Chunking Text

Chunking Text is a practice that allows students to breakdown difficult passages into more comprehensible pieces or smaller parts. By doing this, students are able to identify key ideas and words, increase their ability to paraphrase, organize their thinking, and synthesize information.

☐ Consider the reading level of the students and determine the appropriate length of chunked text to use with each student. Depending students' reading level, the lengths of chunks can vary.

  • A struggling reader may work with phrases, rather than sentences.
  • A stronger reader can often work with longer chunks. Students can rewrite "chunks" in their own words.

☐ Identify the text that aligns with the lesson objectives/standards.

☐ Model how to chunk text using a simple text.

☐ Guide students through the practice and evaluate their level of understanding prior to allowing them to chunk text on their own.

☐ Allow time (3-5 minutes) for students to chunk the text (if it is not already done for them). Students can work alone or with a partner, scaffolding teacher support when necessary.

☐ Provide students ample time to read their chunks (using the reading/decoding strategies), paraphrase, and record the main ideas of the chunks in their own words.

☐ Assess students using the paraphrased text to determine understanding and reading ability.

Additional Tools

Create a Visual

When students are able to use imagery, teachers will see an improvement with comprehension and retention of ideas. Have students visually represent the selected chunk as a picture or symbol. The use of non-linguistic representation (Marzano) is an example of this variation.

Identifying significance and connections

After students summarize a portion of the text, ask them to respond to a few questions that will help them make connections and understand the significance of the text.

For more strategies and/or resources, visit
houstonisd.org/EffectivePractices .

ALERTS

This is a means to an end (understanding the text), not the objective itself.

QUICK TIPS

Review decoding strategies: Use context clues, underline, read aloud, multiple readings, looking up unfamiliar words, and synonyms for new words.