Preface

Literature can be a powerful force in the lives of human beings. It can make us feel, think, and wonder. It can provide us with exciting, interesting information and new ways of looking at the world. It can change who we are forever.

*Literature-Based Reading Activities: Engaging Students with Literary and Informational Text* is based on the beliefs that quality literature is an essential component of classroom activity and learning and that teachers should engage their students in thinking deeply about ideas in literature, making connections with literature, and responding to literature in ways that enrich their lives. It is also based on the beliefs that students bring unique perspectives, experiences, and contexts to their reading of literature and that social interaction is at the heart of learning. Thus, in this book we share activities that are intended to inspire and support students as they engage with ideas in literature; as they bring themselves to the literature; and as they expand their understandings, perspectives, and responses through interactions with others.

The organization of this sixth edition remains the same as previous editions. Chapter One provides important background information, with particular attention to diverse learners including English learners. Chapters Two, Three, and Four provide descriptions of pre-, during, and postreading activities for literature-based reading experiences, along with examples of their application at several grade levels and for a variety of genres. Chapter Five focuses on writing and publishing student work in response to literature. A few final comments are offered in the Afterword, and lists of websites that have the potential to enrich the literature experience are provided in Appendix A. We continue to use icons to draw the readers’ attention to information regarding both English learners and the use of technology.

New to This Edition

The sixth edition provides teachers with updated information about sharing literature in the context of today’s classrooms, new activities for supporting students’ interactions with literature, and numerous new examples of children’s literature, many of which are recent award winners. The edition is enhanced by:

- A discussion of 21st-century skills and how experiences with literature can support student progress toward achieving them
- A discussion of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and how experiences with literature can support student progress toward meeting the standards, and an appendix (Appendix B) that lists the College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for the CCSS
- A new feature called Take Five! (or Take Ten!) that invites readers to take a few moments to read five (or ten) tips related to the topic under discussion
- Updated discussions of research, including new references to recent studies and major reports
- Attention to using literature in the content areas, including Figure 1.3, which identifies resources for selecting literature appropriate for several content areas and highlights activities in this book that are useful for content area teachers
Eleven new activities that will expand teachers’ repertoires for engaging students with literature

Increased attention to the use of technology to support students’ interactions with and responses to literature, including new figures that share technology tools and tips, several new activities that emphasize the use of technology, and new ideas for integrating technology

More than 80 new examples of exceptional literature, including an increased number of nonfiction examples

A list of websites of recommended literature in which diverse populations are represented in a positive and authentic manner, along with sample titles (Figure 1.5)

Acknowledgments

We wish to acknowledge the following reviewers who provided helpful comments about the book: Julia E. De Carlo (Long Island University), Patricia Becker Johnson (University of Texas, El Paso), Joan Powell (Whitley County Board of Education, Williamsburg, KY), and Erika Tucker (Redan Middle School, Lithonia, GA).

We extend a special thanks to Aurora Martínez Ramos, Editor in Chief, and Barbara Strickland, Associate Sponsoring Editor, both at Pearson Education, for their valuable insights and important contributions to our thinking. We also thank Michelle Hochberg, Editorial Assistant, for always answering our questions so quickly. Thanks, too, go to Annette Joseph and Pavithra Jayapaul for project management and Marianne L’Abbate for careful editing.

As always, we are grateful to our husbands, Bert and Tom, and our children, Peter, Erica, Bill, and Dan, for their love, support, and encouragement.
Literature plays an important role in the lives and learning of students in many classrooms. Teachers read aloud a wide selection of literary and informational texts; they provide regular independent reading time supported by rich classroom libraries; they explore literature with their students as part of the language arts instructional program and also integrate literature into the content areas; and they structure opportunities for students to share their responses with one another. The fortunate students of these teachers benefit in many ways from the literature-rich experiences and environments their teachers provide; chief among these benefits is that the students experience the joy and satisfaction of reading.

Kiefer (2010) stated that the intrinsic value of literature alone should be sufficient to give it a place in the curriculum. There is considerable evidence, however, that literature contributes to literacy development as well. Literature, for example, facilitates language development in both younger and older students (Chomsky, 1972; Morrow, 1992; Nagy, Herman, & Anderson, 1985). It promotes reading achievement (Cohen, 1968; DeFord, 1981; Feitelson, Kita, & Goldstein, 1986; Galda & Cullinan, 2003; Morrow, 1992). It positively influences students’ perceptions of and attitudes toward reading (Eldredge & Butterfield, 1986; Hagerty, Hiebert, & Owens, 1989; Larrick, 1987; Morrow, 1992, 2003; Morrow, O’Connor, & Smith, 1990; Tunnell & Jacobs, 1989). It also influences writing ability (DeFord, 1981, 1984; Eckhoff, 1983; Lancia, 1997) and deepens knowledge of written language and written linguistic features (Purcell-Gates, McIntyre, & Freppon, 1995). It has been suggested that the use of literature in the content areas (such as social studies and science) results in greater student understanding of and engagement with the subject matter (Bean, 2000; Morrow & Gambrell, 2000; Saul, 2004).

When we examine what we believe are the goals of literacy instruction—to develop students’ ability to learn with text; to expand their ability to think broadly, deeply, and critically about ideas and perspectives in text; to promote personal responses to text; to nurture a desire to read; and to develop lifelong learners who can use text information to satisfy personal needs and interests, and fully and wisely participate in society—the value of literature becomes apparent. How are teachers to stimulate minds and hearts without good literature? How are students to explore ideas, come to understand the worldviews and experiences of others, grow in their thinking, and develop
a love of reading without good literature? Literature nurtures the imagination; provides enjoyment; and supports an understanding of ourselves, others, and the world in which we live. Without authentic and compelling texts and meaningful instructional contexts, quality instruction cannot happen and we will not achieve the goals that we hold dear.

Theoretical Perspectives

Literature-based instruction and the activities in this book are influenced by three theoretical perspectives, including reader-response, cognitive-constructivist, and sociocultural theories.

Reader-Response Theories

Reader-response theories had their beginnings in the first half of the 20th century with I. A. Richards (1929) and Louise Rosenblatt (1938). Prior to the work of Richards and Rosenblatt, literary theory focused primarily on the author and then on the text, and largely ignored the role of the reader. Reader-response theories emphasize that what the reader brings to the reading process matters just as what the author brings to the process matters and that, without a reader, texts are merely marks on a page. The reader’s experiences, feelings, beliefs, attitudes, and knowledge all influence his or her reading of a text and are, in turn, influenced by the text.

Scholars identify several groups of reader-response theorists, but Rosenblatt has had the greatest influence on teachers. It was not until the 1970s and 1980s, however, that her ideas gained a wide audience. In Rosenblatt’s view, a transaction between the reader and the text occurs during the reading process. The transaction is influenced, in part, by the stance that a reader assumes during reading. The reader can take a predominantly aesthetic stance or a predominantly efferent stance. When taking an aesthetic stance, the reader focuses on feeling states during the reading, the lived-through experience of the reading. Emotions, associations, ideas, and attitudes are aroused in the reader during an aesthetic stance. You probably take a predominantly aesthetic stance when reading a mystery novel—you are curious about who committed the crime, you worry about the safety of the hero or heroine with whom you may be identifying, your heart beats a little faster at the climax, and you are relieved when the mystery is solved. Similarly, you probably take an aesthetic stance when you read a moving or humorous poem. In contrast, an efferent stance is one in which the reader attends to information that he or she wishes to acquire from the text for some reason, either self-imposed or imposed by others. You likely take a predominantly efferent stance when reading instructions for setting up a new gadget in your home. Your purpose is to gather information so that you can make all the right connections and have a fully operational piece of equipment to use.

It should not be assumed, however, that fiction evokes only an aesthetic stance and nonfiction text inspires only efferent reading. Have you ever experienced confusion about a character in a novel and flipped back through the pages to remind yourself exactly what his relationship is with the protagonist? You were engaging in efferent reading. Your purpose was to gather information in order to clarify the character’s identity. Conversely, have you responded to a work of nonfiction by recalling personal experiences and feelings related to the topic? Have you ever had a visceral reaction to the content of informational text or an emotional response to a historical document, such as the Preamble to the U.S. Constitution? If so, you were reading aesthetically.

According to reader-response theorists, a reader’s stance falls along a continuum from aesthetic to efferent and changes from text to text, situation to situation, and moment to moment. It is influenced by many factors, including the text, the reader, the context, and—in the case of students—the teacher. When teachers focus on the information in texts, they promote an efferent stance: Students read to gather and remember
information. When teachers encourage enjoyment of the reading experience and invite and accept personal responses to the reading; when they ask students to recapture the lived-through experience of the reading through drawing, dancing, talking, writing, or role playing; when they allow students to build, express, and support their own interpretations of the text, they promote an aesthetic stance. Unfortunately, teachers often use activities with their students that evoke only efferent responses (Beach, 1993). Although gaining information from texts is important, reader-response theorists argue that students should also have many opportunities to respond aesthetically to literature.

Teachers who are influenced by reader-response theories understand that readers bring different backgrounds, experiences, understandings, and attitudes to their reading. These educators believe that reading is an experience accompanied by feelings and personal associations and that responses resulting from a transaction between the reader and the text depend, in part, on the stance a reader takes and the opportunities for response that teachers provide. They foster students’ aesthetic responses to literature. They respect diverse interpretations of text, rejecting the notion of one correct response, and they support students in reflecting on and revising their interpretations by prompting them to revisit the text and discuss their ideas with peers.

As an aside, some more current models of reader stances include an analytic stance in which a reader examines the author’s craft and a critical stance in which a reader asks questions about the author’s intentions and motives. (See Murphy, Wilkinson, Soter, Hennessey & Alexander, 2009, and Pellegrino & Hilton, 2012, for discussions.)

Cognitive-Constructivist Theories

Like reader-response theories, cognitive-constructivist views of learning emphasize the importance of the reader in the reading process. According to cognitive-constructive views, readers are not empty vessels or tabulae rasa; rather, they bring complex networks of knowledge and experiences with them to a text (Anderson, 1984; Rumelhart, 1980). They use their knowledge and experiences as they construct understandings of a reading selection, and because different readers bring different backgrounds, experiences, and purposes to their reading, no two readers construct exactly the same understandings. Further, the same reader may have different understandings of a text at different points in his or her life. For example, your understanding of The Giving Tree by Shel Silverstein today would quite likely be different from your understanding of it at age 10.

Cognitive-constructive theorists also emphasize the active nature of reading. Meaning making is the result of cognitive work, with more complex or unfamiliar texts requiring more work if understandings are to be constructed.

Teachers who are influenced by cognitive-constructivist views of reading provide time and opportunities for students to think about what they already know and to extend their knowledge networks in a variety of ways, including learning from those around them. They appreciate the subjectivity of the reading experience. They engage their students in activities that require them to actively process the text by, for example, examining language, organizing information, and making links among ideas in books and with their own lives.

Sociocultural Theories

The third group of theories relevant to the rich use of literature in the classroom are sociocultural theories. Based on the work of Vygotsky (1978), who asserted that children learn through language-based social interactions, sociocultural theorists believe that learning is fundamentally a social process and that interactions among learners are crucial. They believe that students develop as readers and writers through authentic participation in literacy communities where they interact with more knowledgeable others.
Teachers who hold this perspective believe that students organize their thoughts and construct meaning through language exchanges, and so they provide many opportunities for students to work together. They structure classroom environments and learning experiences to promote student interactions. They ensure that students engage in discussions and negotiate their evolving understandings and interpretations of text with peers. We share more on the importance of discussion later in this chapter.

**New Contexts for Sharing Literature**

Teaching and learning have always occurred in dynamic contexts, and today is no exception. Two recent large-scale educational movements are and will increasingly influence daily classroom experiences. Many of the emphases of these movements align with the rich use of quality literature.

**21st-Century Skills**

In the past decade, considerable attention has been directed to identifying the skills students will need to succeed in the 21st century. Individuals and organizations point to the rapidly changing world that today’s students are facing and the necessity of shifting the way teaching and learning occur in order to prepare students for the future. Consider that, as adults, our students will

- have jobs that do not even exist today.
- face challenges of a global nature, some of which have not yet been identified.
- use information and communication technologies that are currently beyond our imaginations.

Language arts teachers in particular must help lead students successfully into this new world, especially as innovative technologies are redefining the nature of reading, writing, and communication (International Reading Association, 2009).

What do today’s students need to know and be able to do? Although several frameworks have been developed (for example, Marzano & Heflebower, 2012), the Partnership for 21st Century Skills (P21) is a frontrunner in many conversations about 21st-century education. Recently, the Partnership—a collaborative among education, business, community, and government leaders—proposed a learning framework that is influencing reform both nationally and around the globe (Trilling & Fadel, 2009). Key categories of the framework include core subjects (such as English and history) and 21st-century themes (such as global awareness and environmental literacy); learning and innovation skills (such as creativity, critical thinking, communication, and collaboration); information, media, and technology skills (such as accessing and evaluating information and applying technology effectively); and life and career skills (such as social and cross-cultural skills). Detailed information about the framework is available on the organization’s website (http://p21.org).

The P21 learning framework provides an important context for teachers as they explore literature with their students. Twenty-first century emphases on global awareness, critical thinking, creativity, communication, and digital skills, for example, can be addressed in part through engagement with literature. Teachers who plan literature experiences for their students that support these emphases will help students both achieve important reading goals and develop 21st-century skills. In Figure 1.1, we identify how various literature experiences support selected 21st-century skills. In Take Ten! we share ideas for technology experiences that can be used to enhance thinking about literature while also building digital skills.
Common Core State Standards

At the end of the last decade, the National Governors Association (NGA) Center for Best Practices and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) launched an initiative to define the literacy and mathematics skills and knowledge that students need in order to
succeed in college and the workforce in the years ahead. One result was the development of College and Career Readiness (CCR) Standards for literacy. These CCR Standards are organized into four strands: reading, writing, speaking and listening, and language. They appear in Appendix B and also may be viewed online at www.corestandards.org.

The CCR Standards serve as anchor standards for the K–12 Common Core State Standards (CCSS), grade-specific standards that identify the skills and understandings students need to achieve during their K–12 years in order to meet the CCR expectations. The English Language Arts/Literacy CCSS consist of standards in English language arts for grades K–12 as well as standards in literacy in history/social studies, science, and technical subjects for grades 6–12, making content teachers partners in supporting students’ literacy development. The CCSS were released in 2010 and have been adopted by most states in the United States and several of its territories.

Although groups of educators across the United States have identified several shifts in K–12 literacy education that the CCSS represent, the lead authors of the standards highlight three (Student Achievement Partners, 2012). The first shift is an increased emphasis on the use of nonfiction, the genre most typically read in college and the workplace but often neglected in English language arts programs across the grade span. Beginning in the earliest grades, students are expected to have frequent and substantial experiences with nonfiction. The second shift is an emphasis on the use of text evidence

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**Take Ten!**

**Ten Ideas for Using Technology to Explore and Communicate about Literature**

1. Use an electronic student response system ("clickers") to collect, display, and discuss student responses to prompts, such as in anticipation guides and opinionnaires (see Chapter 2). Free software such as Socrative (http://socrative.com) can run on smartphones, laptops, and tablets.

