ACING THE TEST
Strategies For Supporting Student Achievement

Content Provided By GREAT MINDS
Poll: What inspires you and your students?

a) Reading great texts
b) Building knowledge
c) Close reading
d) Asking questions
e) Exploring rich vocabulary
f) Practicing assessment items
Meet the Team

Rachel Stack  
Director of Humanities, Great Minds

David Liben  
Student Achievement Partners

Andrea Minich  
Sr. Curriculum Developer, Great Minds
Poll: What is your current role?

a) Teacher
b) Coach
c) Administrator
d) Other
Poll: What grade level?

a) Elementary School
b) Middle School
c) High School
d) Other
What do assessments measure?

- Comprehension of complex text
- Stamina for close, careful reading and writing
- Ability to unpack multiple question types
- Knowledge of content-area and academic vocabulary
- Facility for critical thinking
Principles for Achievement

1. Read excellent texts.
2. Read them again (and again).
3. Talk and write about compelling questions.
4. Explore words.
5. Examine and discuss fine art.
1 Read excellent texts.
Read excellent texts.

Chief Joseph’s Lincoln Hall Speech

Chief Joseph – Lincoln Hall Speech
Washington, D.C., January 24, 1879

Citation: excerpts from the Speech at Lincoln Hall in Washington, D.C., 1879 by Young Joseph, Chief of the Nez Perce. Published in North American Review, 106, 156, issue 205, pp. 412-414. Courtesy of Cornell University’s Making of America.

Part 1

My friends, I have been asked to show you my heart. I am glad to have a chance to do so. I want the white people to understand my people. Some of you think an Indian is like a wild animal. This is a great mistake. I will tell you all about our people, and then you can judge whether an Indian is a man or not. I will tell you much trouble and blood would be saved if we opened our hearts more. I will tell you in my way how the Indian sees things. The white man has more words to tell you how he feels, but it does not require many words to speak the truth. What I have to say will come from my heart, and I shall speak with a straight tongue. Ah, come, let the Great Spirit, look at me, and will hear me.
How the Beaver Stole Fire from the Pines

A Nez Perce Legend

Once, before there were any people in the world, the different animals and trees lived and moved about and talked together just like human beings.

The pine trees had the secret of fire and guarded it jealously, so that no matter how cold it was, they alone could warm themselves.

At length an unusually cold winter came, and all the animals were in danger of freezing to death. But all their attempts to discover the pines' secret were in vain, until Beaver at last hit upon a plan.

At a certain place on the Grande Ronde River in Idaho, the pines were about to hold a great council. They had built a large fire to warm themselves after bathing in the icy water, and sentinels were posted to prevent intruders from stealing their fire secret.

But Beaver had hidden under the bank near the fire before the sentries
Comprehension of complex text

PART A: Read the following sentences about the story. Then, choose four sentences that belong in a summary of “How Beaver Stole Fire from the Pines.”

Before their meeting, the pines take an icy bath in the river.
Beaver crosses the river and gives fire to other trees, who are then able to make their own fire.
The pines run for a long time, but eventually they become tired and stop.
Cedar tells the other pines he will run to the top of a hill to see how far ahead Beaver is.
The pines know how to start a fire, but they refuse to share this knowledge with the animals.
Beaver runs mostly in a straight line, but when the pines get close he runs side to side.
Beaver steals a live coal from the pines’ fire and runs away.
The pines chase after Beaver, but he keeps away from them.

PART B: In the boxes below, write the letters of the sentences for PART A in the order they should appear in a summary of the story.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summary of “How Beaver Stole Fire from the Pines”</th>
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<tr>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Read them again (and again).

How the Beaver Stole Fire from the Pines
A Nez Perce Legend

Once, before there were any people in the world, the different animals and trees lived and moved about and talked together just like human beings.

The pine trees had the secret of fire and guarded it jealously, so that no matter how cold it was, they alone could warm themselves.

At length an unusually cold winter came, and all the animals were in danger of freezing to death. But all their attempts to discover the pines’ secret were in vain, until Beaver at last hit upon a plan.

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But Beaver had hidden under the bank near the fire before the sentries
Coyote and the Monster Story
A Nez Perce Legend

Once upon a time, Coyote was tearing down the waterfall at Celilo and building a fish ladder, so that salmon could go upstream for the people to catch. He was very busy at this, when someone shouted to him, "Why are you doing that? All the people are gone now because the Monster has eaten them."

