

# TEACHING METACOGNITIVE READING STRATEGIES WITH FIFTH GRADE CORE LITERATURE

**Grade Level:** 5

**Presented by:** Katherine Kapustka, Coronado Village Elementary, Universal City, TX

**Length of Unit:** 11 lessons plus culminating activity

## I. ABSTRACT

This unit presents mini-lessons, based on fifth grade Core literature, for use in a holistic reading program. These mini-lessons focus on developing the students' metacognitive reading strategies in order to improve their comprehension abilities. Through the use of Core literature such as *Little House on the Prairie* and *Little Women*, students will be taught to employ a variety of metacognitive strategies. These strategies include: activating prior knowledge before, during, and after reading a text; previewing a text to activate prior knowledge and make predictions; asking questions of themselves, the authors, and the texts they read; setting a purpose for reading; retelling or synthesizing; and monitoring comprehension and applying fix-up strategies.

## II. OVERVIEW

### A. Concept Objective:

The students will come to understand that the purpose of reading is to gain meaning, and that good readers employ a variety of strategies to accomplish this goal.

### B. Core Knowledge Content:

1. *Little House on the Prairie*
2. *Little Women* (part first)

### C. Skills

1. The students will learn to make predictions as they read, evaluate these predictions, and generate new predictions.
2. The students will learn to use the strategy of previewing to activate prior knowledge and gather the information necessary to make predictions.
3. The students will learn to set a purpose for reading in order to read for meaning.
4. The students will learn to create questions for themselves as they read in order to assure comprehension and guide reading.
5. The students will learn to draw from their own background knowledge in order to increase comprehension, make inferences, and generate predictions.
6. The students will learn to summarize as a text as they read it and employ fix-up strategies when they become aware that their comprehension is breaking down.

## III. BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE

### A. For teachers:

Keene, Ellin Oliver and Susan Zimmerman. *Mosaics of Thought: Teaching Comprehension in a Reader's Workshop*. Portsmouth, New Hampshire: Heinemann, 1997, ISBN 0-435-07237-4.

Schmitt, Maribeth Cassidy. "A Questionnaire to Measure Children's Awareness of Strategic Reading Processes." *The Reading Teacher* (March 1990): 454-461.

### B. For students:

Fifth grade American History  
Westward Expansion (*Little House on the Prairie*)  
Civil War (*Little Women*)

#### IV. RESOURCES

*Little House on the Prairie* by Laura Ingalls Wilder (any unabridged copy)  
*Little Women* (abridged by Muriel Fuller)  
"A Questionnaire to Measure Children's Awareness of Strategic Reading Processes" by Maribeth Cassidy Schmitt

#### V. LESSONS

##### **Lesson One: Identifying Students' Reading Strategies**

- A. *Objective:* The students will complete a questionnaire that asks them to identify the reading strategies they presently use.
1. *Lesson Content:* *Little House on the Prairie* and *Little Women*
  2. *Concept Objective:* The students will come to understand that the purpose of reading is to gain meaning, and that good readers employ a variety of strategies to accomplish this goal.
  3. *Skill Objective:* The students will identify the metacognitive reading strategies they presently use.
- B. *Materials:*  
Metacognitive Strategy Index from *The Reading Teacher* (March 1990): 459-461.  
Data Form (Appendix A)
- C. *Vocabulary*  
Metacognition  
Strategy
- D. *Procedures*
1. Tell the students that they will be filling out a set of questions that will allow you, the teacher, to learn more about how they read. Explain to the students that on these questions, there are no right or wrong answers.
  2. Pass out the questionnaires. Depending on the reading levels of the students in your class, you may want to read the questions and answers aloud so that a student's reading ability does not interfere with his or her performance on the questionnaire.
  3. Ask the students to circle the letter of the answer that they believe would help them the most as they read. Reiterate that there are no right or wrong answers.
- E. *Evaluation/Assessment*
1. Once the questionnaires are completed, score them. You may want to compile the data onto a data form for your reference (see appendix A).
  2. Analyze areas of weakness for the students. These areas should be emphasized in your lesson plans. Skills can also be taught to small groups of students in a guided reading group.
- F. *Standardized Test/State Test Connections*  
Metacognitive reading strategies are applicable to all areas of the curriculum.

