

Content-Area Strategies

Language Arts

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Introduction

The goal of *Content-Area Strategies: Language Arts* is simple: to give students tools to communicate effectively. This book addresses language arts in terms of a set of integrated skills and strategies that work together to help students read, write, speak, and think critically for success in school and beyond. *Content-Area Strategies: Language Arts* is divided into three instructional sections: Vocabulary, Reading, and Writing.

Vocabulary

The building blocks of language are words. With this program, students begin by analyzing words, then synthesize what they have learned to develop strategies for comprehending new words. The Vocabulary section begins by introducing vocabulary strategies such as recognizing word parts, looking for word groups, and looking for context clues. Students then practice the strategies in a series of activities based on appealing short readings. Building vocabulary and learning how to figure out new words enhances reading, writing, speaking, listening, and thinking critically, giving students a broad base of language to draw on in classroom and real-life communication.

Reading

The second section presents reading strategies. Here, students acquire tools that help them read to learn. The transition from learning to read to reading to learn is vital to success in school and in life, and this section helps students broaden their expectations about text. Familiar patterns of narratives—stories with a beginning, a middle, and an end—are replaced by organizational constructs tailored to convey information. In this section, the act of reading is broken down into a process of steps. Students learn concrete strategies to read informational texts efficiently, to comprehend what they read, and to retain the information they have learned. The graphic organizers for the Reading section help students connect new information to their existing schemata, increasing their ability to recall and to take ownership of what they read. The reading strategies give students a way to “see” what they read—a great asset to visual learners. Organizing and writing what they read also cements information and concepts in students’ minds and helps them retain it.

Introduction *(continued)*

Writing

The Writing section is the third instructional part of *Content-Area Strategies: Language Arts*. In this section, students review the writing process and study models of good writing. Students learn to recognize common writing patterns and employ them themselves to write strong essays. The graphic organizers for the Writing section address each explicit step in the writing process. Breaking the process of writing an essay into a series of manageable steps makes the assignment easier to tackle and demystifies the act of writing.

Classroom Management

Content-Area Strategies: Language Arts is easy to use. Each lesson is self-contained and may be used in class or as homework. You may want to model the strategies used in each lesson, showing students that all readers and writers—including teachers—use tools and follow processes to communicate and comprehend. The blank graphic organizers may be photocopied for use in other assignments beyond this book. Students who need more support may benefit from more modeling or from completing some activities and graphic organizers in small groups. Metacognition—talking and writing about learning—can provide structure that supports new information and makes it easier to access. *Content-Area Strategies: Language Arts* transforms the abstract idea of learning into a concrete process that all students can master.

Lesson 7

A Brief History of Peanut Butter

Activity 1: Introducing Vocabulary in Context

Read the following article. While you read, notice the words in bold type. Try to figure out what those words mean by looking at the context.

As a partner to bananas, honey, marshmallow creme, or the ever popular grape jelly, peanut butter cannot be beat. Year after year, this **perennial** favorite has been a sandwich-fixing fixture in millions of American homes. It is highly valued as a tasty ingredient in many **savory** main dishes and desserts, as well. It is to the efforts of a **botanist**—a specialist in plants—named George Washington Carver that we owe the credit for introducing the world to the delicious, **delectable** wonders of our favorite smooth, chunky, and extra-chunky food.

George Washington Carver was born a slave during the Civil War. He grew up on farms in the Midwest. He earned an advanced degree in horticulture from Iowa State University. When young Professor Carver graduated, he was asked by the distinguished thinker Booker T. Washington, one of the **preeminent** African-American intellectuals of the day, to teach at Tuskegee Institute in Alabama.

When Carver moved to the South in 1896, it was still very much an **agrarian** society. Farming formed the backbone of the economy, and cotton was its primary cash crop. Years of growing nothing but cotton in a field however, would **deplete** the once rich soil of nitrogen. As a result, future crops would produce ever smaller yields. Carver introduced his students and, indeed, farmers

throughout the South to the practice of crop rotation in which cotton fields were planted with nitrogen-rich peas or sweet potatoes for a season or two before returning to cotton. As the leading **proponent**, or supporter, of this successful practice, Professor Carver earned the respect of farmers.

