide a concluding statement or section (2nd).
- to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly (3rd, 4th, 5th).

(The writing part of the lesson teaches students how to write summaries including key vocabulary.)

Speaking and Listening Standard 1:

- Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about grade level topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups (K, 1st, 2nd).
- Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups and teacher-led) on grade level topics and texts building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly (3rd, 4th, 5th).

(*Ten Important Words* lessons engage students in collaborative conversations on grade level topics and texts with peers in their trios as well as their teacher and peers during whole-class instruction.)

Many children, even older children, have difficulty determining what the most important words in a selection are and thus they have difficulty determining the main ideas. *Ten Important Words* (Yopp & Yopp, 2007) is a comprehension lesson framework you can use to help your students learn to determine which words in an informational text are the most important ones. When your students have chosen the most important words, they have simultaneously identified most of the major concepts or main ideas. [TIP: This framework won't work with narrative texts because these texts don't usually contain a set of content-specific key words.]

A Sample *Ten Important Words* Lesson

The students in this class are learning about different countries and cultures and are about to read an article in a student news magazine about Ecuador. This is the first *Ten Important Words* lesson this class has done.

Purpose Setting

Miss Y begins the lesson by drawing student attention to the world map and having children identify countries they know something about or which someone they know has been to. Miss Y then points to Ecuador on the map and asks if anyone knows anything about Ecuador. Children respond with facts they can discern from the map ("It's in South America." "It is next to Colombia.") but don't have any other knowledge about Ecuador.

"When we are learning about a new topic or a new place, we need to decide what the most important words are that help us learn about the topic. Often, before you read, I introduce some new words to you. But what do you do when you are reading on your own? Today, we are going to work on deciding what the most important words are on the topic of Ecuador. Once we have these important words, we will use them to write a summary of some important facts about Ecuador."

I Do and You Watch

Miss Y assigns the students to trios and gives one person in each trio a copy of the article about Ecuador. [TIP: Three is the perfect group size for elementary students. If your groups are too large, some students just sit on the sidelines and watch. Create trios that contain a variety of abilities. Designate the struggling reader to sit in the middle and hold the book. Have the most fluent writer be the scribe.] She also gives each trio ten sticky notes.

"We are going to use the sticky notes to mark the 10 words you think are the most important words. We are going to choose a few together. Then your trio will choose the others. When all the trios have chosen their ten important words, we will tally up the choices to get the class list of most important words."

Miss Y reads the first paragraph aloud and puts a sticky note next to the word *Ecuador*.

"I think the word *Ecuador* is going to be important. Who agrees with me?"

The next word I think is important is the phrase *South America*. We read that Ecuador is on the continent of South America and the map in this article only shows the continent of South America. Again everyone agrees and trios place a second sticky note next to *South America*.

I Do and You Help

Miss Y then tells students that she needs their help to choose the next important word.

"Read the next paragraph and see if you find an important word there, a word we would need to write our summaries of what we learned about Ecuador."

The students read the next paragraph and one trio suggests that *Quito* is an important word because it is the capital of Ecuador. Another trio suggests that *equator* is important because Ecuador is right on the equator. Miss Y puts sticky notes on both *Quito* and *equator* and explains:

"Both of those words might be two of the ten most important words so I will mark them both. As we keep reading, we are going to come to other words that may be important. As you read, mark any word your trio things should be marked. You will probably run out of sticky notes before you come to the end. Then you will have to decide which of the words you have already marked are not as important to Ecuador as some other words. You can then move sticky notes to those words. When you finish, your trio must have decided on the ten most important words. We will then get a tally and the words that most trios chose will be the class 10."

You Do It Together and I Help

The trios work together to choose the important words. When trios have trouble deciding, Miss Y encourages them to mark the word and continue reading.

"It is really not possible to know which words are going to be in your final 10 until you have read the entire article. Mark that word for now and later if you find a word that seems more important, your trio can decide to move it."

Predictably, trios start asking for more sticky notes but Miss Y reminds them of their purpose—to choose the 10 most important words—and helps them think about what words chosen earlier might be replaced with words they are wanting more sticky notes for.

Eventually, each trio settles on their ten words although they clearly would be happier if she just allotted them some more sticky notes!