##### **Lesson Two: Making Text-to-Self Connections**

- A. *Objective:* The students will use background knowledge to make text-to-self connections.
1. *Lesson Content:* *Little Women* (Chapters 1-3)

2. *Concept Objective:* The students will come to understand that the purpose of reading is to gain meaning and that good readers employ a variety of strategies to accomplish this goal.
  3. *Skill Objective:* The students will learn to draw from their own background knowledge in order to increase comprehension, make inferences, and generate predictions.
- B. *Materials:*
- Little Women* (one copy for each student or each pair of students)
  - Self-adhesive notes
  - Journal or notebook paper
  - Chart tablet paper
- C. *Vocabulary*
- Schema
  - Background (prior) knowledge
- D. *Procedures*
1. Begin by brainstorming what the students believe good readers do, or think about, while they are reading. Write this list on chart tablet paper so that you can use it as a reference and add to it as the unit progresses.
  2. Once a list has been compiled, let the students know that over the next several weeks they are going to be learning many of the things that good readers do. Remind them that they may already be doing some of these things and that these lessons may simply allow them to give names to things they already do.
  3. Explain to the students that you are going to read aloud from *Little Women*, occasionally stopping to think aloud. Let the students know that when you are thinking aloud you will close the book so that they know you are thinking and not reading from the book. Ask the students to concentrate on what you are saying during your “think alouds” and decide what they believe to be the topic of these "think alouds."
  4. Begin reading aloud from *Little Women*. Periodically stop to comment on connections you have made between yourself and your life experiences, and the book. For example, you may be similar to the main characters in that you wish for a time when money was not so tight, or you may set goals for yourself in an attempt to be a better person.
  5. After the chapter is completed, ask the students to decide what you had been thinking about. Students should be able to say that you were thinking about your own life. At this point, let the students know that that is something good readers do. Good readers draw connections between their lives and the books they are reading. These text-to-self connections are one way readers activate their prior knowledge or schema. This allows readers to realize what they already know about a subject, thus making comprehension easier.
  6. Next, have each student, or pair of students, read the next two chapters in the book. A copy of the book on tape or a small group that meets with the teacher, an instructional assistant, or a parent volunteer, may be necessary for some readers. Provide the students with self-adhesive notes that they can place in the book when they make a text-to-self connection. At the end of the third chapter, students can use their reading journals, or a piece of notebook paper to reflect on the connections they have made.
  7. At the end of class, allow for a few minutes of share time. Students enjoy talking about the text-to self-connections they made, and for those students who are struggling, hearing the connections made by other students often helps alleviate confusion.
- E. *Evaluation*

1. Since this is the first day of this activity, it may be wise to simply give students a participation grade based on whether they behaved appropriately during reading time, marked pages with self-adhesive notes, reflected on the activity in their journals, and shared at the end of class.
  2. The journal entries could also be given a grade based on the whether students reflected on their text-to-self connections and what they had learned. A rubric for grading journal entries helps to set clear expectations. See appendix B for one example of a grading rubric.
- F. *Standardized Test/State Test Connections*
1. Metacognitive reading strategies are applicable to all areas of the curriculum.

**Lesson Three: Making Text-to-Text Connections**

- A. *Objective:* The students will use background knowledge to make text-to-text connections.
1. *Lesson Content:* *Little Women* (Chapters 4-6)
  2. *Concept Objective:* The students will come to understand that the purpose of reading is to gain meaning and that good readers employ a variety of strategies to accomplish this goal.
  3. *Skill Objective:* The students will learn to draw from their own background knowledge in order to increase comprehension, make inferences, and generate predictions.
- B. *Materials:*
- Little Women* (one copy for each student or for each pair of students)
  - Self-adhesive notes
  - Journal or notebook paper
- C. *Vocabulary*
- Schema
  - Background (prior) knowledge
- D. *Procedures*
1. Again, explain to the students that you are going to read aloud from *Little Women*, occasionally stopping to think aloud. Tell the students that today you will be modeling another strategy that good readers use to help them with comprehension
  2. Begin reading aloud from Chapter 4 of *Little Women*. Periodically stop to comment on connections you have made between this book and other books that are familiar to you and the students. For example, you may see a connection between Jo and Caddie in *Caddie Woodlawn*. Both characters act like tomboys and have no desire to grow up to be young ladies. Another comparison might come to mind between *Little Women* and *Across Five Aprils*. Both books take place at the time of the Civil War and mentioned large sacrifices made by the families involved. If you choose books that most students have read, they are more likely to understand the text-to-text connection.
  3. After Chapter 4 is completed, ask the students to decide what you had been thinking about. Students should realize that instead of making connections between your own life and the book, this time you have made connections between *Little Women* and other books. At this point let the students know that besides making connections between themselves and the books they are reading, good readers also make connections between books. These text-to-text connections are another way readers activate prior knowledge or schema, and thus increase comprehension by allowing readers to understand the book they are reading in through comparisons to other familiar books.
  4. Next, have each student, or pair of students, read Chapters five and six in *Little Women*. Again, some students might require the assistance while they are reading. Provide the students with self-adhesive notes that they can place in the book when they make a text-

to-text connection. At the end Chapter six, allow each student to pair with another student in a “think-pair-share” session. This allows the students to share their ideas in a small group, which is less threatening than the whole class.