"Well," said Coyote to himself, "then I'll stop doing this because I was doing it for the people, and they are gone. Now I'll go along, too."

From there he went upstream, by way of the Salmon River country. As he was walking along, he stepped on the leg of Meadowlark and broke it. Meadowlark got mad and shouted, "Lima, lima, lima! What chance do you have of finding people, walking along like this?"

Coyote said, "My Aun! Please tell me what is happening, and I will make for you a new leg from the wood of a chokecherry tree."

So the Meadowlark told him, "Already all the people have been swallowed by the Monster."

Coyote replied, "Well, that is where I, too, am going." Then he
Read them again (and again).

How the Beaver Stole Fire from the Pines
A Nez Perce Legend

Once, before there were any people in the world, the different animals and trees lived and moved about and talked together just like human beings.

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PART A: In what ways are Beaver and Coyote alike? Choose two answers.

a) They both show determination in the face of obstacles.
b) They both help to create the Nez Perce people.
c) They both trick a monster to help fellow animals.
d) They both use their speed to escape their enemies.
e) They are both too proud to admit their mistakes.
f) They both know the land well and how to use its resources.

PART B: Annotate a line from each text that supports the answer to PART A.
**Talk and write about compelling questions.**

- **Wonder**
  What do I notice about the text?

- **Organize**
  What is happening in the text?

- **Reveal**
  What does a deeper exploration of the [specific text element] reveal about the text?

- **Distill**
  What is the essential meaning of this text?

- **Know**
  How does this text build my knowledge of the topic?
3 Talk and write about compelling questions.

**Wonder**
What do I notice about the text?

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What is happening in the text?

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**How the Beaver Stole Fire from the Pines**

_A Nez Perce Legend_

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The pine trees had the secret of fire and guarded it jealously, so that no matter how cold it was, they could warm themselves.

At length an unusually cold winter came, and all the animals were in danger of freezing to death. But all their attempts to discover the pines’ secret were in vain, until Beaver at last hit upon a plan.

At a certain place on the名称Ronde River in Idaho, the pines were about to hold a great council. They had built a large fire to warm themselves after bathing in the icy water, and sentinels were posted to prevent anyone from interfering.

The animals, with great difficulty, managed to slip away unnoticed, and with the help of a friend, they soon managed to start the fire. And from that day on, the animals had a supply of fire to keep them warm and safe.
Ability to unpack multiple question types

“He is very old, so old that his top is dead, but he still stands as a testament to the story’s truth.”

PART A: What does the word *testament* mean in this sentence?
   a) opinion
   b) piece
   c) proof
   d) area
   e) path

PART B: Which detail in paragraph 6 helps the reader understand the meaning of *testament*?
   a) “near the junction”
   b) “very old”
   c) “his top is dead”
   d) “story’s truth”
   e) “the chase was a very long one”
Explore words.
4 Explore words.
4 Explore words.

Handout 2C: Word Line: Values

Directions: Create a Word Line using the following words. Be sure to consult a dictionary to look up definitions of any words whose meanings you do not know. After completing your word line, explain how you decided where the word values should go.

values, codes of behavior, beliefs, laws, ideas

How did you decide where the word values should go in the Word Line?
4 Explore words.

Determine Word Meaning Using Etymology

- Time: 15 min.
- Text: "A Jacob's Well Speech," Chief Joseph
- Vocabulary Learning Goal: Use etymology of words to determine meanings of related words.

Launch:
Display the following excerpt with the word 'values' underlined and engage students in a small-group discussion.

Handout 2C: Word Line: Values

Directions: Create a Word Line using the following words. Be sure to consult a dictionary to look up definitions of any words whose meanings you do not know. After completing your word line, explain how you decided where the word values should go.

values, codes of behavior, beliefs, laws, ideas

How did you decide where the word values should go in the Word Line?
4) Explore words.

LESSON 29 DEEP DIVE: VOCABULARY

Determine Word Meaning Using Etymology

- Time: 15 min.
- Text: "Joseph's Hills Speech," Chief Joseph
- Vocabulary Learning Goal: Use etymology of words to determine the meanings of related words

Launch

Display the following words with the word value.