2. Have students use digital cameras and video-editing software to produce creative responses to literature.

3. Encourage students to search the internet for reviews of their favorite book, author information, or background information related to their book.

4. Have students engage in online discussions—-with peers near and far—about literature. Consider using Edmodo (www.edmodo.com), a social networking site for teachers and students.

5. Teach students to use Quick Response (QR) technology to attach comments to their creative products, such as poems and pop-up books (see Chapter 5). Peers access the comments with QR readers to learn the author’s thoughts. Or invite students to comment on one another’s work using an online program such as VoiceThread (http://voicethread.com).

6. Have students collaborate on a project using a wiki.

7. Invite students to use a document camera to share and discuss text passages or images with classmates or to present their own work.

8. Have students use e-readers, such as Amazon’s Kindle, to read literature. Teach and encourage students to use the special features of e-readers, including highlighting and annotating text and accessing an instant dictionary.

9. Have students create digital books using the ideas shared in Chapter 5.

10. Gather additional ideas by looking for the technology icon in the margins of this text.
to justify inferences and make arguments. The standards require that students return to the text to identify the language and information that support their ideas and interpretations, and use that evidence to communicate their understandings to others. The third shift is a focus on regular practice with complex text and its academic language. Specifically, teachers are expected to share increasingly challenging texts with students. More information on the CCSS can be obtained at www.corestandards.org.

Literature clearly plays a major role in achieving the vision of literacy outlined by the NGA and CCSSO. Students must have extensive opportunities throughout their K–12 years to engage in rich and meaningful interactions with a wide range of high-quality literature of a variety of genres if they are to become thoughtful, creative, and purposeful users of language.

*Literature-Based Reading Activities* supports teachers as they implement the CCSS in the context of rich literature programs. In Figure 1.2, we identify literature experiences promoted by activities in this book that align with the three shifts. In terms of increased opportunities to engage with nonfiction, most of the activities in this text can be used with all genres. In fact, the activities were gathered and developed with flexibility and broad applicability in mind. We provide numerous examples with a variety of genres, including nonfiction, in each chapter. In Figure 1.3 we share resources for locating

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**Figure 1.2 Literature experiences and shifts represented by the CCSS for ELA/Literacy**

**Increased emphasis on nonfiction**

Students build skill in reading nonfiction and concurrently build knowledge when they

- read and listen to a broad range of nonfiction.
- examine the text structures of nonfiction, and use a variety of nonfiction text structures as models for writing in response to literature.
- explore their existing knowledge of the topic and make connections with new knowledge.
- talk to peers to learn about others’ knowledge of the topic before, during, and after reading nonfiction.
- compare and contrast several works of nonfiction on the same topic.
- engage in hands-on experiences relevant to the content of a work of literature.
- write in response to the content of a work of nonfiction.
- examine and use the language of the content.

**Increased emphasis on the use of text evidence**

Students build skill in making meaningful and reasonable inferences about the content of literature when they

- examine the details, images, and language of the literature as they construct understandings.
- search for information in literature.
- identify key ideas in the literature, using text language as support.
- refer to the literature to explain their thinking to peers.
- listen to and ask genuine questions of their peers about their understandings of the literature.
- identify language or other aspects of the literature that contributed to their interpretations.
- revisit literature to confirm or refine their thinking.
- explain creative and critical responses to literature.

*(continued)*
Expanded opportunities to engage with complex text and its academic language

Students build independence in reading complex texts when they

• are given opportunities to interact with challenging literature that is worth reading.
• set their own purposes for reading.
• work to organize text ideas.
• talk with peers about their tentative interpretations and understandings of and responses to literature.
• examine and talk about the language and features of the literature.
• communicate understandings in a variety of creative ways.
• ask themselves and others questions about the literature.
• engage in strategic reading of challenging text.
• draw on their experiences with a variety of text structures and their knowledge of content in the literature.
• use the language of literature in writing and speaking.
• recognize the importance of and work to build their background knowledge and vocabulary.

Figure 1.3 Literature and activities for the content areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Area</th>
<th>Literature Lists</th>
<th>Activities*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>NSTA's Outstanding Science Trade Books for Students K-12</td>
<td>• Preview-predict-confirm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="http://www.nsta.org/publications/ostb/">http://www.nsta.org/publications/ostb/</a></td>
<td>• Concrete experiences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>American Institute of Physics Science Writing Award for Children</td>
<td>• K-W-L charts</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="http://www.aip.org/aip/writing/winchild.html">www.aip.org/aip/writing/winchild.html</a></td>
<td>• Quickdraws</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>• Journals</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Graphic organizers</td>
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<td>• Ten important words</td>
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<td>• Pack the suitcase</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Sketch to stretch</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• 3-D responses</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Internet investigations</td>
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<tr>
<td>History/social studies</td>
<td>National Council for the Social Studies Carter G. Woodson Award</td>
<td>• Anticipation guides</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="http://www.socialstudies.org/awards/woodson">www.socialstudies.org/awards/woodson</a></td>
<td>• Opinionnaires/questionnaires</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>National Council for the Social Studies Notable Trade Books for Young Children</td>
<td>• Picture packets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="http://www.socialstudies.org/resources/notable">www.socialstudies.org/resources/notable</a></td>
<td>• Picture carousels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Journals</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Contrast charts</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Circle of viewpoints</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Ten important words</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Powerful passages</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Dramatic responses</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Internet investigations</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Using Literature in the Classroom

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Area</th>
<th>Literature Lists</th>
<th>Activities*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Arts         | Kalamazoo Institute of Arts  
**www.kiarts.org/page.php?page_id=125**  
Kirkus Reviews  
**www.kirkusreviews.com/lists/**  
Go to “Best of [year]”; click on “Books About the Arts” | • Quickdraws  
• Journals  
• Ten important words  
• Internet investigations  
• Sketch to stretch  
• Multimedia responses  
• 3-D responses  
• Poetic responses  
• Multigenre responses |
| Mathematics  | California Department of Education  
Literature for Science and Mathematics:  
Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve  
**www.cde.ca.gov/ci/cr/rl**  
NAEYC Math-Related Children’s Books  
**www.naeyc.org/files/tyc/file/MathbookslistSchickedanzexcerpt.pdf** | • Book boxes  
• Concrete experiences  
• Quickwrites  
• Quickdraws  
• Journals  
• Sketch to stretch  
• 3-D responses  
• Bookmaking |

* All activities in this text can be used or adapted but the following activities are especially appropriate.

The purpose of this text is to assist teachers in providing their students with meaningful experiences with literary and informational text. We offer a variety of activities that are rooted in reader-response, cognitive-constructive, and sociocultural perspectives and that support current national efforts to ensure all students are well prepared for productive and satisfying futures. The activities honor readers by acknowledging that their backgrounds, knowledge, and experiences influence their transactions with literature and by inviting them to assume aesthetic, efferent, and critical-analytic stances. The activities require the active engagement necessary for meaning making by prompting thoughtful interactions with text. And they reflect the crucial role of social interaction in the construction of meaning as they stimulate discussion and collaboration. The activities fit well in classrooms where teachers are working toward developing students’ 21st-century skills and achievement of the Common Core State Standards for ELA/Literacy.
### Figure 1.4 Selected Common Core State Standards and sample supportive literature-based reading activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard*</th>
<th>Sample Activities</th>
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</thead>
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| RL.K.2 With prompting and support, retell familiar stories, including key details. | • Picture retelling books  
• Accordion books  
• Graphic organizers (story maps) |
| RL.1.9 Identify basic similarities in and differences between two texts on the same topic. | • Venn diagrams  
• Book charts  
• Contrast charts |
| RL.2.7 Use information gained from illustrations and words in a print or digital text to demonstrate understanding of its characters, setting, or plot. | • Book bits  
• Dramatic responses  
• Magazine covers |
| RL.3.3 Describe characters in a story (e.g., their traits, motivations, or feelings) and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events. | • Character webs  
• Literature maps  
• Feelings charts |
| W.4.7 Conduct short research projects that build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic. | • Internet investigations |
| RL.5.1 Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text. | • Polar opposites  
• Literary report cards  
• Investigator’s notebook |
| SL.6.1 Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions with diverse partners on grade 6 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly. | • Anticipation guides  
• Opinionnaires/questionnaires  
• Literature circles |
| SL.7.2 Analyze the main ideas and supporting details presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and explain how the ideas clarify a topic, text, or issue under study. | • Picture packets  
• Cover clues  
• Picture carousels |
| RI.8.2 Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to supporting ideas; provide an objective summary of the text. | • Ten important words  
• Pack the suitcase  
• Sketch to stretch |
| W.9-10.6 Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products, taking advantage of technology’s capacity to link to other information and to display information flexibly and dynamically. | • Multimedia responses  
• Book trailers  
• Pod previews  
• Digital books |

* Standards are identified by the strand (RL = Reading Literature; RI = Reading Informational Text; W = Writing; SL = Speaking and Listening), followed by the grade level (K–12), then the standard number (1–10, which correspond to the CCR Standards). Thus, RL.1.1 refers to Reading Literature, first grade, standard 1. Source: © Copyright 2010. National Governors Association Center for Best Practices and Council of Chief State School Officers. All rights reserved.
Before sharing the activities, however, we describe key responsibilities of teachers as they engage their students in meaningful experiences with literature, and we identify the questions that guided our search for activities to include in this book.

1. **Know children’s literature.** Familiarize yourself with a wide variety of children’s literature, and keep abreast of newly published works. Spend time in libraries and bookstores. Browse websites that provide lists of award-winning literature, reviews of children’s literature, and ideas for using literature. Visit author websites. Ask students and their families to share their favorite titles and authors. Talk to colleagues about books and consider establishing a book club at your school. It is difficult to share great literature with students and to respond to requests for recommendations unless you know children’s literature.

2. **Provide students with access to a wide variety of literature.** Develop a rich classroom library that includes selections reflecting a wide range of interests, topics, and difficulty levels. Make available a variety of genres, ensuring ample inclusion of informational books, which are necessary for students’ literacy development and a key emphasis of the CCSS, yet are a scarcity in many classrooms (Duke, 1999; R. H. Yopp & Yopp, 2006, 2012). Include plentiful literature that authentically represents the diversity of humankind. See Figure 1.5 for a small sampling of resources and titles. Research

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**Figure 1.5 Literature about diverse populations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus/Cultural Group</th>
<th>Resource</th>
<th>Literature Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>Coretta Scott King Award for African American illustrators and authors whose books promote an understanding and appreciation of African American culture and universal human values</td>
<td>The Great Migration: Journey to the North by Eloise Greenfield; Heart and Soul: The Story of America and African Americans by Kadir Nelson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian/Pacific American</td>
<td>Asian/Pacific American Awards for Literature given by the Asian/Pacific American Librarians Association for literature that promotes Asian/Pacific American culture and heritage</td>
<td>Heart of a Samurai by Margi Preus; Shooting Kabul by N. H. Senzai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino/a</td>
<td>Pura Belpré Award for Latino/a authors and illustrators whose books best portray the Latino/a cultural experience</td>
<td>Diego Rivera: His World and Ours by Duncan Tonatiuh; Maximilian and the Mystery of the Guardian Angel: A Bilingual Lucha Libre Thriller by Xavier Garza</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Eastern</td>
<td>Middle East Book Award given by the Middle East Outreach Council for books that contribute to an understanding of the Middle East</td>
<td>Mirror by Jeannie Baker; The Grand Mosque of Paris: A Story of How Muslims Rescued Jews During the Holocaust by Karen Gray Ruelle</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(continued)
has revealed that the availability of reading materials in extensive classroom libraries and opportunities to choose literature are key factors in motivating students to read (Guthrie & Wigfield, 2000; Palmer, Codling, & Gambrell, 1994; Worthy, 2000, 2002).

3. Provide time for reading and talking about literature. The best-stocked classroom and school libraries mean little if the books are never accessed. Students must be given time to read. And, as we noted earlier, they must be given opportunities to talk about what they read. Not only are understandings socially constructed, talk about literature motivates students to read (Guthrie & Wigfield, 2000). Be a reader yourself, and

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus/Cultural Group</th>
<th>Resource</th>
<th>Literature Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| American Indian      | American Indian Youth Literature Award given by the American Indian Library Association | A Coyote Solstice Tale by Thomas King  
http://ailanet.org/activities/american-indian-youth-literature-award/  
Free Throw by Jacqueline Guest |
| Ethnicity in the United States | Carter G. Woodson Book Award given by the National Council for the Social Studies to distinguished social science books that treat topics related to ethnic minorities and race relations sensitively and accurately | Red Bird Sings: The Story of Zitkala-Sa, Native American Author, Musician, and Activist by Q. L. Pearce  
A Nation’s Hope: The Story of Boxing Legend Joe Louis by Matt de la Peña  
www.socialstudies.org/awards/woodson/ |
www.naeyc.org/files/yc/file/201001/LesserHandout310_2.pdf | Molly’s Family by Nancy Garden  
And Tango Makes Three by Justin Richardson and Peter Parnell |
| Persons with disabilities | Schneider Family Book Award given by the American Library Association  
Anything but Typical by Nora Raleigh Baskin |
| Peace, social justice, world community, and equality of sexes and races | Jane Addams Children’s Book Awards offered by the Jane Addams Peace Association (JAPA) and the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF)  
http://www.janeaddamspeace.org/jacba/index_jacba.shtml | Sylvia & Aki by Winifred Conkling  
Sit-In: How Four Friends Stood Up by Sitting Down by Andrea Davis Pinkney |
talk about what you are reading. Teachers who are highly engaged readers create students who are highly engaged readers because these teachers model their enthusiasm and strategic thinking about texts (Dreher, 2003).

4. Plan for whole-group, small-group, and individual experiences with literature. Whole-class experiences with literature contribute to the building of a community and offer opportunities for scaffolded instruction and guidance. Small-group experiences provide students with greater opportunities for interaction and negotiation of meaning. Individual reading of self-selected books respects student interests and choice, and helps students develop independent reading strategies that underlie lifelong reading.

5. When you choose to provide group experiences with a work of literature, be sure to read the selection. Simple as it may seem, it is important that prior to engaging students in a literature experience, you read the selection yourself. It is difficult to plan meaningful experiences or respond to students’ explorations without being familiar with the literature.

6. Identify themes, topics, or compelling issues in the literature. The themes, topics, or issues you identify will guide the experiences you plan for your students. Be prepared for the possibility, however, that during the course of discussion other ideas may emerge from the students that will take precedence over the ones you selected.