The Class Top Ten Ecuador Words are Chosen

Once the trios have made their choices, Miss Y gathers the students and creates a class tally. She asked each trio for one of their ten words and then has the other trios indicate if they also included this word. She continues asking for words and tallying how many groups had chosen that word until all the words and votes are tallied. Here is the tally of important words.

Ecuador	8
South America	8
rain forests	6
bananas	7
coffee	7
Giant tortoise	6
equator	8
Galapagos Islands	6
volcanos	3
independence	3
Spanish	6
Pacific Ocean	6
mountains	6
Quito	6
fish	2
iguanas	2
penguins	2

All eight of the trios had chosen *Ecuador*, *South America* and *equator*. Seven trios had chosen *bananas* and *coffee*. *Giant tortoise*, *Galapagos Islands*, *Pacific Ocean*, *rain forests*, *mountains*, *Quito* and *Spanish* got 6 votes. Since there was a tie, the class decided that there were really 12 important words!

Writing About Ecuador

This class had been learning to write informational pieces and had an informational piece writing scale. Miss Y reviews the three criteria they have been working on and has them write an informational piece about Ecuador. She encourages them to use as many of the 12 important

words the class has chosen because these will be important facts and details their readers will want to know.

When they finish writing, they get with their editing partner and use the scale to decide if they have a good informational piece. They help each other revise if needed. Miss Y helps her students who struggle most with writing to evaluate and revise their pieces.

Planning a *Ten Important Words* Lesson

You can use the *Ten Important Words* lesson framework whenever students are going to read informational text. Decide on how much of the text you will use for the "You do, I watch" modeling step of the lesson and which words you will choose. After that, it is up to the students to figure out what the important words are.

Teaching a *Ten Important Words* Lesson

1 Tell students the purpose of the lesson. "When reading informational text, there are usually words that unique to that topic but important to understanding. When you have identified the most important words, you also have identified some of the most important ideas about that topic."
2 Use the "I Do and You Watch" and "I Do and You Help" procedures to show students how you decide which words are important. Mark those words with sticky notes and explain why they are probably going to be important.
3 Have students work in trios ("You Do It Together and I Help") to complete the reading and choose their top ten words.. Give each trio just one copy of the text and 10 sticky notes. Circulate and encourage children to mark words they think might be important but wait until they have finished the entire piece to make their final choices. Do not give in to their pleas for more sticky notes. There may indeed be ties, and thus 11 or 12 important words when you get the class tally but the trios need to be limited to 10 so that they have to talk about why one word might be more important than another word.
4 Convene the class and crate the class tally. Let trios take turn sharing one of their ten words and count how many trios included that word. When all the words chosen by any group are tallied, determine the most important ten by including those words that got the most votes. If there is a tie, declare that there must be 12 (or 11 or 13) important words.
5 Have students write a summary about the topic they read about. If the class has an Informational Piece Writing Scale, have them work in writing partners to revise their pieces.

Ten Important Words Lessons Across the Year

Observe your students as they work together in their trios. Fade out your modeling and their help as you notice they have the knack for choosing important words. When your formative assessments indicate that most students can pick out the important words in an informational text, have them complete the task independently (You Do and I Watch).

Handouts adapted from ***Teaching Common Core ELA Standards 20 Lesson Frameworks for Elementary Grades*** by Patricia and James Cunningham, Solution Tree Press, 2014

Chapter 9

Preview-Predict-Confirm

CCSS Standards in a Preview-Predict-Confirm Lesson

Preview-Predict-Confirm is a lesson framework you can apply to any informational text that has a lot of visuals. When you lead students through this lesson, you are helping them learn to do the type of reading and communicating required in these standards.

Reading Standard 6, Informational Text: Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words (anchor).

(Using the visuals to anticipate and understand text is the major focus of *Preview-Predict-Confirm* lessons.)

Reading Standard 4, Informational Text:

- Determine the meaning of words and phrases in a text relevant to a grade 2 topic or subject area. (2nd)
- Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases in a grade-level text, topic or subject area. (3rd, 4th, 5th)

Language Standard 4: Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases by using context clues, analyzing meaningful word parts and consulting general and specialized reference materials, as appropriate (anchor).

