

Instructional Literacy Strategies for Content Area Classrooms

Strategies used after a learning activity help students connect old and new knowledge by reframing it in a way that makes sense to them and relevant to their lives.

Strategy	Literacy Skills*	Purpose	Description
Carousel Brainstorming	C, W	Activates prior knowledge before a topic is discussed or used as a review at end.	Teacher posts 4-5 questions at the top of chart paper (one /paper) & tapes them on the wall around the classroom. Each group of students gets a colored marker and responds to each question in a carousel fashion until all are answered.
Exit Slips	C, W	Helps students reflect on what they've learned and prepare their minds for continued learning on a topic. Teachers can use Exit Slips to assess the effectiveness of their teaching.	Students take a few minutes to jot down their thoughts at the end of a lesson and hand in, usually without a name.
Making Connections	C	Students gain a deeper understanding of a topic when they make authentic connections to it.	Students are asked to make relevant connections to material by explaining how it can relate to their lives and the world around them.
Professor Know-it-All	C	Students become an expert on a topic to inform their peers and answer classmates' questions.	After students learn their topic (usually done in small groups), they are asked by teacher to answer classmates' questions about the topic.
RAFT Writing	C, W	Provides students an opportunity to clarify their own thinking through writing and help teachers gauge students' understanding of content.	Students write about a topic when given a RAFT prompt: R - role A - audience F - format T - topic
Tossed Terms	C, V	Use to review and reinforce content learned in a game format.	A box is created where each side displays vocabulary terms or process terms such as analyze, compare, describe, contrast, justify, and explain. In small groups, students roll the box and respond to the side facing up.

*Literacy Skills: C-comprehension, L- language development, V-vocabulary development, W-writing