SMART READING

UNLOCKING MEANING THROUGH SOCIAL STUDIES

Strategies to Improve Reading Comprehension

By

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Introduction

Students begin to read at an early age. By middle school most students have, in fact, mastered the mechanics of reading. Specifically, students have learned to *decode*—or translate printed words into understandable sounds and language. It can be said that by middle school most students have progressed from "learning to read" to "reading to learn." In the "reading to learn" phase, however, many students find themselves struggling to understand what they have read.

Students find they can read words, but they do not always comprehend what they are reading. There are several reasons that contribute to this dilemma. First, 85 to 90 percent of what students learn in school comes from textbooks; most of the writing in textbooks is expository, or factual and informational. Research shows that expository writing is more difficult to comprehend than narrative writing, which generally tells a story. A second reason for the dilemma is that, as students progress from one grade to another, the complexity of reading comprehension becomes greater. Students with reading comprehension problems tend to fall farther and farther behind each year.

There is, however, help for the struggling reader. There are "tools" or strategies that students can use to organize and manage their learning. Research shows that teaching students strategies to enable them to interact with what they are reading increases comprehension. In fact, the difference between successful and unsuccessful readers is actually reflected in their ability to effectively apply these strategies. Because of the correlation between the use of strategies and reading comprehension, it is extremely important that all teachers, not just English or reading teachers, structure their lessons to help students become purposeful readers. Having a purpose for reading makes students more focused, which, in turn, helps them understand and remember what they have read. Most teachers may not be trained to teach students to read (decode), but every teacher can teach reading strategies in their particular content. To that end, the strategies found in Clairmont Press's *Smart Reading* may be used in any subject area.

It has been said that good readers

- are active readers,
- set goals for reading, including identifying the purpose for their reading,
- skim material before they read, noting things that are related to their goals,
- integrate their prior knowledge and make personal connections,
- develop questions that they hope to answer during the reading,
- make predictions about what is to come in the reading,
- monitor their understanding of the reading,
- try to determine the meaning of unfamiliar words or concepts,
- respond to text in a variety of ways,
- create visual representations to aid comprehension and recall, and
- determine important ideas.

Teaching the strategies that follow will enable students to develop all the traits of a good reader. The strategies included in *Smart Reading* actually help students interact with text.

- ***Before reading***. Here you will find strategies to activate students' prior knowledge. Strategies include SQ3R, Think-Pair-Share, KWL, and predicting.
- ***During reading***. Here you will find strategies to increase comprehension. Strategies include monitoring text structure (e.g., finding the main idea/details, sequencing/ordering, comparing/contrasting, and cause/effect), using context clues, determining fact from opinion, and inferring. Strategies to address special skills (e.g., interpreting photographs, political cartoons, graphs, charts, tables, and maps) are also included.
- ***After reading***. Here you will find strategies to assess comprehension and expand knowledge. Strategies include summarizing/paraphrasing, synthesizing, and testing.

Before Reading

Students should know ***what*** they are reading. They can use the **SQ3R** strategy to skim a passage and/or chapter to determine how it is organized as well as what material is covered.

Students should know ***what they already know*** about a topic. They can use **Think-Pair-Share** and **KWL** strategies to recall information. Students who activate prior knowledge remember more information than students who have little or no prior knowledge of a topic.

Students should know ***why*** they are reading. They can use the **KWL** and **What Does It Mean?** strategies to activate prior knowledge, determine what they still want to know about a topic, set a purpose for their reading and make predictions about what they will learn from reading the material.

Before reading, students can access prior knowledge by using

- KWL
- Think-Pair-Share

Before reading, students can set a purpose for their reading by using

- SQ3R
- KWL
- What Does It Mean?

Before reading, students can preview what they are to read by using

- SQ3R

STRATEGY 1

SQ3R

SQ3R (Survey, Question, Read, Recite, Review) is a strategy that is quite effective when reading fairly structured text, including text that includes detailed information. This strategy enables students to skim material and help them recall prior knowledge. SQ3R requires students to skim, or read material quickly. It also gives them an opportunity to scan, or locate specific information. The strategy encourages students to divide material into manageable chunks. "Chunking" information provides an opportunity to pause and internalize the information after reading each section.

SQ3R begins as a "before reading" strategy. **Survey** and **Question** may be used "before reading," not only to skim (read quickly) and scan (locate information) the information, but also to develop questions that set a purpose for reading. **Read** and **Recite** occur "during reading." **Review** occurs "after reading."

SQ3R

To Teach the SQ3R strategy, use Selection 1 and Graphic Organizer 1. Introduce the strategy by showing the students a transparency of Graphic Organizer 1. Highlight each heading as you have students follow the steps in the left column. Allow the students to respond to the questions in the organizer as they preview and then read Selection 1.

1. **SURVEY**
   Tell students that surveying prepares them to read. It allows them to get an overview of the material. Ask them to use Selection 1 and answer the questions in the survey box.

2. **QUESTION**
   Ask students to write a number of questions based on the results of their survey. Record the questions in the question box.

3. **READ**
   After students have surveyed and determined a purpose for reading, have them read Selection 1. Tell them to look for the answers to their questions. They should also note any unfamiliar words and use a dictionary or context clues to define them. They should read slowly and deliberately, reading small sections at a time.

4. **RECITE**
   Have students be active readers, stopping at regular intervals to paraphrase or summarize what they have read.

5. **REVIEW**
   After they have finished reading, ask students to check their understanding by verifying the answers to their questions or recording notes on the content of the passage.

SQ3R	
SURVEY	1. What is the title of the chapter (selection)? *Free Blacks Before The Civil War* 2. What is the main idea in the first paragraph? *That not all blacks were slaves.* 3. What conclusion is made at the end of each section?
QUESTION	What questions do you think will be answered in the selection?
READ	1. What are some new words in the selection? 2. What words are underlined, italicized, in bold print, or in color? 3. Which of your questions were answered?
RECITE (Do one or more)	1. On a separate sheet of paper, write notes to highlight the main ideas in the selection. 2. On a separate sheet of paper, summarize the selection in your own words. 3. On a separate sheet of paper, draw a picture representing the content of the selection.
REVIEW	1. On a separate sheet of paper, convert your notes to questions. 2. Answer the questions from memory.

To apply the skill, use Graphic Organizer 1 and have students illustrate their ability to use the strategy while reading a selection from their textbook.

STRATEGY 1

SQ3R

Selection 1 - Free Blacks Before the Civil War

Free Blacks

Not all blacks were **slaves**. Besides those who fled to free states, some bought their freedom, while others were given their freedom by kind masters. Free blacks often sent money to the South to purchase freedom for members of their families. One man sent $9,000 to purchase freedom for eight of his children.

The plight of **runaways** is well documented. George Washington wrote about fugitive slaves in Philadelphia as early as 1786. The **Quakers** established groups to support slaves in their quest for freedom. Some slaves, like **Henry "Box" Brown**, found creative ways to escape. Henry, with some water and a few biscuits, had himself nailed inside a large box. The box was sent from Richmond, Virginia, to the Vigilance Committee in Philadelphia where it arrived safely 26 hours later with Henry inside. Although Henry gained his freedom, the Virginian who helped him escape was sentenced to prison for his role in the plot.

The Underground Railroad

Most slaves followed the North Star, walking to freedom. Thousands of these voyagers were aided in their attempts to be free by the **underground railroad**, which was really not a railroad of steel and steam, but a network of paths, river crossings, boats, trains, and wagons. Along the route of the "railroad" were stations or stopping places where the **fugitives** found people sympathetic to their cause who were willing to aid them on their journey. Because the underground railroad was surrounded by secrecy, it is unclear when it actually began or how many people followed its route to freedom.

Levi Coffin, a Quaker, was said to be president of the underground railroad. From his reminiscences, it is possible to learn some things about its origin and growth. When Levi was seven years old, he saw a group of slaves being driven to market by a man on horseback with a long whip. This scene made a lasting impression on him. When he was fifteen, he had the opportunity to help a slave named Stephen who was part of another group being taken to market. Coffin learned that Stephen was actually a free man who had been kidnapped and sold. Appalled by his tragic story, a group of Quakers raised money and sent men to find him. Stephen was found in Georgia, and six months later, because of the efforts of the Quakers, was granted his freedom. This was the beginning of Coffin's involvement with freeing slaves. When he and his wife Catherine moved north to Indiana, they established an underground railroad station. Soon, they were helping dozens of fugitives, providing them with clothing and a place to sleep.

Graphic Organizer 1

SQ3R	
SURVEY	1. What is the title of the chapter (selection)? 2. What is the main idea in the first paragraph? 3. What conclusion is made at the end of each section?
QUESTION	What questions do you think will be answered in the selection?
READ	1. What are some new words in the selection? 2. What words are underlined, italicized, in bold print, or in color? 3. Which of your questions were answered?
RECITE (Do one or more)	1. On a separate sheet of paper, write notes to highlight the main ideas in the selection. 2. On a separate sheet of paper, summarize the selection in your own words. 3. On a separate sheet of paper, draw a picture representing the content of the selection.
REVIEW	1. On a separate sheet of paper, convert your notes to questions. 2. Answer the questions from memory.

STRATEGY 2 KWL

New information often builds upon previous facts or concepts. Therefore, activating previous knowledge sets the stage for new learning to take place. Also, the amount of prior knowledge a student has about a topic determines how quickly he or she can read a passage or chapter. If the student sees familiar names or vocabulary, he or she is more likely to skim, covering the material more quickly. A good strategy to activate prior knowledge and establish a purpose for reading is **KWL.**

The **K** in the strategy represents *knowledge*. Students — as individuals, in small groups, or as part of the whole class — may be asked to generate a list representing what they already know about a topic. (Some teachers begin by asking students to activate prior knowledge individually. Then each student may share her or his list with one other student or a small group of students. Finally, each pair or group shares its list with the class. Then, a class list of what all students know is posted.)

The **W** in the strategy represents what students *want* to know. Students define what they would like to know about the topic before they read. Defining what they want to know sets a purpose for their reading. These ideas may be written in the form of a question. (Again, after asking individual students to make a list, teachers may want to combine the questions and make a class list.)

The **L** in the strategy represents what students *learned*. The L column may be completed during reading or after reading. During reading, students may take notes to record new information or they may record answers to their questions. After reading, teachers may use a variety of activities to allow students to demonstrate what they have learned. Activities include traditional tests, writing assignments, oral or written reports, or special projects.

KWL

To Teach the KWL strategy, you will need a copy of Selection 2 and Graphic Organizer 2. Follow the steps in the left column and allow the students to complete the first two columns (K and W) about the life of George Washington. Then have the students read Selection 2. As they read or when they have completed reading the selection, have them complete Column 3 (L) on the organizer.

1. Tell students about the topic of the selection, in this case, the life of George Washington.

2. Ask students to brainstorm a list of information they already know about George Washington.

3. Have each student record her or his information in the first column (K) on the form.

4. Ask students to think about what information they would like to know about George Washington.

5. Have students list what they would like to know in Column 2 (W). Have them phrase what they want to know as questions.

6. Ask students to read Selection 2. As they read, have them take notes and record information they did not know before they read the passage. They should record this information in Column 3 (L).

7. Have students identify which of their "before reading" questions were answered.

8. Have students identify which of their "before reading" questions are still unanswered.

K	W	L
Born in Virginia Chopped down a cherry tree First president of the United States Indian fighter	1.What did George Washington do before he became president? 2.In what battle did he fight? 3.Why was he chosen president?	

To apply the skill, assign a reading in the textbook. Before reading, have students use Graphic Organizer 2 and complete Columns K and W. Have them complete Column 3 (L) after they have read the material.

To extend the activity, have students brainstorm where they might find the answers to their unanswered questions. Then have them conduct additional research to find those answers

Selection 2 - The Life of George Washington

George Washington, the first president of the United States, was born February 22, 1732, in Virginia. Raised by a family of planters, Washington was taught the morals, manners, and body of knowledge becoming of an eighteenth-century Virginia gentleman.

As a young man, Washington was interested in military affairs as well as the western expansion of the United States. At age 16, he helped survey the western Virginia lands that were owned by Thomas Lord Fairfax. At age 22, he was commissioned a lieutenant colonel in the Virginia militia. In that capacity, he engaged in the early skirmishes of the French and Indian War.

After the British victory in the French and Indian War, Washington spent nearly twenty years living the life of a large landowner. He managed the lands around his home at Mount Vernon. During this time he also married Martha Dandridge Custis and served in the Virginia state legislature.

As a landowner and politician, Washington sided with his fellow planters who believed they were being exploited by the British government. The restrictions and taxes placed on the southern gentlemen fueled growing resentment. This resentment continued to grow until the hostilities finally erupted into a war for independence.

With the clouds of war growing, Washington was selected as one of Virginia's representatives to the Second Continental Congress, which met in Philadelphia in 1775. He was also elected commander-in-chief of the Continental Army. In that capacity, he led the colonial troops against King George III and the British government.

During the American Revolution, Washington's troops were out-trained and outmanned, but the colonial commander developed a strategy to avoid face-to-face confrontation when possible. Washington chose to harass the British troops and strike unexpectedly in order to keep them off guard. The American Revolution lasted six years. The last major battle took place at Yorktown where the colonial troops, aided by their French allies, defeated British General Cornwallis.

After the American Revolution, Washington hoped to retire to his beloved Mount Vernon. He soon realized, however, that the new constitution of the United States - the Articles of Confederation - was weak and ineffective. Because of his love for his country, Washington was instrumental in calling for a convention to be held in Philadelphia in 1787 to amend the Articles. This meeting became the Constitutional Convention, where the form of government we have today was created. The newly formed Electoral College unanimously chose George Washington as the nation's first president. He served two terms before retiring to Mount Vernon, where he died on December 14, 1799.

Graphic Organizer 2

K	W	L

STRATEGY 3

What Does It Mean?

Predicting requires making educated guesses about what will happen, e.g., what will happen tomorrow, what will happen in the story, what will be on a test. Making predictions about a reading passage requires a student to be an active reader. Predicting requires students to activate prior knowledge as well as to expand that knowledge as they read.

In the **What Does It Mean?** strategy, students activate prior knowledge about a given topic. They respond by generating a list of words associated with the topic. Then, they categorize the words according to an organizing framework, for example, people, places, cooking utensils, government, punishments.

After categorizing the words, students give each group a name. The name should describe the words - entertainment, household items, customs. Finally, based on the groupings of the words and their descriptive titles, students write one or more hypotheses or predictions about the content of the reading.

Listing the words, grouping them, giving the groups a name, and writing a prediction are completed before reading. During reading, students may validate or discount their predictions.

What Does It Mean?

To Teach the What Does It Mean? strategy, use Selection 3 and Graphic Organizer 3. Give the students the word list that is in the template. Have them complete the other steps in the strategy as you read the directions in the left column.

1. Have students make a list of key words about the topic. (The words may come from memory or from skimming a reading passage. The teacher may also provide the list.) The words should be written in the large rectangular box. (NOTE: In the practice exercise, give the students the list of words in the Word List.)

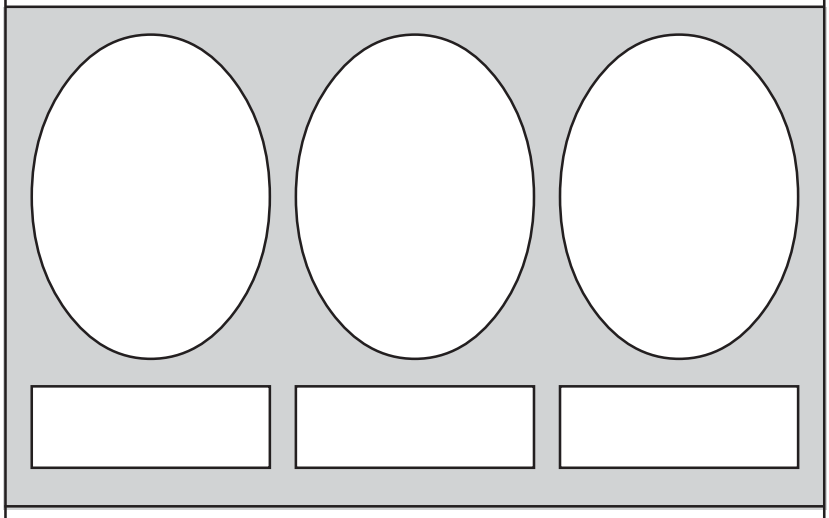
2. Have the students group the words in one of the ovals. The words should be grouped by some common characteristic. Use each word in only one oval.

3. After the words are grouped, have students give each group of words a name. Write the name in the rectangular box under each circle.

4. Based on the groupings, have students make a prediction (hypothesis) about something that may be addressed in the selection.

WORD LIST

culture	*customs*	*beliefs*	*traditions*
atlatl	*archaeologists*	*prehistoric*	*artifacts*
anthropologist	*extinct*	*paleo*	*gatherers*
nomads	*hunters*	*Clovis point*	*Folsom Point*
mammoths	*mastodons*	*flint knapping*	



PREDICTIONS

1. *Culture includes beliefs, customs and traditions.*
2. *Scientists tell us about ancient cultures.*
3. *Early people had crude weapons.*
4. *Early people hunted animals that are extinct today.*

To apply the skill, have the students complete Graphic Organizer 3 on their own as they read a passage in their textbook.

To extend the activity, have students check the accuracy of their predictions by using Graphic Organizer 4. They should write their hypotheses in the middle column and then, as they read, cite evidence to support their prediction in Column 1 or cite evidence to refute their prediction in Column 3

STRATEGY 3

What Does It Mean?

Selection 3 - Prehistoric Cultures: The Paleo and Archaic Periods

Culture refers to the **beliefs, customs,** and civilization of a particular people or group. Prehistoric cultures are those cultures or communities that existed before recorded history. Prehistoric cultures are usually grouped by how and where they lived as well as when they lived.

What we know about prehistoric cultures on the North American continent comes from **traditions** and the work of **archaeologists** and **anthropologists**. From **artifacts** - bits of stone, bone, pottery, tools, and weavings - these scientists piece together a picture of how the people lived.

