Instructional Strategies ToolBox

A		
Strategy	Description	Resources
ABC Summary	A tool used to introduce, review, or organize thoughts about a particular concept. Uses the letters of the alphabet to organize thoughts and ideas related to a concept being studied.	-"ABC Summary" Template
Anticipation Guide	A comprehension strategy used before reading to activate students' prior knowledge. Write statements about key ideas in the text or about the content. Some statements should be true and others should be false. Students must decide if they agree or disagree with the statement. Emphasis is to share what they know and make predictions.	http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/curriculum/section7.pdf http://www.readingrockets.org/strategies/anticipation_guide
AlphaAntics	A student created book to summarize a concept or topic. Students create an alphabet book for a given topic. Word or phrases summarize key ideas. For example, "W is for eagle because they have an eight foot wingspan."	http://www.learner.org/jnorth/tm/InstrucStrat2.html
Artifact Box	Based on inquiry. A tool to get students interested and excited in a new topic to be studied. Great for giving students prior knowledge. Place objects relating to a unit to be studied in a bag or box. Present objects to students one at a time, allowing them to make predictions and ask questions based on items presented. Revisit items during or after the unit.	http://www.learner.org/jnorth/tm/InstrucStrat2.html
Attribute Chart	Used with informational text. Best used as an organizational tool. Write category headings along the top and topic headings along the side. Reread the selection and fill in information in the appropriate spaces on the chart.	http://www.learner.org/jnorth/tm/InstrucStrat2.html

B		
Strategy	Description	Resources
Brainstorming	Brainstorming can be done as a group or independent activity. Used to collect ideas related to a problem or topic. Teacher begins by posing an idea or question or by introducing a topic. Students share answers and relevant ideas. Contributions are accepted if they are right or wrong. Allows students to focus on a specific topic.	
Book Ends	Used before and after reading. Pairs of students meet and make predictions prior to an activity or prior to reading. Group meets again after to compare and discuss reactions.	http://www.beesburg.com/edtools/glossary.html
Blind Sequencing	Used as a comprehension strategy. Students are given cards with parts of a story, parts of a cycle, etc. In teams, students take turns describing the card and sequencing them face down. The team turns the cards over to check for correctness.	

C		
Strategy	Description	Resources
Clocking	A cooperative learning structure. Students are given a graphic organizer with slots for appointments. Teacher gives time for reflection and processing learning. Students meet with a partner, record their appointment's name and discuss a given problem or question.	-"Clocking" Template
Clocking II	A cooperative learning structure. Students form two circles, one inside the other. Students on the inner circle and outer circle turn to face each other. Teacher poses a question or	http://leadership4asp.org/files/resources/engagement%20ring%206.6.11.pdf

	statement to think about and respond to. After wait time, students share their response/thoughts with the student they are facing. Once they are done discussing have the outer circle move so they are now paired with the next person on the inner circle. Students can discuss the same question, or a new one.	
Concept Mapping	A web or diagram used to explore knowledge or gather information. Includes cells that contain concepts as well as links. Links must be labeled and show the direction with an arrow.	http://olc.spsd.sk.ca/DE/pd/instr/strats/conceptmap/index.html
Carousel	Used as a cooperative learning activity. Students are grouped and given an open ended question to discuss. Students brainstorm, discuss, and write down thoughts or solutions. Teacher gives students a specific time limit and then has them move to the next group. Students must repeat the same process as the next group but must read what other students have written first.	http://www.shastacoe.org/page.cfm?p=3232 http://www.andistix.com/carousel_brainstorming
Content Links	Students are given a card with a word or phrase. They circulate around the room trying to find someone with a card that fits with theirs.	http://www.shastacoe.org/page.cfm?p=3232
Character Maps	Graphic organizer used to help students organize thoughts about characters in stories. Focus on what the character does, says, and how other characters in the story respond to the character.	-"Character Map" Templates
Capsule Vocabulary	Vocabulary building activity. Teacher selects 8 – 10 words about a topic or concept and writes them on the board. Discussion begins and the teacher uses the selected words in the discussion. Students then work with a partner to discuss the words.	http://www.spokaneschools.org/Page/6508
Choral Reading	Reading aloud in unison with a whole class or group of students. Helps build fluency, self-confidence, and	

