

Rules of Engagement: Modeling and Implementing Literacy Activities in the College Classroom

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This author discusses ways to engage college students in reading their primary textbooks to maximize their ability to understand the content material, interact with the author, and apply what they have learned. Through the use of ten “rules of engagement” —specific strategies and activities— college instructors and professors can intentionally plan how to actively involve students in the pre-reading, during-reading, and post-reading stages of reading course materials which are designed to increase their comprehension of the course content and assignments.

Gambrell and Almasi (1996) suggest that an engaged reader is motivated, knowledgeable, strategic, and socially interactive. Readers use their prior knowledge to construct new meaning from the text, utilize a variety of strategies to comprehend the material, and choose to read to acquire new knowledge – or so college instructors and professors hope. It is often incorrectly assumed that college undergraduates arrive on campus with the necessary literacy skills to tackle their texts, actively interact with the information, and understand what they have read. According to a recent report by the American College Testing program (ACT), “only about half of ACT-tested high school students are on track for being ready for college-level reading. Reading skills are critical for college readiness and an important precondition for academic” success in college courses (ACT News, 2009, p. 1).

Textbooks remain the primary source of information for college students to

attain knowledge; yet students may be unable to effectively utilize the textbook in the course. College students, even at the junior and senior levels, may find reading the textbook a challenge and struggle to comprehend text due to an inability to set purposes, process the text, and determine significant information (Feldman & Shattles, 2007; Melendez, 2000).

My colleagues and I find that students often fail to read the textbooks for their classes, and instead, primarily rely on the professors' lectures as the main resource of information. This “reading avoidance” is often due to the fact students don't know how to approach the reading of the text for a variety of reasons. They struggle with how to establish the purposes for reading – What is worth remembering? What does the professor want me to know? What ‘gels’ with what I know and what doesn't? Unfortunately, the lack of effective textbook reading results in low test scores, the inability of

the students to fully converse with peers and professors about the text content, general disconnectedness with the material, and limited ownership of the material. Active readers search for meaning using multiple strategies to process the text, including generating questions, monitoring their comprehension, and interacting with the text to make sense of the information. They actively construct meaning and reflect upon what they have read. If a key to student success at the university level is processing text material, then college professors must intentionally plan how to assist students in strategizing and interacting with the material, particularly for teaching candidates who have the responsibility to pass on literacy practices.

As a professor who teaches undergraduate methods courses for prospective teachers, I have found it essential to provide direct instruction and modeling of specific strategies for students in my courses. In order to model

specific strategies, I present the three stages of reading—pre-reading, during-reading, and post-reading—and when to use each strategy. Thus, the "rules of engagement" presented within this process (before, during, and after) provide students with a reminder of how to approach the reading of their text and the materials posted on Blackboard (or another web-based course management system) and other written material for the content of the course, (e.g., journal articles, websites, and lesson plans). By knowing and intentionally utilizing effective reading strategies, students are more likely to read the text and gain a better understanding of the material. In this way, students have greater success in the course; moreover, they have reported being able to attain their academic goal for the course – the grade they desire.

Purpose

The purpose of this article is to present methods that college instructors and professors can utilize to scaffold learning, maximizing their students' understanding and use of the course textbook and other materials through a variety of meaningful strategies and activities. While these rules are universal

to all college readers and many college courses, this article incorporates examples from courses in a teacher-education context. The methods will be called "rules of engagement," and the article will focus on ten specific ideas for helping students actively read the text during pre-reading, during-reading, or post-reading activities.

An Overview of the Rules of Engagement

To engage college students in the content and assist them with learning and applying the material, I incorporate ten rules of engagement into the course. These ten strategies fall into pre-, during-, and post-reading categories. As instructors contemplate introducing a text to a group of college students, they must consider what their undergraduates already know about the course content since it is one of the strongest indicators of how well they will learn the new content that will be presented (Marzano, 2004).

As professors consider what their college students know about a text, they can tailor the pre-, during-, and post-reading scaffolding activities for the class.

The first five of these "rules" are designed to be used together at the pre-reading stage. Front-loading for students—scaffolds before students begin reading by setting a purpose for reading, accessing the content, and teaching key vocabulary from a chapter before they read—impacts their understanding. Often, I will tap students' prior knowledge, then provide an overview of a chapter and set purposes for reading. Finally, I will define and give examples of vocabulary key to understanding the chapter. However, an instructor may elect to focus on only one of these "rules" or strategies at a time.