5. After a brief “think-pair-share,” guide the whole class in a sharing time. Students can share the various text-to-text connections they made as they read.
6. The whole-group share time would be an excellent place to remind students that these strategies should be used every day. Ask the students if anyone made any text-to-self connections while they are reading, besides the text-to-text connections. This type of discussion should help remove the idea that these are simply skills that are being taught in isolation. These skills should not be forgotten once the day's activity is completed.
7. After the whole-group share at the end of the “think-pair-share” activity, ask the students to reflect, once again, in their journals. They can comment on the text-to-text connections they made, any additional text-to-self connections, as well as what they have learned from their own work and from the comments of others.

E. *Evaluation*

1. Again you may want to choose to give the students a grade based on participation.
2. Evaluate the journals for completeness. (Appendix B)

F. *Standardized Test/State Test Connections*

Metacognitive reading strategies are applicable to all areas of the curriculum.

**Lesson Four: Making Text-to-World Connections**

A. *Objective:* The students will use background knowledge to make text-to-world connections.

1. *Lesson Content:* *Little Women* (Chapters 7-9)
2. *Concept Objective:* The students will come to understand that the purpose of reading is to gain meaning, and that good readers employ a variety of strategies to accomplish this goal.
3. *Skill Objective:* The students will learn to draw from their own background knowledge in order to increase comprehension, make inferences, and generate predictions.

B. *Materials:*

*Little Women* (one copy for each student or pairs of students)  
Self-adhesive notes  
Journal or notebook paper

C. *Vocabulary*

Schema  
Background (prior) knowledge

D. *Procedures*

1. Begin today’s lesson by reviewing what the students already learned about using background knowledge to aid comprehension during reading. Ask the students to explain why they believe that this helps with comprehension. Students should realize that by activating their prior knowledge, they help themselves understand what is happening in the book. Prior knowledge helps them relate to what is happening in the book and allows them to make predictions about what will happen next.
2. Since the text-to-world connections seem to be the toughest for students to understand, before you begin reading, explain that when you stop to think aloud you will be making connections between the book and issues that are important in society today.
3. Begin reading aloud from Chapter 7 of *Little Women*. As you read, stop to “think aloud” when you make a connection between the book and an issue in society. For example, in Chapter 7, you may want to stop to comment on the debates about the use of corporal punishment in schools, or on issues related to home schooling.

4. After the chapter is completed, you may want to read the next chapter aloud together, asking students to raise their hands if they make a text-to-world connection. This provides additional support for a rather difficult skill.
  5. If the students seem to have grasped the skill, allow them to read Chapter 9 alone, or with a partner, again using self-adhesive notes to mark places where they made text-to-world connections. You may want to allow the students to read with a partner so that they can support each other in their search for these connections.
  6. At the end of class, allow for a few minutes of share time. Students should comment on all three types of connections, but the focus should be on the text-to world connections they made while reading.
  7. End the class discussion by asking the students if they have learned anything new while reading the book and ask some students to share. This discussion serves to illustrate that as people read they are creating new schema.
- E. *Evaluation*
1. Due to the difficulty of this particular strategy, you may choose to give a participation grade.
  2. You may also choose to have the students reflect on what they have learned by writing in their journals. (Appendix B)
- F. *Standardized Test/State Test Connections*  
Metacognitive reading strategies are applicable to all areas of the curriculum.

### **Lesson Five: Previewing and Predicting**

- A. *Objective:* The students will use learn to preview before they read in order activate prior knowledge and create predictions.
1. *Lesson Content:* *Little Women* (Chapters 10-12)
  2. *Concept Objective:* The students will come to understand that the purpose of reading is to gain meaning, and that good readers employ a variety of strategies to accomplish this goal.
  3. *Skill Objective:* The students will learn to use the strategy of previewing to activate prior knowledge and gather the information necessary to make predictions. The students will learn to make predictions as they read, evaluate these predictions, and generate new predictions.
- B. *Materials:*  
*Little Women* (one copy for each student or for each pair of students)  
Journal or notebook paper  
Chart tablet paper
- C. *Vocabulary*  
Previewing  
Background (prior) knowledge
- D. *Procedures*
1. Refer to the list of strategies that good readers use begun by the class during lesson two of this unit. Ask students to add any new strategies they have learned to the list. If someone mentioned the strategy of previewing, refer to that now. Otherwise it can be added at the end of this lesson.
  2. Write the word previewing on the board. Ask students to predict what it means. Guide the students to isolate the prefix, “pre,” from the root word “view.” Ask the students to say what “pre” means or to think of other words that start with pre, such preheat or pretest. Students should realize that “pre” means before, so to preview something, you look at it before you view it.