	motivation.	
Cause and Effect Frames	Graphic organizer used to help students comprehend cause and effect relationships in text. Used to organize what happened in a story and why it happened.	http://www.learner.org/jnorth/tm/InstrucStrat2.html -"Cause & Effect" Templates
Chain of Events	Comprehension activity for sequencing, summarizing or main idea and details. Students work independently or in groups to collect important facts or events from text. The events are written on strips of paper and are then connected in the correct order to make a paper chain of events.	http://www.learner.org/jnorth/tm/InstrucStrat2.html
Clue Collector	An activity to use to introduce a concept or to use before reading. Teacher collects five to ten key words, phrases, or quotes from a text or about the concept to be student. Students use the information to make predictions, ask questions. Can also be used to set the purpose for reading. As students read they can confirm or revise their predictions.	http://www.learner.org/jnorth/tm/InstrucStrat2.html
CAPS	A reading comprehension strategy used to help students discover what is important in a story. C – Characters A – Aim P – Problem S – Solution	http://cehs.unl.edu/csi/Pdfs/caps.pdf
Chunking	A review/comprehension strategy. Students group content into chunks to facilitate memory of information. No more than seven chunks and seven ideas per chunk is recommended	

D		
Strategy	Description	Resources
DRTA	A strategy focused on asking questions and making predictions. Teacher should select text and choose stopping points. Direct – have students scan the reading for titles, headings, pictures and then have students make predictions Reading – Read up to the first stopping point and then discuss and ask questions of students. Have them evaluate predictions and refine them if needed. Thinking – After reading students should go back and verify if predictions were accurate.	http://www.shastacoe.org/page.cfm?p=3232 http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/curriculum/section7.pdf http://www.adlit.org/strategies/23356/
Double Entry Journal	A two column journal. The first column contains quotes, concepts, or information from text that students would like to understand, question, or look into more. The right column is a place for students to reflect on the information included in the left column,	GCPS handbook
Draw It	Similar to Pictionary. Students select a card with a word, phrase, or concept and draw pictures until their teammates guess what is on the card. Students take turns drawing.	

E		
Strategy	Description	Resources
Exit Ticket	Informal assessment given by teachers to assess student understanding of content taught during class. Students respond to a question(s) or problem that will reflect their understanding of content taught that day.	
Echo Reading	Students imitate teacher's oral reading. Teacher reads a	

	selection first and students "echo". Great for building fluency and prosody.	
Empty Outlines	Teacher provides students with an empty or partially filled in outline of the content to be taught for the day. Students fill in the outline as the class discusses the content.	http://www.edison.k12.nj.us/cms/lib2/NJ01001623/Centricity/Domain/58/101_Tips.pdf

F

Strategy	Description	Resources
Fishbowl	Cooperative learning/group activity. Four or five students are arranged in a group and given a topic to discuss. Other students listen in on the discussion. Activity is followed by class reflection about fishbowl discussion.	http://leadership4asp.org/files/resources/engagement%20ring%206.6.11.pdf
Four Corners	Cooperative learning/group activity to promote engagement. Teacher asks a question with four different answer choices. Students go to the corner of the room that corresponds to their chosen answer. They discuss with others who chose the same answer and come up with a rationale to present to the rest of the class about why they chose the answer they did.	http://leadership4asp.org/files/resources/engagement%20ring%206.6.11.pdf
Five Card Draw	A review activity for use in cooperative groups. Students work in groups to review content. Prepare cards with vocabulary words, geographic locations, components of mathematical equations, etc. As kids enter room, they take a card. They move about room to find other students who "fit" their category.	http://www.shastacoe.org/page.cfm?p=3232
Flow Chart	Tool to organize information or steps in sequential order. Typically presented to students as a graphic organizer.	http://www.shastacoe.org/page.cfm?p=3232
Frayer Model	Graphic organizer used for vocabulary building. The strategy requires students to think about and describe the meaning	-"Frayer Model" Templates