Pre-reading Strategies

#1: Provide a Text Overview

Facing an expository text can be a daunting task; however, by integrating the "rules of engagement" in the college

classroom, students are more likely to experience success. In each course, I provide an overview of the text, drawing students' attention to the general chapter layout, highlighting the text aids, and noting the sub-headings and visuals that students should read. This includes how the author introduces the chapter (such as the use of a graphic organizer, an anticipation guide, or a series of questions), how technical words are defined in the text, and how to use the text aids. For example, in reading a chapter, students survey the concept map on the main topic and the bulleted points on what they will discover in the chapter. While they read the chapter, they keep the surveyed information in mind.

In any particular text, professors can overview the text—go to the sub-titles, draw attention to the key words, and point out the visuals. For example, professors teaching an American History course can explain that the chapter on the Civil War and Reconstruction is divided into five sections; in the first section, some of the sub-titles are "The war began at Fort Sumter," "The North appeared to have an advantage," and "Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation." Professors can draw attention to the critical vocabulary from the chapter—*provisions, abolition, emancipation, proclamation, secession, and reconstruction*—and explain that these words are defined in the chapter and can also be located in the glossary. They can point out the visuals that will enrich their students' understanding of the content, (e.g., the pictorial history of Civil War, the map of Union and Confederacy states, and the chart reviewing the key people, places, and main ideas in the chapter).

In another course, I overviewed the book and showed how the author organizes the chapter into four sections (as noted in Figure 2), pointing out examples of how to turn sub-headings into questions and drawing attention to how key words are defined in the text. My students reported that the textbook

Figure 1

Overview of the Rules of Engagement

1. Provide a text overview and chapter overviews
2. Set purpose(s) for reading
3. Tap students' prior knowledge
4. Pre-teach key words
5. Assess students
6. Model and use a variety of strategies
7. Provide follow-up discussions
8. Plan specifically for individual needs
9. Offer tutorials and/or literacy coaching
10. Read and process directions and sample assignments

and chapter overviews were helpful to their comprehension and taught them how to use the author's organization of the book as a study guide for their own question/answer study approach to comprehending the text.

Figure 2

Example: Overview from Chapter 9: Vocabulary

Before students read the chapter, the professor provides an overview of the chapter. This chapter is about teaching vocabulary. There are four sections that appear in boldface:

1. What It Is and What Research Can Tell Us
2. Teacher Behaviors
3. Teaching Strategies
4. Activities

(Blair, 2007)

#2: Set Purpose(s) for Reading

Identifying reasons for reading helps students become active readers and to fully engage with the author of the material. When students read without a purpose, they lack the information needed to navigate the text, and therefore do not remember as much of what they read (Clewell & Czarnecki, 2006). The purpose for reading influences the strategy the reader chooses. For example, if the purpose is to locate a key date in a history chapter, readers will skim and scan the chapter quickly to find the answer. However, if readers want to identify three key reasons for the Civil War, they will need to slow down and read closely to distinguish the critical information. In reading the chapter on vocabulary, one purpose is to identify teaching behaviors that encourage vocabulary development. The strategy might be to take notes on the behaviors the author highlights. Thus, readers must know their purposes for reading and then strategically apply their reading skills to understand the content of a chapter at the

level that is appropriate for these purposes.

There are two general ways to set purposes for reading: 1) ask key questions, and 2) brainstorm as a group what students want to learn from the material. By posing specific questions, students know what to look for and can locate answers to these questions while they read. Instructors can demonstrate how to take the boldface sub-headings and turn these into questions, (e.g., "The North appeared to have an advantage" is converted to "Why did the North appear to have an advantage?").

By brainstorming with my class about other reasons they might want to read a selection, students generate ideas that are important to them as readers. I encourage students to develop questions that will draw upon the content yet require them to go beyond remembering the information; for example, I ask students to consider questions which form an opinion of the veracity of the material, evaluate the writer's style, analyze the ideas in light of what they have observed in their field experiences, and develop questions about things they need to explore further.

For the chapter on vocabulary, my teacher-education students were given the following purposes for reading:

1. What does the research tell us?
2. Identify the three types of vocabulary and examples of each.
3. Describe five teacher behaviors that assist children with vocabulary development and provide examples of how these are evident in their field experiences.
4. Which of the teaching strategies have you observed your cooperating teacher use? How effective was this strategy?