In the years following the turn of the century, a sneaky little beetle made its way from Mexico to the cotton fields of the American South. Soon the boll weevil had destroyed thousands of acres of cotton and threatened the entire region with economic ruin. Carver, knowing that the boll weevil would not harm peanuts, instructed farmers to plant this unlikely crop. The peanut, **indigenous** to Africa, was first brought to this continent by slaves. They and their descendants grew peanuts in small gardens to use as **fodder** to feed their livestock. When Carver suggested that growing peanuts could be the Southern farmer's salvation, many laughed—a market for peanuts did not exist. Peanut butter was created to fill this need.

Back in his laboratory at Tuskegee, Professor Carver set to work developing recipes and formulas for products using the protein-rich peanut. Carver was certain that if enough people could be convinced to try his peanut products, farmers would have no trouble selling their peanut crops. He was right. Soon,

(continued)

A Brief History of Peanut Butter *(continued)*

peanut farms were thriving across the South. The South's cotton crop was saved, as well.

Professor Carver, who died in 1943, was a scientist who used his knowledge of plants to improve the quality of life for many people.

Today, more peanut butter is produced and enjoyed than ever before, and for this we can dip our spoons and offer a heartfelt thank you to its inventor, George Washington Carver.

Activity 2: Developing Vocabulary in Context

One type of context clue is *restatement*. Restatements usually follow the word they are renaming or restating. Complete the following sentences with the most appropriate vocabulary word from this lesson. Circle all context clues that you find.

agrarian	fodder	preeminent
botanist	indigenous	proponent
delectable	perennial	savory
deplete		

1. Year after year, this _____ favorite has been a hit with sandwich lovers.
2. It was a scientist who studies plants, a(n) _____, who developed peanut butter.
3. Peanut butter is now valued as a tasty ingredient in many fine desserts and _____ main dish meals.
4. George Washington Carver introduced the world to peanut butter's delicious, _____ wonders.
5. It was an honor to be recognized by the celebrated thinker, the _____ African-American intellectual, Booker T. Washington.
6. Because the South's culture was _____, farming formed the backbone of the economy.
7. Cotton would _____, or use up, the nutrients in the soil so that future crops would be smaller.
8. George Washington Carver was a leading _____—that is, a supporter—of the method known as crop rotation.
9. Native to the continent of Africa, the peanut is not _____ to North America.
10. For many decades, peanuts were used only as _____, feed for livestock.

A Brief History of Peanut Butter *(continued)*

Activity 3: Extending Vocabulary Strategies

Part I

Many words of Latin or Greek origin are made up of at least two, or possibly three, separate parts. These parts are called the *prefix*, the *root*, and the *suffix*. Breaking up an unfamiliar word into these parts will give you clues to help you guess its meaning. Complete the following “equations” by matching the vocabulary words from this lesson with their correct meaning. Write the letter of the correct meaning on the line.

- (a) scientist who studies plants
- (b) relating to farming or rural matters
- (c) celebrated, distinguished
- (d) advocate, defender, supporter
- (e) present throughout the years; persistent
- (f) to use up, exhaust
- (g) native, occurring naturally in an area

1. **pro po nent** in favor of + to place + one who = _____
2. **pre emi nent** before + to stand out + one who = _____
3. **per ennial** throughout + year = _____
4. **botan ist** plant + a person who is trained in a specific field = _____
5. **agrar ian** land or field + of or belonging to = _____
6. **indigen ous** native + of = _____
7. **de plete** reversal + fill = _____

Part II

Often words can be placed in a group to show what they have in common. On the following lines, list the vocabulary words in this lesson that are related to food.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Reading Strategies

Lesson 1

Previewing

You may think that when you sit down to read, you do just that: read. However, reading well means doing a little more than that. Once you learn the steps to good reading, you'll find that reading comes easier and you'll better understand what you read.

