

# Reading in the Middle

A newsletter for the Middle School Reading Special Interest Group of the International Reading Association



## Motivating Middle School Boys to Read

### Editor's Note

This issue of *Reading in the Middle* offers an exciting combination of teaching tips, great reads, and research to assist you in reaching all the needs of your middle school students.

Sheilah Barnett's article about motivating boys to read combines humor with the reality faced in many middle school classrooms. She

does an excellent job balancing suggestions for teaching reading and motivating reading with middle school boys.

Dr. Koss' book list continues our focus on middle school boys with an annotated list of

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books.

Jonathan's review of David Brown's teaching resource provides you with information regarding one of the newest books available for teachers.

Amy's article is full of wonderful ideas for making literacy a school-wide priority.

I hope you enjoy.

To submit articles, booklists, or teaching ideas send your submission to [msrsig@gmail.com](mailto:msrsig@gmail.com)

## IRA Phoenix

Phoenix was a great success! We learned about wonderful books for middle school students with presentations from Brandon Mull author of the *Fablehaven* series and Sharon Draper author of *Just Another Hero*, *Copper Sun*, and many more!

Tammy Schwartz, Jonathan Bennett, and John Ploehs demonstrated the power that comes from a University-School Partnership.

Cathy Hunter shared her work with the Teens for Literacy group.

Nance S. Wilson and Billie Jo Dunaway shared long-term projects for getting middle school students engaged in higher-level thinking.

## Submit a proposal for Los Angeles

We are now accepting proposals for our session at IRA in Los Angeles 2010. We are looking for presentations that demonstrate effective teaching methods for teaching middle school reading, for motivating middle school to read, for improving the writing of middle school students, etc.

Proposals should include the following information:

- Literature overview
- Description of presentation
- Significance of topic to audience.

Proposals are due May 15, 2009 to [msrsig@gmail.com](mailto:msrsig@gmail.com)

# Can Butt Wars Really Motivate Guys to Read?

By: Sheilah Barnett

The largest gender gap in student achievement is in literacy (Smith & Wilhelm, 2002). Therefore, we need to focus our efforts on motivating boys to read. This is not to say forget about girls and reading. We need to encourage all students to read but sometimes guys just need extra encouragement.

Boys typically begin their education in kindergarten with a love of reading. My own three sons loved when I read to them when they were young. Now my five-year-old and eight-year-old grandsons enjoy being read to by adults. They each also enjoy reading books on their own. However, as my sons grew older, reading was replaced with sports, girls, cars, and other more *manly* pursuits. I often asked them why they did not read more and was told that books were not interesting or that books were boring. They wanted action and sitting still reading a book just did not cut it with them.

Boys generally like to be in motion or active and reading is often viewed as a sitting still activity. As boys get older, they seem to read less and less. This sad fact becomes very obvious in middle school. My remedial reading class is customarily largely populated with males. There are various reasons for this heavy population of males. One of the varied reasons is the perception that boys have picked up concerning reading. Boys often view reading as a feminine activity. Boys find it hard to sit still. Video games are more exciting and you get to shoot weapons. Television has more action. A bat can make a ball go a long way. A touchdown pass is more thrilling. A motorcycle is much faster. I could go on and on about the reasons that boys give for not reading. Boys need sound, color, and motion to get their brains stimulated (Gurian, 2002). Therefore, boys think that reading is immobile and just not much fun. If I could invent a machine where boys could ride a motorcycle and read at the same time, I could really motivate boys to read! I would probably get paid a lot more than I do on my teacher's salary also. A positive reading attitude is tied with a gain in reading achievement. So what are we as educators and parents going to do?

Boys need to be challenged in academic achievement, which includes reading. Studies have shown a strong relationship between reading

interest(s) and achievement. Boys have various outside interest and hobbies. Boys cannot ride their motorcycle, throw or hit a ball, play a video game or watch television in school. Nevertheless, we can take these varied interests and find reading materials that boys can utilize to learn more about their favorite activities.