The earliest primitive hunters are sometimes called Paleo Indians. The word **paleo** means "very old." So, it might be said that these people were very old **hunters.** Some people from the Paleo period were nomads who followed large animals like **mastodons** and hairy **mammoths.** They depended on these animals for food and clothing. They hunted with spears that had a **Clovis point** made by chipping away rock. The process of making the spear points was known as **flint knapping.**

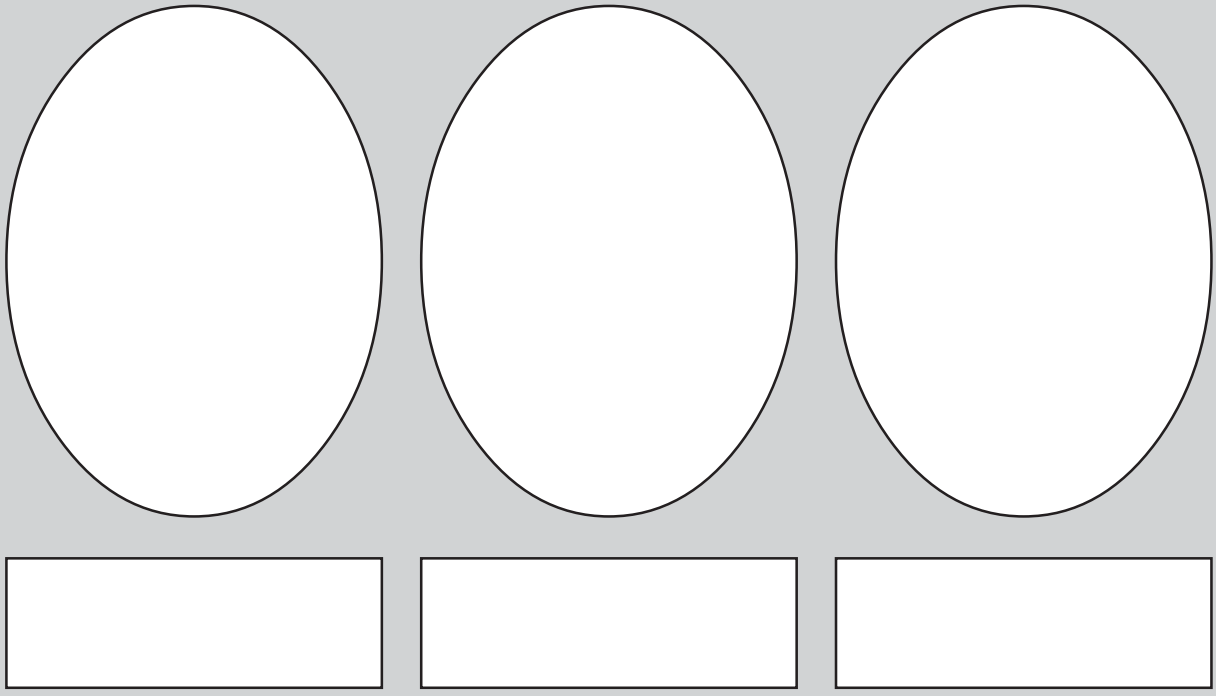
As the large animals became **extinct**, people had to change their methods of hunting. They began to make a finer spear point — the **Folsom point** — that was more effective when hunting smaller animals. A popular new weapon — the **atlatl** — was developed during the Archaic period. The atlatl made it possible to throw spears or darts with more force. The Archaic people, since they did not have to follow the large animals, stayed in one place for longer periods of time. As a result, they became **gatherers** as well as hunters.

Graphic Organizer 3

Preview a reading passage and make a list of key words.

WORD LIST

Group these words according to a common characteristic. Place each group of words in one of the ovals. After you have grouped the words, give each group a name. Write the name in the rectangle under each oval.



Based on your groups of words, predict what you may find in the reading passage.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Graphic Organizer 4

Record the predictions you made on Graphic Organizer 3 in the middle column. Then, as you read the text, find evidence to support or refute your predictions. Write evidence to support your prediction in Column 1. Write evidence to refute your prediction in Column 3.

SUPPORT	PREDICTION	REFUTE

REFLECTION: How accurate were your predictions?

STRATEGY 4

Think - Pair - Share

Think-Pair-Share can be used to activate prior knowledge as well as to extend knowledge and formulate predictions. The strategy gives students time to process their thinking. It also gives them an opportunity to check out their thinking with a classmate before they speak to the whole class. Sharing with one student promotes confidence, which fosters thoughtful ideas. Sharing also increases the likelihood of greater student participation.

The Think-Pair-Share strategy has three distinct phases. These include:

THINK During this phase students activate prior knowledge. This is generally done through brainstorming. The prior knowledge may be used to make predictions or to set the purpose for later reading. Generating prior knowledge will also enable students to read more quickly and with greater comprehension.

PAIR During this phase each student is paired with a classmate. The two share their ideas with one another and make a list reflecting their thinking. The list should not contain duplicate ideas.

SHARE Finally, the pair share their ideas with the whole class. You may want to record the ideas on the chalkboard or on flip chart paper. Do not list duplicate ideas. After each pair has shared its list, use the class list to set the purpose for their reading.

STRATEGY 4

Think - Pair - Share

To Teach the Think-Pair-Share strategy, make a transparency of Graphic Organizer 5. Instead of a transparency, you may write the steps in the strategy on flip chart paper. Then go over the steps in the left box as you point out each step—one phase at a time.

1. Introduce a topic, for example, the settlement of the southern colonies.

2- A. Show the first task **(THINK)** on the transparency of Graphic Organizer 5.

2-B. Have students make a list of their prior knowledge of the topic. They should record their ideas on a piece of notebook paper. Give students 5-10 minutes to make the list.

3-A. Show the second task **(PAIR)** on the transparency.

3-B. Ask each student to join with one other student. (You may want to assign pairs.)

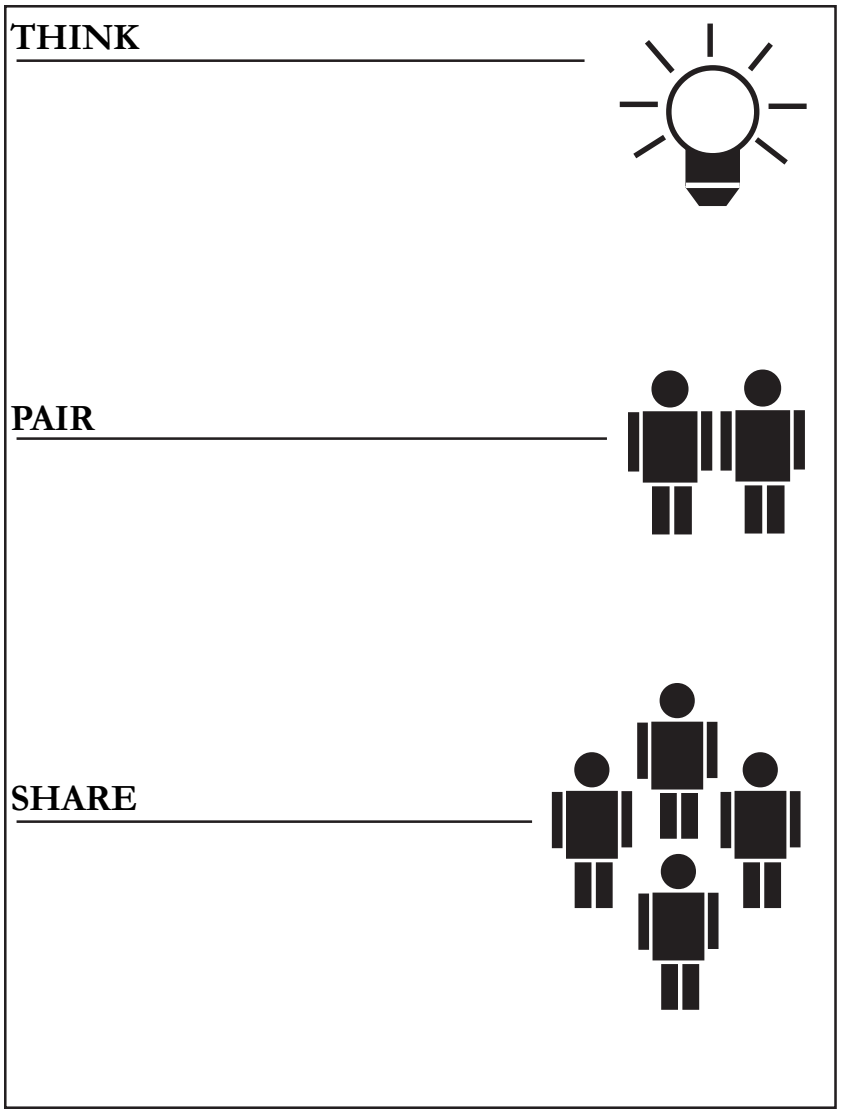
3-C. Ask each student to share her or his list with her or his partner.

3-D. Combine the two lists into one list per pair of students.

4-A. Show the third task **(SHARE)** on the transparency.

4-B. Have one member of each pair share ideas with the class.

4-C. Make a class list of ideas on flip chart paper.

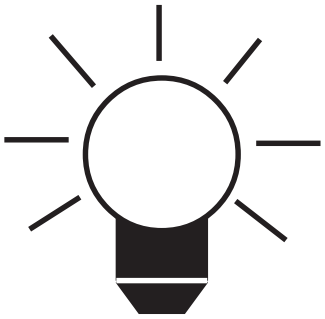


To apply the Think-Pair-Share strategy, introduce a topic in the textbook. Have students repeat the process they used in the practice session to activate prior knowledge.

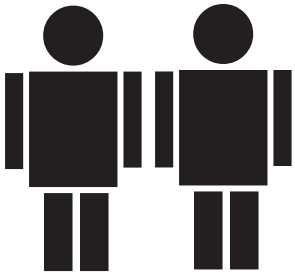
To extend the strategy, have students **THINK** by brainstorming prior knowledge of the topic and writing predictions or questions they may be able to answer after reading the passage. Then have them **PAIR** with one other student and **SHARE** with the class. When they have gone through the process, there should be one class list of predictions to establish the purpose for reading the material.

Graphic Organizer 5

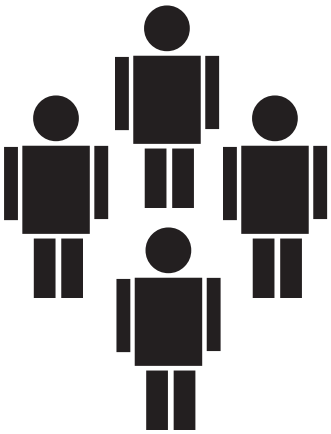
THINK



PAIR



SHARE



During Reading

Students should interact with the textbook content as they read. Graphic Organizers provide a format by which they can record information from the readings. As students read, they should

- analyze text structure. Text structure describes the writing style of the author. Styles include
  - listing main idea and supporting details,
  - sequencing or ordering information,
  - comparing and contrasting, and
  - illustrating cause and effect.

- define unfamiliar words through context clues.

- distinguish fact from opinion.

- make inferences.

- "read" nontext material, including
  - photographs,
  - political cartoons,
  - graphs,
  - charts and tables, and
  - maps.

STRATEGY 5

Analyzing Text Structure

Authors use a variety of writing styles. These styles or organizational patterns are referred to as *text structure*. Writing is either narrative or expository. Narrative writing tells a story, while expository writing (the type of writing found in textbooks) is informational or factual in nature. Students learn to analyze narrative text structure at an early age when they are asked to examine the beginning, middle, and end of a story. Typically, however, they are never taught to analyze the variety of text structures found in textbooks. This lack of knowledge of how to interact with text structures is one of the reasons for poor comprehension.

Students may be able to read (decode) textbook material, but even good decoders sometimes have trouble comprehending what they have read. The words they read are just that — words. Many students are not able to organize those words into a pattern that provides meaning.

Good readers read not only for pleasure but also to gain information and deepen their understanding. They, perhaps instinctively, recognize the organizational patterns found in textbooks. They are able to select strategies that allow them to graphically organize the information they are reading. Poor readers, on the other hand, may lack the ability to organize what they have read into meaningful patterns.

Teachers can help students increase comprehension by teaching ways to organize information to make it meaningful. Teachers who **analyze text structure** actually teach students to read like authors. The following chart summarizes some of the text structures found in textbooks. The chart defines each structure and provides cue words that can be used to identify a particular text structure.

TEXT STRUCTURE	DEFINITION	CUE WORDS
Main Idea/Supporting Details	The text resembles an outline. Each section has a main idea, followed by supporting details, e.g., life in colonial America, the compromises from the Constitutional Convention.	For example, for instance, in addition, in some instances, who, what, when, where, why
Order/Sequence	The text tells the order of something, e.g., the steps in a recipe; a series of events; a biographical excerpt.	Next, first, last, second, another, then, additionally, finally, in the beginning, before, after
Compare/Contrast	The text describes the differences and/or similarities of two or more things, e.g., a comparison of two or more people, events, places, ideas.	**Compare:** Like, same as, similar, likewise, and, also, too, both, just as, in comparison **Contrast:** However, unlike, by contrast, yet, although, whereas, different from, on the other hand, but, as opposed to
Cause/Effect	The text tells the result of an event, detailing the reasons it occurred, e.g., causes a war; causes of the Great Depression.	Consequently, therefore, as a result, thereby, leads to, because, so that, so, since

Analyzing Text Structure

To Teach the Analyzing Text Structure strategy, make a transparency of Selection 4. Instead of a transparency, you may write the information on flip chart paper. Then, give the students a copy of Graphic Organizer 6 and Selection 5 or 6. Go over the steps in the left box as the whole class answers each question on the graphic organizer..

1. Use Selection 4 to teach students the names and characteristics of various types of text structures.

2. Have students read the title of Selection 5. Then have them complete question 1 on Graphic Organizer 6.

3. Have the class brainstorm how they think the text is organized. (You may want to use the Think-Pair-Share strategy to do this.) Record all ideas and then come to a class consensus.

4. Have students read Selection 5. As they read, have them individually list words on the chart.

5. Have individual students share their list with the class. Make a class list of the words.

6. From the class discussion, come to consensus on the text structure found in Selection 5.

7. As a variation, you may want to assign half the class Selection 5 and half Selection 6 and complete an analysis of both readings simultaneously.

ANALYZING TEXT STRUCTURE

1. From the title, what do you think the reading is about?
Compromise of 1850

2. Based on prior reading, how do you think the text will be organized?
The text will be sequenced

3. As you read, write down any words in the text that are like those found in the following chart describing text structure.

TEXT STRUCTURE	CUE WORDS	WORDS IN TEXT
Main Idea/Supporting Details	For example, for instance, in addition, in some instances, who, what, when, where, why	
Order/Sequence	Next, first, last, second, another, then, additionally, finally, in the beginning, before, after	*Finally*
Compare/Contrast	**Compare:** Like, same as, similar, likewise, and, also, too, both, just as, in comparison **Contrast:** However, unlike, by contrast, yet, although, whereas, different from, on the other hand, but, as opposed to	*On the one hand* *On the other hand*
Cause/Effect	Consequently, therefore, as a result, thereby, leads to, because, so that, so, since	

4. Based on the words you have found, what text structure did the author use?
Compare and Contrast (although a case could be made for sequencing)

Analyzing Text Structure

Selection 4 - Analyzing Text Structure

Text structure is a term used to describe how an author organizes written material, especially in textbooks. The following chart summarizes examples of text structure. It also provides cue words to help you identify the text structure of particular written text

TEXT STRUCTURE	DEFINITION	CUE WORDS
Main Idea/Supporting Details	The text resembles an outline. Each section has a main idea, followed by supporting details, e.g., life in colonial America, the compromises from the Constitutional Convention.	For example, for instance, in addition, in some instances, who, what, when, where, why
Order/Sequence	The text tells the order of something, e.g., the steps in a recipe; a series of events; a biographical excerpt.	Next, first, last, second, another, then, additionally, finally, in the beginning, before, after
Compare/Contrast	The text describes the differences and/or similarities of two or more things, e.g., a comparison of two or more people, events, places, ideas.	**Compare:** Like, same as, similar, likewise, and, also, too, both, just as, in comparison **Contrast:** However, unlike, by contrast, yet, although, whereas, different from, on the other hand, but, as opposed to
Cause/Effect	The text tells the result of an event, detailing the reasons it occurred, e.g., causes a war; causes of the Great Depression.	Consequently, therefore, as a result, thereby, leads to, because, so that, so, since

Selection 5 - The Compromise of 1850

In 1848, gold was discovered at Sutter's Mill in California. People from all over the nation moved west to find gold. By late 1849, the population of California was over 100,000, enough to ask for statehood. In 1850, there were fifteen slave states and fifteen free states. California's constitution did not allow slavery. If California became a state, the slave/free balance in the U.S. Senate would change. For eight months, what was later called "the Great Debate" went on as Congress tried to agree on what to do about California.

Finally, Congress passed five laws, later called the Compromise of 1850. They offered something to please both North and South. On the one hand, the following provisions favored the North: (1) California came into the Union as a free state, (2) slave trading was stopped in the District of Columbia, and (3) Texas gave up the idea of annexing New Mexico and making it part of a slave state. On the other hand, these provisions favored the South: (1) The territories of New Mexico and Utah would be allowed to decide if they wanted to be slave or free, (2) District of Columbia residents could keep the slaves they had, and (3) Congress would pass a law stating that slaves who ran away to free states would be returned to their owners.

Selection 6 - Abolitionists

Many northern whites and free blacks, called *abolitionists*, worked to get rid of slavery. They made speeches, wrote books and articles, and offered their homes as "safe houses" for runaway slaves. William Lloyd Garrison published a newspaper called *The Liberator*. Harriet Beecher Stowe wrote about slaves as individuals, rather than as a group, in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Although Stowe, who grew up in Connecticut, had seen slaves only once when visiting in Kentucky, her book described some of the worst things about slavery and the Fugitive Slave Law. Three hundred thousand copies of the book were sold in a year, and the information in it caused northerners to like slavery less and abolition more.

Freed slave Sojourner Truth was famous for her speeches, which asked for freedom for all blacks. Others, like Harriet Tubman, helped slaves escape from the South to free northern states. Tubman was a leader in the underground railroad. She personally led over 300 slaves to freedom. The underground railroad was a chain of homes, farms, and churches where runaway slaves could rest and hide from slave catchers. One person or small groups moved from place to place at night until they reached a free state or Canada. Tubman and others like her, helped up to 50,000 slaves escape through the underground railroad between 1830 and 1860.

Graphic Organizer 6

ANALYZING TEXT STRUCTURE

1. From the title, what do you think the reading is about?

2. Based on prior reading, how do you think the text will be organized?

3. As you read, write down any words in the text that are like those found in the following chart describing text structure.

TEXT STRUCTURE	CUE WORDS	WORDS IN TEXT
Main Idea/Supporting Details	For example, for instance, in addition, in some instances, who, what, when, where, why	
Order/Sequence	Next, first, last, second, another, then, additionally, finally, in the beginning, before, after	
Compare/Contrast	**Compare:** Like, same as, similar, likewise, and, also, too, both, just as, in comparison **Contrast:** However, unlike, by contrast, yet, although, whereas, different from, on the other hand, but, as opposed to	
Cause/Effect	Consequently, therefore, as a result, thereby, leads to, because, so that, so, since	

4. Based on the words you have found, what text structure did the author use?

STRATEGY 6

Main Idea/Supporting Details

Reading to find the main idea is one of the most important reading skills to ensure comprehension. The **main idea**, a general or broad topic, is the most important idea in a selection. The main idea can be stated in one sentence that condenses specific ideas or details. Sometimes the main idea is referred to as the thesis or gist of the selection.

The main idea is generally stated in the topic sentence, which is often the first sentence in a paragraph. The main idea is easier to identify when it is the first or the last sentence in the paragraph. It is more difficult to find when it is located in the middle of a reading. And, it is perhaps most difficult to identify when it is inferred and not actually stated. Regardless of where the main idea is stated, you can identify it by answering the question, "What is the most important idea in the selection?"

The main idea is followed by **supporting details**, which explain, describe, prove, or clarify. Supporting details may tell the who, what, where, when, and why of the main idea. Supporting details may also provide examples, illustrations, facts, and statistics. Sometimes, if the main idea is not clearly stated, identifying the supporting details first makes finding the main idea easier.

Often the main idea and supporting details are found in the textbook almost in outline form. The main idea may be found in the heading for a section of reading and the supporting details may be found in the paragraphs that follow.

STRATEGY 6

Main Idea/Supporting Details

To Teach the Main Idea/Supporting Details strategy, use Selection 7 and Graphic Organizer 7. You may want to make a transparency of Graphic Organizer 8 or write the information on flip chart paper. Teach the strategy by following the steps in the left column.