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	of a word or phrase. Students must list a definition, characteristics, examples, and nonexamples.	
Focused Free Write	Provide a specific topic or question for students to reflect on. Have students individually reflect/write. Have them break into groups and share what they have written.	http://www.ode.state.or.us/search/page/?id=3907
Fact or Fiction	Strategy used with informational text. Based on the reading, create sentences or phrases that are fact or fiction. After reading, students should go through the sentences created by the teacher and decide, based on what they read, if it is fact or fiction.	http://www.learner.org/jnorth/tm/InstrucStrat2.html
First Lines	A before reading activity focused on activating prior knowledge and making predictions. Students read the first few sentences of a reading selection and then use that information to make predictions about the context of the story.	http://www.adlit.org/strategies/23330/
Flashback	Used to review a topic. Teacher turns on music and slowly shows lesson review while students observe silently	

G		
Strategy	Description	Resources
Give One, Get One	A cooperative learning activity in which students work together to find answers and solve problems. Have students fold a piece of paper so they have two columns. The first column should be listed give one and the second get one. Pose a question and have students record their response. Students should then pair with others in the class and record peer's answers under the get one column.	http://leadership4asp.org/files/resources/engagement%20ring%206.6.11.pdf
Graffiti	This is great for brainstorming. Write problems, sentences, and ideas to brainstorm on pieces of large chart paper	http://www.shastacoe.org/page.cfm?p=3232

	around the room. Students move from chart to chart in a small group. Each group works on a different question and groups move between posters together. Ultimately post the charts and have students react to the statements.	
Gallery	Place chart paper in different areas of the room. Pose a question or problem and have different groups of students share their answers on their chart paper. Once they have finished sharing their ideas they can take a gallery walk and see what other groups came up with.	http://www.beesburg.com/edtools/glossary.html
Gist	Comprehension activity great for summarizing. Divide reading into sections. Divide the class into small groups. Each student should individually read the first reading section. As a group they must summarize the selection. They must include who or what the selection is about as well as important information. It should be in their own words. Optional: as a whole class write a summary from information each group came up with.	http://www.ode.state.or.us/search/page/?id=3907

H		
Strategy	Description	Resources
Heads Together	Cooperative group strategy. Each student in small group is assigned a number. Teacher poses a questions or gives an assignment. Teacher calls out a number and the student assigned to that number is responsible for reporting for their group.	http://leadership4asp.org/files/resources/engagement%20ring%206.6.11.pdf

I		
Strategy	Description	Resources

Strategy	Description	Resources
I Have, Who Has I Have the Question, Who Has the Answer	Review strategy. Teacher creates related cards. Cards are distributed. Student reads their "I have" statement and then reads the "Who has". The student with the answer to the "who has" reads their card. For example: Card 1 - I have happily, who has a noun, Card 2 - I have turtle, who has an adjective.	http://leadership4asp.org/files/resources/engagement%20ring%206.6.11.pdf
Idea Wave	Each student lists 3 to 5 ideas about the assigned topic. • A volunteer begins the "idea wave" by sharing one idea. • The student to the right of the volunteer shares one idea; the next student to the right shares one idea. • The teacher directs the flow of the "idea wave", until several different ideas have been shared. • At the end of the formal "idea wave", a few volunteers who were not included can contribute an idea.	http://www.shastacoe.org/page.cfm?p=3232
Inquiry Charts	Graphic organizer that allows students to gather information from a number of different sources. Teacher or student can provide the topic. Students fill in the graphic organizer with questions about the topic (top of graphic organizer) and then research to find the answers to the questions.	http://www.ode.state.or.us/search/page/?id=3907 http://www.readingrockets.org/content/pdfs/I-chart_socstudies.pdf -"Inquiry Chart" Template

J		
Strategy	Description	Resources
Jigsaw	A way to break up an assignment and allow for collaboration among students. Separate assignment into subtasks. Each student completes their portion of the assignment and then the group comes together and shares.	http://www.learner.org/jnorth/tm/InstrucStrat2.html
Journal of Senses	A reading strategy great for talking about characters in a	http://www.cehd.umn.edu/nceo

	story. Have students write down what they think a character would see, hear, smell, feel, and taste at certain points in a story.	/presentations/nceo-lep-iep-ascdglossary.pdf
Journal Reflections	Students write reflections in their journals to process learning and to relate the content to personal experiences	