7. Plan activities for three stages of exploration: before, during, and after reading. Prereading activities activate and build requisite knowledge and language, help students set purposes for reading, set the stage for personal responses to literature, and spark students’ curiosity. During-reading activities support comprehension by promoting students’ active engagement with the text, contextualizing the text, and prompting personal connections and responses to ideas in the text. Postreading activities encourage students to respond to the literature in personally meaningful ways and to think deeply about and beyond the literature.

8. Establish an atmosphere of trust. Students will honestly communicate their feelings, experiences, and ideas only if there is an atmosphere of trust in the classroom. You can promote trust by actively listening to the contributions of your students, respecting all student attempts to share, and allowing for a variety of interpretations of the meaning of a selection as long as the readers can support their ideas on the basis of the language in the text or their own experiences. Disagreements among students should be used to lead them back to the literature to conduct a closer analysis of the author’s words or to prompt them to identify and elaborate on their experiences and knowledge that may differ from those of their peers.

Rationale for Selection of Activities for This Text

The following questions guided our development of and search for activities to include in this text:

1. Will the activity promote discussion about literature? The use of discussion for enhancing understanding of literature is supported by several theoretical perspectives, including the cognitive-constructivist and sociocultural perspectives described earlier in this chapter. Discussion promotes active engagement in meaning making and involves
co-construction of understandings through interaction with others. In discussing literature, students grapple with putting words to their ideas and clarifying and refining their thoughts. They are exposed to the perspectives and reasoning of others and wrestle with opposing interpretations. These experiences enrich their comprehension of the text.

In fact, Nystrand (2006) found that increased time devoted to discussion is associated with richer understandings of literature, as are teachers’ use of authentic questions and “uptake,” in which they ask questions that build on student comments. In other words, students benefit from time spent in genuine, meaningful conversations about literature.

Meaningful classroom discussions about literature have been likened to the kinds of discussions that occur in adult book groups in which the focus is on topics that are important to the participants and everyone is encouraged to contribute. These so-called grand conversations are best explained by contrasting them with “gentle inquisitions” in which the tone of the interaction is one of checking on the students (Bird, 1988; Edelsky, 1988; Eeds & Wells, 1989). During grand conversations, students are encouraged to think about and respond to ideas, issues, events, and characters in the literature. They are invited to express their opinions, and their opinions are valued. Personal involvement with the ideas contained in the literature is encouraged, and individual interpretations are permissible as long as they are supported by the text.

Unfortunately, teachers have a long history of doing most of the talking in classrooms. When students are invited to talk, it is often in the context of a gentle inquisition, with interactions following what Cazden (1986) referred to as an I-R-E pattern: The teacher initiates a question, a student responds, and the teacher provides an evaluative response (“That’s right!”) before asking the next question. In one large study of middle and high school English classrooms, researchers found that open discussion averaged only 1.7 minutes per 60 minutes of class time, with students in low-track classrooms engaging in considerably less discussion than peers in higher track classrooms. Only 19% of teacher questions were classified as authentic, and only 31% of the questions involved uptake (Applebee et al., 2003).

Literacy experts are increasingly urging teachers to adopt dialogic approaches to discussion, that is, approaches that emphasize a dialogue among participants and result in a dynamic construction of meaning due to the tension created by multiple voices and perspectives (Almasi & Garas-York, 2009; Wilkinson & Son, 2011). Reninger and Wilkinson (2010) argued for increased use of discussion with below grade-level readers. Duke, Pearson, Strachan and Billman (2011) identified discussion about text as one of 10 essential elements of a comprehension program. A national report on teaching comprehension to young children listed high-quality discussion on the meaning of text as one of five research-based recommendations (Shanahan et al., 2010).

The activities in this text are intended to prompt students to engage in real discussions about literature. They offer an alternative to the traditional question-and-answer format that usually focuses on lower level understandings, can discourage meaningful conversations, and often limits participation to the most verbal students in the class. The discussion sparked by these activities can occur in a whole-class setting, in small groups, and among pairs. It is our hope that students have many opportunities to engage in discussions about literature in each of these configurations. In Take Five! we share five ideas for promoting student talk in large-group discussions. These ideas can be used to encourage even the most reluctant students to participate and they help ensure equitable opportunities to contribute to the conversations.

Online discussions also provide excellent opportunities for students to interact with one another about literature and, in fact, offer several advantages (Beach, Appleman, Hynds, & Wilhelm, 2011; Beach, Thein, & Webb, 2012). Among these are that some students are more willing to participate in online discussions than face-to-face discussions where social factors may inhibit them. Some students formulate more thoughtful
comments when given the opportunity to share online. And students are exposed to a broader range of perspectives when they participate in discussions with others in distant classrooms and communities.

2. Will the activity activate or develop background knowledge? According to reader-response and cognitive-constructivist theories, what the reader brings to a work of literature influences his or her interaction with the literature. In fact, years of research reveal that a reader’s experiences and knowledge provide the basis for comprehension of ideas in a text (Duke et al., 2011; Willingham, 2006, 2006–07; Wolf, 2007). The following sentences illustrate this phenomenon:

Jones sacrificed and knocked in a run. (Hirsch, 2006)

The notes were sour because the seam split. (Bransford & McCarrell, 1974)

If you are a baseball fan or player and bring knowledge of the sport to your reading, you will have no difficulty understanding the first sentence. However, note the wealth of familiarity with the sport that the sentence takes for granted. To make sense of the sentence, you must have sufficient world knowledge to infer that it is about baseball and that Jones is at bat. You must further understand that baseball consists of innings and outs, that players run around bases on a field, and that the sacrifice Jones makes is one of getting out so a teammate can run to home plate and score a point. If you do not have that knowledge about baseball—and some readers don’t—you no doubt had difficulty understanding the sentence.

Read the second sentence again. Observe that the vocabulary is not difficult and the sentence is short, yet you may not understand it. You might possess the appropriate background knowledge, but the authors have not triggered that knowledge for you. If we provide the clue that the sentence is about a bagpipe, do you now understand it? You probably do. Your knowledge of bagpipes likely accounts for all the elements in the sentence: the split seam, the sour notes, and the cause-effect relationship between the two. Failure to activate, or call to mind, the requisite knowledge results in poor comprehension. An effective teacher promotes students’ comprehension by providing experiences that encourage them to access relevant knowledge prior to reading a text and supports students in building the skills so that ultimately they do so independently. If students do not have the necessary background knowledge to engage with the literature.

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**Take Five!**

**Five Ways to Encourage Students to Participate in Large-Group Discussions**

1. Start with open-ended, genuine questions such as “What do you think?” and value all responses.
2. Practice wait time after posing a question and before responding to student comments.
3. Ask students to share their thinking with a partner before asking them to share with the whole group.
4. Have students jot down their thoughts before asking them to share with others.
5. Engage students in many paired, small-group, and large-group discussions so you build a classroom culture of talk about literature.
The activities in this text provide opportunities for students to learn and employ strategies with literary and informational texts. Students review texts and set purposes for reading; they generate predictions and read to confirm, revise, or reject their predictions; they activate relevant knowledge and monitor their comprehension, attending to whether they are understanding the literature and seeking clarification through their
interactions with others. Students use text structures such as story elements to organize their understandings; they construct visual representations to depict relationships among ideas, events, and concepts; they summarize information in a variety of ways; and they answer self-posed questions as well as those posed by others. The activities also provide numerous opportunities for students to integrate the strategies as they work with peers to build understandings and respond to the literature.

4. Does the activity promote higher-order thinking? Educators agree that students need to be able to do much more than simply recall what they read. This is reflected in the rigorous Common Core State Standards and in discussions of the demands of the 21st century. Consider the goals of literacy instruction we shared at the beginning of this chapter. These goals will not be achieved unless students are able to think deeply and critically about what they read.

One well-known conceptualization of thinking skills is Bloom’s (1956) taxonomy of educational objectives, a classification system that identifies levels of cognitive processing or thinking. The revised taxonomy (Anderson, 2005; Anderson et al., 2001; Forehand, 2005) is multidimensional and includes the following cognitive processes, from least to most complex and abstract: remember, understand, apply, analyze, evaluate, and create. A second conceptualization of cognitive processes is Webb’s (2005) Depth-of-Knowledge Levels, which includes recall and reproduction, basic skills and concepts, strategic thinking and reasoning, and extended thinking.

Higher levels of cognitive processes are considered by many to be the most important outcomes of education, and attention to them is crucial. Unfortunately, there is some evidence that heavy emphasis in schools is placed on the lowest levels of thinking (Krathwohl, 2002), and these findings seem to be confirmed by National Assessment for Educational Progress results (National Center for Education Statistics, 2011). Yet there is evidence that higher-order thinking about text can be taught (Murphy, Wilkinson, Soter, Hennessey, & Alexander, 2009). In particular, discussion approaches that require students to adopt a critical-analytic stance can yield high levels of thinking.

The activities included in this text can be used to promote higher-order thinking. They provide opportunities for complex thinking about text and extending that thinking through shared explorations with peers. The activities prompt students to compare and contrast elements of text, analyze characters and concepts, support their opinions and interpretations with examples from the text, and make connections with their lives and other texts. Many of the activities promote creative responses, the most complex and abstract cognitive process on Bloom’s revised taxonomy. Because lower-order processes are not prerequisite to higher-order processes, teachers at all grades can engage their students in complex thinking.

5. Are the activities appropriate for a broad range of readers? Few would argue with the idea that all students should have the opportunity to experience good literature. In their efforts to meet the needs of low-achieving readers, however, some teachers limit these students to short prose and to worksheets and activities addressing only low-level cognitive skills. These students often have neither the opportunity to share in rich literature experiences nor the opportunity to participate in the grand conversations about literature that other students enjoy. Indeed, several decades of research reveals that students in low-ability groups typically receive less instruction and qualitatively different instruction than students in high-ability groups (Allington, 1980, 1984, 1994; Anderson et al., 1985; Applebee et al., 2003; Au, 2002; Bracey, 1987; Walmsley & Walp, 1989; Wuthrick, 1990). Yet research suggests that instruction involving the use of high-quality literature can make a significant difference in low-achieving students’ literacy development and that these students need opportunities for higher-level thinking and discussions about books (Li, 2004; Nystrand, 2006).
Similarly, the most advanced readers are often not well served and are given tasks that leave them bored and unchallenged (Colangelo, Assouline, & Gross, 2004; Tomlinson et al., 2003). These students, too, need access to high-quality learning experiences that address their potential and maximize their opportunities for growth. Activities that emphasize thinking, exploration, problem solving, and decision making, and allow for creativity are appropriate for these learners (Vaughn, Bos, & Schumm, 2010). Like all learners, advanced students need a curriculum that stimulates and inspires (National Association for Gifted Children, 2008). They need opportunities to engage with increasingly complex and abstract content that demands higher-order thinking.

One of the advantages of the activities presented in this text is that they can be successfully implemented with a broad range of readers. Students with different levels of academic preparedness can participate in and be challenged by the activities.

6. Will English learners benefit from the activities? More than 5 million school-age youth in the United States are English learners, and the number is rising (Ballantyne, Sanderman, & Levy, 2008; NCELA, 2009). Unfortunately, like low-achieving readers, many English learners receive instruction that focuses predominantly on word identification and low-level skills. Some become adequate decoders, but because opportunities to actively, thoughtfully engage with rich text have been limited, comprehension is a significant problem (Au, 2002).

The educational community still has much to learn about supporting the literacy development of English learners, particularly because the population is diverse in terms of cultures, languages, native and second language proficiencies, experiential and educational backgrounds, socioeconomic conditions, and the educational contexts in which their learning occurs. Even so, several key empirical and theoretical understandings can guide teachers as they support students’ interactions with literature as well as their English language development. We highlight three: comprehensible input, language production, and culturally relevant literature. Additional guidelines for supporting English learners are provided in Take Ten!

English learners will have the greatest opportunity to participate fully in classroom learning experiences, while simultaneously building proficiency in the new language, if teachers make the content and language of instruction accessible—in other words, if they provide “comprehensible input” (Cummins, 2010; Krashen, 1982). Comprehensible input can be provided through the use of scaffolds, or temporary supports, that serve to clarify or illuminate the meaning of language, thus increasing the likelihood of understanding (August & Shanahan, 2010). Scaffolds may include realia (real, concrete objects), models, visuals such as photographs and drawings, hands-on activities, and graphic organizers that serve to structure complex text. In addition, comprehensibility is enhanced when content is familiar (August & Shanahan, 2006). You read previously about the role of relevant knowledge in reading. Students are more likely to understand text if they know something about the content or if it reflects their experiences and lives. This notion is important for all students, but it is especially crucial for English learners given the formidable language challenges they face (Cummins, 2010; Droop & Verhoeven, 1998; Goldenberg, 2011; Snow & Katz, 2010; Verhoeven, 2011). The more knowledge and experiences students have related to a text, the fewer are the demands on their linguistic abilities. Thus, activities that draw on or build students’ background knowledge prior to reading support the comprehensibility of the text, and engagement with challenging text supports their language development. It is important to note that building students’ requisite knowledge before reading does not mean that the teacher summarizes and analyzes the selection for the students. Doing so would not only render reading of the text pointless, it would eliminate the opportunity for readers to employ meaning-making skills (Sandler & Hammond, 2012-13).
In addition to providing English learners with comprehensible input, teachers should ensure that English learners have many opportunities to produce language (Cummins, 2010; Snow & Katz, 2010). Thus, for this and other reasons, genuine interactions with others are crucial. Whereas comprehensible input largely focuses English learners’ attention on meaning, production additionally focuses their attention on language. As students grapple with vocabulary and syntax in their efforts to express themselves, their language development is extended (Snow & Katz, 2010). Opportunities to participate in discussions about literature are important, then, not only for the reasons we noted in our first question—discussions result in enhanced comprehension and exposure to others’ thinking, understandings, and interpretations—but also because discussions support language development, which in turn supports students’ ability to engage with increasingly complex text.

Unfortunately, research suggests that many teachers fail to ensure that English learners are involved in oral language interactions (Mohr & Mohr, 2007). Teachers must be mindful of establishing environments and classroom structures that promote social interaction and equitable opportunities for participation and of using activities that facilitate language production from all students. Goldenberg (1996) found that small-group settings stimulate active engagement from English learners, particularly when students are involved in what he calls “instructional conversations”—conversations that focus on joint meaning making, involve questions that have multiple responses, and encourage elaboration. Students have more frequent opportunities to talk, clarify language and ideas, and negotiate meaning in small groups. Others noted that paired and small-group work on structured tasks that prompt certain types of language use (for example, specific vocabulary such as just-learned academic language, or specific language constructions such as before and after) are especially effective for supporting language development (Gersten et al., 2007; Saunders & Goldenberg, 2010).

