

## Lesson 6: Making Connections

### Newspaper Focus: News and Feature Stories, Editorials and Opinion Columns

*Background* – Readers who comprehend well make connections between the text they read and their prior knowledge and experiences. Students who struggle with comprehension often approach reading passively; they do not actively engage with the text and make the connections between what they already know and new information. In this activity, students are directed to make connections between themselves and the text. With practice, they can learn to make these connections automatically.

#### Before Reading: Introduce the Lesson

- 1) Ask students to think about something they did with their families or friends recently – went to the movies, ate at a restaurant, visited relatives, etc. Have a student talk about the experience.
- 2) Ask students if they could understand what the first student was talking about. When students respond positively, ask them to explain why they understood what was happening. Generally, it will be because it is something they have also experienced and know about.
- 3) Explain that they are making connections between their prior knowledge and experiences, and the story told by their classmate. Tell students that making connections is an important tool in helping them comprehend what they read.
- 4) Encourage students to use their connecting ability to comprehend what they read.

#### During Reading: Direct Instruction

- 1) Distribute newspapers to students. Explain that they are going to look at the different kinds of connections they can make between what they already know and the information they read in the newspaper.
- 2) Model the lesson with the students. Direct them to a news story about a topic that will be very familiar to them – a community event, a sports story about a school team, etc. Have a student read the headline aloud. Ask the class to react to the headline: What do they already know about the topic? How do they know?
- 3) Read the first paragraph aloud. Again, ask students to discuss what is happening in the story. Then ask them how they already know about the topic. Guide the discussion toward students’ experiences, personal acquaintance with someone in the story, or something they have heard from another person. Explain how what they already know has helped them understand what they are reading about now.
- 4) Distribute the Lesson 6 activity sheet, *Make Connections*. Have them complete the activity independently.

#### After Reading: Reflect and Review

- 1) Have students discuss their experiences. What kinds of connections did they make? Were more connections from personal experiences, or from prior reading and learning?
- 2) Guide students’ discussion toward their content-related classes. Help them identify the connections between the newspaper stories and what they have learned in other classes, such as social studies, science or health. Remind students that everything they learn and experience can help them comprehend what they read.

#### Performance Rubric

Expectation: The student was able to...	Exceeds expectations	Meets expectations	Revisit
Identify appropriate connections			
Identify the type of connections			
Identify appropriate newspaper content-area connections			

## Student Activity Sheet 6: Make Connections

You will become better at understanding what you read when you are able to make connections between what you already know and the new information you find in your reading.

- ✎ Pick one news story, feature story, editorial or opinion column from the newspaper. Number the paragraphs.
- ✎ In the second column, write about something in the paragraph that reminds you of something you already know. It might be something you have read, something you have learned in school, or something you have experienced.
- ✎ In the third column, check the type of connection you made with the information.

Headline \_\_\_\_\_

Paragraph number	Your connection	Type of connection
1		<input type="checkbox"/> Read <input type="checkbox"/> Learned <input type="checkbox"/> Personal experience
2		<input type="checkbox"/> Read <input type="checkbox"/> Learned <input type="checkbox"/> Personal experience
3		<input type="checkbox"/> Read <input type="checkbox"/> Learned <input type="checkbox"/> Personal experience
4		<input type="checkbox"/> Read <input type="checkbox"/> Learned <input type="checkbox"/> Personal experience
5		<input type="checkbox"/> Read <input type="checkbox"/> Learned <input type="checkbox"/> Personal experience
6		<input type="checkbox"/> Read <input type="checkbox"/> Learned <input type="checkbox"/> Personal experience
7		<input type="checkbox"/> Read <input type="checkbox"/> Learned <input type="checkbox"/> Personal experience