3. Ask the students what they think they should look at if they were going to preview part of a fiction book. They should come up with, or be led to, items such as chapter titles, pictures, and the first sentences of paragraphs or chapters.
4. Preview Chapter 10 of the book together, asking students to read or comment on things that they believe are important to preview. Once you have finished previewing Chapter 10, fold a piece of chart-tablet paper in half. Label the left side "predictions" and the right side "events." Have the students talk about any predictions they can make after having previewed Chapter 10. List those predictions on the paper.
5. Read aloud from Chapter 10. When the chapter is completed, look at the predictions. If the predictions came true, write the events that happened to prove the prediction. If the prediction was proven incorrect, write the events that contradicted the prediction. If it is unclear whether the prediction will come true or not, write any events that give you clues to whether the prediction will come true.
6. Next have the students make a similar two column chart in their journal. Ask them to preview Chapters 11 and 12 on their own, pausing after each chapter to make predictions.
7. Students should then read Chapters 11 and 12 independently. They should pause to note, in their journals events that either prove or disprove their predictions.
8. At the end of class, allow for a few minutes of share time. Students should give examples of predictions that came true and those that were proven to be false.

E. *Evaluation*

1. Evaluate the journal entries for completeness of predictions and events.

F. *Standardized Test/State Test Connections*

1. Metacognitive reading strategies are applicable to all areas of the curriculum.
2. Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) Objective 1: The student will determine the meaning of words in a variety of written contexts.
3. TAAS Objective 2: The student will identify supporting ideas in a variety of written texts.
4. TAAS objective 5: The student will perceive relationships and outcomes in a variety of written texts.

**Lesson Six: Setting a Purpose for Reading**

- A. *Objective:* The students will learn that different reading situations require different types of reading. The students will learn to set a purpose for reading in order to adjust their reading style based on this purpose.

1. *Lesson Content: Little Women* (Chapters 13-15)
2. *Concept Objective:* The students will come to understand that the purpose of reading is to gain meaning, and that good readers employ a variety of strategies to accomplish this goal.
3. *Skill Objective:* The students will learn to set a purpose for reading in order to read for meaning.

B. *Materials:*

*Little Women* (one copy for each student or for each pair of students)  
Journal or notebook paper

C. *Vocabulary*

Purpose

D. *Procedures*

1. Ask students to list all the times that they read during the day. Remind them that reading does not necessarily have to happen at school with a book. Some less obvious examples might be reading the cereal box, reading the *TV Guide* to see whether a certain show is on, or reading a menu at a restaurant. Write the students' examples on the board.

2. Ask the students to explain how they read each of these things. For example, students might read their science books word for word, focusing on the words in bold type, while they skim over a menu quickly, looking for something they like.
  3. Explain that setting a purpose for reading allows good readers to decide how to read. Should they quickly skim for one piece of information or should they read closely to get as much information as possible? Ask the students to define the purpose for reading *Little Women*. Students should realize that the purpose to learn about the characters and the story, while gaining additional information about life in 1860s America.
  4. Based on this goal, ask the students how they believe the book should be read. Students should know that it is important to read the story closely. Read Chapter 13 of *Little Women* aloud. Ask the students if the purpose and the type of reading matched and if they were able to accomplish what they set out to do.
  5. Before the students begin reading Chapter 14, set a new purpose for reading. Ask the students to find out how Jo persuaded the man to cut her hair and pay her the price she wanted for it. When the students have come up with the answer, ask several students to explain how they found it. Hopefully, some students skimmed to find the answer. This should reinforce the idea that we read differently depending on the purpose for reading.
  6. Tell the students that the purpose for reading the remainder of assignment is to learn about the characters and the events in the story. Students should then finish Chapters 14 and 15.
  7. At the end of class, allow for a few minutes of share time. In addition to commenting on different purposes for reading, students should also give examples of their previewing and predictions, as well as any connections they made between the text and themselves, another text, or the world.
- E. *Evaluation*
1. As always, a participation grade can be given.
  2. You may choose to have the students reflect on what they have learned by writing in their journals. Again these can be graded using a rubric. (Appendix B)
  3. Students can list several types of reading they do during the day and explain how they change their reading style based on that purpose. They should also explain why they choose the style they did. Grade these based on the student's understanding of how the type of reading changes based on the purpose for reading.
- F. *Standardized Test/State Test Connections*
1. Metacognitive reading strategies are applicable to all areas of the curriculum.
  2. TAAS Objective 2: The student will identify supporting ideas in a variety of written texts.