Handout 2C: Word Line: Values

Directions: Create a Word Line using the following words. Be sure to give a definition of any words whose meanings you do not know. After you have written them, show how you decided where the word value should go.

values, codes of behavior, beliefs, language, culture, traditions, heritage, values, codes of behavior, beliefs, language, culture, traditions, heritage, values, codes of behavior, beliefs, language, culture, traditions, heritage, values, codes of behavior, beliefs, language, culture, traditions, heritage, values, codes of behavior, beliefs, language, culture, traditions, heritage.

How did you decide where the word values should go in the Word Line?

LESSON 24 DEEP DIVE: VOCABULARY

Explore the Meaning of Surrender

- Time: 15 min.
- Text: "The Great Dictator," Mel Brooks
- Vocabulary Learning Goal: Clarify the meaning of surrender

Launch

Display and read aloud, demonstrating metacognitive fluency:

Looking Glass said he would never surrender. He looked at me sternly. "I am older than you," he said. "I know the white people are men with two faces and two tongues. If you surrender, you will be sorry. It is better to be dead!"

Ask: "What do you know about the word surrender heard on what Looking Glass says?"

- Looking Glass believes truly strongly that no one should surrender. He said he'll never do it and that it would be better to be dead.
- To Looking Glass, surrender is something shameful.

Call on students to read the definition of surrender from their Vocabulary Journal.

Learn


Pair complete the Prayer Model for surrender.

Circulate as students work, addressing misconceptions or
Explore words.

**LESSON 29 DEEP DIVE: VOCABULARY**

**Determine Word Meaning Using Etymology**
- Time: 15 min.
- Text: “Lincoln’s First Speech,” Chief Josephy
- Vocabulary Learning Goal: Use etymology of Latin to determine the meanings of related words.

**Launch**
Display the following excerpt with the words: "dead people, father’s grave, my heart is sick, broken promises, no right to talk."

**LESSON 24 DEEP DIVE: VOCABULARY**

**Explore the Meaning of Surrender**
- Time: 15 min.
- Text: "In the Picture of Dorian Gray," Scott O’Holl and Elizabeth Hall
- Vocabulary Learning Goal: Clarify the meaning of surrender. (L.5.5.C)

**Launch**
Display and read aloud, demonstrating masterful delivery:
"Looking Glass said he would never surrender. He looked at my father: "Is an older than you," said. "I know the white men are men with two faces and two tongues. If you succeed you will be sorry. It is better to be dead.""

Ask: "What does the word surrender mean?"
- "Looking Glass believes that no one should surrender. He said he would never do it because the world must be better.
- "To Looking Glass, surrender is something shameful."

Call on a student to read the definition of surrender from their Vocabulary Journal.

**Learn**
- Pair complete the Frayer Model for surrender.
- Circulate as students work, addressing misconceptions or confusions.

**Handout 31B: Frayer Model: Liberty**

**Definition:**

<table>
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<th>Word: liberty</th>
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<td>Characteristics:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examples:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Non-Examples:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Directions:** Record the definition of liberty in the upper left-hand box. Then, complete the rest of the Frayer Model to add characteristics, examples, and non-examples of the word liberty.
“The Grande Ronde River preserves the direction Beaver took in his flight, and this is why it is tortuous in some parts of its course and straight in others.”

PART A: Which word has a similar meaning as *tortuous* in this sentence?
   a) curvy  
   b) lengthy  
   c) straight  
   d) short

PART B: Which detail from paragraph 3 helps the reader understand the meaning of *tortuous*?
   a) “raised a hue and cry”  
   b) “started after him”  
   c) “darted from side to side”  
   d) “he kept a straight course”
Examine and discuss fine art.
Principles for Achievement

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Facility for critical thinking

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Questions?
ELA / Literacy Assessments

Minit-assessments that illustrate the Shifts required by the Common Core and represent the demands of all college- and career-readiness standards.

Understand how CCSS-Aligned Assessment is Different
Assessments specifically designed to demonstrate aspects of the ELA/Literacy Shifts

Results (51)

- 09/22/18: "1984" by George Orwell Mini-assessment
  Includes a citation for an excerpt from "1984", seven text-dependent questions, and explanatory information for teachers regarding alg...

- 09/22/18: Sort Mini-assessment Items by Standard
  The Literacy Mini-assessment Series is a Microsoft Excel file that can be used to find specific information about the questions within...

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