Along with setting specific purposes for reading, professors can suggest a reading rate. This can be accomplished through the use of a study aid such as a Reading Road Map, which is particularly useful with informational texts (Wood, Lapp, Flood, & Taylor, 2007). Figure 3 illustrates how a Reading Road Map is utilized by students in my Children's Literature course. This "map" serves as a guide for the students while they read a specific chapter in their textbook.

Similar to a road map or a "cheat

Figure 3

Reading Road Map for a Children's Literature Textbook Chapter

Page	Pace	Purpose
pages 66-68	Read at a rapid rate	To get an overview of the history of children's literature
page 68	Read at a slow rate	To define "classic" as this applies to picture books
page 70	Read at a rapid rate	To identify a couple of ways picture books can be used in teaching reading
pages 71-72	Read at an average rate	To grasp some of the questions you would use to evaluate picture books
page 73	Read at a slow rate	To define the elements of art and provide details about each element
pages 73-74	Read at a slow rate	To master the different styles of art, including details (Gangi, 2004)

sheet" for quickly finding information, a concise set of notes that outline what an individual needs to work a new computer program, this mapping activity helps readers visualize the layout of the text before they start reading so they will have an idea of the purposes for reading, pages noted on which they will find the information, and a suggested reading rate at which the material should be read in order to find and respond to questions about the information.

Any study aid such as a reading road map, graphic organizer, or anticipation guide is helpful to students. When the concepts and vocabulary within a graphic organizer or other visual are described during instruction, students have an understanding of the key words and a better focus for reading the chapter which leads to a better understanding of the content (Wright & Bilica, 2007).

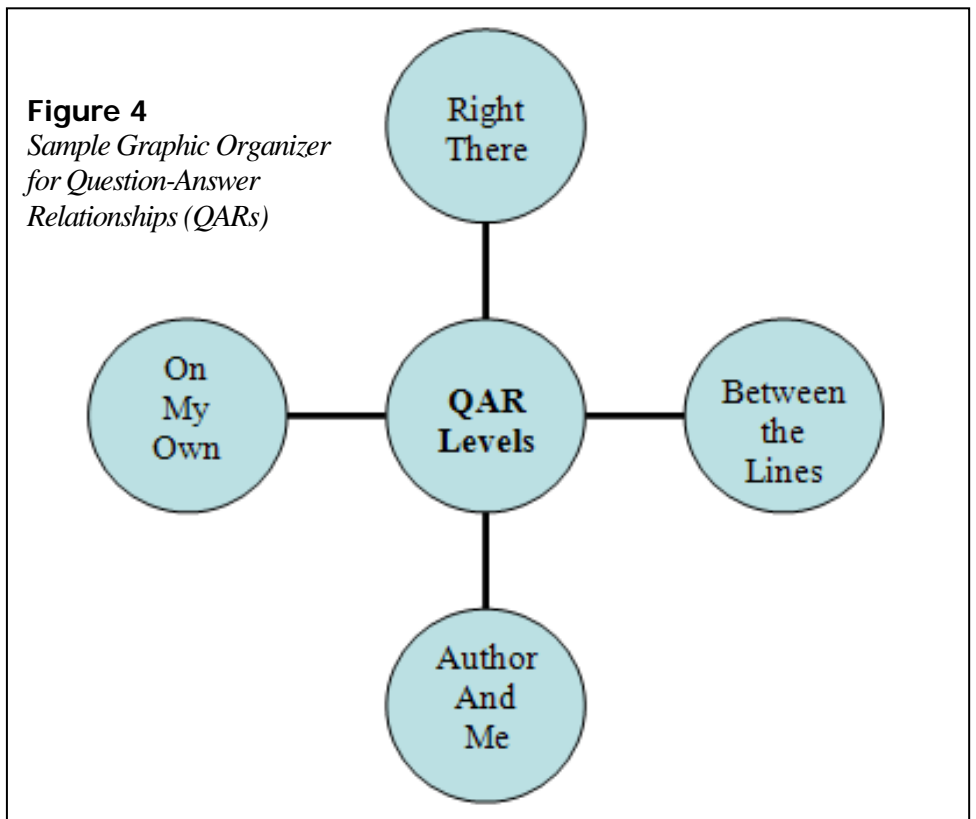
#3: Tap Students' Prior Knowledge

Students learn more effectively when they already know something about the content area and when concepts in that area mean something to them and to their particular background or culture (Kujawa & Huske, 1995). When teachers link new information to the students' prior knowledge, they activate the students' interest and curiosity, and infuse instruction with a sense of purpose (Bransford, Brown, & Cocking, 1999). I use word webs to jot down students' ideas on the challenges they face in reading textbooks for difficult classes, to find out what they know about certain phonics elements, or to present the parts of the question-answer relationship strategy (QARs) (Buehl, 2001; Raphael & Au, 2005).