K		
Strategy	Description	Resources
KWL	Helps students activate prior knowledge and set a purpose for reading. Students first list things they know about a topic and then things they want to know. As they read, students are looking for answers to the items listed in the "want to know" column. After reading, they will fill in the "what I learned" column.	http://www.cehd.umn.edu/nceo/presentations/nceo-lep-iep-ascdglossary.pdf http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/curriculum/section7.pdf http://www.readingrockets.org/article/29202 -"KWL Chart" Template -"KWHL Chart" Template
Kinesthetic Symbols	Students create and practice hand or body symbols associated with the content. Helps with retention of content.	

L		
Strategy	Description	Resources
List Group Label	Select the main concept in new content to be taught or in a reading selection. Have students brainstorm a list of words they think relate to the topic. Divide the class into groups and have groups work together to divide the words listed into subcategories. Students should be able to explain why words	http://www.readingrockets.org/strategies/list_group_label

	were grouped together. They should also come up with headings for each group of words.	
Line Ups	Students line up to discover characteristics, sequence dates or items, make estimates, or agree/disagree with statements	

M		
Strategy	Description	Resources
Main Idea Chart	Graphic organizer used to illustrate the main idea of text as well as supporting details. Can be used during or after reading text to identify the main idea and supporting details within the text	-"Main Idea" Template
Mind Mapping	Used to help students structure thinking focusing on one main concept. Helps organize ideas and information. Students should: 1. create a central image in the center of the page 2. brainstorm main ideas - draw images of these surrounding the central image and connect with branches, key words can also be included to describe the main idea 3. add details branching out from each main idea	

N		
Strategy	Description	Resources
Numbered Heads Together	Cooperative learning structure that allows students time to process information and work as a team to form a consensus. Students should be placed in groups of four. Each student receives a different number. The class is given a question and each student tries to solve the problem individually. Students should then discuss their answers as a group. The teacher will randomly select a number, and the student with that number will report for their group.	

O		
Strategy	Description	Resources
Observe-Draw-Rally Robin	Students draw what they observe. Then partners take turns sharing their observations using only their drawings	
One Stray	Used to share information among groups and students Students are placed in groups of four and are given a number 1-4. The teacher provides groups with a question or topic to discuss. Student one stands up while the other three students remain seated and raise their hands. The students who are standing will find a new group of students that have their hands raised. The one stray student to join the group will share with the group what they discussed and listen to any new information from their new group. The teacher may	

	repeat this activity, changing numbers each time.	

P		
Strategy	Description	Resources
Pairs Check	Working in pairs within smaller groups, students will use pair check to check for understanding. Students can work in pairs within groups of four. One student works to solve a problem supplied by the teacher, while another coaches. The students will then check with the other pair in their group to see if they have the same answer. Students will alternate roles within their pair throughout the exercise.	
Plot Diagram	Used to illustrate the key elements of plot including conflict, rising action, climax, falling action, and conclusion/resolution. Students can use plot maps while reading or after reading text to demonstrate understanding of story elements.	-"Plot Map" Template
PIES	Principles of Cooperative Learning P- Positive Interdependence - students work together cooperatively I - Individual Accountability - individual public performance is required E - Equal Participation S - Simultaneous Interaction - students are interacting at the same time	

Q

Strategy	Description	Resources
QAR-Question Answer Response	Helps students understand the different types of questions. Questions are either "right there", "think and search", or "on my own". Once students understand the different types of questions they can better decide how to answer or go about finding the answer.	http://www.readingrockets.org/strategies/question_answer_relationship

R

Strategy	Description	Resources
Rally Coach	Students take turns solving problems and coaching each other while working in partners. Students are grouped in pairs. The teacher provides students with a problem or task to solve. One student acts as the coach, guiding the other student and providing support while he/she works to solve the problem. After the problem is reviewed, students will reverse roles.	
Rally Robin	Working in pairs, students alternate providing oral responses. The teacher will group students in pairs. Working with their partner, students will take turns listening and answering the question/problem presented by the teacher. The tool may be used as a warm up or closure activity.	-"Rally Robin" Poster
Reader's Theater	This tool allows students to use a script to better understand content and encourage reading with expression. The teacher will select a script that reinforces learning objectives.	