1. Give students a copy of Selection 7 and Graphic Organizer 7.

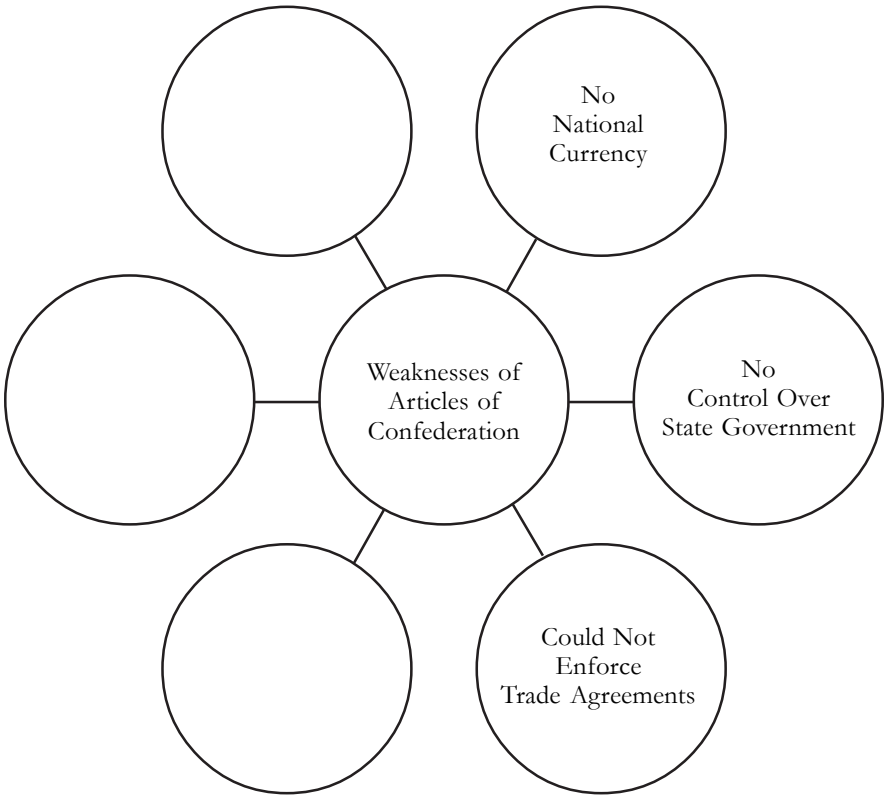
2. Ask them to read the article on the Articles of Confederation and identify the main idea. Have them write the main idea in the center circle of the graphic organizer.

3. Then ask them to re-read the article to find at least three supporting details. Write those ideas in three of the circles that surround the main idea.

VARIATION: Use Graphic Organizer 8 instead of Graphic Organizer 7 to record the information.

You may also have the students list expanding details that further define supporting details.

Finding the Main Idea and Supporting Details



To apply the main ideas/supporting details strategy, introduce a topic in the textbook. Have students use Graphic Organizer 7 and repeat the process they used in the practice session.

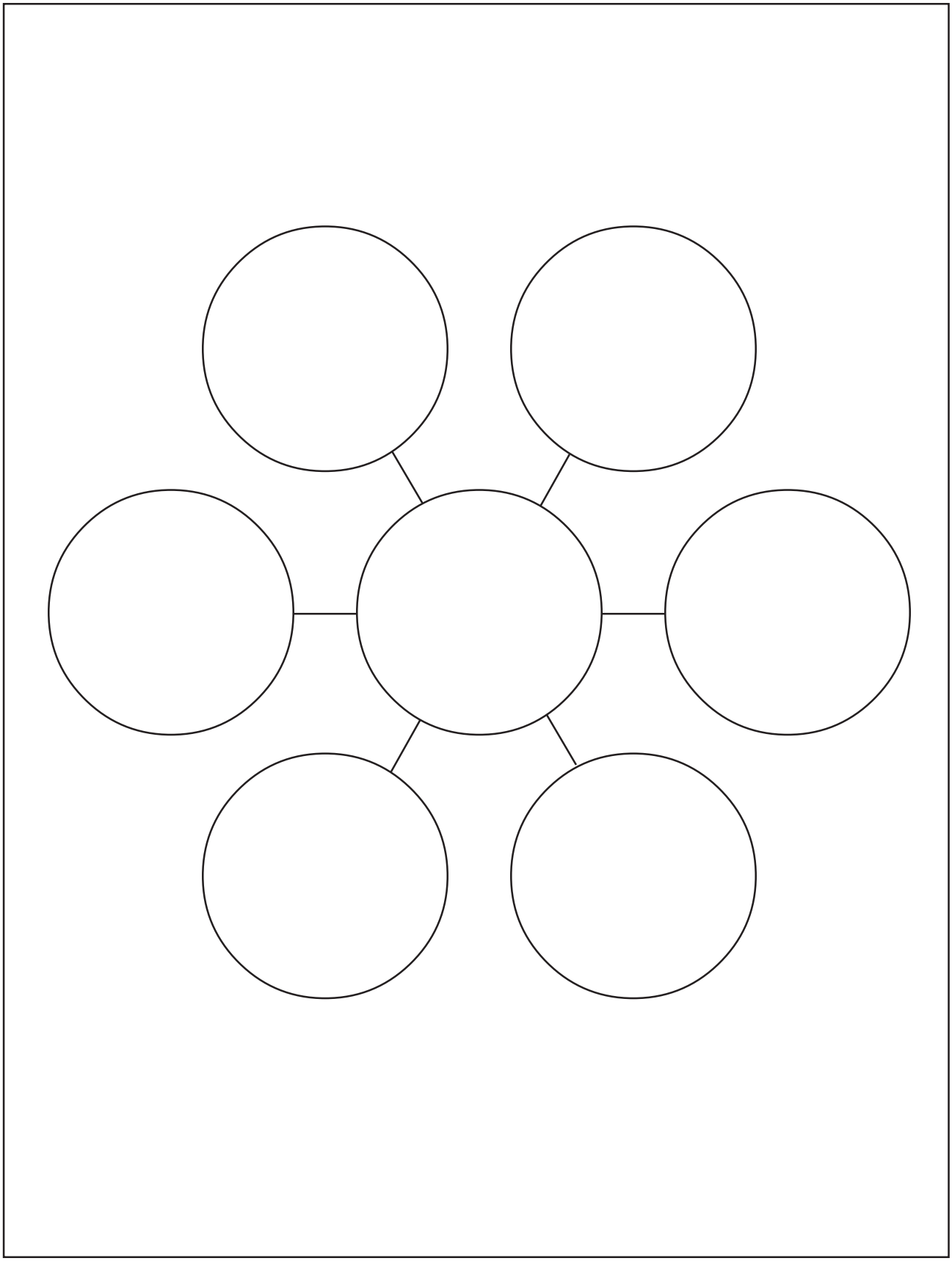
To extend the strategy, have students write paragraphs that include a main idea and supporting details. Then, have students trade papers and identify these features from the papers of their peers.

Selection 7 - The Articles of Confederation

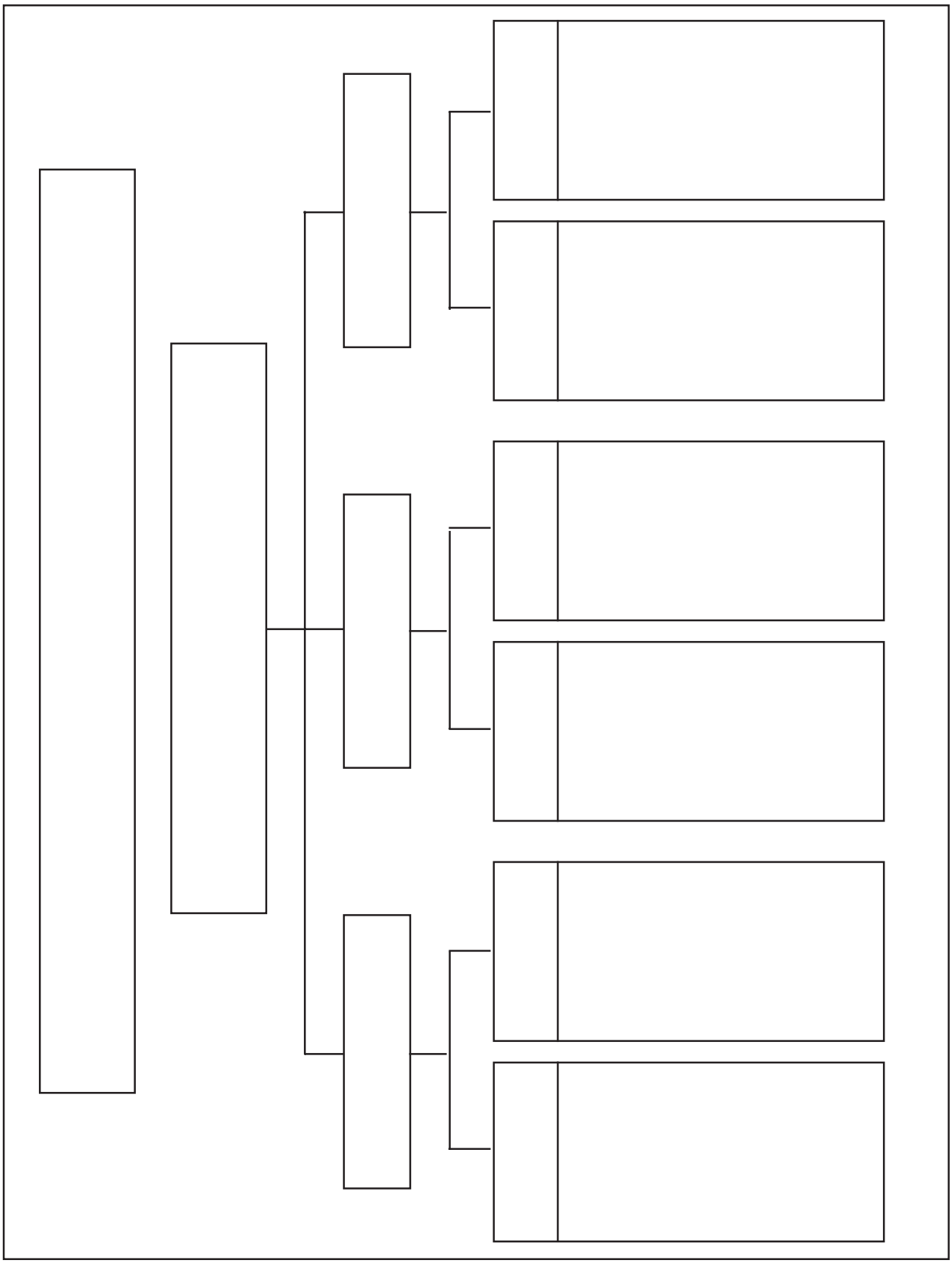
The United States began its life with a weak national government, known as the Articles of Confederation. This new government caused many problems for the young nation. One weakness was that the Articles government did not provide for a national currency. As a result, the United States government had no money and no way to get any money to pay its debts from the Revolutionary War. The states had agreed to give the national government $10 million, but they only paid $1.5 million. Since Congress had borrowed most of the money to pay for the war, it lost credibility with its creditors when it could not repay that debt. Another weakness was that Congress had no control over state governments or their citizens. Therefore, if a state or any one of its citizens disobeyed a law of the national government, there was no way for the national government to make them obey.

A third weakness concerned trade agreements. Congress had the power to make trade agreements with foreign nations, but it did not have the power to force state governments to live up to those agreements. Some colonies imported goods from other nations and then refused to pay for them. This practice also led to the loss of credibility of the national government. At home, Congress had no power to make laws controlling trade among the states. As a result, people in one state sometimes tried to take advantage of those in other states. In some instances one state would not permit goods from another state to be sold within its borders. Additionally, one state might not accept the currency of another in payment for goods. For example, Virginia had its own money and Massachusetts had a different currency. Virginia might not accept money from Massachusetts. Because of all the trade restrictions, many businesses failed, causing bankruptcies and impoverished conditions.

Graphic Organizer 7



Graphic Organizer 8



STRATEGY

Ordering/Sequencing

A common text structure illustrates the main idea and supporting details in an **ordered** or **sequenced** pattern. Sequencing is generally learned at an early age — as early as when a child learns *first*, *next*, and *last*. Sequencing is important to the study of history because students need to comprehend the order in which events happened. The sequencing of events often leads to an examination of more complex comprehension skills, such as compare/contrast, cause/effect, and problem-solving.

When examining text structure for sequencing, look for words like *first, last, second, another, then, additionally, finally, before and/or after, next, initially, when, preceding, following*. Sequencing may be chronological or ordered. The use of years, months, etc. indicates a reading is sequenced chronologically; while the use of words like *next*, *following*, *preceding*, *before*, and *after* denotes an ordering of information.

Ordering/Sequencing

To Teach the Ordering/Sequencing strategy, use Selection 8 and Graphic Organizer 9. You may make a transparency of Graphic Organizer 9 or duplicate the form on flip chart paper. Have the class construct a timeline illustrating the sequence of battles that occurred in 1863.

1. Have students read Selection 8.
2. Generate a list of cue words that define the text structure of the reading as sequencing (e.g., again, last, dates, months).
3. Ask students to determine the manner in which the material is sequenced (chronological).
4. Have students work in pairs to list the events in the selection in chronological order.
5. Develop a class timeline of events mentioned in the selection. (Record the list of events on the transparency or flip chart paper.)
6. Ask students why other types of information in textbooks might be sequenced.

DATE	EVENT
May	*Battle of Chancellorville*
May	*Battle of Gettysburg*
	Battle of Vicksburg
September	*Battle of Chickamauga*
November	*Battle of Chattanooga*

To apply the ordering/sequencing strategy, introduce a topic in the textbook. Have students repeat the process they used in the practice session to activate prior knowledge.

To extend the strategy, have students read a second textbook excerpt that illustrates sequencing and complete Graphic Organizer 10. This organizer provides another way to visually represent information that is ordered. (**Note:** You may want students to read a biographical excerpt and have them sequence the main events in the person's life.)

STRATEGY

Ordering/Sequencing

Selection 8 - The Civil War in 1863

The Civil War was fairly quiet during the early part of 1863. Major fighting did not begin again until the spring and summer. Key Confederate victories included the Battle of Chancellorsville in May, under the direction of General Robert E. Lee, and the Battle of Chickamauga in September. There were many more Union victories. The Battle of Gettysburg in July was the last battle on northern soil. All other battles were in the South.

After the Battle of Vicksburg in Mississippi, 31,277 southern soldiers were listed as dead, wounded, or missing. This battle gave the Union control of the Mississippi River. The Confederacy was cut in half and any hope for Confederate victory ended.

While Union forces led by General U. S. Grant were taking Vicksburg, Union General William Rosecrans and his army moved against Chattanooga, Tennessee. Chattanooga was a major railroad center from which supplies and munitions were sent to southern troops.

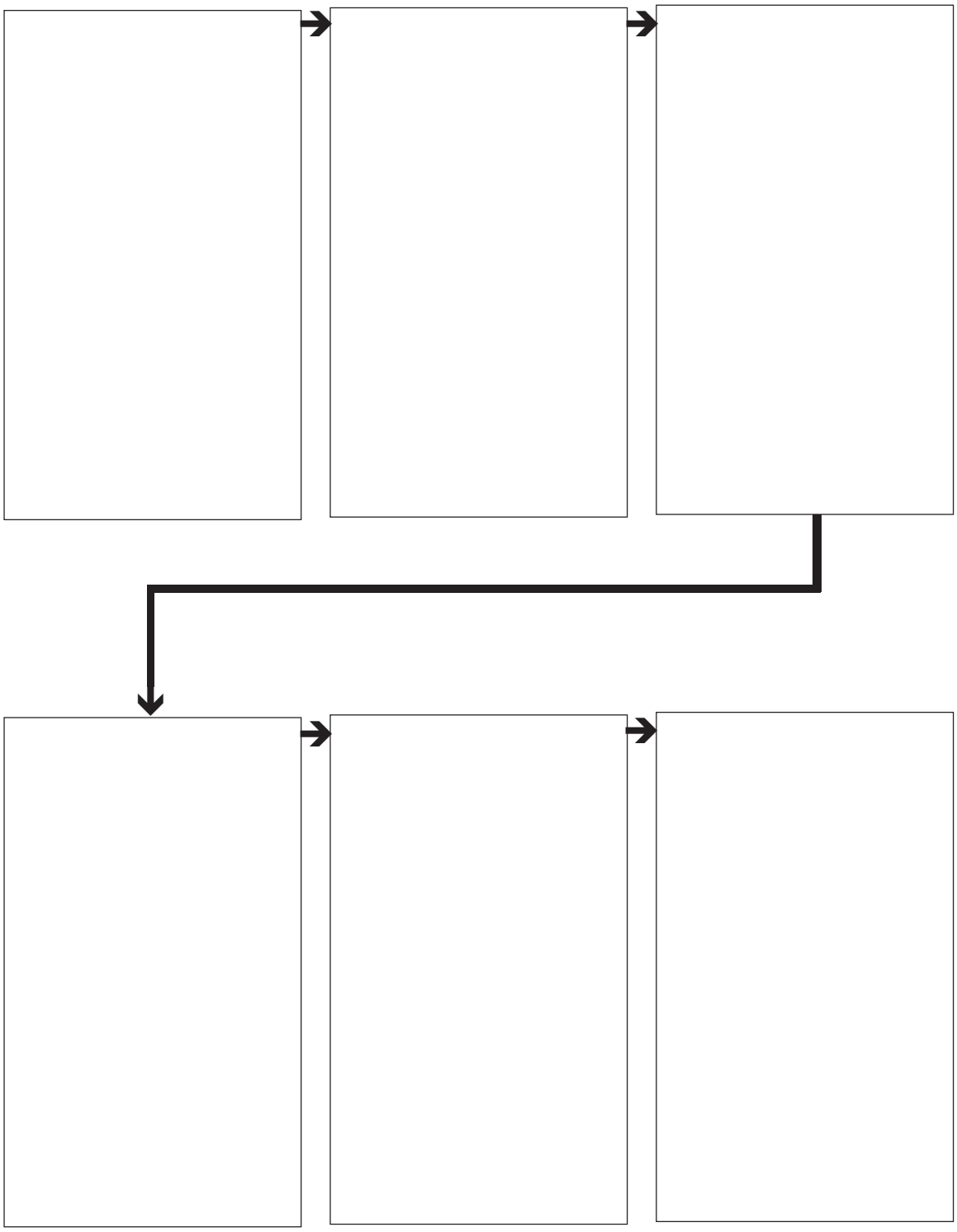
On September 19 and 20, Rosecrans's troops met Confederate General Braxton Bragg seven miles south of Chattanooga at Chickamauga Creek. The Indian meaning of *Chickamauga* is "river of death." On September 19 and 20, 17,804 Confederate and 15,851 Union troops were killed, wounded, or missing. The Union made several mistakes, so Bragg and his forces won the battle and forced the Union army back into Chattanooga. Bragg did not follow the Union troops northward into Tennessee and, by November, General Grant arrived with more soldiers. The Battle of Chattanooga, fought on November 23-25, placed the area in the hands of the Union. Bragg retreated to Dalton, Georgia.

Graphic Organizer 9

DATE	EVENT

Graphic Organizer 10

Putting Things In Sequence



STRATEGY 8

Compare/Contrast

Compare/Contrast is a strategy that enables students to determine the ways in which two or more events, people, places, or periods of time are alike and the ways in which they are different. The use of a graphic organizer to display the students' thinking allows students to translate their thinking into a visual representation.