The QAR strategy helps students to identify the four different question-answer relationships—"right there" questions, "think and search" questions, "author and you" questions, and "on my own" questions that they may encounter as they read and answer questions about what they have read. For example, I use a word web of the QAR strategy to

introduce and explain each of type of question and examples of each before students read. Figure 4 displays the four QAR levels to which specific points are added after students read the text.

"Emphasizing Oral Language Development" is What is oral language? Students hear the question and immediately "fire back" the answer. Students can also be paired to share their



To determine my students' prior knowledge, I use four strategies: 1) asking questions, 2) brainstorming to find out what they know, 3) using an anticipation guide, and 4) pre-testing students over their current understanding of a topic or information for a unit. The first strategy is to ask questions about a topic before beginning a lecture or reading the related material. For example, asking students questions such as How does your "master teacher" approach vocabulary development? Which strategies does s/he use? What are the different ways your master teacher groups students? A specific strategy I use to tap students' prior knowledge is what I term "Quick Fire Questions," which are content-related question to which students provide a rapid answer without deliberation. This allows me to learn what students know "on the spot." For example, a question for the chapter titled

responses. Only one question is posed at a time to check students' prior knowledge.

A second strategy is brainstorming, during which students contribute what they know about a specific topic; then their ideas are listed on the board. This is similar to the KWL strategy—What do I know? What do I want to learn? What have I learned? This is designed to help students read expository text (Ogle, 1986); however, only the first part of the strategy is essential in bridging what students know and what they will be reading.

Another strategy that an author may include as part of the introduction to a chapter is an anticipation guide (Duffelmeyer, 1994). The author's anticipation guide may be a starting place for tapping prior knowledge, or instructors may design a guide with statements that match the purposes for reading. The anticipation guide (Figure

5) includes four statements for students to consider as true or false. The students fill out the anticipation guide and then read the text to see if they have changed their minds about any of their answers.

Finally, pre-testing students prior to teaching the material is beneficial to me as I make instructional decisions.

it. On April 6, Lincoln informed the governor of South Carolina that he was going to send a supply ship, taking care to add that 'no effort to throw in men, arms, or ammunitions will be made'" (Berkin, Brinkley, Carson, Cherny, Divine, Foner, Morris, Wheeler, & Wood, 1995, p. 220). In the sentence that follows, "supply ship"

both whole class and individual needs. Finally, they can develop and administer a reading survey that includes questions related to students' interests, attitudes, and motivation. Some of the questions might include How much time do you spend reading in your spare time? What is your favorite literary genre? What do you find most challenging about reading a textbook for one of your classes? In my Children's Literature courses, for example, students respond to a reading survey and the results are used to make book recommendations to students based upon their interests.

With the information gleaned from the assessments, professors can determine which students are reading at the frustration level in the textbook and who will require additional help in processing the content.

Professors can provide assistance such as defining key words, developing a study guide, meeting with a student one-on-one, or substituting lower readability materials for students who find the text

Figure 5

Anticipation Guide

Chapter 7: Developing Prior Knowledge

Read each statement and mark your answer as True or False.

	<u>True</u>	<u>False</u>
1. How well a student comprehends what they read depends largely upon his/her prior knowledge.	_____	_____
2. One way to develop students' prior knowledge is to show a brief video clip on the topic.	_____	_____
3. A semantic map is visual aid, a strategy that helps reinforce what have learned from the textbook.	_____	_____
4. A teacher can help students have a purpose for reading by giving them a list of vocabulary words to define while they read.	_____	_____

Students enrolled in my Elementary Reading/Language Arts course typically take a pre-test before a unit on developing phonological awareness and other linguistic processes; this helps me assess each student's knowledge related to the unit and how to teach specific skills.

