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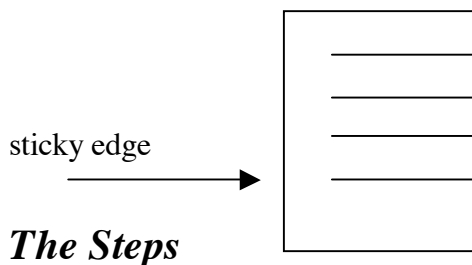
Tips for Success with Informational Text

From Linda Hoyt

Very Important Points Strategy (VIP)

(originally printed in *Revisit, Reflect, Retell* (1999) and *Make It Real* (2003), Heinemann Publications)

When reading informational texts, students can easily overload their short-term memory by trying to remember *everything* on a page. To help them learn to determine importance and engage in the powerful thinking that occurs when you isolate the most important ideas, try the V.I.P Strategy.



The Steps

1. Set the Stage:

Provide students with a limited number of sticky notes that have been cut with slim strips extending out from the sticky edge. Explain that these strips are like money. Each student will get a small number of VIP strips and no more. As readers they need to think carefully and spend their strips wisely.

2. Demonstrate:

Model how to read a brief selection, thinking aloud about ideas that are highly important versus those of lesser significance. When you isolate a Very Important Point, tear off a strip of sticky note and place it on that portion of the text. (With primary students, be sure to show them how to mark a portion of a photograph as so many important ideas are often included in the visuals.)

3. Provide Guided Practice:

Have students work independently or with partners, placing VIP markers on the most important points they identify.

4. Share and Reflect:

Engage partners in sharing their VIP markers with each other, explaining why they selected the points that are marked in their articles.

5. Sum It Up:

Guide the students in talking about the VIP strategy and how it helped them as a reader.