When comparing, students actually describe how two or more things are alike. Key words in the text that cue them to this text structure include: *same as, and, as well as, in comparison, not only. . . but also, similarly, similar, like, still, likewise, at the same time, also,* and *both.*

When contrasting, students actually describe how two or more things are different. Key words in the text that cue them to this text structure include: *however, on the other hand, but, yet, nevertheless, on the contrary, in contrast, whereas, different from, as opposed to,* and *unlike.*

Most often when authors are comparing or contrasting items, they write about one thing and then write about the second. Sometimes, however, writers alternate the two things they are describing. They may write something about one item and then immediately tell how the second item is the same or different. The writing continues in this manner. When an author uses this style, the same number of examples is given for item A as for item B.

STRATEGY 8

Compare/Contrast

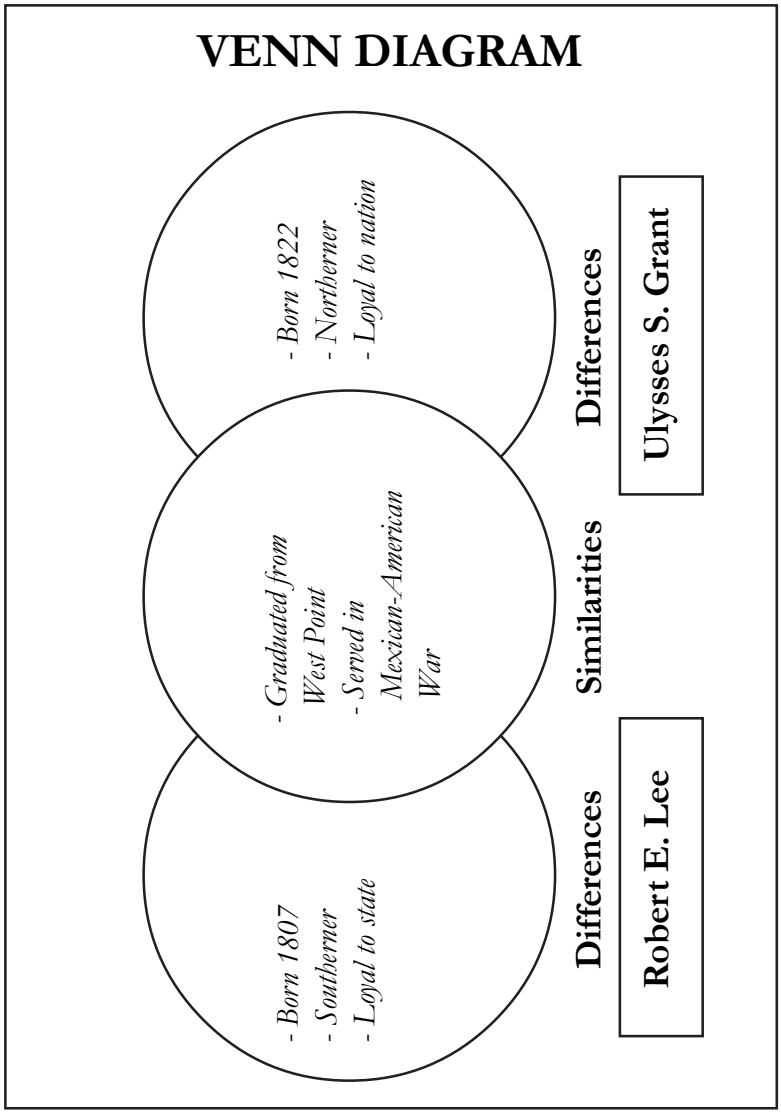
To Teach the Compare/Contrast strategy, use Selection 9 and Graphic Organizer 11. You may want to make a transparency of the Venn diagram and use it to record information from the selection.

1. Show students Graphic Organizer 11 and explain to them that a Venn diagram is a way to visually illustrate similarities and differences. The differences between two events, people, locations, etc., are written in the two outer circles. Similarities are written in the center circle.

2. Have students read Selection 9.

3. As a class, complete a Venn diagram focusing on the differences between the two Civil War generals.

4. Write "Lee" in one of the rectangular boxes and "Grant" in the other. In the circle above Lee's name, write information about him that makes him different fromGrant. In the circle above Grant's name, write information that makes him different from Lee. In the center circle, write statements describing things the two generals had in common.



To apply the compare/contrast strategy, introduce a topic in the textbook. Have students repeat the process they used in the practice session.

To extend the strategy, have students use Graphic Organizer 12 to compare and contrast a reading in the textbook. In this organizer, students identify two items they are comparing and contrasting in the top two rectangular boxes. In the middle box, they tell how the two items are similar. Then they set specific criteria (e.g., birth date, education) to use in showing differences between two items. When they have finished the organizer, they should look at the similarities and differences and write a conclusion about their findings.

Selection 9 - Two Great Civil War Generals

Robert E. Lee was born on January 19, 1807, into an old, distinguished Virginia family. Military tradition ran in his family. He graduated from West Point in 1829 with a degree in military engineering. Lee loved the military, and George Washington was his hero. In 1831, he married Mary Custis, the great granddaughter of Washington's wife.

Lee had a varied military career. He served under General Winfield Scott in the Mexican-American War. He rose to the rank of lieutenant colonel and, in 1859, while home on leave, led troops against John Brown at Harpers Ferry. In 1861, when the secession movement began, General Scott tried to use his influence to persuade Lee to come to Washington to be near him and lead the federal troops. Lee loved his country, but he also loved his home state of Virginia. He took obligations seriously. In fact, he once wrote to one of his songs, "Duty is the sublimest word in our language. Do your duty in all things. . . ."

Lee weighed his obligations of loyalty to his country and loyalty to his state. As secession became a reality, he was torn as he tried to do his duty. Eventually his intense loyalty to Virginia prevailed, and he reluctantly declined Scott's request, taking a vow instead to follow Virginia and the Confederacy. As the Civil War began, the Confederacy made Lee a general — a general without an army. He was a failure in his first assignment, and it was not until 1862, when he was given command of the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia, that he was able to take charge of the forces.

Ulysses S. Grant was born Hiram Ulysses Grant on April 27, 1822, in Point Pleasant, Ohio. He loved horses and math, but had no special fondness for the military. At age 17, Grant was appointed to West Point. The congressman making the appointment did not know the youth's middle name and incorrectly used his mother's maiden name, Simpson, instead of his given name, Hiram. Thereafter Grant was known as Ulysses Simpson Grant.

Grant was not a good student at West Point, graduating near the bottom of his class. After graduation, he was sent to Jefferson Barracks near St. Louis, Missouri. There he proposed to Julia Dent, the daughter of a slave owner. Before they could marry, he was sent to serve in the Mexican-American War. Grant was unhappy, often thinking of Julia and longing for the time when he could be reunited with her. To help him forget his unhappiness, he began to drink rather heavily. It was the beginning of a habit that would later damage his reputation.

After the war, Ulysses and Julia were married, but another military assignment soon separated them again. Grant was sent to the Pacific Coast by way of the Isthmus of Panama. While in route, a cholera epidemic in Panama gave him the opportunity to demonstrate his energy and resourcefulness. He was able to acquire mules, a difficult thing to do, and to transport ill soldiers across the Isthmus so they could receive medical attention. Grant spent two homesick years on the Pacific Coast where he began to drink more heavily and became slovenly in his appearance. His colonel, unhappy with Grant's appearance and performance, asked for his resignation from the Army. Grant submitted the necessary papers quickly and without remorse, because he knew his resignation would free him to return home.

Upon his return, Julia's father gave him 80 acres of land near St. Louis, Missouri. He cleared the land, built a cabin, and named his homestead "Hardscrabble." It soon became evident that he could

continued next page

Selection 9 - Two Great Civil War Generals

continued -

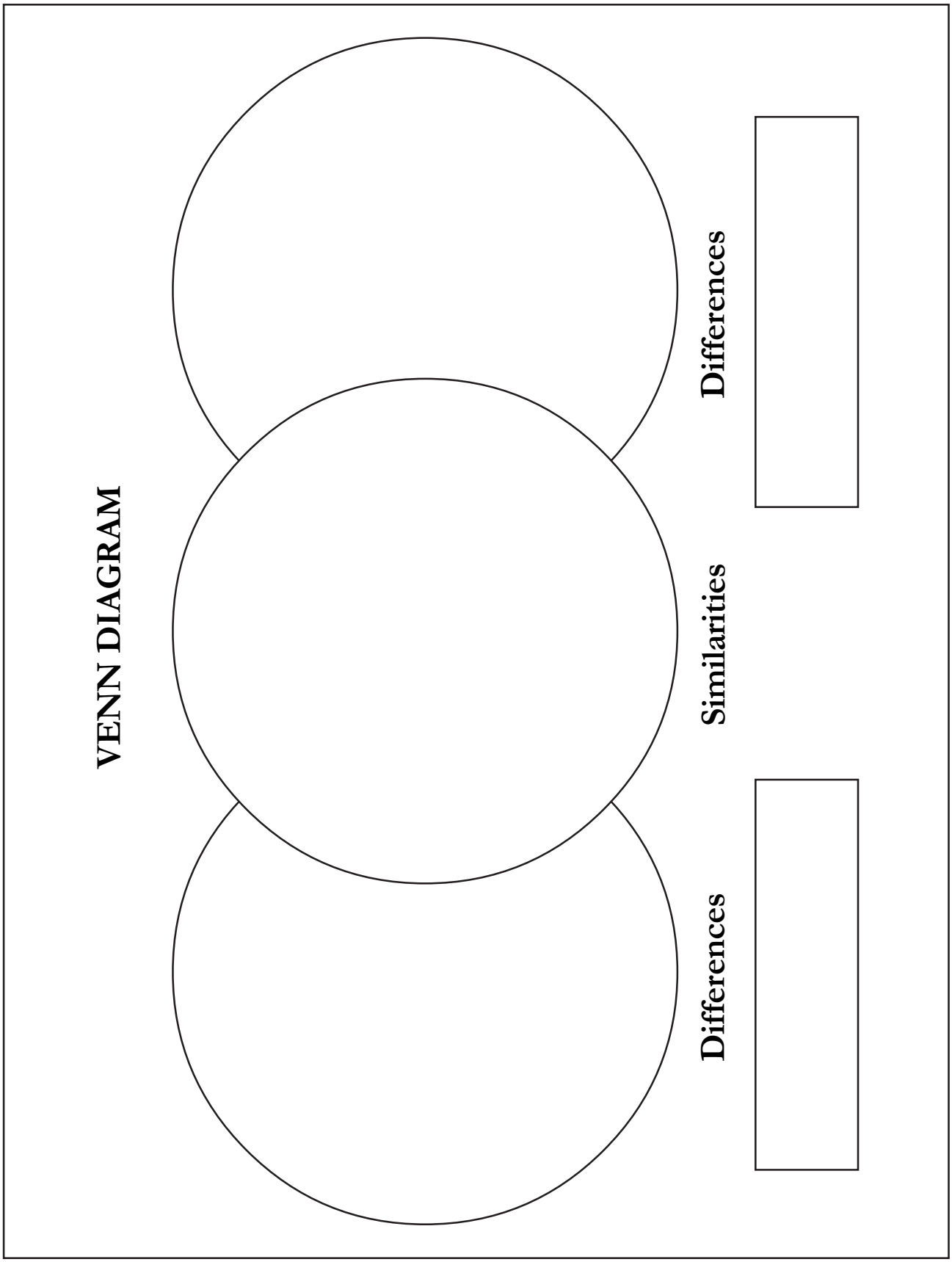
not make a living from the land, so he had to look for other work to support his wife and four children. He tried selling real estate, but failing in that, ended up walking the streets looking for a job.

Grant's father persuaded his younger sons to take Ulysses into their leather business in Galena, Illinois. For a while, he worked there as a clerk selling animal hides to saddlemakers and cobblers.

As the Civil War began, it seemed unlikely that Grant or Lee would emerge to lead their nations on the battlefield. Lee was 54 years old, graying, dignified, and reserved. He did not like familiarity, but he was kind and aroused the devotion of his men. Grant, 39 years old, was slovenly and generally regarded as a failure with a drinking problem. When he volunteered after the firing on Fort Sumter, he had no uniform or horse — two items that officers had to supply themselves.

In the early stages of the Civil War, these two generals went their separate ways — Grant to the West and Lee to Virginia. Before the war ended, however, they became the leaders of their respective government's forces, meeting on the battlefield and eventually at the peace table.

Graphic Organizer 11



Graphic Organizer 12

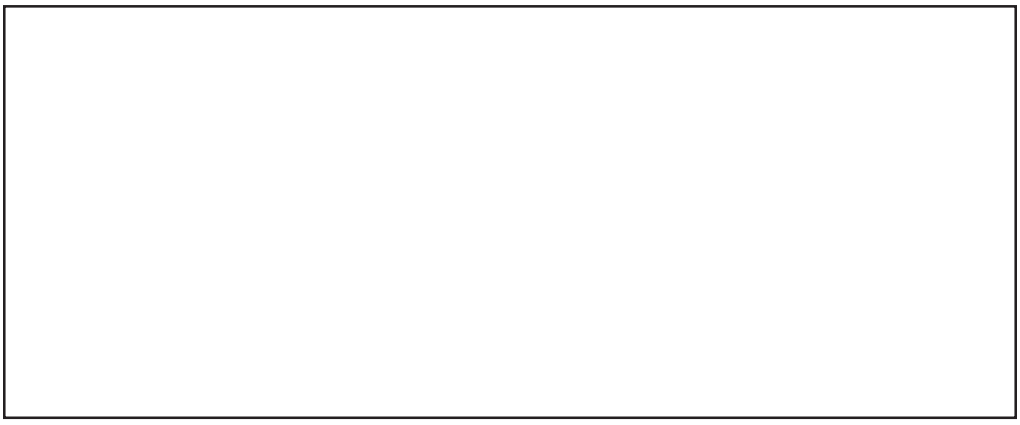
COMPARE AND CONTRAST DIAGRAM

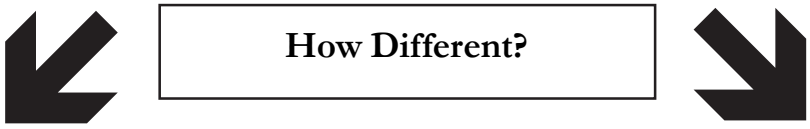
Name: _____ Date: _____

Item 1 _____

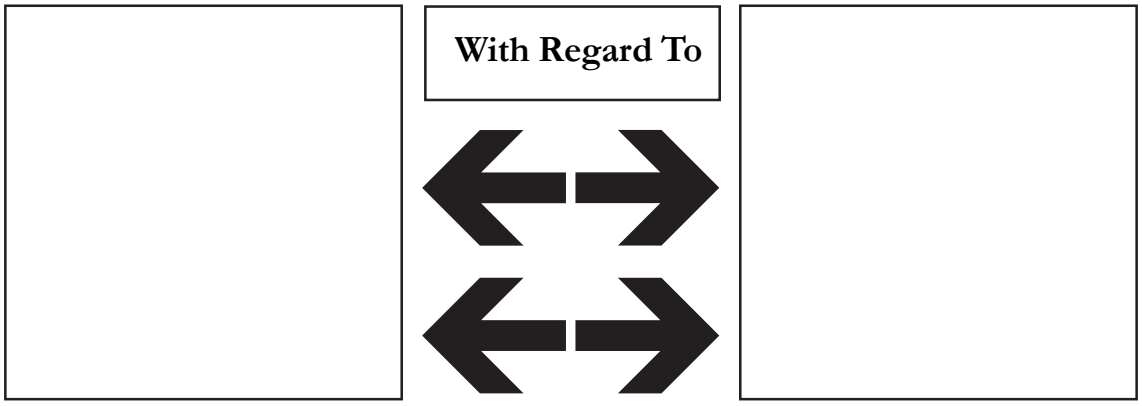
Item 2 _____

How Alike?





How Different?



With Regard To

Conclusion

STRATEGY 9

Cause/Effect

Historical events happen because something makes them happen. Why an event happens is the *cause*. What happens is the *effect*. The connection between what happens and what makes it happen is known as the **cause/effect** relationship.

Not all cause/effect relationships are clear-cut. Sometimes, an event may have more than one effect, and an effect may have more than one cause. At other times, an effect may not appear immediately. An action could cause something to happen even years later. Writers use cause and effect to inform and speculate.

To help students recognize cause and effect in text structure, they should look for:

- cue words or phrases, e.g., *because, as a result of, in order to, led to, may be due to, effects of, consequently, for this reason, why, brought about, produced, so that, thus, since, outcome, as a consequence, resulted in,* and *therefore*;
- the word *and* or a comma instead of one or more cue words; and
- a longer text passage to read since a writer may need to write several paragraphs in order to illustrate a cause/effect relationship.

STRATEGY 9

Cause/Effect

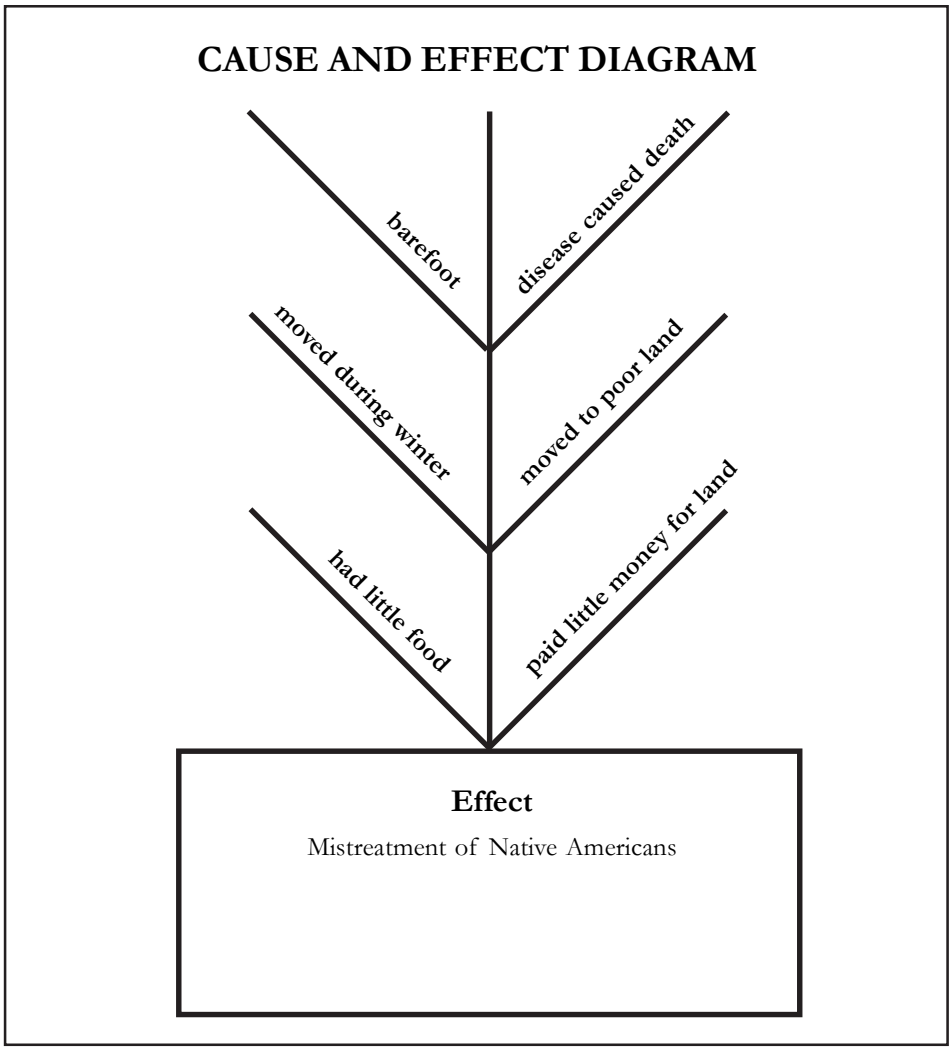
To Teach the Cause/Effect strategy, use Selection 10 and Graphic Organizer 13. You may want to make a transparency of the graphic organizer to use as you teach the strategy using the steps in the left column.