The Reading Process

There are three main stages to reading:

- Prereading (before reading)
- During Reading
- Postreading (after reading)

Prereading

Prereading includes four main steps: Preview, Predict, Prior Knowledge, and Purpose. You can remember these four steps by thinking of them as the "4 Ps."

Previewing

Have you ever watched a movie and seen the previews of coming attractions? These previews give you an idea of what a movie is about. From watching a preview, you can decide if you want to see the whole movie. **Previewing** in reading is much the same. It means that you take a quick look at the whole reading to get a sense of what it might be about. Previewing only takes a minute or two, but it is an important step. It prepares you for what you are about to read and gives you a sense of what is to come.

Here are some things you might do when you preview a reading:

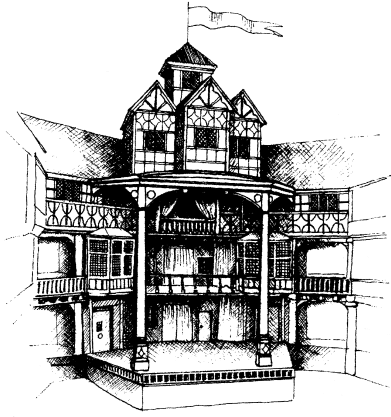
- Read the title.
- Skim or scan the paragraphs to see what words jump out at you.
- Look at drawings, photographs, and captions.
- Read the first and last lines of the paragraphs.

Application

Look at the article that follows. Don't *read* it yet! Practice previewing by reading the title, looking at the drawing, reading the first and last lines of the paragraphs, and skimming for any words that jump out at you and might give you a clue as to what the article is about.

Previewing *(continued)*

Rediscovering the Globe Theatre



Shakespeare's Globe Theatre

In December 1996, Shakespeare's Globe Theatre was voted the best attraction in Europe. But it wasn't always a main attraction. In fact, before 1996, it had been 400 years since the Globe opened its doors.

In 1599, theater was the main form of entertainment for every type of Londoner. There were no televisions or video games or computers or even many books for people to enjoy. So they went to one of many theaters built around 1599. And they didn't just see plays. Sometimes they would watch bears being teased and tamed, or bulls being baited and killed.

Shakespeare and the Globe

At the Globe Theatre, people came to see plays. Many of the plays they saw there were by William Shakespeare, who wrote and performed along with Richard Burbage, another famous actor of the time. Most of Shakespeare's best-known plays were written to be performed on the Globe stage. The

theater was carefully designed so that everyone could see the stage and the play would be seen in its best light.

Destruction

One night, during a particularly dramatic scene in Shakespeare's *Henry VIII*, a cannon, which was part of the play, was shot and misfired. The theater caught fire and burned to the ground. It was rebuilt immediately. Then, in 1642, the Puritans closed the theater, believing the entertainment was not appropriate for audiences to watch. A few years later, the theater was torn down to make room for London housing.

Reconstruction

Four hundred years passed. Nothing remained of the Globe except a small plaque in a brewery. A man named Sam Wanamaker made it his mission to find the remains of the Globe and rebuild the theater. Starting in 1949, he searched old maps, drawings, and plans to try to find the exact location of the theater. Then, in 1989, the remains of the Globe were discovered. Wanamaker and his team of architects set about rebuilding the theater. Finally, on June 12, 1997, Queen Elizabeth II of England inaugurated the new Globe Theatre. Since then, each summer, plays have been performed there in exactly the same style as in the 1600s when Shakespeare was on the stage.

Previewing *(continued)*

1. What does the title suggest the article might be about?

2. What headings and words jumped out at you as you looked over the article?

3. What did the drawing suggest about the article?

4. What key words did you see in the first and last paragraphs that gave you a hint about the article?

Lesson 2

Predicting

The second “P” in prereading is **predicting**. Have you ever predicted that something will happen? Let’s say you have a test coming up, and you don’t take the time to study for it. Can you predict how you will do on that test? Probably not very well. How do you know?

