

Questioning a Text to Enhance Comprehension - Grade 4

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Objectives

The student is expected to locate the meanings, pronunciations, and derivations of unfamiliar words using dictionaries, glossaries, and other sources. **TEKS §110.6.**

English Language Arts & Reading, Grade 4. (b)(6)(C)

The student is expected to:

- read regularly in instructional-level materials that are challenging but manageable
- demonstrate characteristics of fluent and effective reading
- adjust reading rate based on purposes for reading
- read aloud in selected texts in ways that both reflect understanding of the text and engage the listeners.

TEKS §110.6. English Language Arts & Reading, Grade 4. (b)(7)(B,C,D,E)

The student is expected to:

- develop vocabulary by listening to selections read aloud
- draw on experiences to bring meanings to words in context, such as interpreting figurative language and multiple-meaning words
- use multiple reference aids, including a thesaurus, a synonym finder, a dictionary, and software, to clarify meanings and usage
- study word meanings systematically, such as across curricular content areas and through current events.

TEKS §110.6. English Language Arts & Reading, Grade 4. (b)(9)(A,B,C,E)

The student is expected to:

- use his/her own knowledge and experience to comprehend
- establish and adjust purposes for reading, such as reading to find out, to understand, to interpret, to enjoy, and to solve problems
- monitor his/her own comprehension and make modifications when understanding breaks down, such as by rereading a portion aloud, using reference aids, searching for clues, and asking questions
- use the text's structure or progression of ideas, such as cause and effect or chronology, to locate and recall information
- draw inferences, such as conclusions or generalizations, and support them with text evidence and experience
- represent text information in different ways, such as in outline, timeline, or graphic organizer.

TEKS §110.6. English Language Arts & Reading, Grade 4. (b)(10)(A,B,C,E,H,L)

The student is expected to:

- offer observations, make connections, react, speculate, interpret, and raise questions in response to texts
- interpret text ideas through such varied means as journal writing, discussion, enactment, media
- support responses by referring to relevant aspects of text and his/her own experiences
- connect, compare, and contrast ideas, themes, and issues across text.

TEKS §110.6. English Language Arts & Reading, Grade 4. (b)(11)(A-D)

This lesson plan supports the reading comprehension strategies presented in ***Strategies That Work: Teaching Comprehension to Enhance Understanding*** by Stephanie Harvey and Anne Goudvis, Stenhouse Publishers, 2000.

Questioning Strategy

Main points of strategy:

- Good readers propel themselves forward by questioning the text as they read.
- Ask questions before, during, and after reading. Before-reading questions activate schema and make predictions about the text and/or topic. During-reading questions help readers monitor comprehension, as well as infer, predict, and summarize text. After-reading questions help readers reflect on initial predictions, process information gained, and decide if further investigation is needed.
- “Thin” questions clarify confusion, help readers acquire new vocabulary words, or answer simple content questions.
- “Thick” questions address large universal concepts or major content areas: Why? How come? I wonder? Answers are usually long and involved and require research or discussion.

Use of Primary Sources

Show the website summary of [Peace Treaty with the Caddo and other Native American Tribes](#). Have the students record questions they have about the document on sticky notes before reading it. Facilitate discussion about their questions and display them on chart paper for later reference. Also discuss their schema on the information presented in the summary.

Next, read the [transcript of the letter](#) together. Have the students record during and after reading questions. Model the strategy while reading. Your model questions might involve vocabulary words, references to the content of the letter, people involved, and/or the events and circumstances surrounding the date of the letter. Discuss the questions they had and whether or not they were answered in the text. Also reflect on their before-reading questions posted in the chart paper.

Finally, if students do not mention the final outcome of Mr. Watkins’ task, ask whether or not they think the mission was successful. Follow the Tides link to the information on [Jesse Watkins](#) to find out. Additional reading can be found on [Cherokee Chief Bowl](#) in the Handbook of Texas Online, also. The connection between these two men is especially meaningful to students who have read *Make Way for Sam Houston* by Jean Fritz.

Assessment

Have students write a reflection journal to document the new information they gained and connections made from the lesson. You can also use an unanswered question from the lesson to guide a research project if desired.

Enrichment Activity

1. Create a vocabulary chart with words from the letter to Mr. Watkins. Use a dictionary to chart the following: vocabulary word, sound spelling, part of speech, meaning in context, synonyms and antonyms, and/or an original sentence. Suggested words: proceed, dispose, distribute, commissioner, particular, cautious, comply.
2. Make a timeline of Chief Bowl's life.
3. Explain and illustrate the figurative and literal meanings of the following phrases found in the letter: "break our long knives and bury one tomahawk" and "open a wide road between the house of the Red and White Man."

Materials:

[Peace Treaty with the Caddo](#)

[Transcript of the letter](#)

["Questioning a Text" chart example](#)

[Jesse Watkins](#) in *The Handbook of Texas*

[Cherokee Chief Bowl](#) in *The Handbook of Texas*