I thought that I would take an informal "family poll" and ask the younger males in my family, "What is your favorite movie?" When I asked my eight-year-old grandson he replied, "Justice League". The characters in this movie include Flash, Green Lantern, Batman, and Wonder Woman. They fight crime and are superheroes, which entice boys to want to be like them. My grandson even thinks that when he grows up he is going to be a Superhero. When my granddaughter, Kathryn Shelby, tried to tell Gavin that he could not be a superhero, he replied, "Ok. But when you get in trouble don't call me to come save you!" Reading superhero books and watching these types of movies has convinced him that he can become such a character when he is grown. Many books are available which feature these superhero characters such as *Justice League of America Volume 3: The Injustice League* by Dwayne McDuffie, *JLA: Superman's Guide to the Universe* by Jackie Gaff, and *Superman: The Never-Ending Battle (Justice League of America)* by Roger Stern. The JLA by Jackie Gaff has an Accelerated Reader (AR) test available and is written on a 6.8 reading level.

I asked my eighteen-year-old nephew, Jacob, about his favorite movie and he said *Top Gun* and *Iron Man*. According to him, *Top Gun* was manly and humorous while *Iron Man* was full of action. From this interest, Jacob could find books on the military, F-14's, and other types of military aircraft. The book *Top Gun* by Mike Cogan is available in paperback at very cheap rates. Other books include *Anytime, Baby! Hail and Farewell to the U.S. Navy F-14 Tomcat* by Erik Hildebrandt and *Strike: Beyond Top Gun: U.S. Naval Strike and Air Warfare Center* by Rick Llinares. Anytime, Baby even sounds like something my sons would say to each other – in other words, *Guy Talk*, which is vastly different from *Girl Talk*.

Iron Man is a comic book character, and there are many comic books featuring him. *Iron Man* by Peter David is a paperback that coincides

with the new Iron Man film. There are numerous comic book versions of Iron Man. Comic books should be considered reading material. *The Creation of Iron Man* by Adam Eisenberg is written on an 8.3 reading level. Iron Man is a superhero who evolved from a character who was a genius inventor and used this genius to develop weapons and defenses to fight crime. His Iron Man suit is very technologically advanced which inveigles boys to read about it and to further their curiosity about technology by reading other books.

My fifteen-year-old nephew's favorite movies are *Transformers* and *Resident Evil* because there are lots of guns and action. My twenty-three year old son's favorite movie was also *Transformers* because of the action. Corbin said, "Aunt Sheila, you know boys love action". I hear this often from guys. Corbin and Jared could read *Transformers* books, weapons books, military books, etc. *Transformers: Stormbringer* is a paperback by Simon Furman and Don Figueroa. Reviews by guys discussed how manly the *Transformers* were in the story and that there were no wimpy humans to mess up the story. A lot of guys love robots especially ones that can transform into a completely different creature. Many may think that *Transformer* books are just for younger children but the movie was a hit for children, young people and adults. I loved it myself! This paperback is a version for the mature reader so teenagers and young adults would enjoy reading it. There were several good reviews from guys on this book as well. There are bountiful versions of *Transformer* books available for all ages. This movie and the various books appeal especially to males who grew up with the *Transformers* as well as the new generation of *Transformer* lovers. Or dare I say addicts? My twenty-seven year old son, Ashley, is a *Transformers* addict. He has even begun to collect old *Transformer* books and movies.

My male students love to look at encyclopedia type books of "guy things". There are many weapons books available including *The Encyclopedia of Weapons: From World War II to the Present Day* by Chris Bishop and *High-Tech Weapons* by John Allen. The Allen book has an AR test and is written on an 8.4 reading level.

Disney puts out books in relation to their movies and television shows. Many of my boy students like to read about *Cory in the House* and *The Suite Life of Zack and Cody*. *New Kid in Town (Cory in the House)* by Alice Alfonsi

and *Hotel Hangout (Suite Life of Zack and Cody)* by Kitty Richards are two paperbacks which feature these characters who are full of life and get into various predicaments that males find funny. My African-American students like to read books with African-American characters, and Cory is one of their favorite. Seeing books which feature characters that students are familiar with enhances the appeal of these books.