#4: Pre-teach Key Words

Before introducing a new topic, I recommend that instructors identify the key words from the reading material and select a specific strategy in pre-teaching these words such as word webs, graphic organizers, word sorts, analogies, and context clues. According to Roe, Stoodt, and Burns (2009), "Vocabulary words should include both the use of definitions and words in context (ranging from sentences to entire selections) to have the maximum effect" (p. 185). In teaching the content words from a chapter on the Civil War, for example, professors can use context clues to help students discover the meaning of an unknown word. For example, the word "provisions" appears in the following sentence: "The surrender of Fort Sumter was inevitable unless provisions were sent to the troops holding

helps students discover the meaning of *provisions*.

Before my teacher-education students read a chapter on vocabulary, I introduce the three types of vocabulary (basic service, meaning, and content words), define each word, and provide examples as shown in Figure 6. Introducing new words students will encounter in their reading will boost their comprehension.

#5: Assess Students

To determine college students' reading abilities, their background knowledge connected to the units of study, and their interests, instructors can develop and administer a variety of assessments, such as the Cloze Procedure, an assessment of prior knowledge, pre-tests, and reading survey. Professors can develop a Cloze Procedure from the course textbook to determine who is reading at the independent, instructional, and frustration levels in the textbook. Before lectures, they can tap students' prior knowledge with key questions related to the content. They can administer pre-tests for different units and develop an instructional plan to address

Figure 6

Sample of Key Words from Blair, Chapter 9: Teaching Vocabulary

There are three types of vocabulary words that increase a student's reading comprehension and communication abilities:

- **Basic Service Words** – sight words, e.g., always, two, through
- **Meaning words** – words of interest to students at various grade levels; comprise students' literature and reading texts, e.g., curved, winding, belonging
- **Content words** – words specific to the various subject areas, e.g., short vowels, adjective, ecosystems, amendment

too difficult.

During-reading Strategies

The first five "rules of engagement" are strategies that primarily fit into the pre-reading stage, while the next rule fits into the during-reading stage.

#6: Model and Use a Variety of Strategies

When professors demonstrate how to use different strategies, (e.g., word webs, reciprocal teaching, Venn diagrams, and KWL strategy), and integrate these into the classroom, they help their students become strategic readers and writers. It is essential for professors to select the appropriate strategy for the stage of reading – before, during, or post-reading (Laverick, 2002).

To tap students' background knowledge on a topic, professors can lead with a question: "What do you already know about this topic?" Professors can use a word web to list students' prior knowledge of the topic, listing students' ideas around the main topic. This prepares them for the reading and helps them begin to make connections between what they already know and new information they may encounter in their reading.

Professors can incorporate different vocabulary and comprehension strategies during reading such as

- referring back to anticipation guides
- utilizing context clues
- filling in graphic organizers as we read
- filling in the "What We Learned" column of K-W-L charts
- using semantic maps while we read
- completing story maps as we read
- utilizing think-alouds
- taking notes while students respond to study guide questions

For example, to help my students process the content while they read, I demonstrate how to use reciprocal teaching, a comprehension strategy that has four steps—summarize, question, clarify, and predict (Palinscar & Brown,

1984). Then, students are placed in small groups and assigned roles that align with the four steps and process several pages from the assigned reading.

To reinforce the understanding of the material, instructors can incorporate a Venn diagram, the last part of the KWL strategy, story maps, and "Exit Slips" after students read. For example, after my students read two Cinderella stories, they use a Venn diagram to examine the similarities and differences between the two versions and organize their ideas for an essay.

To help students monitor their own comprehension, professors can introduce "Exit Slips" as a strategy and provide opportunities for their students to use. For example, American History professors can ask students a critical question related to Civil War such as "Was it inevitable that the North would win the Civil War? Support your answer with facts from the lecture or chapter." Professors can emphasize how responding to a key question or summarizing a lecture at the end of class helps students monitor their own comprehension. "Exit Slips" may be collected so that professors can assess what their students learned on the topic.

In teacher education courses, modeling and implementing various strategies serve dual purposes: 1) to demonstrate how to use a specific strategy that assists my college students in their own learning, and 2) to provide practice in the use of a variety of strategies, so that in turn, they can use these strategies effectively when they teach. If prospective teachers have first-hand experience with different strategies, they are more likely to implement these strategies in their own classrooms.