Writing Standard 2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly (3rd, 4th, 5th).

(The writing part of the lesson teaches students how to write summaries including key vocabulary.)

Speaking and Listening Standard 1:

- Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about grade level topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups (K, 1st, 2nd).
- Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups and teacher-led) on grade level topics and texts building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly (3rd, 4th, 5th).

(*Preview-Predict-Confirm* lessons engage students in collaborative conversations on grade level topics and texts with peers in their trios as well as their teacher and peers during whole-class instruction.)

Preview-Predict-Confirm (Yopp & Yopp, 2004) is a lesson framework that teaches students to use the visuals in an informational text to build vocabulary and to predict what they will read. The lesson begins with students seated in their trios and talking about 10-15 visuals from a text

they will read. Students have 20 seconds to look at each visual, talk about it and try to predict words they will read connected to the visual. Next students have eight minutes to write as many words as they can that they think will occur. At the end of eight minutes, students look at their words and choose one word they think all the other groups will also have, one word they think is unique to their group and one word they are most interested in. Next, the trios read the text together. They put a check on each word they listed which actually occurred and add five words they wish they had thought of. The class reconvenes and shares their discoveries. At the end of the lesson, students write a short paragraph using as many of their words as they can to tell what they learned.

Planning a *Preview-Predict-Confirm* Lesson

Select 12-15 visuals from a text, including any maps, charts and diagrams. Scan these into a presentation or cover the words (except for labels, etc. included in visuals). Assign your students to trios making sure to have a strong reader/writer in each trio. Write the topic word in the center of the 30-box sheet and tear paper of three different colors into thirds on which they can write their common word, unique word and most interesting word.

Teaching a *Preview-Predict-Confirm* Lesson

1 Tell students the purpose for the lesson. Point out that by studying the visuals before you read informational text, you can make connections to what you already know and predict some words that you might see and some questions the text will answer.
2 Use the "I Do and You Watch" and "I Do and You Help" procedures for the first visuals so that students will understand what they are expected to do.
3 Show the remaining visuals and give trios 20 seconds to talk about each.
4 Give trios a sheet with 30 boxes and the topic in the middle box. Hand the sheet to the fastest writer in the group and ask that student to be the recorder. Tell them that they have eight minutes to try to fill up the boxes with words they think will be in the text they are about to read. Remind them that the words need to be topic-related (*and*, *the*, *of* are not allowed!)
5 After eight minutes, give each trio three different colored strips of paper. Give trios two minutes to choose a common word—a word they think all the other groups will also have, a unique word—a word they don't think any other group will have, and the word they are most interested in learning more about. Have them write the words on the designated color strip with a marker, big enough so that everyone can see it when the class reconvenes.
6 After two minutes, gather the class together. Have everyone hold up their paper with the word they think is common and see how many other trios did indeed include that word on their list. Next have groups hold up their unique words and determine if that word is truly unique to that group. If students ask, "what does regurgitate mean?" let the group with that word define the word. Finally, have each group display the word they are most interested in.
7 Give trios one copy of the text and ask them to read it together. Have them put a * on each word on their sheet that actually occurred. When groups finish before others, have them look back through the text and choose 5 words they wish they had thought of and write these five words on the back of their sheets.
8 Gather the students and discuss which words actually occurred. If some sophisticated words such as *regurgitate* did not occur, brag on the group that chose the word and tell them that their

word would have been a better word! Let groups who had time to list words they wish they had thought of share some of these words and their reasons for choosing them.

9 Have students write a paragraph including some facts they learned. Allow them to look back as the text and their list of words as they write and encourage them to use text-specific words related to the topic. Use a paragraph frame if they need this kind of support.

Preview-Predict-Confirm **Lessons Across the Year**

In subsequent lessons as students demonstrate their ability to predict key words based on visuals, gradually fade out the modeling and helping steps and let the trios talk about and come up with words for all the visuals. When your formative assessments of the students working together in their trios indicates that most of your students can predict words based on the visuals, have them do this independently (You Do and I Watch).

Handouts adapted from ***Teaching Common Core ELA Standards 20 Lesson Frameworks for Elementary Grades*** by Patricia and James Cunningham, Solution Tree Press, 2014