Predicting means using clues to determine what may happen. These clues come from what you see, hear, or know. You know that if you don’t study, you won’t remember the information for your test. Therefore, you probably won’t do well. Sometimes predictions are not correct. But most of the time, if you analyze the clues carefully, your prediction will be correct.

In reading, you use predicting in the same way. You gather clues from what you see, read, or already know, and make an informed guess about what you think the reading is about.

Application

When you previewed the article about the Globe Theatre, you gathered clues about its content. The next step is to make predictions based on those clues. Answer the following questions using your predicting skills.

1. What do you think the article is about? _____

What clues tell you what it might be about? _____

2. What person do you think the article is about? _____

What clues tell you that? _____

3. What does the drawing suggest to you about the article? _____

What clues tell you that? _____

4. What do the first and last lines tell you the article might be about?

Lesson 3

Prior Knowledge

The third “P” in prereading is **prior knowledge**. *Prior* means “before,” so prior knowledge means “before knowledge.” This means that you bring what you already know about a subject to a new reading.

Anything you have experienced, read, heard about, seen, or listened to—everything you know—is part of your prior knowledge. When you see a word, a phrase, a picture, or a sentence that you recognize, it triggers your prior knowledge. Then you can apply what you already know to what you are about to learn. And, as soon as you finish the new reading, everything you learned in it will become part of your prior knowledge!

Application

Look again at the article on page 32. You’ve previewed it and predicted what it will be about. Now it’s time to build a bridge between what you already know—your prior knowledge—and what you have previewed and predicted.

1. One way to connect to what you know is to brainstorm words that are related to the topic. You have determined that the article is about the Globe Theatre. On the lines below, quickly write down words that come to mind when you think of either the word “globe” or the word “theater.”

globe

theater

2. Next, write some sentences related to the topic in the article. You have determined that it has something to do with Shakespeare. Have you ever heard of Shakespeare? What do you know about him?
3. Finally, do you already know anything about Shakespeare’s Globe Theatre? Have you read or seen or heard anything about it in the past? If so, what things do you already know?

Lesson 4

Purpose

The Reader's Purpose

The fourth “P” in prereading is **purpose**. You know that purpose means “reason.” When you read, you read for a reason. Here are the three main reasons you read:

- to have fun (novel, short story, nonfiction)
- to learn something (article, newspaper, on-line encyclopedia, textbook)
- to find out some specific information (directions, manual, encyclopedia, textbook)

The Writer's Purpose

Writers write for a purpose, too. They write to entertain, to teach something, or to give specific information about something. The writer always brings her or his own experience and knowledge set to the writing. As a good reader, you will learn to figure out what purpose and message the author is trying to share. Oftentimes, a writer will write for more than one purpose. And readers will read for more than one purpose. For example, if you read a guidebook on a city you want to visit, you are reading for specific information. But you may also be reading to learn something new and for a little fun as well.

Application

What do you think the author's purpose is in writing the article on page 32? Is it to entertain? To inform? To give specific information? Write a sentence that tells what you think the purpose of this article is.

Prereading Review

Now go back to page 32 and read the article. When you have finished, write about whether or not you feel that the prereading strategies—previewing, predicting, prior knowledge, and purpose—helped you understand what you read.

Purpose *(continued)*

Now look at the chart below. It is called a **4-P Chart**. You can use it any time you are about to read something. Soon you will be able to create this chart in your head because the prereading strategies will come so quickly and easily to you. In the meantime, use it to help you before you read.

Look at the information that you gathered in Lessons 4 through 7 about “Rediscovering the Globe Theatre,” page 32. Fill in the 4-P chart below, using that information.

1. Preview	2. Predict	3. Prior Knowledge	4. Purpose
Words, graphics, captions, headings, subheadings that jump out	Based on Preview, what is this reading mostly about?	What do I already know about this subject? Words, phrases, figures, facts	What do I want to accomplish/get from this reading?