	Students will be assigned individual roles for the script. They will be given time to practice and read over their parts.	
Role Playing	Students learn through mimicking and taking on the roles of characters. Students will be assigned roles and will act out a scenario. They will then have time to reflect on what happened during the role playing, sharing reactions and feelings.	
Round Robin	A cooperative learning strategy. After placing students in groups the teacher will provide a topic or question. Students will take turns supplying information that supports the topic or learning objective.	
Roundtable	Students will share ideas and thoughts with other students using written expression. Students break up into small groups. Each group will be provided with a white board or chart paper and markers. The teacher provides students with a category or topic. Students take turns writing their responses on the paper and then pass their response to the next person in the group. Once all group members have shared their responses, students review as a group.	

S		
Strategy	Description	Resources
Sandwich Chart	Graphic organizer used to organize main ideas and supporting details. Can be used with reading or writing. Allows students to organize their thoughts.	-"Sandwich Chart" Template
Sequence Chart	Similar to a flow chart, this graphic organizer puts information in order based on the sequence in which it	-"Sequence Chart" Template

	occurs using transition words. Can be used across content areas and to check for understanding of sequence of events.	-"Sequence Chart" Example (Virginia Studies)
Share and Compare	Students read independently and then pair to share what they have read. Students can compare summaries or discuss a question posed by the teacher.	
Snowball	Using physical activity and verbal expression, this strategy allows students to share learning and explain material through peer interaction. The teacher provides students with a topic they are supposed to explain to a classmate. Students write a summary or answer the question on a piece of plain white paper. They then crumple the paper into a ball. Once all students are done, they have a "snowball" fight and toss their paper to another student. Students pick up the paper closest to them after the snowball fight and share and discuss. Can be repeated more than once if teacher wants students to see multiple answers.	
Stand Up, Hand Up, Pair Up	Allows students to process learning together will pairing with multiple students. The teacher will have students stand up with one hand in the air. Students find a partner near them with a hand up and high five. These two students will work together. After the teacher asks a question, students will work together to find an answer and then share their work. Can be repeated more than once.	
Story Map	Illustrates key elements of a story. Students can use this during or after reading to demonstrate their understanding of key story elements including setting, characters, and plot.	-Story Map 1" Template -"Story Map 2" Template -"Story Map 3" Template
Same-Different	On opposite sides of a barrier, students discover attributes that are the same and different in two pictures or objects	
Showdown	Students are placed in groups of three to five students. Each student has a dry erase board and marker. "Problem" cards are placed in the center of the group. Once a card is flipped	

	over, students silently write their own answers on their whiteboards. Once they are finished, they place the whiteboard face down on the table. The leader says "Showdown" once all students have finished. Students compare answers. Group leaders rotate for each new question.	

T		
Strategy	Description	Resources
10/2	Allows students to verbally share their learning in order to synthesize and process material together. The teacher will pause every ten minutes during instruction to allow students two minutes to discuss and process learning. The teacher may decide to paus more frequently for younger students, or if students seem disengaged.	
Talking Chips	Students use talking chips to participate in discussion & share in learning. Working in groups, each student is given a certain number of chips (determined by teacher). The teacher provides students with a question or discussion topic. Each time a student shares in the discussion they place a chip in the middle of the group. Students continue discussing until all chips have been used.	
T-Chart	Chart used to organize or compare and contrast information. Select two subjects or topics and use the chart to organize and sort information.	-"T-Chart" Template -"T-Chart" Example (Grade 5 Math)

