



Directed Reading Thinking Activity for Jane Eyre

Purpose of the Strategy:

In this strategy, students can use their own experiences before reading the novel *Jane Eyre* to prepare themselves to comprehend Brontë's message. Through this activity, students will develop their own purposes for reading the novel, which will help them develop their reading and thinking processes. The teacher's questioning techniques and use of pictures, music, and text will prescribe how students will interact with the text.

Directions:

Step 1: PREDICTING—making hypotheses from small portions of the text and media.

Throughout this activity it would be a good idea to play the theme music from the 1996 Zeffirelli film *Jane Eyre* to help students with their predictions. Begin by presenting the title and cover of the book. Present various covers of the novel from different publishers (Barnes and Noble has a great selection) and ask the students to predict what the novel will be about, based on the information they can gather from the illustrations chosen for each cover. Next show small video clips or photo stills from the beginning and middle of any version of the film you choose (I prefer Zeffirelli's version. The following website contains many photo stills from the film: www.angelfire.com/nc/janeeyre/moviemenu.html). You may choose to include small sections of text to accompany each photo. Show the clips or stills in chronological order and direct students in their guessing, anticipating and hypothesizing by asking questions. "What do you think the novel is about?" "Why do you think so?" "What clues lead you to that conclusion?" Ask students to record their predictions in their reading logs. This should take about 20 minutes, allowing ample viewing and writing time.

Some specific questions you might use:

- From these pictures/clips of Jane as a child, what do you think this novel will be about? What conclusions can you make about her character and the others represented?

- From these pictures/clips of Jane as an adult, what do you think this novel will be about? Is it different than what you thought after the first set of pictures? Why? Who do you think the other characters are? What do you think will be the central conflict within the novel? What do you think Jane desires? What will happen to her?

Step 2: **READING**—students are asked to read the text to verify the accuracy of their predictions.

Ask the students to support their predictions by locating material within the text that will verify their responses. They will have the entire unit to continually verify and amend their predictions as they read the novel and encounter new information. Remind them that there are no right or wrong predictions, rather, some responses are judged to be more or less accurate than others. Have them cite the support and reword predictions so that they are accurate. In addition, students will be asked to contribute their predictions and evidence in the novel in class and group discussions, contributing by stating the prediction and then reading aloud the support from the novel.

Step 3: **PROVING**—during this step, students read back through the text and point out how they were able to verify their predictions.

Students write an essay verifying the accuracy of their predictions or explaining the disparity between their predictions and the actual events of the novel. The essay should include their initial reason for the predictions they made and the evidence to support what was the same and what was different in the novel.

Assessment:

From this activity, students will be directed continually throughout their reading by amending or affirming their predictions in their reading journals and through class and group discussions. Students may continually make new predictions and search for evidence to prove them. Teachers are able to assess the students' ability to read aloud, their level of comprehension, and how actively students are searching for meaning within the text. This activity engages readers in the subsequent reading of the novel and activates schema.