1. Tell students that history is often a series of causes and effects. Have them think about something they have done recently and then identify what caused them to take that action.

2. Introduce Graphic Organizer 13 as a fishbone diagram. Tell students to read Selection 10 and identify an effect of the methods used to remove Native Americans west of the Mississippi River.

3. Then, have students write a statement on each of the fishbones (lines) showing a reason for the effect.

4. **VARIATION**
   You may want to teach the strategy by having students list the causes first and then, based on the causes, list the effect.



To apply the cause/effect strategy, introduce a topic in the textbook. Have students repeat the process they used in the practice session.

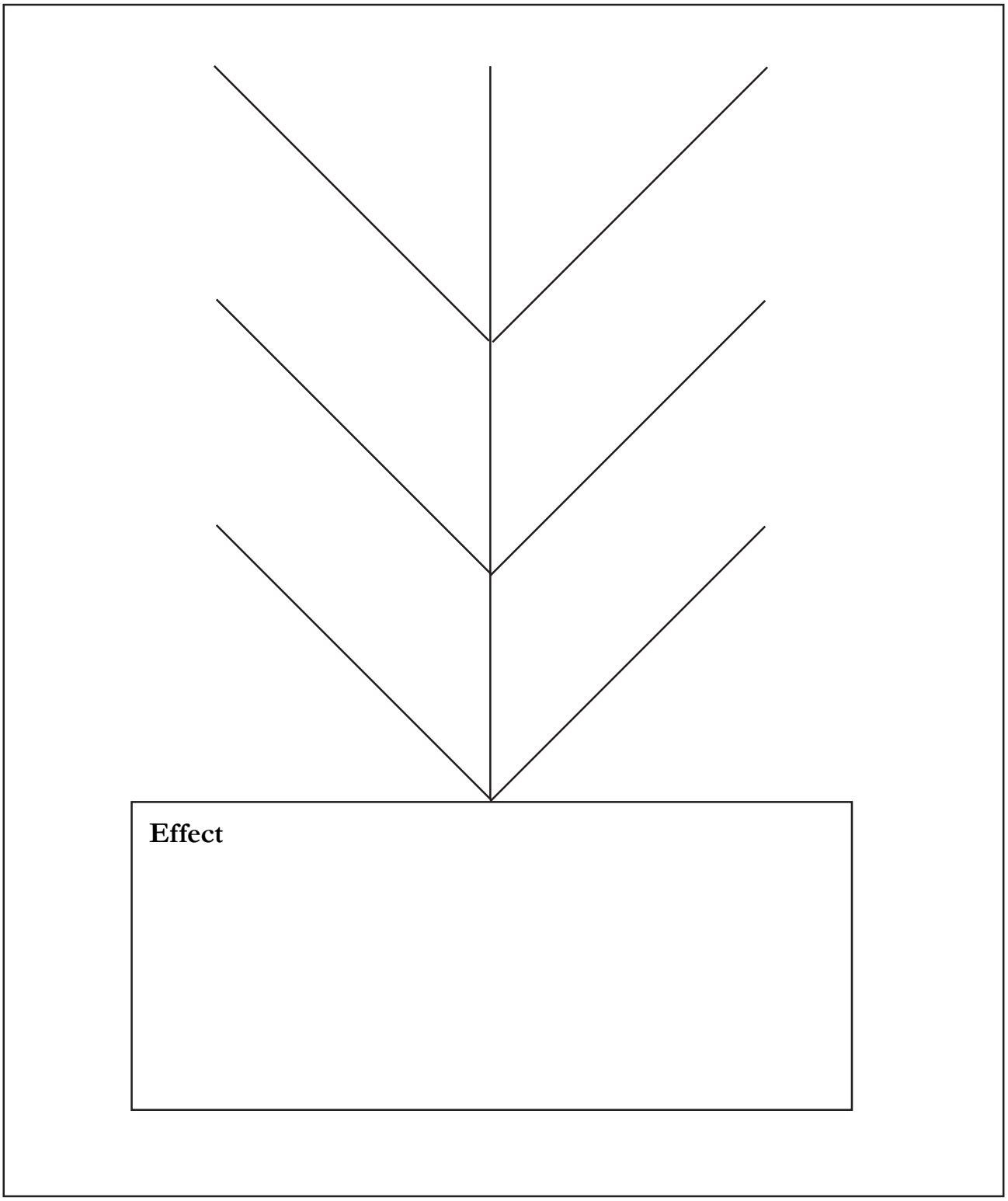
To extend the strategy, have students use Graphic Organizer 14 to record a cause/effect relationship from an excerpt in the textbook. The organizer requires students to list causes and an effect. Then they list effects of the first effect. For example, they may list causes of the American Revolution (causes/event-effect). Then they would list effects of the American Revolution. This graphic organizer shows how an event that has specific causes can then in turn become a cause of other effects.

Selection 10 - Indian Removal

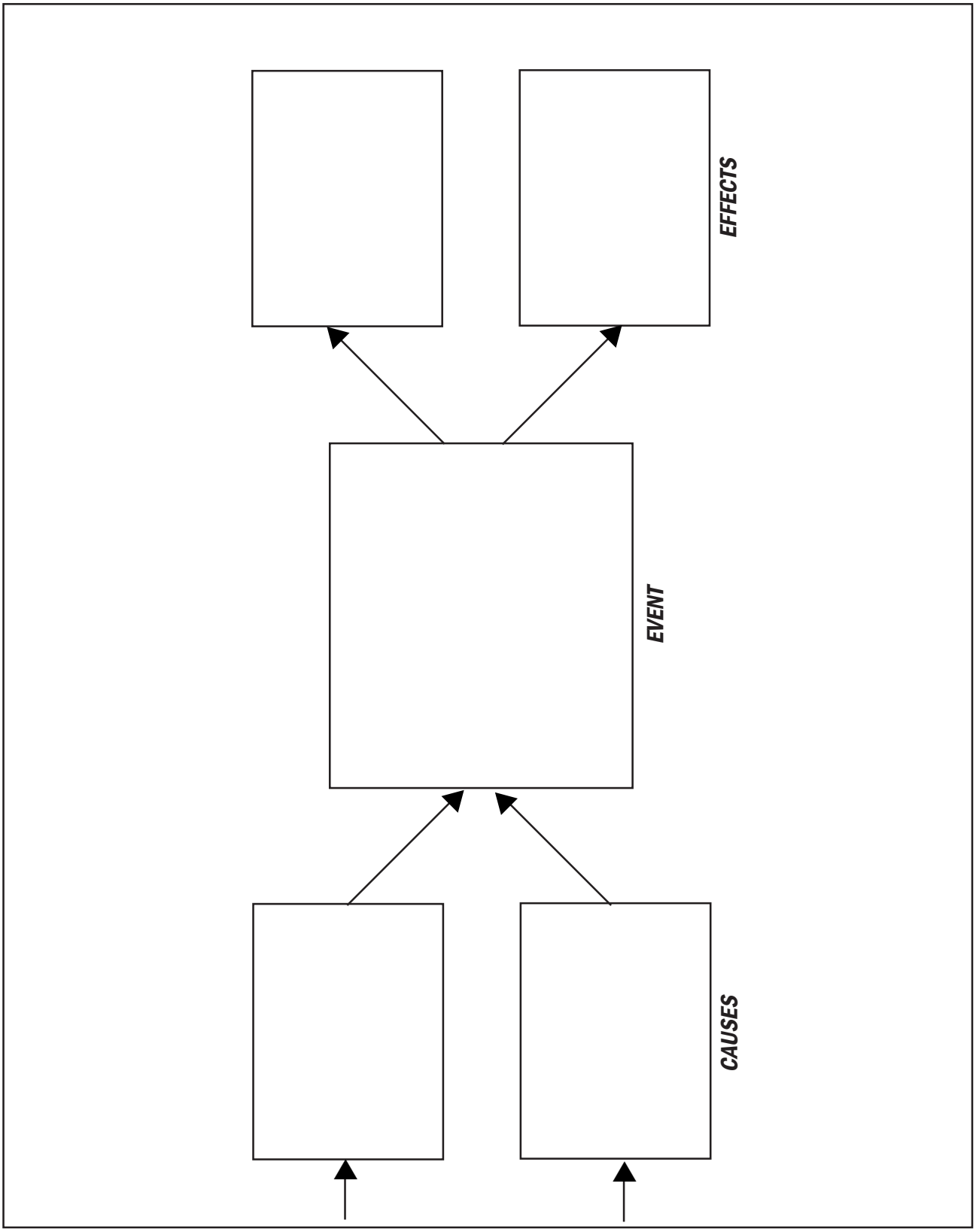
Andrew Jackson's policy of Indian removal was harsh and cruel. The plan was insensitive to the Native Americans, who were given small payments for their lands. Federal agents often tricked or coerced Native Americans to sign away their lands. When the Indians did agree to move, the migrations were not well planned. The Choctaw, the first tribe to be moved west, marched through six inches of snow. They loaded the very young, the old, the blind, and the sick on wagons along with their baggage. Because of the muddy roads, the wagons could only travel five miles a day. They were met by a blizzard and below-zero temperatures. Each family had only one blanket, and many Choctaw were barefoot and starving. A cholera epidemic broke out, and it is estimated that as many as one-fourth of the Choctaw died on the trail. The land to which the Indians were moved was usually poor, not suitable for raising enough food to support the tribal population. When some Black Hawks tried to return to their lands east of the Mississippi in order to find a place to plant crops for their starving people, a war broke out, which was suppressed by the army and militia.

Graphic Organizer 13

Cause and Effect Diagram



Graphic Organizer 14



STRATEGY 10

Using Context Clues

Many times, students encounter an unfamiliar word in a textbook. When this occurs, the students may seek a dictionary to look up its meaning. This process is not only time-consuming but also distracting. A better, more efficient way to determine the meaning of an unfamiliar word is to use context clues within the reading to find its meaning. A **context clue** refers to the word or words that come before and after the unfamiliar word. Context clues include:

- examples, which may be preceded by cue words, e.g., *such as*, *like*, or *including*. Examples may also be set apart by punctuation such as a colon, dash, or parenthesis.
- synonyms and definitions. Sometimes the author will include a synonym (a word with the same meaning) for the unfamiliar word in the text. Other times, the unfamiliar word will actually be defined.
- antonyms, which are words that are the opposite of the unfamiliar word.

Most often, students can determine the meaning of a word by inserting a word or words in place of the unfamiliar word. To do this, the students should read through the entire passage to get a sense for its meaning. They should look at the previous sentences, locating words that clarify understanding. Tell them to imagine there was a blank line in place of the unfamiliar word. In the blank, they can substitute a familiar word that makes sense.

Using Context Clues

To Teach students to use context clues, use Graphic Organizer 15 and Selection 11. You may want to make a copy of the graphic organizer to use as you lead students through a discussion of the steps in the left column.

1. Give the students a copy of Selection 11.

2. Have them read the excerpt, noting the words in bold. (These words are considered the unfamiliar words.)

3. Have students write the sentence(s) that precede the unfamiliar words, if appropriate.

4. Ask students if there are any prefixes or suffixes that help determine the word's meaning.

5. Ask students if there are any synonyms, antonyms, examples, or punctuation clues that help to define the word.

6. Write the unfamiliar words in the first column in the chart. Then opposite each unfamiliar word, write a familiar word that means the same thing.

Using Context Clues to Determine Meaning

1. Read the excerpt.

2. Underline any unfamiliar words.
(conservative, self-serving, self-sufficient, infrastructure, agendas)

3. What sentence(s) precedes the unfamiliar word? _____

Not Appropriate

4. Does the unfamiliar word have any prefixes or suffixes that might help you determine its meaning? *No* _____

If so, what are those clues? _____

_____

5. What words in the excerpt might help you to determine the meaning of the unfamiliar word?

Synonyms: _____

Antonyms: *infrastructure is followed by examples: roads, bridges, ports*

Examples: *conservative is followed by a parenthesis that has a definition; self-serving is followed by a comma, followed by a definition*

Punctuation: _____

6. What familiar word would you use in place of each unfamiliar word?

Unfamiliar Word	Familiar Word
conservative	*traditional*
self-serving	*selfish*
self-sufficient	*independent*
infrastructure	*roads, ports, bridges*
agendas	*interests*

To apply the context clues strategy, have students read selected excerpts from the textbook, use Graphic Organizer 15, and repeat the process they used in the practice session to determine the meaning of unfamiliar vocabulary.

To extend the strategy, give students a reading using the Cloze method. In the reading, do not give students words to replace. Rather, leave blanks for students to fill in with words that make sense in the paragraph

STRATEGY 10

Using Context Clues

Selection 11 - The Constitutional Convention

The fifty-five men who attended the Philadelphia Constitutional Convention were, for the most part, a well-educated group of wealthy landowners. Forty-one of them had served in the Continental Congress, and a number of others had served in state government, including eight who were governors. The delegates were relatively young. The average age was forty-two, but a number were under thirty.

The delegates were more **conservative** (favoring traditional values and reluctant to make changes) than some others who supported widespread change. Charles Beard, a noted nineteenth-century historian, described the delegates as practical men who wanted to protect property and encourage business interests. Beard even suggested that the delegates might have been **self-serving**, more interested in furthering their own interests.

In reality, the delegates had experienced the problems of the weak national government under the Articles of Confederation first-hand. No one state was **self-sufficient** enough to fend for itself against a foreign foe. Nor could a single state build the **infrastructure**, for example roads, bridges, and ports, to increase travel and commerce throughout the nation. Working together, however, a group of united states could accomplish these goals. Whatever their own **agendas**, the delegates put personal feelings aside and worked together to create an endurable form of government for all people.

Graphic Organizer 15

Using Context Clues to Determine Meaning

1. Read the excerpt.

2. Underline any unfamiliar words.

3. What sentence(s) precedes the unfamiliar word? _____

_____

4. Does the unfamiliar word have any prefixes or suffixes that might help you determine its meaning? _____

If so, what are those clues? _____

_____

5. What words in the excerpt might help you to determine the meaning of the unfamiliar word?

Synonyms: _____

Antonyms: _____

Examples: _____

Punctuation: _____

6. What familiar word would you use in place of each unfamiliar word?

Unfamiliar Word	Familiar Word

STRATEGY 11

Distinguishing Fact from Opinion

Students sometimes mistakenly think that everything they read in a textbook is fact. It becomes more of a challenge for them to separate fact from opinion when authors, especially authors of history texts, weave facts, inferences, and opinions into their writing to make it more interesting.

Being able to distinguish fact from opinion requires the ability to apply critical thinking skills to text. It requires a person to make judgments about what he or she reads. But the first step in separating fact from opinion is simply knowing how to recognize each.

- A **fact** may be defined as something that can be proved or verified. Facts may be verified by observation or by information in reliable sources, e.g., textbooks, reference books, periodicals, Internet sites.
- An **opinion** may be defined as an expression based on personal belief or judgment. Opinions are open to debate. There are a number of cue words that often signal an opinion. These words include *bad, good, may, probably, believe, feel, think, greatest, worst, should, should not, best, most, least, always, never, all, none*. Opinions are not verifiable.

.

Distinguishing Fact from Opinion

To Teach students to distinguish fact from opinion, use Selection 12 and Graphic Organizer 16. You may want to make a transparency of the graphic organizer to use as you lead a discussion of the steps in the left column.

1. Introduce students to Selection 12 and Graphic Organizer 16.
2. Have students write three opinions from the reading.
3. Ask students to give reasons or state cue words that lead them to believe the statement is an opinion.
4. Have students write three facts from the article and cite reasons for identifying those statements as fact.

Using Context Clues to Determine Meaning

1. Read the selection.

2. Write three opinions.

What cue word(s) or reason(s) identify the statement as an opinion?

Statement of Opinion	Cue Words/Reason
1. The main importance of the Election of 1860 was that it was a mandate for free soil.	*Main importance is debatable.*
2. This figure illustrated the overwhelming support of the people for the exclusion of slavery from the territories.	*Overwhelming support (support of those who voted, but maybe not of all people)*
3. With Lincoln's election, the direction of the country became clear.	*Debatable: Direction was not clear in the eyes of everyone*

3. Write three facts.

What evidence supports each statement as fact?

Statement of Fact	Evidence
1. Lincoln and Douglas together received 69 percent of the total popular vote.	*Can be proved through election statistics*
2. South Carolina voted to secede on December 20, 1860.	*Historical record*
3. In February, Texas joined the other six.	*Historical record*

To apply the strategy, have students read other passages from their textbook, use Graphic Organizer 16, and repeat the process they used in the practice session.

To extend the strategy, have students practice writing statements of fact and statements of opinion. Encourage them to use cue words.

Have students look for statements of fact and opinion in other things they read, e.g., the newspaper, magazines, other textbooks. Have them use Graphic Organizer 17 to record their findings

STRATEGY 11

Distinguishing Fact from Opinion

Selection 12 - The Results of the Election of 1860

The main importance of the election of 1860 was that it was clearly a mandate for free soil. (A *mandate* is authority given to someone to perform a certain task or to apply certain policies.) Lincoln and Douglas together received 69 percent of the total popular vote. This figure illustrated the overwhelming support of the people for the exclusion of slavery in the territories. With Lincoln's election, the direction of the country became clear. The supporters of slavery realized that they would now have to find a way to turn their threat of secession into reality.

South Carolina voted to secede on December 20, 1860. Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana followed in January 1861. In February, Texas joined the other six. On February 4, 1861, delegates from the seceding states met in Montgomery, Alabama, to form a new government called the Confederate States of America.

Graphic Organizer 16

Distinguishing Fact from Opinion

1. Read the selection.

2. Write three opinions.
What cue word(s) or reason(s) identify the statement as an opinion?

Statement of Opinion	Cue Words/Reason

3. Write three facts.
What evidence supports each statement as fact?

Statement of Fact	Evidence

Graphic Organizer 17

Distinguishing Fact from Opinion

Directions: Use the following chart to record statements of fact and statements of opinion. Write each statement in the first column. Put a check in the Fact or Opinion column to indicate what type of statement it is. Cite your reason(s) for classifying each statement as a fact or an opinion.

Statement	Fact	Opinion	Why?

STRATEGY 12

Inferring

Inferences are made when main ideas and supporting details are not clearly defined or when information is missing or not available in a text or story. When students infer, they must draw on prior knowledge to fill the void in order to propose or predict an idea that is "probably true." To that end, **inferring** is often defined as "reading between the lines"; at other times, it is defined as "drawing conclusions."

Inferences can also be made when adequate information is available. In these instances, students go beyond the literal meaning of the text in order to include some of their own knowledge, beliefs, and experiences in the interaction with the content. In this way, students connect with the reading on a more personal level, which in turn makes the reading more meaningful. When students make connections and construct their own knowledge, they in turn increase their level of comprehension.

Narrative text provides more opportunities for inference; however, expository text also lends itself to this strategy. When good readers infer, they may

- draw conclusions from the text,
- make predictions as they read,
- construct unstated main ideas,
- interpret the text, and
- make judgments about what is being read.