Tea Party	Placing students in two groups, students are able to work with multiple partners to discuss a topic provided or find an answer to a question provided. The teacher sorts students into two groups. In their groups students form two lines OR an inner and outer circle. Students are given a topic or question and have one minute to discuss. After discussing, the line/circle moves so that students have a new partner to discuss with.	
Timed Pair Share	Students work with a partner to share learning through verbal explanation and listening. Students are provided with a set amount of time along with a question or topic. One student shares what they know or what they have learned about the topic. When time is up, students switch roles.	-"Timed Pair Share" Poster
Think-Pair-Share	Allows students to think about their answer or learning, pair to discuss with a partner, and share with a group. The teacher provides students with a topic or question. Students will think about the question or solve the problem. Students will then find a partner to process learning with and then come back to the whole group to share.	-"Think-Pair-Share" Poster
Three-Column Recall Chart	Allows students to check for understanding during the reading process. Students will read a selection of text. After reading, students are given time to write down what they recall from the reading. Students will repeat this process, breaking the reading into three sections (three columns). The strategy can be used with fiction or nonfiction text.	-"Three-Column Recall Chart" Template
Three-Step Interview	Students will work with a partner as well as a small group to share their learning. The teacher provides students with a topic and pairs them up. Students take turns interviewing their partner about the topic provided. After their interviews, pairs form groups of four to share what they learned during their interviews.	

Timelines	Used to illustrate a sequence of events in chronological order.	-"Timeline" Template -"Timeline" Example (Grade 3 Science)
Tree Diagram	Graphic organizer used to show relationships, or to organize information.	-"Tree Diagram" Template -"Tree Diagram" Example (Grade 5 Science)
Team Charades	Teammates take turns selecting a card with a concepts relating to the content. They each act out the concept until a teammate guesses what her or she is acting out	
Turn Toss	When a teammate is tossed the ball he or she must add a new idea to the list, state a possible answer, or add to the sequence. No toss-backs or repeated patterns are allowed.	
ThinkTrix	Thinking Matrix-strategies that help develop thinking questions for teachers and students Recall - recollecting facts from the lesson Cause/Effect - examining relationships between events Similarity - find similarities between items, events, people, phenomena, or ideas Difference - finding differences between items, events, people, phenomena, or ideas idea to example - offer specific examples for a given concept, rule, or generalization Example to idea - derive concepts, rules, or generalizations from examples Evaluation - students weigh and decide among alternatives, judge the worth of something, and defend their conclusions	

U		
Strategy	Description	Resources

V		
Strategy	Description	Resources
Venn Diagram	Graphic organizer used to compare and contrast ideas or topics. Two circles are draw overlapping so there is a section covered by both circles. Things that are the same about both topics are listed in the overlapping portion, while differences are added to each side of the circles.	-"Venn Diagram" Example (Grade 5 Science) -"Venn Diagram" Template
Vocabulary Word Map	Graphic organizer used to enhance vocabulary word meaning. Can be used to introduce new vocabulary. Focuses on word definition, synonyms, sentences, illustrations, etc.	-"Vocabulary Word Map" Template -"Vocabulary Word Map" Example
Vocabulary Toons	Students remember words, definitions, and concepts by drawing a cartoon based on the word	

W		
Strategy	Description	Resources

Walk and Talk	Allows students to move around the room as they discuss and process learning. The teacher posts task cards or large paper throughout the room with problems, questions, or topics. Working collaboratively, students rotate through the room to each assignment.	
Webbing	A graphic organizer used to demonstrate students' knowledge and understanding of a concept or idea. The teacher will write the main idea or topic in the center of the paper/board. Students and teacher brainstorm ideas, adding to the outside of the web. This can begin a discussion of relationships among ideas. Clusters can be formed if ideas relate to one another.	-"Webbing" Example (Virginia Studies)
Window Paning	Students follow the teacher's lead to sketch out concepts related to the content in "window panes"	

X		
Strategy	Description	Resources

Y		
Strategy	Description	Resources
Y-Chart	Graphic organizer used to show three parts of a topic. For example, students can write what something looks like, feels	-"Y-Chart" Template

	like, and sounds like.	-"Y-Chart" Example (Virginia Studies) -"Y-Chart" Online Template http://www.worksheetworks.com/miscellanea/graphic-organizers/ychart.html

Z		
Strategy	Description	Resources

7/2014