Teachers and parents can take these fascinations that boys have with adventurous characters, transforming vehicles, and weapons and use this to find reading materials for boys in order to pique their curiosity. One of the best ways to become a better reader is to read more and more. In order to get boys to read more, we must find out what is exciting to them and turn this knowledge into reading motivation. Take your own informal survey in your classroom or with family members to find out what the guys like. This does not have to just apply to boys. Girls can also be surveyed to find out what they like to read about. Give books and magazines to boys as gifts, to as a replacement for transforming robots but to augment the transforming creatures. A gift of a skateboard could include the book, *Advanced Skateboarding: From Kick Turns to Catching Air* by Aaron Rosenberg, which also has an AR test and is written on a 5.6 reading level. A magazine subscription is a good way to get guys into reading. Young male adults are not just limited to *Sports Illustrated* any more. An assortment of "guy magazines" includes *Popular Mechanics*, *Popular Science*, *NASCAR Scene*, *The Skateboard Mag*, *Muscle Car*, *Motorcross Action*, and *Wrestling U.S.A.*

Take your son to the library to check out books. If he will not go, check out books for him that you think he may notice. Yard sales, consignment shops and Goodwill stores are another inexpensive source for books, magazines and comic books. Amazon.com and Half.com are great and economical sources for books. I make it known that I will take any books that people do not want. Teachers, librarians, students, and parents all give me their books, which allow me to offer a huge variety of reading material to my students. Wendy Schwartz(2002) states that boys need to have a voice in the choice of reading materials. This applies to the classroom, the media center, and to the home.

Anna Quindlen(1998) thinks that boys do not read as often as they should because there are very few male characters in books that are portrayed as readers. This is often the case in

movies as well. This goes back to viewing reading as a feminine or girly activity. Characters in books and movies who read are often women. A few examples come to mind such as Jo in *Little Women*, Laura Ingalls Wilder in *Little House on the Prairie*, Margaret in *Are You There God? It's Me Margaret*, Sheila in *Otherwise Known as Sheila the Great*, Amber Brown in *Amber Brown is Not a Crayon*, all of the American Girl series books, and Emily Elizabeth in the Clifford the Big Red Dog series. However, more and more books are being written using characters such as Cory in the House and Zack and Cody in *The Suite Life*. Boys really enjoy reading the *Harry Potter* series because of the strong male characters. Once a boy gets hooked on a book in a series he is very likely to read other books in the series. This provides a sense of comfort and familiarity (Moloney, 2002).

Boys like short nonfiction books where they can find information quickly such as books about sports figures. *Brett Favre* by Terry Dougherty, *LeBron James* by John Hareas, *Extreme Sports Stars* by Philip Abraham and *On the Halfpipe with... Tony Hawk* by Glenn Stout are books that boys can go to get information about their favorite sports stars quickly. The reading levels for these books range from 5.7 to 7.9. Boys also prefer to have reading materials with a lot of pictures which most sports celebrity books contain.

Humor is very popular with boys, especially the *Super Diaper Baby* series by Dav Pilkey. Boys check out my *Super Diaper Baby* and *Captain Underpants* books and never bring them back or bring them back after they dropped one in the toilet or some other disgusting place. However, with titles like *Captain Underpants and the Big, Bad Battle of the Bionic Booger Boy* and *Captain Underpants and the Attack of the Talking Toilet* how can they resist? Those titles just reach out to snatch guys. *Butt Wars: The Final Conflict* and *The Day My Butt Went Psycho* by Andy Griffiths are other titles that just seem to motivate guys to gravitate toward them. How can an adolescent boy resist a book with the word *butt* in the title? That is like a forbidden word that the teacher does not want you to say. But talking about the book allows them to get away with this. I have guys who read the title several times just so they can say *butt* out loud in class and make everyone laugh.

Gary Paulsen books are also popular with boys because they have strong male characters that are adventurous and daring. Paulsen's characters often go on solitary life or death journeys and emerge as stronger more mature people which appeals to guys. Brian is a strong character in several of Paulsen's books including *Hatchet*, *Brian's*

*Winter*, and *Hatchet: The Return*. Guys like to identify with the Brain character. These books are on a 5.7 to 5.9 reading level.

More male authors need to tailor books to entice middle school boys to read. Pilkey does a great job with the Captain Underpants series as does Andy Griffiths with the Butt series. Middle school boys love humorous pranks which is rampant with Captain Underpants. The boys, George and Harold, in these books enjoy making fun of their principal at times, which is truly funny to middle schoolers. The books are written in a comic book form and from George and Harold's point of view, which often includes misspelled words. Students love this. Authors have typically focused on the elementary and higher education students, but a focus on adolescents is becoming more prevalent.