STRATEGY 12

Inferring

To Teach students inferring, use Selection 13 and Graphic Organizer 18 . You may want to make a transparency of the graphic organizer to use as you lead a discussion of the steps in the left column.

1. Give students a copy of Selection 13.

2. Define the term *inferring.*

3. Tell students they will read Selection 13 to help them understand inferences.

4. First, have them read the information about the final days of the Civil War.

5. Have them look for statements in the textbook that might illustrate inference. In the first column on graphic organizer (under "Text") have students write statements from the textbook that might be inferences. In the second column, they should tell why this is an inference.

6. Finally, have students look at the picture on the page. Tell them to write what they think is happening in the second column, under "Illustrations." In this way they are inferring what is happening in the picture.

The T-Chart

From the Text	Inference
Illustrations	
Picture	*More Union soldiers symbolized the power of the North.* *Lee stands out, perhaps symbolizing the respect others had for him.* *The meeting was informal. It didn't appear to be very important.*
Text	
Jefferson Davis knew the war was over.	*This is an assumption. The author infers he knew this because of his exit from Richmond.*

To apply the inferring strategy, have students read other excerpts from the textbook, use Graphic Organizer 18, and repeat the process they used in the practice session.

To extend the strategy, have students look at examples of inference in other materials, e.g., newspapers, magazines.

Give students paragraphs to read and ask them what inferences they can make.

Selection 13 - The Final Days of the Civil War

Soon after Union troops took Savannah, Georgia, the Civil War started coming to an end in other parts of the South. On January 15, Fort Fisher, North Carolina, was captured. This closed the last Confederate port. A month later, Sherman burned Columbia, South Carolina.

In Virginia, Robert E. Lee kept fighting Grant's army, which was twice the size of the remaining Confederate troops. Lee's men were weary and starving. As a result, on March 2, Lee asked for a meeting with Grant to talk about ending the war. President Lincoln refused to allow the meeting unless the South agreed to surrender.

On March 25, Lee tried once again to push federal troops back from Petersburg, Virginia. He failed and, before he could reach the Confederate army in North Carolina, Union troops cut off the retreat. When the disheartening news reached Confederate President Jefferson Davis, he knew the war was almost over and left Richmond to go to Danville, Virginia, to avoid capture.

On April 9, 1865, General Lee and General Grant met at Appomattox Court House in Virginia to arrange the terms for surrender. The meeting was rather startling. Lee arrived wearing a new general's uniform, carrying a bejeweled sword, and riding his white horse Traveller. Grant met him wearing a private's uniform, with three stars indicating his rank fastened to the shoulders. After the surrender, there were a few more small battles in North Carolina, but the Civil War was officially over. It was time to make the North and the South one nation again.

Graphic Organizer 18

The T-Chart

From the Text	Inference
Illustrations Text	

STRATEGY 13

Reading Visual Information

Everything that students read does not necessarily contain words. For example, when they read their textbook, besides words they "read" pictures, graphs, charts, tables, and maps. Noting the details and inferring or drawing conclusions from these virtually wordless aids can increase students' comprehension of the content. Information presented in this manner is attractive to visual learners, but it is also especially helpful to students who are otherwise poor readers. Following are some strategies for helping students "read" visual aids.

STRATEGY 13

Visualizing

As good readers read their textbooks, they are constantly forming mental pictures, or visions, of what they read. Teachers often encourage the formation of these mental images by using a practice known as *deep processing*. Deep processing activates the students' senses by asking them to think about what an event sounds like, looks like, smells like, and feels like. Research has shown that memory is associated with emotions. Therefore, by associating emotions with the content of their reading, they increase the likelihood of comprehending and remembering.

Visualizing

To Teach the visualizing strategy, make a transparency of Graphic Organizer 19 and follow the steps in the left column. You may want to copy the graphic organizer on a piece of flip chart paper.

1. Introduce Graphic Organizer 19. This organizer can be used with any topic that you are studying.

2. To teach the strategy, use the topic of the Iraqi War.

3. Cover up numbers 2, 3, and 4 on the organizer.

4. Show the students the first question. Ask them to close their eyes and think about the Iraqi War. Have them form mental images of what the war might look like. Give them 2-3 minutes to form the images. Then ask them to write words to describe those images. (Or you could ask them to draw a picture.)

5. Look at number 2. Ask students to close their eyes and form images of what the war might sound like. Again, give them 2-3 minutes to form the images. Then have them write words to describe what they see.

6. Follow the same procedure sfor numbers 3 and 4.

Visualizing

1. What does the war look like?

Answers will vary but may include: *Soldiers fighting, planes dropping missiles, fire destroyed buildings, graves, injured people, convoys of tanks.*

2. What does the war sound like?

Answers will vary but may include: *Gun fire, bombs exploding, people screaming, people crying.*

3. What does the war smell like?

Answers will vary, but may include: *Gun fire, bombs exploding, people screaming, people crying.*

4. What does the war feel like?

Answers will vary but may include: *Fear, excitement, sadness, joy, helplessness.*

To apply the visualizing strategy, introduce a topic in the textbook. Have students repeat the process they used in the practice session.

To extend the strategy, have students use the words they generated to write an essay, newspaper article, or story about the Iraqi War.

Graphic Organizer 19

Visualizing

1. What does the war look like?

2. What does the war sound like?

3. What does the war smell like?

4. What does the war feel like?

STRATEGY 14

"Reading" Photography

There is a saying, "A picture is worth a thousand words." To the poor reader, this is an important observation. Students who have trouble reading or comprehending written words can learn a great deal by examining photographs and illustrations that are found in their textbooks. Some students, however, do not realize that they can increase comprehension by "reading" photographs. They consider photographs much like written text. They passively look at them but don't really focus on what can be learned from them. Therefore, if students are to use photos to increase comprehension, they must be taught how to "read" them. When examining photos, students must consider not only the content of the work, but also the intent of the photographer or artist who created them.

When students examine a **photograph**, they should look for the obvious:

- Who or what is depicted in the photo?
- When was the photo taken?
- Where was the photo taken?

There are other things, however, that students should consider to make the examination of the photo more meaningful. Most of these considerations concern why the photo was taken or why the author or editor chose to use a particular photo in a particular section of text. When taking a photograph, the photographer decides where to stand, how to frame the subject, as well as what should be included in the background. Therefore, some additional questions students should consider when examining photos include:

- Is the picture a candid shot or was it staged?
- Why do you think the photographer emphasized certain features in the photograph?
- What do you think is the real focus of the photograph?
- What might have happened right before or right after the photo was taken?

STRATEGY 14

"Reading" Photography

To Teach students to "read" photographs, use Selection 14 and Graphic Organizer 20. You may want to make a transparency of the picture or show it as part of a PowerPoint presentation. Follow the steps in the left column to help the students understand how to examine photos.

1. Show students Selection 14 (the picture of the World Trade Center after the attacks of September 11, 2001).

2. Use the questions on Graphic Organizer 20 one at a time, to analyze the photo:
   a. What is the subject of the picture?
   b. What objects in the picture do you recognize?
   c. What objects in the picture do you not recognize?
   d. When do you think the picture was taken?
   e. Is the picture a candid or staged one?
   f. What happened immediately before or after the picture was taken?
   g. What was the photographer's purpose?
   h. Why is the picture included in your textbook?

3. Allow time for discussion of each question.

Analyzing Photographs

1. **What is the subject of the picture?**
   The destruction of the World Trade Center

2. **What objects in the picture do you recognize?**
   Skyscrapers, building cranes

3. **What objects in the picture do you not recognize?**
   Destroyed buildings

4. **When do you think the picture was taken?**
   After Sept. 11, 2001

5. **Is the picture a candid shot or a staged one?**
   Answers will vary and can generate good discussion.

6. **What happened immediately before or after the picture was taken?**
   Answers will vary but may include plans for caring for families of victims, retaliation.

7. **What was the photographer's purpose in taking the picture?**
   Answers will vary but may include to document history or arouse emotions.

8. **What was the reason for including the photograph in your textbook?**
   Answers will vary but may include to illustrate a historical event.

To apply the reading photographs strategy, look at other pictures in the textbook. Have students repeat the process they used in the practice session.

To extend the strategy, have students write or role-play a dialog that might have occurred before, during, or after the photograph was taken.

Selection 14

Graphic Organizer 20

Analyzing Photographs

1. What is the subject of the picture?

   _____

2. What objects in the picture do you recognize?

   _____

3. What objects in the picture do you not recognize?

   _____

4. When do you think the picture was taken?

   _____

5. Is the picture a candid shot or a staged one?

   _____

6. What happened immediately before or after the picture was taken?

   _____

7. What was the photographer's purpose in taking the picture?

   _____

8. What was the reason for including the photograph in your textbook?

   _____

STRATEGY 15

Interpreting a Political Cartoon

A **political cartoon** is a drawing that makes a statement about a subject. Political cartoons have three main parts. The first part can be identified as its content. Political cartoons found in textbooks often convey messages based on the written text. A political cartoon can focus on a person, event, issue, or theme. For example, the president, congressional leadership, a war, the economy, terrorist groups, or special interests often provide the content of a political cartoon.

The second part of a political cartoon focuses on the methods the author uses to convey the message. Good cartoons deal with emotion and get their message across in a simple and humorous way, usually with few words. Some of the methods used include *caricature* (usually an exaggerated feature of a person), *symbolism* (using a word, icon, or picture to represent something), *stereotyping* (using a trait to apply to a group of people), *irony* (portraying a contradiction between the intended and usual meaning of words), and *sarcasm* (using mockery or bitterness).

The third part of a political cartoon is its purpose. Sometimes the cartoons support or oppose causes. They show reality as opposed to what might be or should be. To extract meaning from political cartoons, students must know the language of cartoons as well as have background knowledge of the subject being presented.

To analyze political cartoons, students should

- examine the date when the cartoon was published. Knowing this will enable them to know if the cartoon was published at the time an event was taking place or at a different period of time.
- find the name of the author of the cartoon. It will be helpful to know if the artist comes from a particular political, social, or cultural background.
- look at any titles or captions. This will help to identify the subject of the cartoon.
- identify people, places, or events that are shown. Knowing who or what is depicted in the cartoon will help place it in an historical or political setting.
- determine the point of view of the cartoonist. Note the size and mannerism of the figures as well as their interaction with one another. Note the use of exaggeration or facial expression to convey a point.

STRATEGY 15

Interpreting a Political Cartoon

To Teach students to interpret political cartoons, use Selection 15 and Graphic Organizer 21.You may want to make a transparency of the political cartoon and use it when having the students complete the analysis by answering the questions in the left column.

1. Show students Selection 15.

2. Use the questions on Graphic Organizer 21, one at a time, to analyze the cartoon.
   a. Who drew the cartoon?
   b. When was the cartoon drawn?
   c. Where was it published?
   d. What are some symbols you see in the cartoon? What do these symbols represent?
   e. What techniques does the author use to convey the message (caricature, exaggeration, irony, humor, interpretative language)?
   f. What is the issue depicted?
   g. What are the people in the cartoon doing?
   h. What viewpoint is conveyed?
   i. What persons or groups might disagree with the view expressed in the cartoon?

3. Allow time for discussion of each question.

Interpreting a Political Cartoon

1. Who drew the cartoon?
   Paul

2. When was the cartoon drawn?
   December 1912

3. Where was it published?
   In the Jersey City Journal

4. What are some symbols you see in the cartoon? What do these symbols represent?

Symbol	What It Represents
Flag	*The Union*
Smiling Sun	*Approval*
Stars	*States*

5. What techniques does the author use to convey the message (caricature, exaggeration, irony, humor, interpretative language)?
   Facial expression of happiness, sun shining

6. What is the issue depicted?
   Women's right to vote

7. What are the people in cartoon doing?
   Making a flag showing the states that have approved the right to vote for women

8. What viewpoint is conveyed?
   They support the right for women to vote

9. What person or groups might disagree with the view expressed in the cartoon?
   Answers will vary

To apply the interpreting political cartoons strategy, have students examine political cartoons from a variety of sources, including their textbook. Have students repeat the process they used in the practice session, using Graphic Organizer 21 to record their interpretations.

To extend the strategy, you may want students to compare the cartoon in Selection 15 with the one in Selection 16. You may also have students draw a political cartoon. Then, have them exchange cartoons to determine if a partner can determine the meaning of their drawing.

Interpreting a Political Cartoon

Selection 15 - The Modern Betsy Ross by Paul

Jersey City Journal
December 1912
(rpt. *American Review of Reviews*)

Graphic Organizer 21

Interpreting a Political Cartoon

1. Who drew the cartoon?

2. When was the cartoon drawn?

3. Where was it published?

4. What are some symbols you see in the cartoon?
   What do these symbols represent?

Symbol	What It Represents

5. What techniques does the author use to convey the message
   (caricature, exaggeration, irony, humor, interpretative language)?

6. What is the issue depicted?

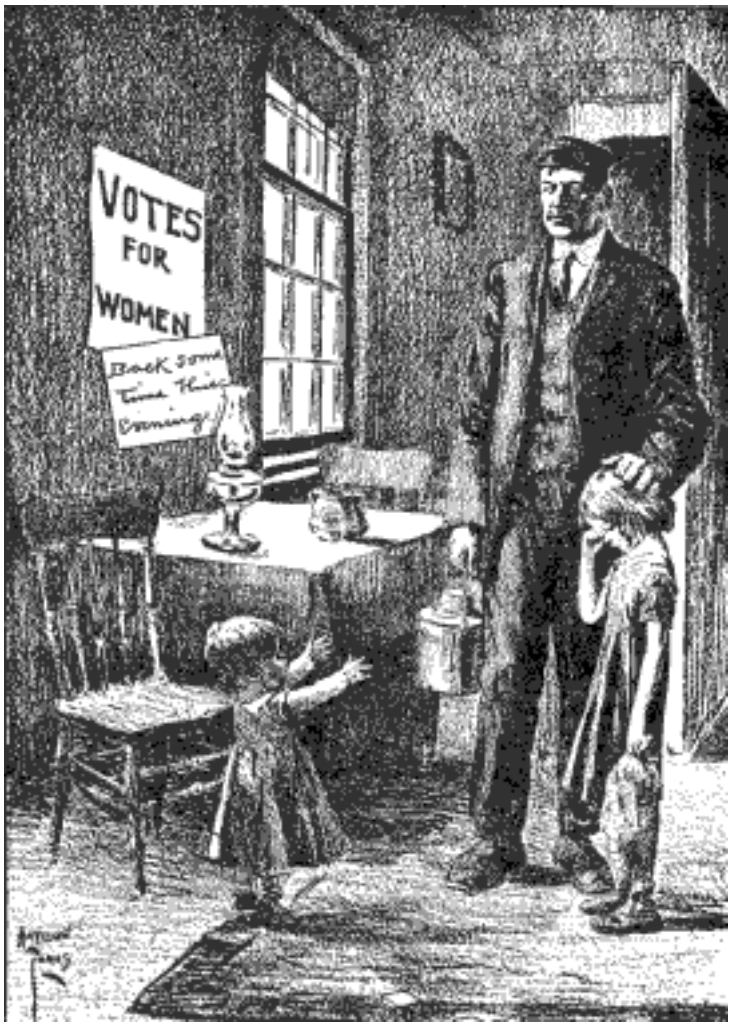
7. What are the people in cartoon doing?

8. What viewpoint is conveyed?

9. What person or groups might disagree with the view expressed in the cartoon?

Interpreting a Political Cartoon

Selection 16 - Home



Women's Anti-Suffrage Association of Massachusetts
(rpt. *Literary Digest: October 9, 1915)*

STRATEGY 16

Interpreting Graphs

In textbooks, students often encounter information in the form of graphs. **Graphs** provide a quick impression of data. Using graphs to obtain information may be quicker and easier than drawing conclusions or making comparisons from written information. Graphs can make learning more meaningful and increase the comprehension of written words.

Graphs can be of several varieties, including line, bar, and circle. Different types of graphs are used to illustrate different types of data.

- A *line graph* contains one or more lines. Values are given along horizontal and vertical axes. A line graph is most often used to show how something has changed over a period of time.
- A *bar graph* displays bars vertically along a horizontal axis that runs along the bottom of the graph or it displays bars horizontally along a vertical axis on the left side of the graph. A bar graph often is used to make comparisons.
- A *circle graph* is used to illustrate parts of something to the whole. A circle graph, which usually contains percentages, is also called a *pie graph* since the parts illustrated symbolically represent the pieces of a pie. The whole circle represents 100 percent. Each part of a circle graph is referred to as a sector, section, or segment.

When reading a graph, students should notice

- the title. The title will tell them what the graph is about.
- the general parts of the graph. If students are "reading" a line or bar graph, they should identify the information on the vertical and horizontal axes. If students are "reading" a circle graph, they should identify the parts.
- the specific parts of the graph. If students are "reading" a line or bar graph, they should choose a point and state what that piece of information tells you. If they are "reading" a circle graph, they should choose a sector or piece.
- any trends.
- any information that they can develop into questions or use to answer questions about the data.

Interpreting Graphs

To Teach students to interpret graphs, use Selection 17 and Graphic Organizer 22. You may want to make a transparency of the graph to use as you lead a discussion of the questions in the left column.

1. Show students Selection 17.

2. Use the questions on Graphic Organizer 22, one at a time, to analyze the graph.
   a. What is the title of the graph?
   b. What do the vertical and horizontal axes tell you?
   c. Choose a point on the graph and tell what information is given.
   d. Ask students to list one trend that the data show.
   e. Ask students whether, according to the graph, males or females have the longer life expectancy?

3. Allow time for discussion of each question.

Analyzing a Graph

1. What is the title of the graph?
   Life Expectancy in the United States, by Gender, Selected Years, 1900-2000

2. What do the general parts of the graph tell you? (Answer all that are appropriate.)
   What does the vertical axis tell you?
   It identifies the age of the population.
   What does the horizontal axis tell you?
   It lists the years the data were taken.
   What do the sectors tell you?

3. Choose a point or piece on the graph and tell what information is given.
   Answers will vary but, for example, in 1940 the life expectancy of males was 55 years.

4. What trend does the graph show?
   Answers will vary but, for example, life expectancy has tended to increase over the years.

5. What other information does the graph give you?
   The graph also shows data for females.

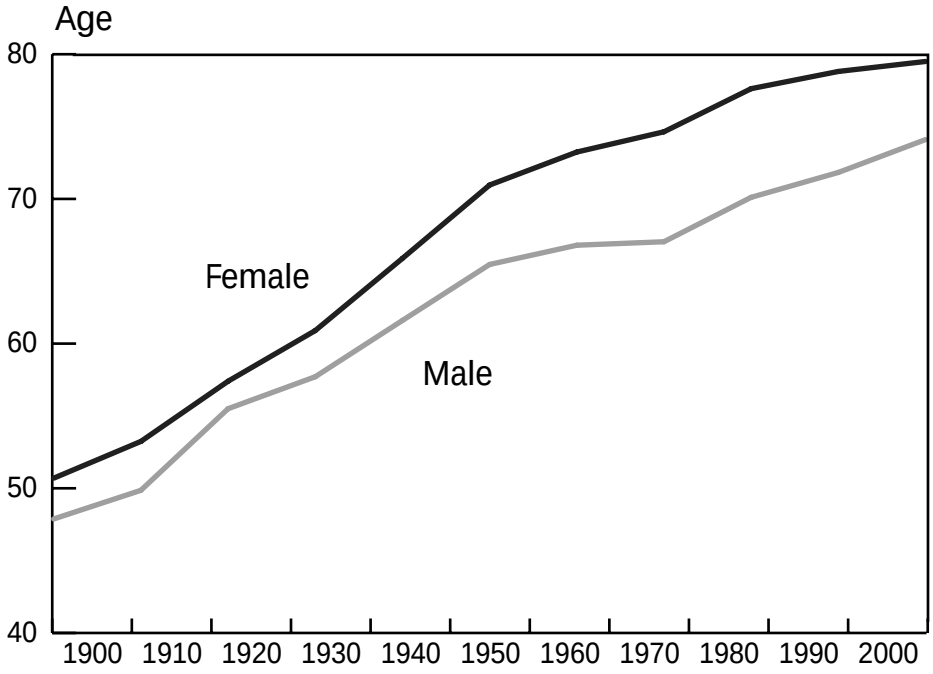
To apply the strategy, have students look at a variety of graphs, especially ones in the textbook. Have students repeat the process, using Graphic Organizer 22, to interpret data. (**Note:** You may want to give students specific questions about a given graph instead of asking them to respond to question 5 on the graphic organizer.)