Active participation in discussions does not happen, however, unless teachers have created a nonthreatening, low-anxiety atmosphere, one in which students are willing to take risks as they engage with others and experiment with language in order to express complex ideas. Establishing such an environment is imperative for language production. In addition, thoughtfully planned activities that spark students’ interest and that value varied responses are more likely to invite participation.

As important as comprehensible input and opportunities for language production are, many argue that unless students find themselves in books, they may experience “aesthetic shutdown” (Athanases, 1998, p. 275). Reading about people who share the same cultural and ethnic background facilitates personal connections with literature and contributes to positive attitudes toward reading (Al-Hazza & Bucher, 2008; Hefflin & Barksdale-Ladd, 2001). Tatum (2011) identified diversifying texts as paramount for honoring students’ diversities, which he asserts is critical for advancing students’ literacy development. In fact, all students benefit from literature that represents the diversity of humankind. In sharing such literature, teachers must ensure that diverse populations are presented in an authentic, multidimensional manner.

The activities in this text support English learners’ interactions with literature in that they contribute to comprehensible input by providing scaffolds, including nonlinguistic support, and facilitating comprehension of challenging text. They also draw on, value, and build students’ background knowledge, particularly when used with a range of genres that exposes students to rich content and themes and various discourse and text structures. They provide opportunities and structures for language production in contexts that motivate and promote meaningful communication as students share their ideas and co-construct understandings. And they facilitate use of a variety of language functions, such as comparing and contrasting, explaining a point of view, questioning, and justifying a prediction. Many of the examples in this book are drawn from multicultural literature. Figure 1.5, presented earlier in this chapter, shares websites that identify literature written by or about a broad range of diverse populations.
Take Ten!

Ten Guidelines for Supporting English Learners

1. Value the diversity that English learners contribute to the classroom.
2. Maintain high expectations of all students in an intellectually challenging context.
3. Provide an environment rich with oral English language opportunities.
4. Respect, use strategically, and develop, when possible, a student’s home language.
5. Ensure ample wait time for student responses.
6. Provide an affirming, positive, and supportive environment.
7. Welcome, involve, and listen to families and communities.
8. Encourage and structure social interactions with peers who are more language proficient.
9. Ensure students’ access to domain knowledge.
10. Look for the icon throughout this text that indicates attention to English learners.

English learners should not be excluded from opportunities to engage with literature. Literature provides exposure to rich language and powerful ideas that are worth thinking and talking about. And shared literature experiences can contribute to building a classroom community where all members feel valued and comfortable participating in the conversation.

7. Are the activities appropriate for a differentiated classroom? One of the joys of teaching is interacting with a wide range of students who have different backgrounds, strengths, needs, interests, and preferred ways of learning. Every class is a mix of learners, and each new academic year brings a new set of individuals. What an exciting profession teaching is!

As teachers embrace the diversity in their classrooms, they recognize the need to differentiate instruction in order to best serve their students (Tomlinson et al., 2003). Differentiation refers to teachers’ efforts to provide meaningful and appropriate instruction for the full range of learners in their classrooms. In differentiated classrooms, teachers consider who their students are—their readiness, interests, and approaches to learning—as they select and recommend literature, plan different ways for students to interact with and make meaning from text, and prepare experiences that help students demonstrate and extend their understandings. Teachers utilize flexible grouping strategies so students participate in a variety of group structures—with different classmates and for various purposes—and teachers continually assess their students’ strengths and needs (Huebner, 2010).

What does differentiated literature instruction look like? If some students in a first-grade class are ready to read a chapter book independently, the teacher ensures that these students do so. If some fifth-grade students would benefit from more purpose-setting and background-building activities in order to comprehend complex text, the teacher provides appropriate prereading experiences for these students. If some eighth-grade students need more opportunities to think about character traits and others need more opportunities to explore themes, the teacher develops different prompts for their journal writing. All students read literature that allows them to be successful but that stretches them and challenges their thinking. They engage in activities that address their
particular needs and that advance their abilities to engage meaningfully with a range of texts. They respond to literature in ways that match and extend their interests and learning preferences, and they are provided with opportunities to make choices.

The activities in Literature-Based Reading Activities are ideal for the differentiated classroom. They may be used with a range of literature. They represent a variety of ways to explore literature before, during, and after reading, and they prompt the development of diverse products that expand and deepen students’ thinking and that represent students’ cognitive, affective, and critical responses to text.

**CONCLUSION**

Literature should be at the heart of our literacy programs. Not only does it support many aspects of literacy development—language, comprehension, writing, attitudes, and perceptions—it also provides an excellent context for deep thinking and personal response. Literature inspires us and informs us; it nurtures our imaginations; it moves us to laughter, to tears, and to action. In the remaining chapters of this book, we provide activities that promote students’ rich interactions with text.
Chapter Two

Prereading Activities

Purposes
- To activate and build background knowledge
- To develop language
- To set purposes for reading
- To promote personal responses
- To arouse curiosity and motivate students to read

Activities
- Anticipation guides
- Opinionnaires/questionnaires
- Book boxes
- Book bits
- Cover clues
- Character quotes
- Contrast charts
- K-W-L charts
- Semantic maps
- Preview-predict-confirm
- Concrete experiences
- Picture packets
- Picture carousels
- Quickwrites
- Quickdraws

Courtesy: Monkey Business/Fotolia.
Prereading activities serve several purposes. They support comprehension by activating and building relevant knowledge and language. They prompt students to set purposes for reading. They stimulate personal responses to text, and they ignite an interest in the reading selection.

As noted in Chapter One, activation of relevant knowledge is fundamental to comprehension. What readers already know about the topic of a text influences their understanding of it. Students therefore can benefit from activities that draw attention to or build relevant knowledge. And, when they participate in these activities with diverse peers they learn even more because multiple perspectives, cultural values, and experiences are shared.

Similarly, students who bring relevant language to a text are better prepared to interact meaningfully with the text. Activities that highlight or build vocabulary and prompt discussions of text-related ideas can affect comprehension. As students articulate their ideas, feelings, and understandings of text-related content and listen to the ideas of others; as they generate and talk about text-related words and phrases; and as they engage in and discuss hands-on experiences, they build requisite language in contexts that are purposeful and meaningful.

In addition, prereading activities can be instrumental in helping students set purposes for reading. As a result of prereading activities, students approach the text wanting to learn about the topic, answer self-posed questions, discover how a character handles a conflict, find out if their feelings about an issue align with those of the author or a character, or determine if their predictions are confirmed. Having set purposes for reading, students more actively engage with the selection, and comprehension is enhanced.

Prereading activities can promote personal responses to literature by signaling students that their knowledge, experiences, ideas, feelings, and beliefs matter. Teachers who invite students to examine and share their perspectives related to ideas in a text they are about to read communicate that the readers themselves are important in the reading experience and that they should bring themselves to the text. Additionally, when students think about text-related issues or information before they read, they are better prepared to appreciate and connect with a character’s experiences or the author’s ideas.

Perhaps most important, prereading activities can also spark students’ excitement for reading. Reflections on their own knowledge, experiences, and beliefs; genuine discussions with peers; and concrete experiences can inspire students’ curiosity about and enthusiasm for the literature. Students want to find out about the characters in a story or learn about the topic of an informational book. They are eager to discover what the author has to say. Teachers who use prereading activities know that building motivation to read is important. Motivation can mean the difference between engagement and disengagement, action and inaction, persistence and quitting, and is especially important as students encounter increasingly challenging text. Reluctant readers, in particular, need teachers who know how to stimulate their interest in a reading selection.

In this chapter, we describe 15 activities that can be used prior to reading a book, a chapter, or a passage. The first activity, anticipation guides, invites students to think about and take a stand on issues or ideas that they will encounter in the reading, promoting personal responses to the literature. Opinionnaires/questionnaires also promote personal responses and making connections to the literature by tapping students’ experiences, beliefs, and opinions on a topic. Book boxes, book bits, cover clues, and character quotes encourage predictions about the characters, events, themes, or content of the book based on bits of evidence from the text, helping students set purposes for their reading. Contrast charts, K-W-L charts, semantic maps, and preview-predict-confirm provide structures for sharing background knowledge and language. Concrete experiences, picture packets, and picture carousels have students explore objects or images related to the
reading content, thus building their background knowledge and language. *Quickwrites* and *quickdraws* activate background knowledge and also prompt personal connections to text-related ideas. Each of the activities serves to pique students’ curiosity about the selection and set purposes for reading, prompting students to approach the text with questioning, active minds.

We hope you are convinced that prereading activities are supportive of students’ successful and enjoyable experiences with literature, and we encourage you to experiment with the activities that fill this chapter. They will help prepare students for and draw them into the text. However, as teachers engage students in prereading activities, they should ensure that the text is not rendered unnecessary because it has already been summarized and analyzed. Rather, teachers should prime the students for success and whet their appetites for diving into the book.

Teachers will note that these activities are especially valuable for English learners. Ensuring that requisite knowledge and language are built through prereading activities is supportive of students’ successful interactions with text. Each activity provides a means for all students to communicate their individual experiences or feelings. Students engage in purposeful use of language where diverse responses are expected and valued. English learners listen to the language of peers, and their own language production is supported by group members as they all work to elaborate on and clarify their thinking. Relevant vocabulary is developed in meaningful contexts. Background knowledge, important for all learners, is especially important for English learners because it may compensate for limited English language proficiency. In addition, prereading activities that ignite students’ interest provide the motivation for students to be persistent in their efforts to read. Students will expend cognitive energy on texts they have a desire to read, even when those texts are linguistically challenging.

Prereading activities are also beneficial for struggling readers because they build pertinent language and background, promote use of comprehension strategies, and provide the motivation for students to engage with text. The motivational aspects of prereading activities also can be vital in bringing reluctant readers to literature.

Before we close this section, we should point out that that prereading activities also offer teachers an opportunity for assessment. What do the students know about the setting or backdrop of the literature? Have they had experiences that will support their understanding of the issues or topics in the text? Do they have requisite vocabulary? Do they demonstrate an interest in or curiosity about the ideas they will encounter in the reading selection? By listening closely to students, teachers discover how much support must be provided to ensure meaningful interactions with the reading selection.

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**Take Five!**

**Five Tips for Using Prereading Activities**

1. Select activities appropriate for your students, your purposes, and the literature.
2. Take advantage of the opportunities for collaboration the activities provide, and ensure equity of participation.
3. Honor diverse responses and ensure that no voice is silenced.
4. Encourage students to elaborate on their ideas and expand on the comments of their peers.
5. Use only as many activities as necessary to achieve your goals; generally one or two are sufficient. Students should spend more time reading than preparing to read.
Anticipation Guides

An anticipation guide (based on Readence, Bean, & Baldwin, 2011) is a list of statements with which the students are asked to agree or disagree. The statements are related to themes, issues, or concepts in the reading selection, and an effort is made to develop statements that will result in differences of opinion and thus lead to discussion. This activity primes students for making personal connections with the literature and sparks their interest as they consider their own opinions and those of their classmates.

Several statements are presented to the students by projecting them onto a screen, writing them on a board or chart paper, or distributing them on a single handout or cut into strips for sorting. Students are provided time to consider and respond privately to each of the statements before making their opinions public. Then they share their agreement or disagreement with each statement by raising their hands, signaling with thumbs up or down, holding up an “Agree” or “Disagree” card, moving to a designated side of the room, or submitting electronic responses via individual transmitters to a classroom receiver. With an electronic response system, student responses are pooled and the group data are displayed. If desired, the teacher can access an individual student’s responses and also save responses for later comparisons. The students share reasons for their responses and are encouraged to comment on their peers’ responses, building on them or disagreeing with them. If an atmosphere of trust has been established in the classroom, students with minority opinions will feel comfortable sharing their thoughts.

Asking students to consider statements such as Very good people sometimes make bad decisions can generate lively discussion and prompt students to explore and identify their own attitudes and beliefs as well as contemplate those of their classmates. Students gain an appreciation for a diversity of perspectives. When the students later encounter the issues they discussed in the reading selection, they are likely to respond at a deeper level than if they had not considered the issues before reading.

Anticipation guides for several books are presented on the next few pages. A brief summary of each book is provided for the teacher and is not intended to be shared with the students. Sample student responses are offered in Example 2.3 and in many of the examples throughout this book. We are not suggesting that these are “correct” responses. They are provided only so the teacher can more fully understand the activity. Student responses will, and should, vary. In addition to indicating their agreement or disagreement with statements in an anticipation guide and as preparation for discussion, students may be asked to write a brief comment in response to each statement. An anticipation guide can serve as a springboard for writing.

Example 2.1

• Title: Teammates
• Author: Peter Golenbock
• Grade Level: 1–4
• Summary: This book describes the prejudice experienced by Jackie Robinson, the first black player in major league baseball. It highlights his courage and the support he received from Pee Wee Reese, a white teammate.
Anticipation Guide

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Staying away from people who are cruel to you is a good idea.
2. When you are very good at something, people like you.
3. Sometimes one person can make a difference in the world.
4. If everybody is being cruel to someone, there’s probably a good reason.

Example 2.2

- **Title:** Tuck Everlasting
- **Author:** Natalie Babbitt
- **Grade Level:** 4–8
- **Summary:** Ten-year-old Winnie Foster stumbles upon the Tuck family’s secret: They will live forever. Those who drink from a spring in the woods near the Fosters’ home—which the Tucks did inadvertently 87 years ago—cannot die. In this thought-provoking story, Winnie faces a number of moral dilemmas.

Anticipation Guide

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. It would be wonderful to live forever.
2. You should never do something that your parents have forbidden.
3. Some secrets are so important that it is acceptable to do anything in order to keep them.
4. People should have the right to sell products even if they are harmful.
5. It is okay to hurt one person to protect many.

Example 2.3

- **Title:** Breaking Stalin’s Nose
- **Author:** Eugene Yelchin
- **Grade Level:** 6–8
- **Summary:** This work of historical fiction is set in Russia during the Stalin era and written from the perspective of 10-year-old Sasha, a devoted Communist who dreams of joining the Young Soviet Pioneers. Life takes a dramatic turn for him when State Security forces whisk his father away for being an enemy of the people, and Sasha begins to rethink his devotion to Stalin.
Anticipation Guide

Agree Disagree

1. You can see much better when you are close to something.
   Generally, I agree with this. It’s hard to really see something from far away. If you are close, you can see the details and read the fine print!!

2. Fully believing in the ideas of someone you admire is good.
   You might admire someone for some of their characteristics such as courage and caring but not admire everything about them. Athletes are good examples. You might admire their skill but not agree with their politics.

3. When you are concerned about national security, you should be suspicious of all foreigners.
   This would be a dangerous point of view. Just because someone was born elsewhere doesn’t make him or her an enemy. In fact, sometimes your own people are the enemy.

4. You should trust a government that strives to take care of its people.
   The important words in this sentence are “strives to take care of its people.” If the purpose of the government really is to take care of its people, it is reasonable to trust it. You have to trust something.