### **Lesson Seven: Creating Questions**

- A. *Objective:* The students will learn to question themselves and the text as they read in order to gain deeper meaning and assure comprehension
1. *Lesson Content:* *Little Women* (Chapters 16-18)
  2. *Concept Objective:* The students will come to understand that the purpose of reading is to gain meaning, and that good readers employ a variety of strategies to accomplish this goal.
  3. *Skill Objective:* The students will learn to create questions for themselves as they read in order to assure comprehension and guide reading.
- B. *Materials:*  
*Little Women* (one copy for each student or for each pair of students)

Self-adhesive notes  
Journal or notebook paper  
Chart tablet paper

C. *Vocabulary*

Comprehension  
Questioning

D. *Procedures*

1. Ask the students why they might choose to ask questions of a teacher or a friend. Most students will reply that they ask questions because they want to gain information or be given an answer. Explain that good readers do the same thing while they are reading. They ask themselves questions about what they are reading when they want to know answers. This mental questioning guides readers' thoughts during reading.
2. Next ask the students to share any questions they might have about the book. Attempt to lead the students away from purely factual questions, like "What is the name of the March family's maid?" to questions that require some deeper thought. These questions will often begin with "why" or "how." List the questions generated by the class on the board.
3. As you read aloud from Chapter 16, stop periodically to ask the students if they have thought of any new questions. You may want to have the children write down any questions that they think of while you are reading so that the questions are not forgotten.
4. When you have finished reading the chapter, ask the students if having the questions listed on the board helped them concentrate while you were reading aloud. Students should realize that when they had questions listed, they were able to focus on their thoughts while they were hearing the story. As they learned in the previous lesson, they were able to set their purpose for reading. After discussing this, discuss the answers to the questions posed by the class.
5. Give each student some self-adhesive notes. Ask them to write questions on the notes as they read Chapters 17 and 18. The notes should be placed in the area in which the answers can be found. Remind the students that these should be questions that they are truly curious about, not "quiz" type questions.
6. When all students have finished, have them break up into small groups of three or four to discuss their questions. If they have not worked in "book clubs" before, you may want to spend some time having the class develop ground rules for group work. You may also want to ask one group to serve as a model group. After they have discussed in front of the class, the other students can comment on what they did well, and what they poorly.
7. When the groups are finished, ask the students to write a review of what happened in their group. Students should comment on what was discussed as well as what their group did well and what they need to improve on.
8. When journals are completed, ask students to share one question they thought was particularly good and ask for responses from the whole class. Also discuss what happened in the group meetings. Students may wish to add to or edit their ground rules.
9. Close by reminding students that good readers ask questions before reading, during reading, and after reading. Ask the students if they have any additional questions that were not answered during their reading today. List these questions on a piece of chart tablet paper so they can be used to guide reading during the next class day.

E. *Evaluation*

1. Evaluate each student's participation as a member of a book club.

2. Base the journal evaluation on whether the students addressed each area listed above. A rubric can be used to grade these journal entries. (Appendix B)
- F. *Standardized Test/State Test Connections*
1. Metacognitive reading strategies are applicable to all areas of the curriculum.
  2. TAAS Objective 2: The student will identify supporting ideas in a variety of written texts.
  3. TAAS Objective 5: The student will analyze information in a variety of written texts in order to make inferences and generalizations.