To extend the strategy, use Graphic Organizer 22 and Selection 18 to interpret data from a bar and circle graph. You might also want to give students data and have them create graphs.

Interpreting Graphs

Selection 17

Life Expectancy in the United States, by Gender, Selected Years, 1900-2000



Source: AmeriStat, analysis of data from the National Center for Health Statistics

Graphic Organizer 22

Analyzing a Graph

1. What is the title of the graph?

2. What do the general parts of the graph tell you? (Answer all that are appropriate.)

   What does the vertical axis tell you?

   What does the horizontal axis tell you?

   What do the sectors tell you?

3. Choose a point or piece on the graph and tell what information is given.

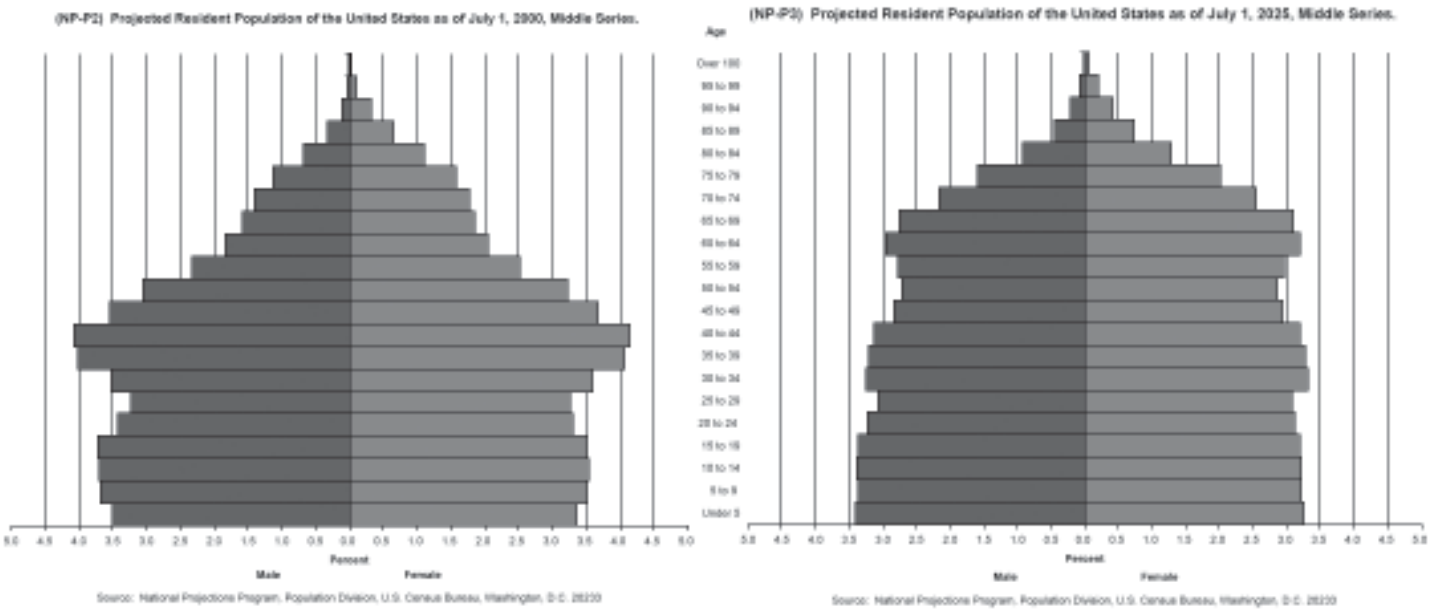
4. What trend does the graph show?

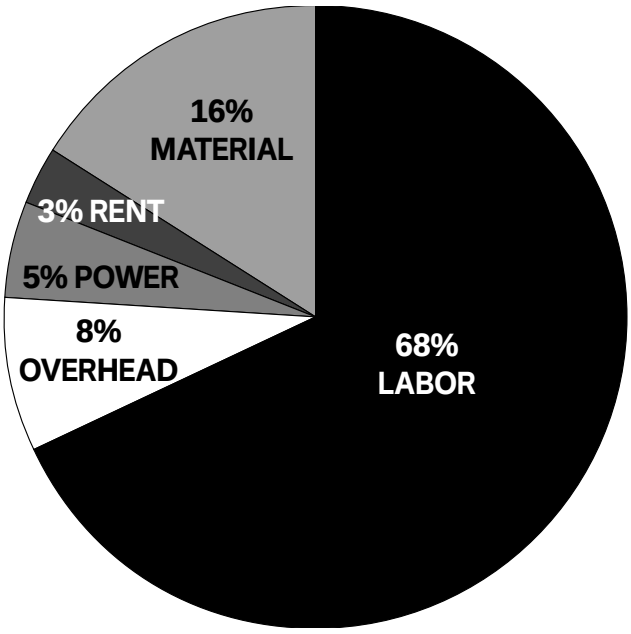
5. What other information does the graph give you?

Interpreting Graphs

Selection 18

Age and Gender Distribution of the U.S. Population, 2000 and 2025





Vicki's Craft Shop
Yearly Expenses

STRATEGY 17

Interpreting a Chart or Table

A chart or table is another way to place text into a visual format. **Charts** and **tables** are used to categorize data so the information is easy to read and understand. Information that would take many pages to put into a text format can be summarized on a chart that may be one page or less.

When examining a chart or table, students should

- read the title to determine what the subject is,
- read the column headings and labels,
- read the columns from top to bottom,
- read the rows from left to right,
- draw conclusions from the data, and
- try to identify trends.

STRATEGY 17

Interpreting a Chart or Table

To Teach students to interpret charts and tables, use Selection 19 and Graphic Organizer 23. You may want to make a transparency of the chart to use as you lead a discussion of the questions in the left column.

1. Show students Selection 19.

2. Use the questions on Graphic Organizer 23, one at a time, to interpret the chart.
   a. What is the title of the chart?
   b. What are the titles of the columns?
   c. Ask students what information is found in Row 5.
   Miles of Railroad Track; 22,000 (North); 9,000 (South)
   d. Ask students what conclusions they might draw from the data, e.g., "Which region was better prepared to fight. Give reasons for your answer."
   e. Ask what trends they can identify from the data.

3. Allow time for discussion of each question.

Interpreting a Chart or Table

1. What is the title of the chart or table?
Differences between the North and South before the Civil War

2. What are the column headings?
Criteria, North, South

3. What is the information contained in the first column?
The areas that are being compared – population, men of combat age, military forces, factories, miles of railroad track, banks/funds, gold, farms, agriculture/grain, and number of draft animals (horses, mules, oxen)

4. Choose between two and four rows and tell what information is found there.
Row ___ *Answers will vary.*
Row ___
Row ___
Row ___

5. What conclusions can you draw from the data on the chart or table?
Answers will vary but probably will say the North was better prepared for war because it had more people, forces, food, and factories.

.

To apply the strategy, have students look at a variety of charts or tables in the textbook. Have them repeat the process they used in the practice session, using Graphic Organizer 23, to interpret data. (**Note:** Instead of asking them to generally make conclusions or identify trends, you may want to give them specific questions to answer.)

To extend the strategy, have students create charts or tables using material they have read in the textbook. For example, they could create a chart of civil war battles, showing the location, major leaders, casualties, and significance of selected battles.

.

Interpreting a Chart or Table

Selection 19 - Differences between the North and the South before the Civil War

CRITERIA	NORTH	SOUTH
Overall population	23 states 22 million	11 states 9 million (3.5 to 4 million were slaves)
Men of combat age	4 million	.8 million
Military forces	Trained army and navy	None
Factories	100,000 employing 1.1 million workers	20,000 employing 100,000 workers
Miles of railroad track	22,000	9,000
Banks/Funds	81 percent of nation's deposits	19 percent of nation's deposits
Gold	$56 million	None
Farms	67 percent of nation's total	33 percent of nation's total
Agriculture/Grain	64 percent of nation's supply	36 percent of nation's supply
Number of draft animals (horses, mules, oxen)	4.6 million	2.6 million

Graphic Organizer 23

Interpreting a Chart or Table

1. **What is the title of the chart or table?**

2. **What are the column headings?**

3. **What is the information contained in the first column?**

4. **Choose between two and four rows and tell what information is found there.**

   Row _____
   Row _____
   Row _____
   Row _____

5. **What conclusions can you draw from the data on the chart or table?**

STRATEGY 18

Reading Maps

The International Cartographic Association defines a **map** as a "representation, normally to scale and on a flat medium, of a selection of material or abstract features on, or in relation to, the surface of Earth." *Cartographers* are those people who transfer information from the surface of Earth to a flat sheet of paper.

A map provides information in a graphic way. Types of maps include topographic, physical/political, historical, and satellite. Maps may also be general purpose, special purpose, or thematic. Some of the most common maps found in textbooks include climate, weather, regions, movement, transportation, distance, cities, states, countries, waterways, transportation routes, natural resources, resources, and population.

When reading information on a map, students should

- identify the type of map,
- read the title to determine its subject and purpose,
- determine what type of information is found on the map,
- look to see if it has a scale that helps determine the distances between two or more points, and
- look at any other information that is included.

STRATEGY 18

Reading Maps

To Teach students to read maps, use Selection 20 and Graphic Organizer 24. You may want to make a transparency of the map to use as you lead a discussion of the questions in the left column.

1. Make a copy of Selection 20 for each student or use a transparency of the map.

2. Have students answer the following questions from information they find on the map of Iraq.
   a. What is the type of map?
   b. What is the subject or purpose of the map?
   c. What types of information are found on the map?
   d. Does the map have a scale? What does it show?
   e. What other information is found on the map?

3. Allow time for discussion of each question.

Reading Maps

1. What is the type of map you are analyzing?
Political/Physical

2. What is the title of the map?

3. What is the purpose of the map?
It shows a political area in the Middle East, focusing on Iraq.

4. What types of information are on the map?
Names of countries, names of cities, capital of Iraq

5. Is there a scale?
No
If yes, what does it tell you?
NA

6. Is there a legend?
No
If yes, what does it tell you?
NA

7. What conclusions can you draw from the information on the map?
Answers will vary but might include relative location of countries in Middle East, relative location of cities from Baghdad, etc.

To apply the strategy, have students look at a variety of maps in their textbook. Have students repeat the process, using Graphic Organizer 24, to "read" the maps. (**Note:** You may want to add some specific questions for the students to answer, based on the map(s) they are "reading."

To extend the strategy, have students bring in examples of maps they find in newspapers, magazines, on the internet, etc. Analyze each in regard to its purpose. Also, draw some conclusions from the information shown on each map.

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Selection 20

Graphic Organizer 24

Reading Maps

1. What is the type of map you are analyzing?

2. What is the title of the map?

3. What is the purpose of the map?

4. What types of information are on the map?

5. Is there a scale?

   If yes, what does it tell you?

6. Is there a legend?

   If yes, what does it tell you?

7. What conclusions can you draw from the information on the map?

After Reading

Students should determine how well they have mastered specific content after they read. Three types of activities are typically used to assess students' understanding of the material. These include:

- Summarizing or paraphrasing (retelling) what they have read. Summarizing and paraphrasing may be used to develop a number of writing assignments, including reports, essays, and journaling. *Summarizing* involves the ability of students to shorten a reading by eliminating nonessential information. The summary must be written in the students' own words. *Paraphrasing* involves students' ability to reword a selection; the rephrasing, however, may be nearly the same length as the original writing.

- Synthesizing or applying what they have read. *Synthesizing* involves the ability of students to take what they know and display it in a new, somewhat creative manner. Examples of synthesizing include creating brochures, displays, games, drawings, and role-plays.

- Testing or evaluating what they have read. *Testing* may include a variety of types of questions, including true and false, matching, completion (constructed response), essay (extended response), or multiple choice (selected response).

STRATEGY 19

Summarizing/Paraphrasing

When students finish reading a text selection, they are often asked to summarize what they have read. To many students, this means copying what they read in the textbook. However, to **summarize** actually means that students should rewrite what they have read in their own words, including only a general overview of the reading. Summarizing involves breaking down content into small pieces.

Sometimes students confuse summarizing and paraphrasing. The main difference between the two is that summarizing leaves out most supporting details or examples. **Paraphrasing**, on the other hand, includes most details, but it uses different words to describe them. Both summaries and paraphrases, however, are written in the student's own words.

To summarize a reading, students should

- focus on the main idea;
- avoid the inclusion of details, examples, and descriptive details; and
- use concise language.

Summarizing/Paraphrasing

To Teach students to summarize, use Graphic Organizer 25 and Selection 21. You may want to make a transparency of the graphic organizer to use as you lead a discussion of the steps in the left column.

1. Make a copy of Graphic Organizer 25 and Selection 21 for each student.

2. Have students read Selection 21. Tell them to write down any important words or ideas in the second box on the graphic organizer as they read the article.

3. When they finish, ask them to look at the words and ideas they wrote down and identify the main idea of the reading. Record their idea(s) in the first box on the graphic organizer.

4. Lead a general class discussion and come to consensus on the critical words and ideas that must be included in a summary of the article.

5. Make a class list of those words or ideas on a transparency of Graphic Organizer 25.

6. Classify the main words or essential ideas. (Note: You may want to use Graphic Organizer 3.)

7. Tell students to use the key words and ideas and write a summary statement of the material in the third box on the graphic organizer.

8. Compare the summary with the original reading.

Summarizing

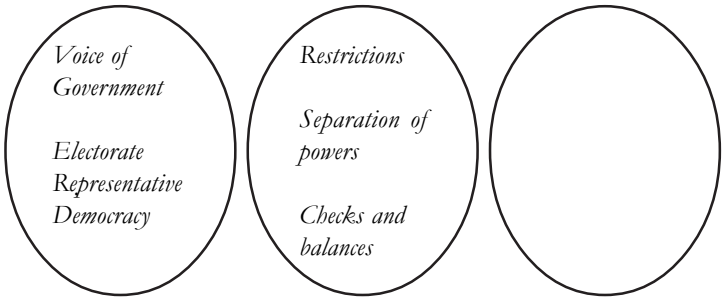
1. What is the main idea of the reading?

To describe the form of government found in the United States

2. What are the key words or essential ideas in the reading?

representative democracy
electorate
constitutionalism
checks and balances
separation of powers

3. Classify the key words or essential ideas.



4. Write a summary of the reading.

The United States government is a representative democracy where citizens choose representatives to make laws for them. The representatives must follow guidelines that tell them what they can and cannot do. The U.S. Constitution limits the power of any one group by providing a system of checks and balances to ensure a separation of powers among the three branches of government.

To apply the strategy, have students read other (and longer) passages of text and use Graphic Organizer 25 to develop a summary of the reading.

To extend the strategy, have students outline a passage in the textbook. Develop a summary from the outline.

STRATEGY 19

Summarizing/Paraphrasing

Selection 15 - The United States Government

If the United States were a direct democracy, then each individual in the country would be directly involved in making decisions about what the government should or should not do. That seemed a bit impractical to our founding fathers, so they made our government a **representative democracy**. The citizens elect or appoint others to represent them in making decisions about what the government should do. The **electorate** (voters) choose the individuals who will be a part of government and represent the people.

The second basic principle of American government is **constitutionalism**. The representatives selected by the voters cannot just make up laws or rules as they see fit. They are bound by the federal and state constitutions. These written documents — the U.S. Constitution and the constitutions of the states — describe the rights of the people and the framework of the government.

When the U.S. Constitution was ratified by the states, it established a national government that was made up of three branches—the legislative branch, the executive branch, and the judicial branch. Responsibilities for government were divided among the three branches in what is known as a **separation of powers**. Separating government powers creates a "limited government." In addition, each branch of government was given some power to control or prevent some actions of the other two branches. This process is known as a system of **checks and balances**. The checks and balances ensure that no one branch becomes too powerful.

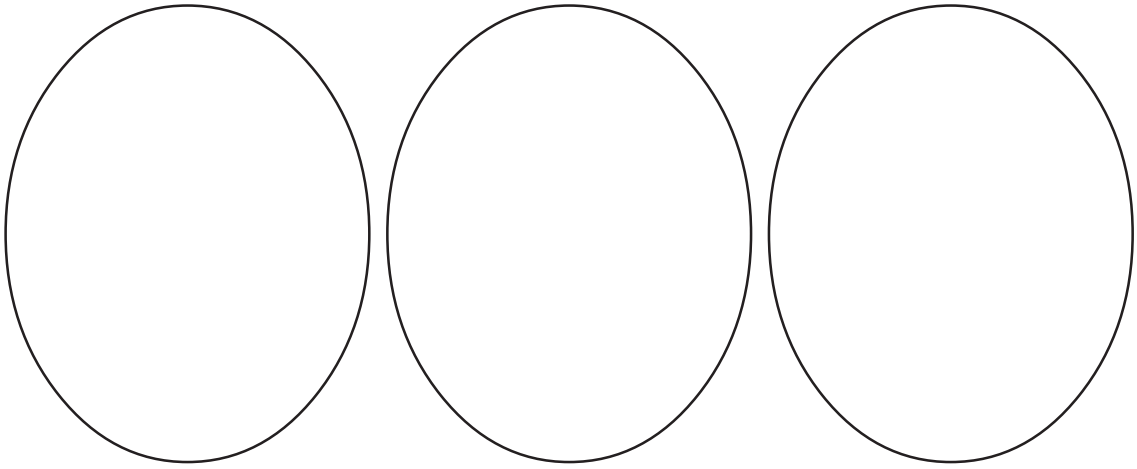
Graphic Organizer 25

Summarizing/Paraphrasing

1. **What is the main idea of the reading?**

2. **What are the key words or essential ideas in the reading?**

3. **Classify the key words or essential ideas.**



4. **Write a summary of the reading.**

STRATEGY 20

Synthesizing

The dictionary defines **synthesis** as "the bringing together of all the parts to make a whole." Defining synthesis as an after reading strategy, however, denotes bringing together a body of knowledge and applying (using) it in some new or creative manner. When students engage in synthesizing activities, they must demonstrate they are able to do more than recall what they have read. They must, in fact, activate higher-level thinking skills that demonstrate their understanding of the material as well as their ability to analyze and apply their knowledge.

Synthesis activities require students to actively engage in the learning process. Synthesis activities may include constructing a

- poster
- map
- poem
- newspaper article
- brochure
- game
- graph
- cartoon
- book
- diorama

A synthesis activity may be used as a form of assessment. The activity can be used to determine the level at which a student has mastered what he or she has read. This form of evaluation, which requires a student to perform a task demonstrating her or his understanding of content, is referred to as *authentic assessment*.