Anticipation guides may be used again after a selection has been read. The format of the anticipation guide can be modified easily to include a single column for anticipation responses in which students put a plus or a minus symbol (or a smiling or frowning face) indicating agreement or disagreement, and a second column for reaction responses. Students complete the second column after reading the selection.

As they complete the activity the second time, students may discover that their attitudes and understandings have changed as a result of their reading. They should identify the language or events in the text that prompted their new responses.

Opinionnaires/Questionnaires

Opinionnaires/questionnaires (Reasoner, 1976; Wilhelm, 2007) are useful tools for helping readers examine their values, attitudes, opinions, or experiences before they read the literature. Constructing an opinionnaire/questionnaire is very much like constructing an anticipation guide. The teacher first identifies themes, ideas, or major events around which to focus discussion. Then the teacher generates questions to tap students’ opinions, attitudes, or past experiences related to those themes. Some items on the opinionnaires/questionnaires may be open-ended, and others may be more structured and offer students a checklist of possible responses. Students complete the opinionnaire/questionnaire independently, then engage in a discussion with their peers.
This activity is designed to spark students’ thinking about their attitudes and experiences related to selected issues and how they may differ from those of their peers, not to elicit “correct” responses. The teacher should be accepting of all responses and avoid valuing some opinions more than others.

The opinionnaire/questionnaire depicted in Example 2.4 provides a structure for students to talk about being different. When they subsequently hear or read Stargirl by Jerry Spinelli, they are more likely to appreciate the story events. The items in Example 2.5 will prompt thinking about important issues in Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry by Mildred Taylor. Note that extra spaces are included for each item in the opinionnaires/questionnaires so that students may insert their own ideas.

Students may wish to poll others, such as students in neighboring classrooms and family members, either through face-to-face interviews or an online survey tool, such as the one offered by Google Docs (http://docs.google.com). These data can be compiled and discussed.

As with the anticipation guides, opinionnaires/questionnaires may be revisited after students have read the literature. Students determine whether their responses have changed and, if so, why they have changed. They locate and share language in the text that contributed to their new opinions.

Example 2.4

- **Title**: Stargirl
- **Author**: Jerry Spinelli
- **Grade Level**: 4–6
- **Summary**: A new girl attracts much attention at Mica High School because she is so different—she wears unusual clothes, behaves in unusual ways, and has an unusual name. Leo Borlock falls in love with her the moment he sees her but soon tries to convince her to become “normal.” Stargirl is a story of popularity and conformity.

**Opinionnaire/Questionnaire**

1. People who are different from their peers
   - ______ should be avoided because they are strange.
   - ______ should be taught to be like everyone else.
   - ______ should be appreciated for being different.
   - ______ should be laughed at because they are different.
   - ______ are just trying to get attention.
   - ____________________________
   - ____________________________

2. To shun someone means to act like he or she does not exist. What would you do if people shunned you?
   - ______ Tell an adult.
   - ______ Try to convince them to talk to you.
   - ______ Ignore them.
   - ______ Change your behavior, clothes, or hairstyle to see if they like the new you.
   - ____________________________
3. In the first column, rate the behavior on a scale of 1 (least) to 5 (most) in terms of kindness. In the second column, indicate with a Y (yes) or N (no) whether the behavior is something you would consider doing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavior</th>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Consider Doing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Giving birthday gifts</td>
<td>_____</td>
<td>_____</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helping someone carry bags of groceries</td>
<td>_____</td>
<td>_____</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheering for the opposing team in a sporting event</td>
<td>_____</td>
<td>_____</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching someone to dance</td>
<td>_____</td>
<td>_____</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spying on neighbors</td>
<td>_____</td>
<td>_____</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. If you could choose a name for yourself, what name would you choose? Why?
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________

Example 2.5

- **Title:** Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry
- **Author:** Mildred Taylor
- **Grade Level:** 6–8
- **Summary:** Set in the South during the Depression, this story relates the struggles of a black family and its encounters with hate and prejudice.

**Opinionnaire/Questionnaire**

Listed below are a few incidents that make some people feel bad. Which of them would make you feel bad?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Incident</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>When someone you love is ashamed of you</td>
<td>_____</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When people call you names</td>
<td>_____</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When people act as if they are better than you</td>
<td>_____</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When you are punished for something you did that you should not have done</td>
<td>_____</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When someone stares at you</td>
<td>_____</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What would you do if you were tricked out of a favorite possession by someone you knew?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cry.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tell your parents and ask for their help.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tell that person's parents and ask for their help.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tell all your friends so they won’t be nice to that person.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Get it back somehow.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pretend you didn’t like the possession anyway.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decide you didn’t deserve the possession.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Prereading Activities

______ Trick that person out of something to show him or her how it feels.
______ __________________________________________________________________
______ __________________________________________________________________

If you were in a store and the clerk who was waiting on you stopped helping you and turned to assist two other people, what would you do?
______ Wait patiently.
______ Leave and go somewhere else.
______ Leave and tell your parents.
______ Complain to the manager.
______ Demand that the clerk finish helping you.
______ __________________________________________________________________
______ __________________________________________________________________

A boy in your class is always bothering you, acting smarter than you, and getting into mischief. Which of the following describe(s) what you would do?
______ Feel sorry for him.
______ Try to be his friend and help him change.
______ Ignore him.
______ Tell him you don’t like his behavior.
______ Hope someone catches him someday.
______ Tell on him.
______ __________________________________________________________________
______ __________________________________________________________________

If he came to you for help, what would you do?
______ Tell him “No way!”
______ Help him.
______ Laugh at him.
______ Pretend you’d help him, then don’t.
______ __________________________________________________________________
______ __________________________________________________________________

Book Boxes

The book box activity stimulates thinking about a selection and builds anticipation as students are shown objects that serve as clues to a text’s content. Students use these clues to make predictions about the reading selection.

The teacher informs students that they soon will be reading a new book and that there are several objects in a box that are somehow related to it. The teacher draws one object from the box at a time. Students identify the object—this is particularly important when it is unusual or unfamiliar—and in small groups talk about the object and generate predictions about the content of the book. What does the object suggest about the book?
After several predictions are shared with the entire group, a second object is drawn from the box. Students once again engage in discussion, first in small groups and then with the entire group. As each new object is drawn from the box, students’ predictions about the literature are extended or revised. After students have seen all the objects, they make final predictions that account for all objects. It is important that students are given ample time to talk with one another and to share their evolving visions of the literature. Listening to the experiences, knowledge, and thinking of peers supports all students as they consider the objects and possible relationships among them.

Examples 2.6 and 2.7 provide suggestions for objects to be included in book boxes for *The First Strawberries* by Joseph Bruchac and *Moon over Manifest* by Clare Vanderpool. Objects may be drawn from the book box in any order.

Example 2.8 provides a format to list clues and predictions if the teacher would like students to record their thinking in writing. Students identify each object as it is revealed, engage in a small-group discussion, and generate two predictions—individually or as a group—before their thinking is shared with classmates. Developing two predictions about the content of a text after each clue stretches students’ thinking and encourages elaboration in their discussion as they consider alternatives that would account for each of the clues.

The book box activity is valuable for a number of reasons. Students bring their experiences and knowledge to discussions with peers, and students’ mental activity becomes public as they generate and explain predictions and share their thinking with one another. The use of objects is motivating and provides nonverbal support for understanding. Also, higher-order thinking is demanded as students consider the relationships among a number of objects and evaluate the adequacy of their predictions as additional information is revealed. Creative and divergent thinking are promoted.

**Example 2.6**

- **Title:** *The First Strawberries*
- **Author:** Joseph Bruchac
- **Grade Level:** K–3
- **Summary:** This Cherokee legend tells the origin of strawberries. A woman, angry at her husband for his harsh words when she is picking flowers rather than cooking their meal, walks away from him. He follows her but cannot catch up to her. The sun helps the man by causing strawberries to grow along her path. She stops to eat them and their sweetness reminds her of the happiness she shared with her husband.

**Objects in the Book Box**

- Figurines of a husband and wife (wedding attire makes this relationship explicit)
- A bunch of flowers
- Some strawberries

**Example 2.7**

- **Title:** *Moon over Manifest*
- **Author:** Clare Vanderpool
- **Grade Level:** 4–8
Prereading Activities 33

• **Summary:** Young Abilene Tucker jumps off the train just before it pulls into the station in Manifest, Kansas, because it is always good to get a look at a place before it gets a look at you. Sent by her father to live with an old friend, she spends the summer of 1936 learning about the town's history, the colorful people who inhabited it, and her father's past. The story jumps between the past and present, and is woven together with keepsakes Abilene finds in a box hidden under the floor boards in the room she occupies.

**Objects in the Book Box**
- cork from cologne bottle
- fancy key
- fishhook
- tiny wooden baby doll
- silver dollar
- stack of old letters

**Example 2.8**

• **Title:** Bananas!
• **Author:** Jacqueline Farmer
• **Grade Level:** 2–5
• **Summary:** Readers learn in this informational and sometimes humorous text about the nutritional value of bananas, how and where they are grown and distributed, and their history.

**Objects in the Book Box**
- banana
- twine
- magnifying glass
- plastic bag
- fork
- apple

**Clue 1:** banana  
**Prediction 1:** The book is about the importance of eating fruits and vegetables.  
**Prediction 2:** This is a recipe book about different kinds of breads, including banana bread.

**Clue 2:** plastic bag  
**Prediction 1:** People are shopping at a grocery store and are putting bananas in a plastic bag.  
**Prediction 2:** Bananas are being placed in plastic bags to help them ripen faster.

**Clue 3:** fork  
**Prediction 1:** Some people went shopping and brought home bananas in a plastic bag. They set the table with knives, spoons, and forks, and ate bananas as part of their meal.  
**Prediction 2:** The book is about the different ways people eat bananas. After bringing home bananas in a plastic bag from the marketplace, people in some parts of the world cut them up and eat them with a fork.

**Clue 4:** twine  
**Prediction 1:** Bananas have been rotting and have fallen to the ground. The farmers use special forks to pick up the rotting bananas and put them in plastic bags. They use twine to tie the bag.
**Prediction 2:** A worker has brought his sack lunch to a dusty location. He keeps his food and utensils in a plastic bag and ties twine around the bag to keep the contents clean.

**Clue 5:** magnifying glass

**Prediction 1:** Scientists are using magnifying glasses to inspect bananas for dangerous bacteria. They cannot handle the bananas so use forks to hold them. Any banana found to be carrying bacteria is put inside a plastic bag and the bag is tied closed with the twine.

**Prediction 2:** Some people fry bananas. The magnifying glass may be used to start a fire for cooking. The bag and twine were used to transport the bananas from a banana plantation to a marketplace. Someone has bought bananas and is cooking them. They will be eaten with a fork.

**Clue 6:** apple

**Prediction 1:** The book is about nutritious foods, including apples and bananas. Before going to a market, foods are inspected with a magnifying glass to see if they are carrying bacteria or poisons. The bag and twine are used to store bananas on the way to market. The book shares one way of eating apples and bananas—as part of a fruit salad. The fork is used to eat the cut-up pieces of fruit.

**Prediction 2:** This book is about conducting experiments with food. Apples and bananas are put in a plastic bag that is tied closed with a string and left to rot. The fork is used to mash the rotting food to get a better view of it. The magnifying glass is used to observe the decay and fruit flies.

In a similar activity described by Wilhelm (2007), the teacher shares items that might be found in a character’s pocket. Students examine the items one at a time and work together to determine what they reveal about the character.

**Book Bits**

Book bits are similar to book boxes in that bits of information from a reading selection are shared with students before they read. Instead of objects, however, sentences or phrases from the literature are shared. This sharing of bits of text arouses curiosity, stimulates thinking, and promotes active engagement with the literature.

The teacher prepares for this activity by selecting sentences or phrases from the literature and writing each on a separate small strip of paper. The teacher should select as many sentences or phrases as there are students so everyone can make a unique contribution to a group sharing of information. The book bits should reveal enough about the literature to support understanding, but not so much as to limit thinking and hypothesizing about the selection.

The students are given a book bit and told that the book bits are all from the same reading selection. Each student reads his or her book bit silently and reflects on it for a moment. The teacher should make certain that students are able to read their book bits and assist students as necessary. In some cases, teachers may wish to be selective about which strips are given to particular students. After reading their book bits to themselves, the students are asked to think about the impressions they are beginning to formulate about the reading selection and to write their initial thoughts. What might the selection be about? What do they think they know about any characters? What do they think is happening or will happen? Do they have any information about the setting?
At a signal, the students move around the room, find a partner, and read their book bits to their partners. No discussion occurs at this time. Students simply read aloud their book bits to one another. After reading, students move on to find new partners with whom to share their book bits. After students have had the opportunity to share with three or four partners (or fewer or more, depending on the size of the group), the teacher asks them to return to their seats and quickly write any new impressions of the text based on information they acquired by listening to their partners’ book bits. At a signal, students again circulate around the room and share their book bits with new partners. The teacher should call time before students hear all of the book bits.

After a final opportunity to record ideas about the text, students meet in small groups or pairs to pool their information. Because each student will likely have acquired information that other group members did not, every student can participate in the conversation and make contributions to the discussion. The pooled information is recorded. If the reading selection is a story, the teacher may suggest that each group develop a three-column chart and record information and speculations in three categories: characters, setting, and plot. (See Example 2.10.) This sharing of information and the inferences drawn from the pooled information provide an opportunity for students to identify why they reached their conclusions. For example, if one group member says, “I think this book is about a tragic loss experienced by a young girl,” others should be encouraged to ask why. Students talk about the language in the book bits that led to the formation of their impressions.

When students have completed this phase of the activity, each small group shares its information with the entire class and the teacher may choose to record the information on a class chart. Students may be surprised to learn of a character, setting, or plot element that their small group had not encountered in their sharing of book bits. Or they may have information that supports the ideas generated by another group. Or they may have put pieces of information together in different ways to reach different conclusions about the text. After the whole-group sharing, volunteers read aloud or comment on their individual writing, which should reflect the evolution of their thinking and hypothesis generation about the reading selection.

Students may be asked to compose a narrative (or exposition, if appropriate) that incorporates the information they gleaned from sharing their book bits and the follow-up discussions. Students might be challenged to include verbatim their individual book bits in their writing.

**Example 2.9**

- **Title:** Rules
- **Author:** Cynthia Lord
- **Grade Level:** 4–8
- **Summary:** Twelve-year-old Catherine has a younger brother who is autistic. She loves him and creates rules for him to help him function in the world. She is also embarrassed by his behavior and resentful of the attention he receives from their parents. Accompanying her brother to a clinic, Catherine becomes acquainted with a paraplegic boy who uses word cards to communicate. Initially uncomfortable, Catherine hesitantly
befriends the boy, adding words to his card collection and joining him at a dance. Topics of difference, disability, and acceptance are sensitively and realistically portrayed.