**Lesson Eight: Monitoring Comprehension and Using Fix-up Strategies**

- A. *Objective:* The students will summarize as they read in order to monitor comprehension.  
The students will know how to help themselves when comprehension breaks down.
1. *Lesson Content: Little Women* (Chapters 19-20)
  2. *Concept Objective:* The students will come to understand that the purpose of reading is to gain meaning and that good readers employ a variety of strategies to accomplish this goal.
  3. *Skill Objective:* The students will learn to summarize as a text as they read it and employ fix-up strategies when they become aware that their comprehension is breaking down.
- B. *Materials:*  
*Little Women* (one copy for each student or for each pair of students)  
Journal or notebook paper
- C. *Vocabulary*  
Comprehension  
Monitoring
- D. *Procedures*
1. Begin by asking the class why people read. Students should realize that people read for enjoyment, or to gain information. Next ask the students what would happen if people did not understand what they were reading. Students should reply that they would not want to read anymore. Remind the students that the purpose of reading is to comprehend or understand what they are reading and if this isn't happening, something needs to be changed.
  2. Ask the students to explain what they do when they start having trouble with something they are reading. Be sure to have the students share what they really do, not what someone told them they should do, or what they believe they should do. Write this list on a piece of paper for future reference.
  3. Introduce the students to the "one, two, three" system of monitoring comprehension. Explain to the students that they should periodically stop to summarize or retell in their minds what they have read. If they can, and they are confident that they understand the main ideas of the story, they should mentally assign the section they have just read a "one." If they are a little confused, and can use a fix-up strategy such as re-reading, identifying where the problem is, and focusing on the section, or reading ahead to see if things get clearer, then they should assign the section they have just read a "two." If, even with fix-up strategies, the students are not able to make sense of a section, they should assign the section a "three." Usually assigning a section a "three" is an indicator that they should ask an adult or a friend for assistance. It may be that the reading is beyond a student's instructional reading level.
  4. Tell the students that as they read the last two chapters in the first part of *Little Women*, they should concentrate on stopping every few paragraphs to mentally assign the section they have read a one, two, or a three. Also tell the class that periodically you will have

them “pause, think, retell.” This strategy allows students to monitor comprehension by retelling or a summarizing what they have read.

5. After the students have read for about five minutes, ask them to stop, think about what they have read, and then write a summary in their journals. This is called the "pause, think, and retell" strategy. Remind the students that if they are unable to write a retelling of what they have read, they should probably use some of the fix-up strategies listed earlier to assist them. Do this “pause, think, retell” strategy several times while the class is reading.
  6. To close the class, remind students that good readers monitor their comprehension by summarizing mentally, and then employ fix-up strategies when the comprehension breaks down.
- E. *Evaluation*
1. Evaluate the retellings for completeness. Even if the beginning retellings were limited, if the students employed the fix-up strategies after the first retelling, the quality of these retellings should have increased.
- F. *Standardized Test/State Test Connections*
1. Metacognitive reading strategies are applicable to all areas of the curriculum.
  2. TAAS Objective 2: The student will identify supporting ideas in a variety of written texts.
  3. TAAS Objective 3: The student will summarize a variety of written texts.

### **Lesson Nine : Review-Previewing and Predicting**

- A. *Objective:* The students will apply the skills of previewing and predicting as they begin a new fiction book.
1. *Lesson Content: Little House on the Prairie*
  2. *Concept Objective:* The students will come to understand that the purpose of reading is to gain meaning, and that good readers employ a variety of strategies to accomplish this goal.
  3. *Skill Objective:* The students will learn to use the strategy of previewing to activate prior knowledge and gather the information necessary to make predictions  
*Skill Objective:* The students will learn to make predictions as they read, evaluate these predictions, and generate new predictions.
- B. *Materials:*
- Little House on the Prairie* (one copy for each student or for each pair of students)
  - Journal or notebook paper
  - Chart tablet paper
- C. *Vocabulary*
- Previewing
  - Predicting
- D. *Procedures*
1. Begin class by passing out a copy of *Little House on the Prairie* to each student. Ask the class to think back to the strategies they learned while reading *Little Women*. Also ask the students to share which strategies they believe they should use before they begin reading. If necessary, lead the students to the realization that they should preview a book before they begin reading in order to make predictions.
  2. Next review with the students what they should look at as they are previewing a book. Chapter titles and pictures should be among the things considered. Allow the students time to preview the book and then ask the class to share some predictions they can make

based on their previewing. Some students may have already read the book and you may want to ask them not to share.

3. Make a list of the class predictions on a piece of chart tablet paper. Save this paper so that these predictions can be referred to later. Also ask the students to explain the evidence they found while previewing that supports these predictions. This should allow the students to see that the strategy of previewing allows readers to make logical predictions.
4. Read aloud the first chapter of *Little House on the Prairie*. After reading, ask the students to review the predictions. Ask the students to decide if the predictions came true, if they were contradicted, or if there is not enough information to know at the present time. If there is not enough information to know, ask students to decide if the information they have gathered so far seems to support or reject the prediction.
5. Assign a reasonable reading assignment for the students. As they read, ask them to keep track of predictions that came to mind in their journals.
6. At the end of class, ask students to share some of their predictions. Again, ask the students to explain why they made the predictions that they did. Also refer to the original predictions that were made immediately after previewing. Ask the students if they have any new evidence to either support or contradict the predictions.