Post-reading Strategies

To construct meaning or reinforce students' understanding, post-reading strategies are utilized after my students have read an entire section, chapter, article, or book. These strategies include providing a follow-up discussion, planning for individual needs, offering

tutorials and literacy coaching, and reading and processing sample assignments.

#7: Provide Follow-up Discussions

Follow-up discussions are imperative to reinforcing students' understanding of what they have read. To determine college students' understanding of the reading material, instructors can use these four general questions: 1) What was new to you in the section? 2) Which section was confusing to you? 3) What was important in the reading? 4) What vocabulary words are essential to your understanding of the material? In listening to students' responses to the questions, instructors will have a sense of where students' have gaps in their knowledge and what needs to be covered in more depth.

To jump start conversations about the assigned reading material, I may ask students to complete an "Entrance Slip" with a question at the top. For example, students entering class responded to this question connected with their reading: What is one strategy for fostering parental involvement? They write a brief response to the question and share their answers in small groups.

#8: Plan for Individual Needs

While it may be difficult to plan for individual needs in larger course sections, instructors can determine the needs of groups of students based upon their initial assessments and assessments after they read. Instructors can scaffold learning before, during, and after reading. After reading, it is particularly important to fill in the gaps in students' comprehension and to ensure that the students with special needs are ready to move forward with the material. For instance, students in my courses who need additional instruction or assistance with their writing skills, word recognition skills (due to their limited exposure in the primary grades), test preparation, and understanding of academic language (vocabulary words such as core literature, describe, making

inferences, critical thinking) meet with me or communicate through e-mail regarding these needs. Some adaptations for struggling students are

- providing a review list of vocabulary words with examples
- reviewing of test material with the student one-on-one
- providing alternative testing, (e.g., giving parts of the test orally)

Students in my courses take pre- and post-tests on some units that allow them to determine their beginning points in various units and preparation for the next unit. To further prepare students for upcoming exams and provide assistance after a failed exam, I provide practice items on the previous session's material throughout the unit, review the formats that will appear on the test, and supply additional practice items sent to those who scored low on the pre-test. Study sessions are open to all students but are highly recommended to students who are struggling with the material.

While a short review and a one-page handout stating what will be covered in the upcoming exam are provided to *all* students, additional strategies and review sessions are invaluable to students who find the material challenging. These include

- whole-class review with game-like formats, (e.g., jeopardy and secret squares)
- small-group reviews in professor's office
- practice items with key, (e.g., multiple choice and short constructed responses)
- sample responses to short and long constructed questions

I also incorporate some of the adaptations for students that I recommend teachers use when they teach in the elementary classroom. For students who need a challenge rather than remediation, I provide additional, more complex curricular materials and/ or journal articles in addition to those read by the majority of students. Students read, summarize, and critique journal articles that examine a

course-related topic or issue in more depth. They also give an eight-minute presentation on the article.

#9: Offer Tutorials and/or Literacy Coaching

College students seek help in a variety of ways; therefore, instructors and professors must be available before and after class, during office hours, and by phone and e-mail. A quick response by e-mail can resolve concerns students have; it also communicates how important students are to faculty. Through offering assistance, I know that I am modeling what I trust the prospective teachers in my class will see as critical when they teach.

Throughout the semester, I provide small group and one-on-one tutorials on course topics, exam preparation, and writing skills. Of the 15 students in one section of the course, six students met with me for at least one hour to review course content; from the second section of the course, four students out of 13 met with me for assistance to go over content material in their textbook or to review an upcoming exam; five students met with me to discuss an assignment; and six students met with me for assistance in a variety of other areas, (e.g., writing a cohesive paragraph or reflection paper, interpreting data for an assignment, and specific study tips). Several students needed literacy coaching on how to effectively tutor elementary children in their field classroom.

The relationship between the professor and the student either invites the student to learn more through mentoring, or increases the level of the anxiety of the student. My experience has demonstrated the importance of being available to help my students comprehend materials and to coach them when they encounter obstacles in their reading and content knowledge. Short, quick tutorials are often the key to bridging barriers students have in their reading.

#10: Read and Process Sample Assignments

In order for college students to successfully complete their assignments,

it is important to provide detailed directions and sample assignments. By breaking down the directions into a series of steps, it becomes clearer to students how to process an assignment or research paper. When instructors use rubrics to evaluate students' writing or other projects, it is helpful to provide sample papers at different levels of the rubric to increase their understanding of the explicit expectations.