**Sample Book Bits**

“It’s fine to hug Mom, but not the clerk at the video store.”

“Mom says David’ll never learn to talk right if we keep letting him borrow words.”

“On my way past Jason’s wheelchair, I study a page of his communication book so my card’ll match his others.”

“Everyone expects a tiny bit from him and a huge lot from me.”

**Example 2.10**

- **Title:** *Everything on a Waffle*
- **Author:** Polly Horvath
- **Grade Level:** 4–8
- **Summary:** When 11-year-old Primrose Squarp’s father and mother are lost at sea, first Miss Perfidy (who charges by the hour), then Uncle Jack, and, for a short while, a foster family take responsibility for Primrose. Primrose is certain that her parents are still living and trying to return home. She interacts with a variety of quirky characters and finds some comfort with Miss Bowzer, the cook and owner of a restaurant who serves everything on a waffle. Each chapter of this wonderful book of hope concludes with a recipe.

**Sample Book Bits**

“I’m not miserable all the time. Sometimes I get these bursts of joy.”

“One June day a typhoon arose at sea that blew the rain practically perpendicular to our house.’”

“When school started, my real troubles began.”

“I don’t know what you think the story of Jonah is about, Miss Perfidy,” I said. “But to me it is about how hopeful the human heart is.”

“He pulled out a yellow macintosh and, with a face full of pity, handed it to me.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characters</th>
<th>Setting</th>
<th>Plot</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Miss Honeycutt</td>
<td>Near the ocean</td>
<td>People are cooking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A teacher</td>
<td>A small town</td>
<td>Someone is a criminal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A child of eleven</td>
<td>A fishing village</td>
<td>There is a terrible storm.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncle Jack</td>
<td>A restaurant</td>
<td>A child is in danger.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miss Perfidy, an old woman</td>
<td>A jail</td>
<td>A group of girls makes fun of someone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A sheriff</td>
<td>A school</td>
<td>Someone is having problems at school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The fall</td>
<td>Someone’s parents are gone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>An accident involving a truck happens.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Images can provide considerable information about a text. Whether they appear only on a cover or are an integral part of the literature—as with picture books—images can influence readers’ understandings and interpretations, and set a tone for the reading. They can contribute to a story or clarify and extend information in a nonfiction work. Despite the importance of images, many teachers do not support their students in thinking about and appreciating elements of color, line, shape, size, and style that can influence interpretations of images and the literature itself (O’Neil, 2011). Yet visual literacy should be a goal for all students, and teachers can help students understand how images can contribute to their comprehension.

Cover clues invites students to examine carefully the first image they generally encounter when reading a book: the cover. Much like book boxes, where students generate hypotheses about a book based on objects, this activity prompts students to brainstorm ideas based on different aspects of the book’s cover. Each small group of students is provided a copy of the text (or, less ideally, the cover is displayed using a document camera) and asked to examine the cover closely.

Depending on the book cover, the teacher might ask one group to focus on colors, shapes, and lines. What hues and tones did the cover designer or illustrator select? What do these choices communicate about the book? Why do the students think so? What shapes appear? Are lines bold or faint? Curved or straight? What thoughts or feelings do these design elements evoke? Another group might be asked to attend to people or animals depicted on the cover. What does the inclusion of these people or animals say about the book? How they presented? Are they large or small? Who is in the foreground and who is in the background? What might these placements suggest? What do people’s expressions reveal about them, or about the book? A third group might concentrate on objects. What are they, and what do they tell us about the book? Why were they selected? A fourth group might inspect scenery. What does it convey about the setting or the characters or the topic? What mood does it set? Can any prediction be made about the plot, if the book is a story? Another group might focus on the title of the book—the words themselves but also the font, style, and size of the lettering. What predictions can this group make about the content of the book based on the title alone?

After allotting several minutes for small-group discussion, the teacher might ask each group to share its observations and ideas with the entire class. Each group’s contributions shift or add to impressions that the class is building about the book, and at the conclusion of the final group’s presentation, the students develop a list of their ideas or predictions about the book.

Alternatively, the teacher can ask each group to record ideas in writing and then, when time is called, pass their work to another group, perhaps in a clockwise rotation. Each group assumes the new focus and adds to the list of ideas started by the previous group. The work is passed from group to group until all groups have had the opportunity to examine each aspect of the cover. Each group then generates a summary of its predictions. A whole-class discussion follows. Example 2.11 displays one group’s summary thoughts about the cover of the 2007 Aladdin edition of *The Higher Power of Lucky* by Susan Patron.

**Example 2.11**

- **Title:** *The Higher Power of Lucky*
- **Author:** Susan Patron
- **Grade Level:** 4–6
Summary: Lucky lives in a tiny desert town with her guardian, Brigette. She learns about “hitting rock bottom” and “finding her higher power” by eavesdropping on 12-step anonymous meetings that are held in the museum and visitor center where she works. Always prepared with a survival kit, Lucky knows that life brings unexpected turns and decides to run away when she thinks that Brigette plans to return to her native France. This book is a Newbery Medal winner.

Cover Clues
(One Group’s Summary Thoughts)

This is the story of a girl.
She doesn’t look happy, but the artist used warm colors to draw her so she’s not sad either.
She is looking up and not down. That may mean she is hopeful.
Her dress gives the impression of movement. Maybe there is wind where she lives, or maybe she is energetic and twirls around a lot. Or maybe the movement means she’s confused and doesn’t know which way to go.
She lives in a warm, dry place.
There aren’t many plants in the setting and the ones that are there look dusty or insignificant.
She is holding something special close to her body.
She is tossing something in the air, letting it go.
The title is in motion and there are curved lines on the cover. These could also be indicators of wind or her energy or confusion and lack of stability.

Character Quotes

Readers can learn much about the beliefs, feelings, and personalities of characters from the voices that authors give them. In this activity, small groups of students read a character quote and talk about what the quote reveals about the character before reading the text (Buehl, 2001). Many books have richly complex characters, and the teacher should select quotes that reflect the various facets of the character’s personality. The teacher writes the quotes on separate pieces of paper or index cards and provides each group with one quote. In their small groups, the students read the quote and generate one or more words to describe the character. After each group records words based on its quote, the teacher asks students to share their quotes and words with the entire class. The teacher lists the words on a chart and informs the students that the words all describe the same character. Students discuss what they think they know about the character and may share predictions about themes, issues, or events in the story as well. Students can return to the chart as they read the book and add or change words based on a growing understanding of the character.

An alternative to providing all groups with a quote from the same character is to give each group a small set of quotes from different characters. Each group discusses its character and shares impressions with the entire class. Another variation of this activity is to provide each group with two different colors of index cards—a yellow one with a quote from one character and a blue one with a quote from a different character. Students can think about the characters as well as their relationships to each other.
Students may be asked to write a paragraph that includes one of the quotes. Or students may be challenged to write two paragraphs using the same quote in very different contexts.

**Example 2.12**

- **Title:** *Joey Pigza Loses Control*
- **Author:** Jack Gantos
- **Grade Level:** 4–8
- **Summary:** Joey is excited to spend the summer with his father, who has been absent from his life. Unfortunately, his well-intentioned father has serious problems and when he flushes Joey’s ADHD (attention deficit hyperactivity disorder) medication down the toilet, things go awry and Joey must work hard to retain control of his life. This deeply moving and humorous book reminds the reader of human complexities and frailties.

**Sample Character Quotes**

*(Joey)*

“*I just want him to love me as much as I already love him.*”

“*I just don’t play much with other kids. They tease me.*”

“*Dad, have you ever felt like two people at once?*”

“*I’m normal. I’m really normal.*”

**Contrast Charts**

Contrast charts are used to facilitate students’ thinking about ideas prior to encountering them in a text. Contrast charts are simple to develop, requiring only that the teacher identify theme-related contrasting categories under which students list ideas. For example, before reading about Karana, who lived alone on an island for years in *Island of the Blue Dolphins* by Scott O’Dell, students list the advantages and disadvantages of living alone. As students consider two sides of an issue, they engage in higher-order thinking.

Contrast charts may be generated by the class as a whole, by small groups of students, or by individuals. We recommend that students be given a few minutes to consider individually the issues and record any thoughts that come to mind. Then students may work in small groups to develop a group contrast chart by listing their ideas in two columns. Students benefit from interacting with one another as they listen to and explain ideas. Each group shares its chart with classmates. Contrast charts may be saved and revisited as students read the selection.

Students can develop contrast charts using paper and pencil or a wiki, an electronic tool for collaborative authorship. After students or the teacher sets up a wiki web page for each group, students construct their charts. One student might create the two-column chart and list an idea or two. As other students in the group get online, they add to the chart or they modify or elaborate on existing ideas. Some students may wish to add clip art to their contrast charts, providing visual images of their ideas. Students construct their contrast charts prior to a whole-class discussion and then, if they choose, revise them after sharing their ideas and viewing contrast charts developed by other groups.
Example 2.13

- **Title:** *Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day*
- **Author:** Judith Viorst
- **Grade Level:** K–3
- **Summary:** Alexander has a horrible day when one thing after another goes wrong for him.

Contrast Chart

Have you ever heard people say, “That made my day!” or “That ruined my day”? They are referring to events that happened that make them feel especially good or particularly miserable and cranky. List some things that would make your day either good or bad.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Good Day</th>
<th>Bad Day</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>1.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>2.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>3.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>4.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>5.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>6.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Example 2.14

- **Title:** *Stuart Little*
- **Author:** E. B. White
- **Grade Level:** 4–6
- **Summary:** This story tells the humorous adventures of a two-inch mouse who is born into a human family.

Contrast Chart

What would it be like if you were two inches tall? List some things that would be difficult to do. List some things that would be easy to do.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Difficult</th>
<th>Easy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>1.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>2.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>3.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>4.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>5.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>6.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Example 2.15

- **Title:** *Things Not Seen*
- **Author:** Andrew Clements
- **Grade Level:** 4–8
• **Summary:** Fifteen-year-old Bobby wakes up one morning to discover that he is invisible. His frantic parents—a physicist and a university professor—decide it is best not to tell anyone while they try to figure out what happened and how to reverse it. Officials become suspicious when Bobby stops attending school and his parents run out of excuses. Bobby tells a blind girl his problem and, with her help, the problem is solved.

### Contrast Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advantages of Being Invisible</th>
<th>Disadvantages of Being Invisible</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>You can eavesdrop easily.</td>
<td>No one notices you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You don’t have to wash your hair, put on makeup, or wear nice clothes.</td>
<td>You can no longer participate in normal activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You can make faces at people and they won’t know.</td>
<td>You don’t matter to people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You can go places you normally wouldn’t be permitted to go.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### K-W-L Charts

Another activity that helps students access their background knowledge on a topic is the K-W-L (Know, Want to Know, Learned) chart developed by Ogle (1986). The K-W-L chart is used before and again after reading or listening to a selection that contains factual content. Prior to the reading, students work in small groups or as a whole class to brainstorm and record in the first column of the chart what they know (or think they know) about the topic of the literature. The pooling of information allows students to benefit from their collective background experiences and knowledge, sparks their memories of their own experiences and understandings, and prepares them for the literature. Sometimes student contributions to the Know column will be challenged by classmates. In these cases, the teacher may ask students to reframe their statements as questions, or gently assist them in doing so, and write them in the middle (Want to Know) column of the chart. If misinformation is recorded in the first column, students correct it after reading.

Students next think about what they want to know about the topic and record their questions in the second column. When students generate questions, they set purposes for reading. Further, questioning promotes personal connections with text as students read or listen to find the answers to their own queries.

Example 2.16 shows the two columns students completed prior to their reading of Tornadoes by Gail Gibbons. Students recorded what they know about tornadoes in the first column and what they want to know in the second column. After the selection is read, students record in a third column what they have learned about the topic and correct any inaccurate information listed in the first column.

### Example 2.16

- **Title:** Tornadoes!
- **Author:** Gail Gibbons
- **Grade Level:** 1–3
• **Summary:** Award-winning author Gail Gibbons provides a wealth of information about tornadoes, including how they are formed, how they are classified, and how to protect yourself if one is approaching.

### K-W-L Chart

**Tornadoes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What We Know</th>
<th>What We Want to Know</th>
<th>What We Learned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tornadoes are strong winds.</td>
<td>How often do tornadoes happen?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The wind spins in a circle.</td>
<td>How fast do they spin?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tornadoes can hurt people.</td>
<td>Do they all spin in the same direction?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some people call them twisters.</td>
<td>Can they pick up cars and houses?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What's the difference between a tornado and a hurricane?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Can you escape from a tornado?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What should you do if you're in a tornado?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is important that the teacher restrict use of this activity to books that contain accurate information. Students should not be asked what they know and what they have learned about whales from a work of fiction that presents whales that chat with one another and have cute personalities. The wonderful story of *Gilberto and the Wind* by Marie Hall Ets anthropomorphizes the wind, using phrases such as “Wind likes my soap bubbles” and “Wind is all tired out” that clearly are inappropriate to include on a K-W-L chart. Therefore, a K-W-L chart should not be developed for this book.

By no means, however, should this activity be used exclusively with nonfiction. Many works of fiction have considerable factual content. Young students learn about the experiences of families that moved west in the 1800s when reading *Dandelions* by Eve Bunting. Middle school students learn about medieval life in *Catherine, Called Birdy* by Karen Cushman. High school students learn about the Johnstown flood when reading *Three Rivers Rising: A Novel of the Johnstown Flood* by Jame Richards. The teacher must be familiar with the reading selection and be confident that information presented about a topic under consideration is accurate before using it in a K-W-L chart.

It is likely that a number of questions generated by the students will not be addressed by the reading selection, or new questions may have arisen. Students should be encouraged to pursue answers to their questions by searching the Internet or exploring other sources. Ogle (1986, p. 567) said that this helps students recognize the “priority of their personal desire to learn over simply taking in what the author has chosen to include.” A fourth column might be added to the chart (K-W-L-H) in which students record how they will obtain the information.

Another modification of the K-W-L chart is the addition of a column labeled *Affect* (Mandeville, 1994). This column in the K-W-L-A chart can be completed before, during, or after reading. Before reading, students use the “A” column to share their feelings about the topic. During or after reading, students use this column to respond to the information they have learned—recording emotional reactions, indicating what they
find most interesting in the selection, noting why some information is especially important to them, or reacting to the author’s presentation.

This linking of affective and cognitive domains has tremendous potential to spark students’ interest in the information presented in many books, and Mandeville suggested that students who attach their own importance and personal relevance to information are likely to comprehend and remember it better.

The discussions that are prompted by this activity can provide the teacher with information that may influence instructional decisions. For instance, if students have limited relevant background knowledge or vocabulary, the teacher may choose to provide instruction that prepares students for understanding concepts in the reading selection. If students demonstrate little enthusiasm for the topic, the teacher may plan activities to stimulate curiosity or help the students make connections between themselves and the topic that may motivate them to read. K-W-L charts provide teachers with information that can guide them as they provide differentiated instruction for their students.