E. *Evaluation*

1. Evaluate the students on the completeness of their predictions. If students made reasonable predictions based on the information in the story, they should be given a satisfactory grade.

F. *Standardized Test/State Test Connections*

1. Metacognitive reading strategies are applicable to all areas of the curriculum.
2. TAAS Objective 2: The student will identify supporting ideas in a variety of written texts.
3. TAAS objective 5: The student will perceive relationships and outcomes in a variety of written texts.

**Lesson Ten: Review-Using Background Knowledge and Questioning**

A. *Objective:* The students will review the skills of activating prior knowledge and creating questioning in order to increase comprehension.

1. *Lesson Content: Little House on the Prairie*
2. *Concept Objective:* The students will come to understand that the purpose of reading is to gain meaning, and that good readers employ a variety of strategies to accomplish this goal.
3. *Skill Objective:* The students will learn to draw from their own background knowledge in order to increase comprehension, make inferences, and generate predictions. The students will learn to create questions for themselves as they read in order to assure comprehension and guide reading.

B. *Materials:*

*Little House on the Prairie* (one copy for each student or each pair of students)  
Journal or notebook paper  
Self-adhesive notes in three colors  
Butcher paper

C. *Vocabulary*

Schema

D. *Procedures*

1. Ask the students to share what they recall from the lessons on background knowledge presented during the reading of *Little Women*. Students should remember that everyone

has some background knowledge (schema) on a subject and that our schema change as we learn new information. They should also be reminded that we can make text-to-self, text-to-text, and text-to-world connections. Ask students to give examples of each type of connection, possibly made during their reading for the previous lesson.

2. Tell the students that our schema, or background knowledge, is also important because it allows us to realize what we do not know. For example, many children who live in cities might not be at all familiar with the type of chores done on a farm, and thus they may not have a connection to these actions in *Little House on the Prairie*.
3. Guide the students through a KWL (What we Know, What we Want to know, and What we Learned) activity. If students have done this type of activity before, you may want to have them begin working individually and then share with the whole group or a partner. If a whole group chart is created, write it on butcher paper large enough for everyone to see. First, have the students list everything they know about life on a farm in the 1800s. This list of information comes from their background knowledge or schema, and should be listed in the "K" area of the chart. Next, have them list what they would like to know. These are the questions that should be used to guide their reading and should be listed in the "W" area of the chart.
4. Assign the student a reasonable number of pages based on the time allowed for the activity. As the students read the assigned pages, have them mark with one color self-adhesive note when they find an answer to one of the questions. If they think of new questions, have them write the question down on the other color and place it in the appropriate place in the book. The third color should be used when the student makes a text-to-self, text-to-text, or text-to world connection. Depending on the ability level of the class, you may want to have the students do the first two steps while reading one chapter and the third step while reading another.
5. When all students have finished reading, ask the students to share the answers that they found to the questions posed before reading began. These should be within the "L" column of the KWL chart. Next have the students share any additional questions that came to mind. You may want to add a fourth column to the KWL chart for these additional questions.
6. Finally, ask the class to share any connections they made between the text and themselves, other texts, or the world.
7. To check for understanding, you may want to have the students write a summary of the lesson for the day, focusing on what they learned about what good readers do. They can also give example of the questions they thought of, and the connections they made.

E. *Evaluation*

1. Evaluate the summaries for completeness and evidence of understanding using a rubric. (Appendix B)
2. You may choose to give a participation grade based on the students' attempts to mark sections in the book using the self-adhesive notes, and their willingness to participate in class discussion.

F. *Standardized Test/State Test Connections*

1. Metacognitive reading strategies are applicable to all areas of the curriculum.
2. TAAS Objective 2: The student will identify supporting ideas in a variety of written texts.
3. TAAS Objective 5: The student will analyze information in a variety of written texts in order to make inferences and generalizations.