In one of my courses, students design and implement a BDA (Before- During-After) lesson; I model both how to develop this lesson format and explain each component of the lesson plan. I involve my students in the process by asking them to generate two ideas at the pre-reading, reading, and post-reading stages using a selected children's book. Information about the BDA Lesson and sample lesson are also available on the course website.

In addition, I develop sample responses of different formats that appear on course exams—short constructed responses, longer constructed responses, and case studies. In preparation for taking the first exam, students practice writing answers to the questions related to the course content; then their answers are ranked on the scale that will be used in evaluating their answers on the exam.

Students' Feedback on the Rules of Engagement

At the end of the semester, my students provided feedback on the "rules of engagement" by completing a brief survey. In this survey, they were asked to rate the rules on a descending scale from "most helpful" to "not helpful" and then prioritize the three they found most helpful and the three they found least helpful. Not only did their feedback indicate which of the rules most benefited my students, but the information allowed me to reflect on my own teaching and improve instruction in the future.

The "rules of engagement" that students found most helpful were (in order of importance): #10 - providing

sample assignments after explaining the directions; #2 - setting purposes for reading, #4 - pre-teaching vocabulary; #7 - following up on their reading with discussions (when paired with the pre-reading questions); and #6 - modeling and implementing various strategies in the classroom. Out of 38 responding students, many expressed how helpful many of these "rules" were in combination, (e.g., setting purposes with specifics, pre-teaching the key vocabulary, following up with discussions, and incorporating this information on the exam). Over 95% identified the sample assignments as the most important "rule" when it was coupled with the professor's explanation of each of the assignments; and 95% found setting purposes for reading with specific questions to be very helpful. One student found that "becoming familiar with the vocabulary was extremely helpful" before she read the chapters in one of the textbooks. Another student commented, "Rather than just reading the material, I knew what to look for, what was important, and what would be emphasized in both the class discussions and on the exam. I think this contributed to my understanding and high score on the tests." Ultimately, readers need to determine for themselves what is important.

The ranking of each "rule" showed that several of the steps in preparing students for reading the text went hand in hand and were helpful to the majority of the students in my class. In addition, a high percentage of students (approximately 85%) ranked the modeling of strategies critical to their ability to implement these in their field classroom. Students also highly rated the availability of samples (83%).

Students found two rules not to be helpful: #8 - planning for individual needs, and #9 - offering tutorials and literacy coaching. Approximately 10% stated that they did not take advantage of the opportunities to meet with the professor or request assistance. Reasons for this included, "I thought I could figure

Figure 7

Rules of Engagement Survey

A. Rate each of the following based upon the helpfulness to you during the course by circling the appropriate number: 3=Very Helpful 2=Helpful 1=Not Helpful

1. Provide a text overview and chapter overviews	3	2	1
2. Set purpose(s) for reading	3	2	1
3. Tap students' prior knowledge	3	2	1
4. Pre-teach key words	3	2	1
5. Assessing students to provide for individual needs	3	2	1
6. Model and use a variety of strategies	3	2	1
7. Provide follow-up discussions	3	2	1
8. Plan for individual needs	3	2	1
9. Offer tutorials and/or literacy coaching	3	2	1
10. Read and process directions and sample assignments	3	2	1

B. Which three above were the most helpful? List these in the order of importance.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

C. Which three above were not helpful to you? List these in the order of importance.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

it out myself," "I'm too busy to come in for tutoring," or "I probably can ask another student in the class if I have questions."

Conclusion

While many professors incorporate some of these rules of engagement, it is critical to intentionally plan to use these in the college classroom. It is evident from the survey and oral feedback from my college students that scaffolding learning must be intentional and is essential if I am to maximize learning in the courses I teach. I cannot assume that students will read the textbook nor gain an understanding of the content if I do not fully prepare them for reading the

textbook and use of a variety of strategies in the course.

If students are not engaged in their own learning, "they may fail to grasp the new concepts and information that are taught, or they may learn them for purposes of a test but revert to their preconceptions outside of the classroom (Donovan, Bransford, & Pellegrino, 1999, p. 14)" (Gillespie, 2002, p. 3). By using these "rules of engagement," students can use the textbook and other course materials more effectively to gain understanding of the content and become more actively involved in the learning process.

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