### Semantic Maps

Semantic maps, sometimes referred to as clusters or semantic webs, are graphic displays of categorized information. They may be used to build key vocabulary and activate and organize students’ background knowledge on a topic (Duke & Pearson, 2002). They give students anchor points to which new concepts they will encounter can be attached (McNeil, 1987). To make a semantic map, the teacher first writes and circles a term that is central to the reading selection. The teacher or the students then generate categories related to the central concept. The category terms are circled and lines are drawn from the categories to the central concept to indicate a relationship. The teacher next elicits from the students exemplars, details, or subordinate ideas for each of the categories. These ideas are written in the category circles. The teacher leads the students in a discussion about the relationships among the ideas. Research suggests that this discussion is vital to the effectiveness of the technique (Stahl & Vancil, 1986). After a map is generated, the class may save it to refer to during or after reading. At any point the map may be modified to reflect new information or ideas.

Another way to develop a semantic map is to have the students brainstorm and record the subordinate ideas after being told the central concept, and then to group them into categories and label the categories. This approach is similar to Taba’s (1967) list-group-label technique for concept development.

The use of semantic maps prior to reading has been found to result in better recall in low-achieving readers than the use of the more traditional directed reading technique in which new content, new vocabulary, and the purpose for reading a selection are discussed prior to reading (Sinatra, Stahl-Gemake, & Berg, 1984). Their use is supported by the cognitive-constructivist views described in Chapter One. Semantic maps help students tap existing networks of knowledge, integrate new information, and restructure existing networks. Semantic maps provide a visual display of concepts and the relationships among them, and they tap, honor, and extend students’ background knowledge and vocabulary; thus, English learners are likely to benefit from their use.

Although semantic maps are used primarily to build vocabulary and activate and organize background knowledge, teachers may facilitate aesthetic responses to the text by including a category that taps students’ emotional responses to the topic, as shown in Example 2.17.

Two software programs that many students and teachers find useful for creating maps are Kidspiration (for younger students) and Inspiration (for older students). These
programs help users visually organize and communicate their ideas. The drawing tools on word-processing programs can also be useful for creating maps and other graphic organizers. Interactive whiteboards on which words and images can be dragged around make organizing and reorganizing information easy.

Example 2.17

- **Title:** Crocodile Safari
- **Author:** Jim Arnosky
- **Grade Level:** 2–5
- **Summary:** In this National Science Teachers Association Outstanding Science Trade Book for Students K-12, the author describes his adventures studying the North American crocodile and provides many interesting facts about the animal, its habitat, and behavior.

Semantic Map

In this activity, students preview images in a selection, make predictions about the language and content of the selection, and confirm or reject their predictions after reading (R. H. Yopp & Yopp, 2004).

The activity begins with the students looking at each page of the selection as the teacher shares them using a document camera or by independently turning the pages of their own copies. After the students have briefly viewed each page, the teacher asks students to predict words, without looking back at the selection, that they think the author used in the selection. Three or four words are elicited from the group, and the teacher asks for reasons for the students’ word predictions. For example, after looking at the images in James Cross Giblin’s Secrets of the Sphinx, one student might say that he thinks the word Egypt appears in the book because he knows the Sphinx is located in Egypt. Another student might predict that the word tourists is in the book and explain...
her contribution by stating that one of the illustrations shows a stream of modern-day people approaching the Sphinx. A third student might predict the words plateau and river, stating that he saw them labeled on a map in the book.

After several predictions are discussed, the teacher organizes the students into groups of three or four. Each group is provided with 30 to 40 (or fewer, depending on the ages of the students) small blank cards, and the students are asked to predict as many content words as they can and to record one word on each card. Students are told not to record function words, such as is, the, and and. As words are generated, students explain unfamiliar words to their peers.

After the students have generated and recorded their words, they sort them into meaning-based categories. Within their small groups, the students negotiate categories with one another, drawing on their observations and background knowledge to make decisions about which words fit together. Students often generate additional predictions during this opportunity to organize their words, and extra blank cards should be made available. Students label their categories and report their category labels during a quick share with the whole class.

The next step is to have each small group of students select three words from their cards: a word they think is common to all groups, a word they believe is unique to their group, and an interesting word. A representative from each group reveals his or her group’s common word prediction. The teacher notes overlap among the groups’ predictions and asks why the words were chosen and what they reveal about the students’ predictions about the book. What do they think the major ideas in the book will be? Next, each representative shares his or her group’s unique word prediction, and, finally, each shares the group’s interesting word. After each set of words is shared, the teacher asks questions about the word choices, such as, “What does the word have to do with the topic of the text?” and “In what context might the word appear?”

Next, the students read the literature or listen to it read aloud. As the book is read, students note which of their words were used by the author. Whole-group or small-group discussion during or after the reading includes examining the author’s use of predicted words, both how and in what contexts the words are used. Students explore the author’s craft, thinking about the author’s choices, including omissions. As appropriate for the text, students reflect critically on the author’s language and text organization. Students can select words from the text to add to their collection of words for possible use in follow-up writing. Example 2.19 shows words students thought were important to add after reading _Lady Liberty: A Biography_ by Doreen Rappaport.

This activity supports students’ comprehension in several ways (R. H. Yopp & Yopp, 2004). Foremost among them are that it contributes to vocabulary development, especially academic vocabulary, and activates and builds relevant background knowledge as students think about words related to a topic and then semantically organize them, as students discuss words and content with peers, and as they closely attend to the words and ideas of the author. It also promotes engagement in strategic reading as students generate questions about the text and establish purposes for reading.

Participation in preview-predict-confirm before reading benefits all students, and it is particularly useful for English learners. Having illustrations serve as the focus of a preview offers students a nonverbal source of information about a text. The small-group structure provides a relatively risk-free environment for students to share their vocabulary. Students’ existing vocabulary is valued and all words are accepted and
considered worthy contributions. For instance, after previewing the illustrations in *Sea Turtles* by Gail Gibbons, students may offer words that range from simpler ones such as *water* and *fish* to more sophisticated ones such as *species, reproduction, and endangered*. Vocabulary is clarified and elaborated on as students spontaneously, or with prompting, offer explanations for their word choices. In addition, students’ understanding of words are extended as they semantically sort them.

This activity provides an excellent opportunity for the teacher to assess students’ readiness for a text. If students generate very few words related to the topic of the selection after previewing pictures and discussing what they saw with peers, the teacher will need to provide instruction and experiences related to the topic prior to asking the students to read the selection in order to ensure meaningful interactions with the text.

**Example 2.18**

- **Title:** Almost to Freedom
- **Author:** Vaunda Micheaux Nelson
- **Grade Levels:** K–3
- **Summary:** A rag doll tells the story of her owner’s escape from a Virginia plantation to freedom through the Underground Railroad. When accidentally left behind at one of the hiding places along the way, the doll is lonely until another runaway child finds it. The doll realizes it has an important job.

**Preview-Predict-Confirm**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Setting</th>
<th>People</th>
<th>Actions</th>
<th>Feelings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>fire</td>
<td>men</td>
<td>work</td>
<td>scared</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cotton</td>
<td>mother</td>
<td>pick</td>
<td>happy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stars</td>
<td>daughter</td>
<td>arrested</td>
<td>sad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>night</td>
<td>father</td>
<td>watching</td>
<td>pain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>boat</td>
<td>African</td>
<td>listening</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>house</td>
<td>slaves</td>
<td>hide</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>basement</td>
<td>black</td>
<td>sleep</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fields</td>
<td>mouse</td>
<td>struggle</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dark</td>
<td></td>
<td>cry</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ladder</td>
<td></td>
<td>sneak</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>row</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>comfort</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>climb</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Common word:** doll  
**Unique word:** sew  
**Interesting word:** watching

**Example 2.19**

- **Title:** Lady Liberty: A Biography
- **Author:** Doreen Rappaport
- **Grade Level:** 3–6
• **Summary:** From the initial dream to the final unveiling, this book tells the history of the Statue of Liberty from the perspectives of those involved in its construction.

**Preview-Predict-Confirm**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Setting</th>
<th>Tools/Materials</th>
<th>People</th>
<th>Statue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>America</td>
<td>shovel</td>
<td>carpenters</td>
<td>crown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>wood</td>
<td>immigrants</td>
<td>torch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>island</td>
<td>scaffold</td>
<td>visitors</td>
<td>cover</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>harbor</td>
<td>chisel</td>
<td>men</td>
<td>hand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ocean</td>
<td>typewriter</td>
<td>women</td>
<td>large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>steamships</td>
<td>mallet</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ideas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>liberty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>freedom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hope</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Work</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>build</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sketch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>carve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>model</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Common word: **torch**  
Unique word: **hope**  
Interesting word: **scaffold**  

**Words Added after Reading:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>campaign</th>
<th>gateway</th>
<th>copper</th>
<th>symbol</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>dream</td>
<td>gift</td>
<td>skeleton</td>
<td>cement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pedestal</td>
<td>France</td>
<td>friendship</td>
<td>pennies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Concrete Experiences**

Concrete experiences support students’ understanding of a text by engaging them with the objects, concepts, or events discussed in the text prior to reading about them. Concrete experiences might include observations, investigations, or simulations. Before reading about light and shadows, for example, students might observe and record the movement of shadows on the playground. Before reading a book about simple machines, students might experiment with levers, pulleys, and inclined planes, talking about their explorations with peers in pairs or small groups. Before reading about mapmaking, students might draw their own maps of their classroom, school, or neighborhood, using the tools, skills, and language of a mapmaker.

According to Guthrie and Ozgungor (2002), concrete experiences—or real-world interactions—have both cognitive and motivational benefits. One cognitive benefit is that they cause students to activate background knowledge. As students observe, manipulate, and experience real objects and events, they often spontaneously describe prior experiences and knowledge related to the object or event and share their experiences and information with peers. When handling a collection of shells, for example, students might talk about collecting shells at the beach, share descriptions of shells they have seen, perhaps comparing them to the shells they are holding now, and discuss what
they know about shells serving as homes for mollusks. This activation of background knowledge puts students in a state of readiness for new learning from text. Additional experiences with objects build background knowledge and develop disciplinary vocabulary. A second cognitive benefit of concrete experiences is that they prompt students to ask questions, a strategy long known to enhance comprehension (National Reading Panel, 2000; Nolte & Singer, 1985; Yopp, 1988). Questions serve as a beginning point for reading by creating a set of purposes for reading and cause students to be actively engaged with text as they read to find the answers to their questions.

Concrete experiences also have motivational benefits. Guthrie and Ozgungor (2002) argued that real-world interactions are intrinsically motivating and that the intrinsic motivation for these activities transfers to texts about the objects and experiences. Additionally, when students explore and experience real objects or events, they gain a sense of ownership over their new information. The results of students’ observations and experiences become their personal knowledge, and a sense of control over one’s knowledge and learning is integral to motivation (Skinner, Wellborn, and Connell, in Guthrie & Ozgungor, 2002). Any teacher who has witnessed students handling seeds, building bridges, or planning elections can appreciate the motivational aspects of these activities. This motivation transfers to reading about these topics.

The use of concrete experiences is particularly supportive of English learners and is often recommended by authorities in second-language learning (Peregoy & Boyle, 2012). Use of realia supports students’ efforts to learn new content because it provides something tangible to support their meaning making. Concrete experiences also prompt purposeful and informal conversations in a low-anxiety setting, so English learners are more likely to engage in their discussions. Indeed, all students make use of or begin developing relevant vocabulary as they talk with one another about what they are observing or experiencing.

Concrete experiences can be provided for many texts that the students read and are especially appropriate for informational text. In the example that follows, teachers provide students with opportunities to observe, touch, manipulate, and investigate real objects and discuss their experiences with peers prior to sharing related texts with them.

**Example 2.20**

- **Title:** Dirt
- **Author:** Steve Tomecek
- **Grade Level:** 1–4
- **Summary:** Soil is as essential for our survival as water and air. This book describes the components of soil, what lives in soil, how soil forms, and how it contributes to our world.

**Sample Concrete Experiences**

1. Take the students on a walk around the school to observe the natural environment. Invite them to describe what they see, including trees, plants, grass, rocks, and soil. Discuss and list what they observe in the soil.
2. Invite students to bring a small bag of soil from their yard or other location. Spread each sample out on a piece of paper. Provide students with hand lenses to examine and compare the soil samples. Have them draw what they observe. Have students wash their hands after handling soil.
3. Dig several inches into the dirt in your school yard to collect a sample of dirt. Remove any living creatures you find in the soil. Fill a large glass jar approximately halfway with
the dirt. Fill the remainder of the jar with water, put on the jar lid, and shake. Let the layers settle overnight, and have the students observe the jar the next day. Have the students discuss and draw what they see.

4. In the school yard, outline several small plots of dirt with yarn, perhaps one square foot each. Provide the students with hand lenses and have them make observations of the plots several times during the day. Have them log what they see in individual journals and develop a class chart of animals they observe in each plot.

Picture Packets

Similar to concrete experiences are experiences with images (such as photographs, drawings, graphics, and maps) related to a reading selection. Before reading, packets containing images that have been downloaded from the Internet, cut from newspapers and magazines, or obtained from other sources are given to students to examine and discuss with peers. For example, before reading Probing Volcanoes by Laurie Lindop, small groups of students study photographs of dormant and active volcanoes, volcanic ash and rock, and volcanic craters. You can locate photographs by searching for “volcano images” on www.nationalgeographic.com. Students talk about what they know about volcanoes and what they see in the pictures, negotiating meaning and clarifying ideas. They generate questions about volcanoes, thus setting personal purposes for reading.

Before reading Journey to Topaz by Yoshiko Uchida, the story of one Japanese American family’s relocation to an internment camp during World War II, students view photographs of the aftermath of the Pearl Harbor attack, Japanese American families leaving their homes under guard, an Exclusion Order announcing the relocation of all persons of Japanese descent, and barracks at internment camps. The Online Archive of California has excellent photographs. Go to www.oac.cdlib.org, click on the images link, and type “Japanese internment” in the search box. Students have both affective and cognitive reactions as they view images such as those of children standing near barbed wire, watch towers, and armed guards.

Dragon’s Gate by Lawrence Yep is a fictional account of Chinese immigrants’ roles in building the transcontinental railroad. Before reading, students examine photographs of Chinese laborers and the conditions in which they lived, the ships on which the laborers traveled, the blasting of tunnels in mountainsides, and the driving of the Golden Spike; charts of the numbers of Chinese and other laborers; copies of newspaper articles; and maps detailing the route of the railroad. One source of images is the Central Pacific Railroad Photographic History Museum at www.cprr.org.

