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Sincerely,
Karen Haag

Make My Brain Happy by Overviewing

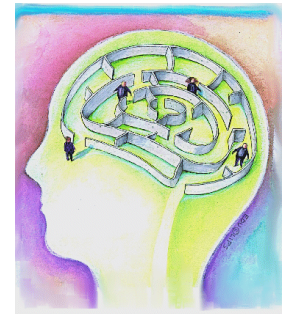
2-Day Lesson Plan

DAY ONE

SHARE LEARNING TARGET: I can overview a selection to improve comprehension.

ENGAGE

1. Begin by asking something like, “Do you want to make your brain happy when you read?”
2. Tell students they will conduct a reading experiment you designed to prove that overviewing makes your brain happy.
3. Tell students that at your signal, they will turn their reading paper over and find as much information as they can in 7 seconds. Suggest they look for the topic, author, and genre.
4. Give each child a handout of a short poem - white side up (p 3).
5. Time them. Give them 7 seconds to scan. Turn papers over when time is up.
6. Without looking at the poem, find out what information the class/group gathered.
 - Students should have been able to determine topic by looking at the title, pictures, captions, and subtitles.
 - They should know the genre by looking at the structure of the piece or the author or title.
 - They should have found the author under the title. See if knowing the author provided any additional information. For example, if the author were J. K. Rowling, the students would know this selection is fantasy.
 - Ask if the students determined any other useful information. Some students zero in on a vocabulary word that helps them know what the selection is about. Some can know the topic well from their personal experiences. Some are excited about reading the selection (based on prior knowledge). Some notice that the selection is a song if they read the word, “lyrics,” etc.



MATERIALS

One picture book or story per child
Timer
Poem/child – p 3
Daybook handout – p 4
Think sheet – p 5

EXPLAIN

Basically, the brain wants to be prepared. K-2 students learn to do a picture walk for this very reason. Unfortunately, upper grade students forget to do the “picture walk,” which we call overviewing, scanning, or browsing, but they need to. Look at the list of what they found out as proof!

1. Explain how the brain is a problem solver and sorter. It loves to put new ideas, questions and solutions into filing cabinets.
2. Stress how comprehension will improve if the brain can understand what it’s going to read. It needs to put the information in the correct cabinet in order to retrieve it. Remembering is connected to taking time to overview.
3. Comprehension improves if the reader knows the topic is an interesting one or one she already knows about.
4. The brain desires a purpose for reading. It wants to know why it is reading the selection.

Therefore, I should overview to find... Ask students to glue this handout in their daybooks (p 4).

THE GENRE If it's a genre I know well, I will know the story structure. I can determine my reading pace. I will have to slow down and reread poetry, topics I don't know, and challenging books to get the main ideas.

THE TOPIC Notice the captions, headlines, and vocabulary to figure out the topic. If I know the topic, I will read pretty quickly. I will add to what I know.

If it is something I know very little about, I will slow down. My purpose will be different.

THE AUTHOR If I know the author, I will know the writing structure.

Without knowing the author, I will not know what to expect. I will have to determine my pace and purpose as I read.

THE PURPOSE After overviews, I should set a purpose for reading. I should take a second to answer this question: "What am I reading to find out?" Having a purpose will help me focus my reading. Knowing my purpose will help me separate what is important from what is unimportant.

Ask, is your brain happy now?

DAY TWO

EXPLORE using Think Sheet

1. Give each student a picture book.
2. Ask the students to overview their books.
3. Ask them to find out as much as they can about the book by overviews, following the guidelines in the daybook handout.
4. Read the book.
5. Notice what happens as a result of overviews. What came true? What didn't? Did you set a new purpose? Did you feel better prepared to read?

REVISIT LEARNING TARGET: Students reflect as a group on the results of using overviews.

As a class, we gathered a lot of information in 7 seconds. As a reader, it shouldn't take very much time either. A huge boost in comprehension results from determining topic, author, genre, and purpose before reading. The brain can store the facts in the correct filing cabinet along with any other background knowledge the reader has. In addition, by taking a few minutes to file the information correctly, the brain can retrieve it again the next day.

Ask, is your brain happy now?

REFLECT → EXIT SHEET

- (1) What is overviews?
- (2) How will you use overviews in the future?

EXTEND

- (1) Try overviews with nonfiction texts. Reflect on the results.
- (2) When reading novels, overview a chapter to pick up where you left off. Reflect: How does taking a few seconds to think about what the reader will read boost comprehension?

Listen To The Mustn'ts

Listen to the mustn'ts, child.
Listen to the don'ts.
Listen to the shouldn'ts,
the impossibles, the won'ts.
Listen to the never haves,
then listen close to me...
Anything can happen, child.
Anything can be.”

— Shel Silverstein

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I will have to slow down and reread poetry, topics I don't know, and challenging books to get the main ideas.

THE TOPIC

Notice the captions, headlines, and vocabulary to figure out the topic. If I know the topic, I will read pretty quickly. I will add to what I know.

If it is something I know very little about, I will slow down. My purpose will be different.

THE AUTHOR

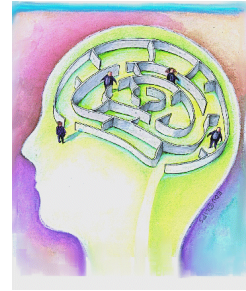
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Without knowing the author, I will not know what to expect. I will have to determine my pace and purpose as I read.

THE PURPOSE

After overviewing, I should set a purpose for reading. I should take a second to answer this question: "What am I reading to find out?" Having a purpose will help me focus my reading. Knowing my purpose will help me separate what is important from what is unimportant.

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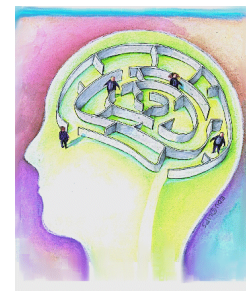
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Overviewing Think Sheet

Name _____ Date _____

Learning Target: I can overview a selection to improve my comprehension.

BEFORE READING

Quickly, overview your book. What can you find out in 1-2 minutes? Make some notes. DO NOT use complete sentences.

AFTER READING

Was your purpose accomplished? What was the answer to your question?

What didn't happen the way you thought it would?

Did you set a new purpose?
What was your new question?

What is your purpose for reading? What question do you want answered?

Did you feel better prepared to read? Explain.

DURING READING

Read the book. As you're reading, notice what happens to your brain. Make some notes.

REFLECT → EXIT SHEET

(1) What is overviewing?

(2) How will you use overviewing in the future?

Is your brain happy now?