Teachers are often reluctant to assign synthesis activities because they are more difficult to evaluate than traditional tests. Traditional assessment generally requires students to select an answer from a list of possible responses, recall information to fill in a blank, or match terms with their meanings. Most often, traditional assessment is teacher-controlled since the tests are written by the teacher or provided by the textbook publishing company.

When given an opportunity to synthesize the information they have learned, students make more decisions about the information they present as well as the structure they use to present it. In order to maintain some control over how a project is to be completed as well as to maintain consistency in evaluation, the teacher generally provides a rubric that details guidelines for evaluation. The guidelines (rubric) contain criteria that describe levels of performance or understanding. Rubrics provide expectations; however, students still have flexibility in organizing, constructing, and presenting the project.

Synthesizing

To Teach students to synthesize, use Selection 22 and Graphic Organizer 26. You may want to make a transparency of the graphic organizer to use as you lead a discussion of the steps in the left column.

1. Make a copy of Graphic Organizer 26 for each student.

2. Give students a sheet of white 8-1/2 x 11 paper.

3. Model each step in the design phase, having students complete one step at a time.

4. Lead a general class discussion on symbols or have students read a section in their textbooks focusing on the meaning and importance of symbols.

5. Tell the class that each student will construct a triarama depicting their understanding of the use of symbols.

6. Go through each of the steps in the "finishing the project" phase of the activity.

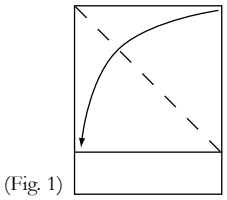
7. Finally, tell students that they are to write a description of why they chose the symbols they did. They could write a description of "What America Means to Me through These Symbols."

8. Show students Graphic Organizer 26, which contains the rubric that will be used to evaluate their final product.

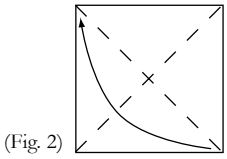
Making a Triarama

To make the design:

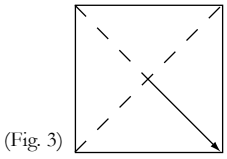
- Take a piece of 8-1/2 x 11 paper. Fold the right corner down to the left side of the paper to form a triangle. Cut off the rectangle that is left over. (Fig. 1)


(Fig. 1)

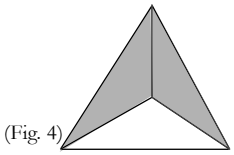
- Open the paper. You will have a square with a diagonal line from top left to lower right. Fold the left corner of the square down to form a triangle. Then open the paper. You will find the letter X outlined on your paper. (Fig. 2)


(Fig. 2)

- Cut one fold line to the center of the square. (Fig. 3)


(Fig. 3)

- Overlap the two triangles and glue or tape them to form a triarama. (Fig. 4)


(Fig. 4)

Finishing the project

- On a separate piece of paper draw four symbols that represent the United States, e.g., Liberty bell, US Flag, Mt. Rushmore, Washington Monument.
- Color the symbols.
- Glue them on the background of the triarama.
- On the base of the triarama, write a description of "What America Means to Me."

To apply the strategy, have students read other passages of text and use Graphic Organizer 26 to develop additional triaramas.

To extend the strategy, have students complete other synthesis activities, e.g., posters, political cartoons, brochures.

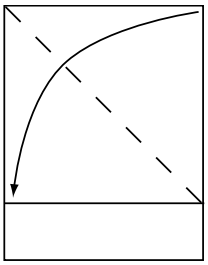
Synthesizing

Selection 22

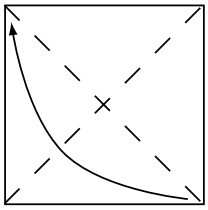
Making a Triarama

To make the design:

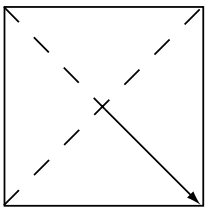
- Take a piece of 8-1/2 x 11 paper. Fold the right corner down to the left side of the paper to form a triangle. Cut off the rectangle that is left over (Fig. 1)

(Fig. 1) 

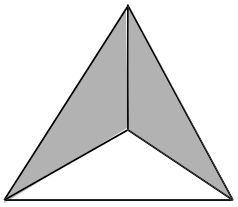
- Open the paper. You will have a square with a diagonal line from top left to lower right. Fold the left corner of the square down to form a triangle. Then open the paper. You will find the letter X outlined on your paper. (Fig. 2)

(Fig. 2) 

- Cut one fold line to the center of the square. (Fig. 3)

(Fig. 3) 

- Overlap the two triangles and glue or tape them to form a triarama. (Fig. 4)

(Fig. 4) 

Finishing the project

- On a separate piece of paper draw four symbols that represent the United States, e.g., Liberty bell, US Flag, Mt. Rushmore, Washington Monument.
- Color the symbols.
- Glue them on the background of the triarama.
- On the base of the triarama, write a description of "What America Means to Me."

Graphic Organizer 26

Rubric for Evaluating a Triarama

Category	4	3	2	1
Following Directions	Triarama contains all the components found in the model and is well constructed.	Triarama contains the components in the model, but is poorly constructed.	Triarama is missing some of the components in the model.	Triarama does not contain any of the components in the model.
Graphic/ Pictures	All the graphics are appropriate symbols.	Half of the graphics are appropriate symbols.	One of the graphics is an appropriate symbol.	None of the graphics is an appropriate symbol.
Attractiveness/ Organization	The triarama is exceptionally attractive and well organized, with appropriate color.	The triarama is attractive and well organized with some use of color.	The triarama is organized, but has no color.	The organization of the triarama is confusing.
Writing/ Grammar	There are no grammatical errors in the paragraph.	There are 1-2 grammatical errors in the paragraph.	There are 3-4 grammatical errors in the paragraph.	There are more than 4 grammatical errors in the paragraph.
Writing/ Organization	The paragraph has a clear beginning, middle, and end.	The paragraph has a beginning, middle, and end.	The paragraph has a beginning and middle, but no clear end.	The paragraph does not clearly show a beginning, middle, and end.

Following are some additional rubrics that may be used to evaluate a number of synthesis projects.

Rubric for a Writing Assignment

Criteria	Always	Sometimes	Rarely
1. Sentence Formation • Uses complete sentences • Uses a variety of sentences			
2. Writing Mechanics • Uses proper capitalization • Uses correct punctuation • Uses correct spelling			
3. Word Usage • Uses descriptive language • Has proper subject/verb agreement • Uses appropriate adjectives/adverbs • Uses proper pronoun antecedent			
4. Composition Development • Uses correct format • Has a beginning, middle, and end • Stays on assigned topic • Uses transitional words (*since*, *because*, *however*) • Includes specific/relevant details (examples)			

Rubric for an Oral Report

Criteria	Yes	Sometimes	No
1. Did the student speak clearly?			
2. Did the student make eye contact?			
3. Did the student use correct grammar?			
4. Were the student's thoughts organized?			
5. Did the student include details in the presentation?			
6. Did the student make a conclusion?			
7. Did the student stay within the assigned time?			
8. Did the student use a model, if appropriate?			
9. If the student used a model, was it accurate?			

Rubric for Creative Project

Criteria	Yes	No
1. Did the student follow directions?		
2. Did the student complete the project by the due date?		
3. Did the student use color, if appropriate?		
4. Did the student replicate the idea (e.g., make a cornhusk doll)?		
5. Did the student show creativity (e.g., an original poem, song)?		

STRATEGY 21

Testing

Tests are given to find out what students know. To be successful on any test, students must know what will be tested. Suggestions for preparing for a test include developing strategies to *review content* as well as to *practice various formats* of test questions.

Review strategies include

- predicting what questions will be asked. Students look over notes or assignments or talk with classmates. They should think about the information that the teacher emphasized or wrote on the chalkboard or overhead projector. The questions, people, concepts, etc., that are covered in class assignments generally are the things that are tested. Students can make a list of the important facts and concepts that might be tested.
- taking notes carefully if there is a test review. Students should note teacher comments, like "This will be on the test," "These are the important people you should know," or "Remember these two points."
- completing any test review sheet that the teacher might provide. The review sheet can be used as a practice test, or a practice test could be constructed using the review sheet as a guide.
- devising methods to study for the test, e.g.,
    - ♦ make a set of flash cards. A flash card could have a name, date, event, place, vocabulary word, or question on one side of the card. On the other side, students should write the answer or some information to describe what is listed on the front side of the card.
    - ♦ make an outline of the information that includes major headings, people, events, dates, etc.
    - ♦ use memory strategies such as mnemonics or graphic organizers, e.g., concept diagrams, cause/effect charts, Venn diagrams, maps, or timelines to organize information.
    - ♦ recite the information. Some students are auditory learners and hearing the content helps them to remember.
    - ♦ find a study buddy. Students can study with a friend or group of friends. They can make practice tests for each other or orally ask one another questions.

Test formats include

- true or false,
- matching,
- multiple choice,
- fill-in-the-blanks (completion), and
- essay.

Testing

To Teach students methods to use to review for tests use Graphic Organizer 27, which gives the directions for making and using flash cards. You may want to make a transparency of the graphic to use as you lead a discussion of how to complete the strategy, using the steps in the left column.

1. Tell students there are a number of activities they can use when reviewing for a test. For this particular strategy, tell them you are going to help them make a set of flash cards and learn how to use them to study for a test.

2. Run Graphic Organizer 27 on heavy card stock and give each student one sheet for every 10 cards that he or she is to make.

3. Have students review the content on which they are to be tested.

4. Ask them to write down any facts or ideas that they do not know.

5. Have them write a question for each fact or idea that they identified.

6. Have them transfer their questions to their flash cards, writing the question on one side of the card and the answer to that question on the other side of the card.

7. Have students, in pairs or groups, ask one another the questions each wrote.

8. As a variation, you may run the template on different colors of paper. Then give each student in a group a different color for his or her flash cards. This makes it easier for each student to identify her or his questions when they are returned to the owner at the end of the practice.

Flash Cards

Directions: Use the following template to create flash cards. Run the template on heavy card stock and then have students write the questions on one side, cut the cards out, and then write the answer on the back of each question.

To apply the strategy, have students review a chapter in the textbook by making a set of flash cards**.**

To extend their knowledge of review strategies, have students

- use the graphic organizers in this book to review information. For example, if they are comparing/contrasting, use Graphic Organizers 11 and 12. If they are finding cause/effect, use Graphic Organizer 13 or 14.
- create a review sheet by outlining the information in the textbook.

Graphic Organizer 27

Flash Cards

Directions: Use the following template to create flash cards. Run the template on heavy card stock and then have students write the questions on one side, cut the cards out, and then write the answer on the back of each question.

Testing

To Teach students how to analyze different formats of test questions, use Selections 23-27.You may want to make a transparency of each selection to use when you lead a discussion of what to look for in each test format. You may also want to make transparencies of Graphic Organizers 28 and 29 to use to teach students to analyze how to "read" and answer essay and multiple choice test questions.

Selection 23 - True and False Questions

The best way to study for true and false questions is to commit facts to memory. Some suggestions for analyzing this type of question follow.

- Read the entire statement. If there is more than one fact in the statement, check the validity of all the facts. If one is false, the item is false.

- When the statement contains a negative word (*no, not, cannot, does not*), it can be confusing and may be either true or false. The best way to check such a statement is to remove the word no or not and then reread the sentence. If the statement is true when the negative word is removed, then the answer to that particular question is false.

- The use of certain qualifying words, such as *sometimes, often, seldom, frequently, ordinarily, generally, usually, probably, might, may,* and *many,* tends to make a statement true. To be false, a statement must be completely untrue. When you read a statement that has a qualifying word, see if you can think of another example to support it. If you can, the statement is true.

- When the statement contains a double negative, it is generally true. For example, if a statement says that something is "not unusual," it is really saying that something is usual. *Usual* is one of those words that tend to make a statement true.

- Absolute words, such as *never, none, always, every, entirely, only, all, worst,* and *best,* most generally make a statement false. To be true, the statement must by 100 percent true. If you see a statement with any of these words, try to think of an exception to what it is saying. If you can do this, you know the statement is false.

Selection 24 - Matching

Matching questions require students to correctly identify or "match" relationships between paired lists of information. The best way to prepare for these questions is to study the relationships between information, for example, the relationship between a person and what he or she did or the relationship between a cause and its result. When taking a matching test, consider the following:

- Find out if an answer can be used more than once.
- Examine both lists to determine the types of items as well as the relationships that are included, for example, places and locations, people and their accomplishments, events and dates.
- Choose one column as your starting point (usually the second column — the one containing the "answers"). Read the first item in the second column and then look through the first column to find an item that matches it. Always starting in the same column will organize your thinking. This process will also help you use your time more efficiently because, once you read through the first column several times while looking for matches, you will become familiar with the whole list, enabling you to find matches more quickly as you read each item in the second column.
- Go through the whole list in the first column before deciding on a match for the first item in the second column. Don't choose the first item that is mostly likely the correct response. There may be a better answer, which you will miss if you do not read all the choices.
- If the lists contain mixed information, such as people, places, and vocabulary, choose an answer that shows a correct relationship. For example, a person would not be an appropriate match for a body of water or a definition of a term.
- Cross off each item when you make a match. This will help you stay organized and you will not make the careless error of using an item that has already been used.
- Don't guess until you have made all the matches that you are sure are correct. If you guess early, you may eliminate an answer that should be used later.

Selection 25 - Completion

The term *constructed response* refers to several types of questions, including fill-in-the-blank, completion, and short answer. These questions require students to write a short response instead of choosing an answer from selected choices. When answering these types of questions, look at a prompt, which asks you to do something. Then, construct your own answer to the prompt. Some questions require a one-word answer, while others may require brief phrases or a short paragraph. Because there may not be an exact answer to the prompt, students' answers will often vary. When this happens, the question may be scored by a rubric. When taking this type of test, you should:

- Read each statement carefully for clues about what information is called for – a name, a place, a list of causes, examples of something.
- Focus on how the statement/question is written. If the statement requires you to fill in a blank, look for words like *a* or *an* before the blank. If *an* appears before the blank, the word in the blank begins with a vowel.
- Look for key words in the statement/question. These words will direct your thinking and help you to provide a reasonable answer.
- If you can't remember the exact word(s) that goes in the blank(s), write something related. Teachers generally give partial or even full credit if the answer means the same thing.
- Check the number of blanks or lines provided to record your answer. If there is one short blank, generally the answer calls for one short word. If there are several lines or spaces, sometimes separated by commas, that is a clue that you need to provide as many answers as there are number of lines. If you leave some lines or spaces blank, then you are only partially answering the question.
- If the question asks you to do more than one thing, be sure to provide all the information called for. For example, if the question asks you to *list* reasons for the American Revolution and *identify* the most important, be certain that you address both parts.
- Write legibly. You are not selecting a letter (A, B, C, or D) or writing *True* or *False*. To get credit, the teacher must be able to determine what you mean.

Selection 26 - Essay Questions

Essay questions are often referred to as extended response questions. These questions are similar to the short answer format, except they are generally more complex. The following steps will help you answer essay questions:

BEFORE starting to write an essay test,

- Determine if you must answer all the questions or if you have some choice.
- Note how much time you have for the test.
- Budget the amount of time you can spend on each question.
- Prioritize the questions if some are worth more points than others.

WHEN you start the test,

- Read the question(s) carefully to determine what is being asked. It is important that you know the definition of some of the most common directive words –
  - ♦ *Compare* identifying similarities between two or more things
  - ♦ *Contrast* identifying differences between two or more things
  - ♦ *Discuss* consider pros and cons or describe similarities and differences
  - ♦ *Analyze* break something down into parts and discuss or interpret data
  - ♦ *Illustrate* give examples
  - ♦ *Summarize* give a brief account, list or enumerate
  - ♦ *Trace* show the order of events
  - ♦ *List* enumerate
- Plan your answer. This may take some time but it will enable you to write a better essay.
- Use pre-writing skills, such as brain storming, jotting down ideas and concepts, making an outline, or using other graphic organizers listing main ideas and supporting details.
- Use the rules of good composition as you write.
- Rephrase the question in your first paragraph
- Identify main points in the first paragraph.
- Develop each key point in subsequent paragraphs, providing supporting details.
- Use transitions to tie the paragraphs together.
- Summarize in the last paragraph.
- Write legibly.

Graphic Organizer 28

Planning an Essay Answer

The following graphic organizer may help you become a better essay writer. Use what you have learned to analyze and write the following essay question.

What is the question I am asked to answer?

Decide what you are to do by reading and defining the directive word(s).

Brainstorm possible ideas to include in the answer.

Use a graphic organizer to structure your answer.

Write your answer on the back of this paper, making sure you use correct grammar, punctuation, and spelling. Remember to write legibly.

Selection 27 - Multiple Choice

Questions that have a multiple choice format are also referred to as selected response questions. These questions, the most common format found on standardized tests, provide a set of choices — one of which is the correct answer. Multiple choice questions usually contain a phrase or stem followed by 3-5 choices (selections). Multiple choice formats may ask a student to answer a question or complete a statement. When answering multiple choice questions, consider the following suggestions:

- Read the question before looking at the answers. If you have an answer, check to see if it is one of the choices. If it is, mark the answer sheet and go on to the next question.
- If your answer is not one of the choices, discard it and look carefully at the selected responses from which you can choose. Put a mark through choices that are clearly incorrect.
- Identity key words in the stem and selected responses. Check the relationship of the words.
- Locate the verb in the stem. Determine what the verb is asking you to do.
- Note words like *always*, *none*, and *never*. If a choice includes one of these words, it is probably not the correct answer.
- Note words like *often*, *frequently*, and *usually*. If a choice includes one of these words, it is likely to be the correct selection.
- Examine each answer to see how precisely it is written. A precise answer is often the correct one.
- Look carefully if the choices contain a range of numbers. Generally, numbers that are extreme (such as the largest or the smallest, the oldest or the most recent) are incorrect. Choose a number in the middle range.
- Don't second guess yourself. Generally, your first choice is best.
- Note the use of "All of the above" as a selection. If you know that at least two of the choices are correct, then "All of the above" is probably the correct choice.
- Look at the length of the answer. One choice that is clearly longer and more descriptive than the others is probably the correct choice.
- Watch for negative words in the stem. Negative words generally ask you to choose an answer that is not true. When examining a question that contains a negative word, try to find three answers that are correct. This process helps you to narrow down your choices.
- Look at the grammar in the stem. If there is a word like *a* or *an*, you should select a response that begins with a vowel.
- Note similar choices. If two choices are similar, one of them is probably the correct answer. However, if there are two choices that essentially mean the same thing, neither answer is likely to be the correct choice.
- Note selected responses that are complete opposites. Generally, one of the responses is the correct answer.
- Note complex questions. If a question has complex choices, mark each item true or false. This will help you narrow your choices before deciding on the correct answer.

Graphic Organizer 29

Use the following graphic organizer to analyze a selected response (multiple choice) question. Remember, you should read the sample question and, without looking at the selected responses, answer the question. Check to see if your answer if one of the choices. If it is one of the choices, you would normally mark the answer and move on to the next. **For practice, assume that your answer is not one of the choices. Refer to the list of clues to help you complete the analysis.**

What is the stem of the question?

Identify key words:

Locate the verb:

Decide what action the verb requires:

Eliminate any choices you know are incorrect:

List the remaining choices:

Make your choice:

Why did you choose that option?