Multiple packets should be made so that every small group of students has access to the images and can view them closely. Or teachers may download images into electronic folders so students can view them on computers or tablets. As students examine the packet contents, they think about what the images reveal about the book and what feelings they evoke. The teacher might ask the students to sort the images in some way that makes sense to them, or the teacher might lead the students in constructing a K-W-L chart or a semantic map about the topic of the book.

An alternative to preparing packets is to use presentation software such as PowerPoint or Keynote to share images with the entire class. Each image should be projected long enough that students can view it in detail. Students may discuss the images as they are viewed or after the entire presentation. Unless blocked by school or district firewalls, YouTube and TeacherTube are instant sources of videos that can also be shared. For example, a search of volcanoes on YouTube will yield dramatic footage of volcanoes
around the world. A great source of maps and other images related to children’s literature is www.googlelittrips.org.

The use of images builds and activates students’ background knowledge, arouses their curiosity, stimulates personal reactions to the content, and supports the development of visual literacy. The images offer a nonverbal source of information, which provides comprehensible input for English learners. At the same time, the peer group and teacher-facilitated discussions are instrumental in building learners’ background knowledge and their academic language.

Students may write after viewing images and participating in discussions. Prompts might invite efferent (What do you learn from this picture?), aesthetic (How does this picture make you feel?), analytical (What choices did the photographer make about the subject, lighting, and angles? How did those choices impact your response to the image?), or critical (What does this image tell you about potential biases or motives of the photographer?) responses, or all four. To allow for individual readiness, interest, and preference, the written response may take one of a number of forms, such as a list of words or phrases, a poem, or a narrative or expository passage. Students’ informal drafts may be developed after sharing by providing the opportunity to revise, edit, and publish their writing.

### Picture Carousels

Picture carousels may be used to enrich students’ background, spark their thinking and inference making, and elicit affective responses about a topic prior to reading. The teacher selects images that are related to the literature and posts them around the room. For example, photographs that capture the hardships of the Great Depression when people traveled the country in search of work are displayed before students read *The Train Jumper* by Don Brown, the story of a boy riding the rails during this period of American history. Images can be obtained from the Internet or other sources. Each displayed image is numbered, and students are provided a guide that directs their attention to important, text-relevant aspects of the image or poses questions for students to consider as they examine the image. The guide is organized so that comments or questions correspond to each numbered photograph. Students individually or in pairs move around the room at their own pace, guides in hand, to explore each image and record notes. They are given ample time to view the images closely and thoughtfully. Then they gather in small groups to discuss their responses to the questions and their reactions to the photographs.

An alternative to a guide with questions is an observation/inference (OI) chart, also designed to promote deep thinking and inference making about images or other nontraditional texts (Nokes, 2008). Each student carries a paper that has been folded in half to create two columns: one for observations the student makes as he or she examines the image, the other for inferences drawn. The student sketches arrows linking inferences with the observations that support them. Students will need many experiences making observations and distinguishing them from inferences prior to using an OI chart independently. They will also need guidance developing inferences that are supportable from their observations.

Like many of the activities in this text, picture carousels allow for differentiated instruction. All students participate in the picture carousel, but they may read different books following their discussions. For instance, after students participate in the picture carousel for the orphan train (Example 2.21), some read Eve Bunting’s *Train to Somewhere* and others read Joan Lowery Nixon’s longer and more difficult *A Family Apart*. After books have been read, students share what they learned and view the images again. Teachers can also differentiate by providing different response guides. Some students
Prereading Activities

respond in writing to questions on a guide, and some develop an OI chart, as in Example 2.23. Others may create a sketch in response to each image. Still others may record a list of words that come to mind as they view an image.

Example 2.21

• **Title:** *Train to Somewhere*
• **Author:** Eve Bunting
• **Grade Level:** 2–4
• **Summary:** From the mid-1800s to the late 1920s, thousands of orphans in New York were taken by trains (“orphan trains”) to the Midwest to be selected by families looking to adopt a child. This fictional account of one girl’s experience is both tragic and hopeful.

**Websites with Images:**
- [http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~adoption/topics/orphan.html](http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~adoption/topics/orphan.html) (The Adoption History Project at the University of Oregon)
- [http://www.childrensaidsociety.org/about/history/orphan-trains](http://www.childrensaidsociety.org/about/history/orphan-trains) (Children’s Aid Society)
- Or click on an images link on a search engine and type in “orphan train.”

**Picture Carousel**

**Image 1:** Photograph of a group of children standing in front of a train
- Who do you think these children are and what are they doing?
- Look at the children’s clothing. Notice that the photograph is in black and white.
- When do you think the photograph was taken?
- Look at the expressions on the children’s faces. How do you think they feel?
- How do you feel as you view this photograph?

**Image 2:** Photograph of children looking out of train windows
- Where do you think these children are going?
- Do you think these children are with their families? Explain.

**Image 3:** Map showing the number of orphans taken to various states
- What is the map showing us?
- What do you think about this?
- Which region of the country received the most children from the orphan trains?

**Image 4:** Poster soliciting homes for orphans
- What is the poster advertising?
- Why might children need homes?
- Who might choose to adopt one of these children?
- How does the poster make you feel?

**Image 5:** Close-up photograph of an older orphan seeking adoption
- How old do you think this girl is?
- Do you think she will be adopted? Explain.
- How do you think she is feeling?
Example 2.22

- **Title:** *Out of the Dust*
- **Author:** Karen Hesse
- **Grade Level:** 4–8
- **Summary:** Set in 1930s Oklahoma, this free-verse book reveals one family’s ordeal with personal tragedy and the Dust Bowl catastrophe.

- **Useful Sites for Images:**
  - www.memory.loc.gov (The American Memory page of the Library of Congress website; type "dust bowl" in the search box.)
  - www.pbs.org/kenburns/dustbowl
  Or click on an images link on a search engine and type in “dust bowl.”

**Picture Carousel**

**Image 1:** Photograph of a blackened sky over a town

  What is your reaction to this photograph?
  Why do you think the sky in this photograph is dark?
  Where are the townspeople?
  How would you feel if you were in this town?
  What do you think will happen to the residents?
  Have you ever been involved in a natural disaster (such as an earthquake, tornado, flood)?
  What did you do? How did you feel?

**Image 2:** Photograph of a person covering his face from the dust

  Why is this person covering his face?
  What would happen if he didn’t cover his face?
  What do you think he is thinking? What else?

**Image 3:** Photograph of a car buried in dust

  What are the first two words that come to your mind when you view this photograph?
  How much of the car is buried in dust?
  How long do you think it took for the dust to bury the car?
  What will the owners of the car do?
  Do you think the car will function?

**Image 4:** Photograph of crops destroyed by the dust

  What happened to the crops in this photograph?
  How long do you think it took to grow the crops? How long for them to be destroyed?
  What are the implications of the destruction?
  How do you think the farmers feel?
  What do you think the farmers will do?

**Image 5:** Map of the United States depicting the Dust Bowl region

  In what part of the country did the Dust Bowl occur?
  The Dust Bowl occurred in which states?
Image 6: Photograph of a car packed with furniture, luggage, and people
Where are these people going? Why?
What will they do when they get to their destination?
What do you think they are hoping for?
How do you think they feel about leaving?
What have they left behind?

Example 2.23
• Title: By the Great Horn Spoon!
• Author: Sid Fleischman
• Grade Level: 4–6
• Summary: Young Jack and his aunt’s butler, Praiseworthy, stow away aboard a ship sailing around Cape Horn and bound for California in search of gold.
• Related Websites:
  www.library.ca.gov/goldrush (the California State Library)
  www.oac.cdlib.org (Online Archive of California, California Digital Library, University of California). Click on the images link and type “gold rush” and “gold rush sailing vessels” in the search box.

Observation/Inference Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observations</th>
<th>Inferences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Photograph 1: A group of men panning for gold</td>
<td>• They are working very hard and panning for gold is a difficult task.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The men are dirty.</td>
<td>• Panning for gold is dirty, exhausting work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The men are not smiling.</td>
<td>• The gold seekers did not have a lot of success.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• There are only men in the photograph.</td>
<td>• Women did not participate in panning for gold.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• They are using pans in running water.</td>
<td>• Conditions were not good.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• There is no gold in the photograph.</td>
<td>• They are tired and the work is exhausting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The area is filthy.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The men are slumped over.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Quickwrites

Quickwrites serve to promote personal connections with the text, activate existing knowledge, and stimulate thinking on a topic prior to students’ encounters with a reading selection.
Given a prompt from the teacher, students quickly write what they know about the topic or record their relevant personal experiences. For example, before reading *Throw Your Tooth on the Roof* by Selby B. Beeler, students think about their own experiences losing baby teeth. What became of the baby teeth? Many cultures have traditions surrounding the loss of a baby tooth: It is put under a pillow, buried in a garden, dropped down a mouse hole, or thrown on a roof. Beeler’s book describes traditions from cultures around the world. Thinking and writing about their own experiences with lost teeth prior to reading stimulates students’ personal connections with the topic.

Likewise, before reading *Blackout* by John Rocco, the story of one community’s experience with a power outage, students reflect on and write about how they would spend a day without electricity. Before reading *The Elephant Scientist* by Caitlin O’Connell, students write about what they would explore or study if they could go anywhere in the world. Example 2.24 provides sample quickwrites about waking up in the morning.

After writing, students are provided an opportunity to share—in pairs, small groups, or as a class—their writing with peers. Conversations about the topic ensue and students may question one another for more detail, particularly when diverse responses are given. Barone and Wright (2008) described a one-to-one laptop classroom where students periodically completed quickwrites prior to listening to or reading a selection. The quickwrites were saved to electronic folders. Students later revisited their quickwrites and selected one to develop into an expanded written work.

### Example 2.24

- **Title:** *Mary Smith*
- **Author:** Andrea U’Ren
- **Grade Level:** 1–3
- **Summary:** Years ago, before the time when alarm clocks were common, people hired “knockers up” to awaken them in the morning. Most knockers up carried long poles and scratched on the windows of their clients’ homes. Mary Smith used a peashooter to shoot dried peas at their windows.

### Quickwrites

**Prompt:** Take a few minutes to write about how you are awakened from sleep, especially on mornings when you need to rise early. What awakens you from your sleep?

**Student 1:**

My mom has an alarm clock. Usually I hear it go off while I sleep, but I roll over and keep sleeping until my mother jiggles my arm and tells me it is time to get up. Sometimes she has to come back three or four times to get me out of bed. When that happens she grabs my feet and tosses them over the side of the bed and pulls me into a standing position. Sometimes when I’m anxious about something the night before, I automatically wake up early the next morning.

**Student 2:**

Usually my parents wake me up. Sometimes I hear my brothers talking in their room and that wakes me up. Some mornings when I want to be sure to get up early I leave the blinds on my windows open so that the sun shines through them in the morning. The way my room faces, the sun really makes my room light and that usually wakes me up.
Prereading Activities

Student 3:

My dog always sleeps with me. She usually wakes me up early in the morning because she wants to play and to be let outside. She whimpers and puts her nose right in my face. My dog is like my alarm clock.

Quickwrites activate background knowledge and prompt personal connections as students reflect on their own knowledge and experiences and learn from the knowledge and experiences of one another. In this prereading activity, as in many, students discover that what they already know and what they have experienced matter in the reading act. They appreciate that the contributions of all students are important and valuable. The more diverse the student population in your classroom, the richer the pool of experiences and information that will be shared.

English learners may be encouraged to record their thoughts in the language that is most comfortable for them. If students are writing in a less familiar language, they should be given ample time to write. Teachers may want to provide all students with a moment of quiet reflection, or think time, prior to writing.

Quickdraws

Quickdraws provide a different medium for students to reflect on and share their experiences or knowledge. Although appropriate for use with all students, quickdraws can be particularly effective with students who are new to the English language and students who are developing as users of written language. Quickdraws provide an opportunity for students to access their relevant knowledge and teachers to learn about students’ experiences with a topic, their existing knowledge on that topic, and misconceptions they may have.

Students are asked to develop a sketch quickly in response to a prompt. For instance, a teacher might provide students with a few minutes to draw what they know about how electricity gets to their homes prior to sharing Barbara Seuling’s Flick a Switch: How Electricity Gets to Your Home. Some students might draw electrical outlets, wires running through walls, and utility poles; others might draw transformers, electrical grids, wind turbines, dams, and nuclear power plants. After drawing, students are given the opportunity to talk about their drawings with one another. They are encouraged to revise or elaborate on their drawings based on their conversations with peers. Some drawings may be shared with the entire class by projecting them onto a screen or board using document projection technology. Students are encouraged to generate questions, which are recorded and displayed.

Example 2.25 shares one student’s drawings of the front and back of a dollar bill before reading about the meaning of the symbols on U.S. currency. After the students drew from memory, they shared their drawings with peers and then refined their drawings. Then the teacher shared several dollar bills for students to examine closely. Included in the example are some of the questions that students generated. Example 2.26 shares quickdraws of snow crystals drawn by two students prior to reading about their formation.

Example 2.25

- **Title:** Money, Money, Money
- **Author:** Nancy Winslow Parker
- **Grade Level:** 3–6
Chapter 2

- **Summary:** The author provides interesting information about the meaning of the symbols and art on the paper currency of the United States. Readers also learn about the individuals whose pictures are on the bills, the engraving and printing process, counterfeiting, and more.

**Quickdraw**

*Prompt:* You probably handle or see money every day. In as much detail as possible, draw the front and back of a one-dollar bill without looking at one.

These questions were generated by the students after drawing, discussing, and viewing a dollar bill:

- Whose pictures are put on the paper money?
- Why is there a pyramid?
- What does the eye represent?
- Why do some bills have an asterisk in the row of numbers?
- Why is there more than one language on the bill?
- What do those foreign words mean?
- Why is there a city name on the bill?
- What is the largest bill?
- How is money made?
- Why is the eagle holding arrows in its talons?

**Example 2.26**

- **Title:** The Story of Snow: The Science of Winter’s Wonder
- **Author:** Mark Cassino with Jon Nelson
- **Grade:** K–3
- **Summary:** A nature photographer and snow scientist collaborated on this Outstanding Science Trade Book, which provides information about the formation and structure of snow.
Quickdraw

*Prompt:* Draw a snow crystal. Use as much detail as possible.

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**CONCLUSION**

The 15 prereading activities described in this chapter set the stage for personal responses to the literature, activate or build background knowledge, develop relevant language, prompt students to set purposes for reading, and motivate students to read. The activities involve students in thinking, discussing, responding, exploring, and shaping ideas. Students are likely to find the literature personally meaningful after engaging in these activities and to approach ideas contained in the books with greater interest, purpose, involvement, and appreciation.

Each of the activities also serves to prepare students for writing. When students consider issues, engage in discussions with one another, and reflect on and share their own relevant experiences, they find they have something to say. Writing is one means for them to continue the thinking that began with the activity. In addition, each activity may be flexibly employed to meet the needs of a range of learners.