**Lesson Eleven: Review-Setting a Purpose and Monitoring Comprehension**

- A. *Objective:* The students will set a purpose for reading, monitoring as they read to ensure that they are accomplishing this purpose, and employ fix-up strategies when they become aware that comprehension is breaking down.
1. *Lesson Content: Little House on the Prairie*
  2. *Concept Objective:* The students will come to understand that the purpose of reading is to gain meaning, and that good readers employ a variety of strategies to accomplish this goal.
  3. *Skill Objective:* The students will learn to set a purpose for reading in order to read for meaning. The students will learn to summarize as a text as they read it and employ fix-up strategies when they become aware that their comprehension is breaking down.
- B. *Materials:*  
*Little House on the Prairie* (one copy for each student or each pair of students)  
 Journal or notebook paper
- C. *Vocabulary*  
 Purpose  
 Comprehension  
 Monitoring
- D. *Procedures*
1. Ask the students to name a variety of purposes for reading. Next, ask the students to set the purpose for today's reading. Perhaps something was left unresolved at the end of yesterday's reading and they would like to figure out what happened. Maybe some of the questions listed in yesterday's lesson could to be answered today. Once the students have chosen their purpose for reading, write that purpose on the board.
  2. Remind the students of the "one, two, three" comprehension monitoring system and ask them what they do when they are at each step. Ask students to give examples of what they did when they were at a two or a three. If the list of fix-up strategies is still visible, remind the students of its location and add new steps or edit old ones if the students believe changes should be made. If it is not visible, create a new list of strategies. List all strategies that students have used to help them when they believe that their comprehension is breaking down.
  3. Reintroduce the "pause-think-retell" system of summarizing. Tell the students that as they read today's chapters, you would like them to pause at least three times to retell what they have read in their journals. Allow the students to choose when to pause. This allows the students to take more control over their reading behaviors. Remind the students to always keep the purpose for reading in mind.
  4. At the end of class, refer to the purpose set for reading. Ask students to write down their response to the query posed in the purpose. Once students have had a reasonable amount of time to write a response, ask some students to share their response. After the discussion, allow students to alter their responses if necessary. You may also want to students to write a summary of what they have learned during the day's lesson.
- E. *Evaluation*
1. Evaluate the retellings and the response to the purpose for completeness and accuracy. Since there was a time for self-correction, all responses should be reasonable. Grade these responses with a rubric. (Appendix B)
- F. *Standardized Test/State Test Connections*
1. Metacognitive reading strategies are applicable to all areas of the curriculum.
  2. TAAS Objective 2: The student will identify supporting ideas in a variety of written texts.

3. TAAS Objective 3: The student will summarize a variety of written texts.

## **VI. CULMINATING ACTIVITY**

### **“How to Be a Good Reader”**

1. This cross-curricular activity incorporates both reading and English skills and should take approximately three days to complete.
2. On the first day, have students brainstorm all the things they have learned that good readers do to increase comprehension. Have them organize those ideas into three paragraphs, each with a topic sentence. The topics taught together in the review lessons provide one example of a way similar topics can be combined. Have the students also begin their introduction paragraph.
3. On the second day, students should finish their introduction paragraph, write their three body, or “how to” paragraphs, and their conclusion paragraph. Rough drafts should be proofread by peers and then by an adult.
4. On the third day, final drafts should be written and “published” into a book, complete with a title page.
5. These books can be kept for reference by the students or shared with other fifth graders, or younger students.

## **VII. HANDOUTS/WORKSHEETS**

Appendix A: Metacognitive Strategy Index Data Form

Appendix B: Grading Rubric for Response Journals

## **VIII. BIBLIOGRAPHY**

Alcott, Louisa May. *Little Women*. Abridged by Muriel Fuller. New York: Scholastic, Inc., ISBN 0-590-43797-6.

Keene, Ellin Oliver and Susan Zimmerman. *Mosaics of Thought: Teaching Comprehension in a Reader's Workshop*. Portsmouth, New Hampshire: Heinemann, 1997, ISBN 0-435-07237-4.

Schmitt, Maribeth Cassidy. "A Questionnaire to Measure Children's Awareness of Strategic Reading Processes." *The Reading Teacher* (March 1990): 454-461.

Wilder, Laura Ingalls. *Little House on the Prairie*. New York: Harper Trophy, 1971, ISBN 0-06-440002-6.

Appendix B

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Grading Rubric for Response Journals**

- A** The student shows a complete grasp of the day's lesson.  
The student gives extensive specific information about his/her personal knowledge of the subject.  
Numerous specific examples are given from the book.
- B** The student demonstrates an understanding of the majority of the day's lesson.  
The student gives some information about his/her knowledge of the subject.  
A limited number of examples are given from the book.
- C** The student demonstrates some gaps in his/her understanding of the day's lesson.  
The student gives some information about his/her knowledge of the subject.  
or  
A limited number of examples are given from the book.
- D** The student demonstrates significant gaps in their understanding of the day's lesson.  
The student gives little information about his/her knowledge of the book.  
or  
The student gives no examples from the book.
- F** No attempt was made.