Since reading is tied to academic achievement and educational progress, boys need to be encouraged to cultivate a positive attitude about reading. As boys complete a Super Diaper Baby or Captain Underpants book they can be encouraged to read *The Day My Butt Went Psycho*. Captain Underpants was written on a 3.5 reading level. *The Day My Butt Went Psycho* is a 3.9 reading level book. This may not seem to be much advancement but with reluctant or low achieving readers we must accept and celebrate small gains. There are Transformer and Justice League books at the 6.0 reading level and beyond. Military and weapons books begin at a very elementary reading level and go into the college level. As boys get interested in a subject they will continue to search for related books and hopefully advance their reading levels along with their curiosity.

Some things that parents and teachers can do are to provide books with interesting colors and pictures on the cover in order to catch the male eye. Recognize materials such as game manuals, comics, magazines, newspapers, etc as acceptable. There are various websites just for male readers such as [www.guysread.com](http://www.guysread.com) by Jon Sczieska and Boys to Men, <http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/>, by the Hamilton-Wentworth school district.

Boys are very competitive and this love of competition can be used by teachers and parents to tempt them to read. Accelerated Reader points can also be used for competition. I have two field trips per year for my students and the top AR readers in my school. The students with the top fifteen AR points out of my six remedial reading classes and the top five AR point's students in the school go with me to a complementary movie. We also eat lunch there and best of all we miss almost a whole day of school! This gets very competitive. I post the points

list of the top ten readers in the school on a bulletin board in the hallway. It is called AR Island and we wait to see each week who will get kicked off the island. I post the top twenty AR points of my students in my classroom and students anxiously await the list each week to see how much they have advanced or if they have been kicked off of AR Island. The last field trip was to see *Prince Caspian*. It was an amazing movie and the students loved the experience. Several even begin to read the Narnia series. The number of books on or above particular reading levels can be developed into a competition. Be creative! There are many competitions for books and boys.

Small successes must be celebrated in boys and reading. As guys finish a book just ask them what the book was about and what they thought about it. They do not have to write a book report to publicize thoughts on the book. Often when boys are asked to perform a specific written assignment after completing a book, they get dissuaded from reading. There are times when a written report is necessary, but this can be a turn off. Offer various opportunities for boys to read for fun. Find out what a boy is interested in and go from there. Boys often love racing, motorcycles, cars, snowboarding, etc. and there are many, many books on these topics. Skating and sports are other areas of interest for boys and with which there are many books.

Parents as well as educators need to encourage boys to read more. Boys need to be encouraged to read for information as well as for fun. They need to know that reading is fun and not just a boring drudgery. Education should always reinforce good reading habits. When Colton is reading a comic book, he should be praised for reading instead of being told that a comic book is not good literary material. Hopefully a love of comic books will lead to an attraction to other types of reading material.

Parents and educators need to work together in order to motivate boys to read. Boys need male role models. Boys need to see other males reading. Sports figures make posters about reading but are not seen or pictured as a reader. More "celebrities" as well as every day men need to be seen as readers. Fathers need to let their sons see them reading. Fathers can share stories from the sports section of the newspaper with their son. Fathers and sons can read the same book and discuss the different messages each received from the reading. Alternatively, they can just share the comical parts of the book. Schools can operate a mentoring program where males are encouraged to read books with boys. Libraries can have "Guys Only" sections with "guy books". Just ask boys

what they like. They will tell you. When guys find out that the teacher, parents and other role models are interested in them, they will begin to accept what the adult is trying to teach them about reading. Reading can be fun. Reading is beneficial. Reading *is* manly.

Butt Wars can be successful!

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## Dr. Koss' Book Lists

### Guys Read: New Series Titles Boys Love to Read

**Melanie D. Koss, Ph.D, Northern Illinois University**

Boys like action, boys like adventure, boys like fast-paced novels, and boys like reading books in series. Literature series are often chosen as favorites by middle school male readers. Entering a new world, getting to know the same set of characters, and following them on their adventures can be a great motivator for reluctant readers. Here are the latest and greatest new releases in series boys love to read and librarians can't keep off the shelves.

***The 39 Clues: The Sword Thief (Book 3).* By Peter Lerangis. 2009. Scholastic. (978-0545060431)**

In Book 3 of the infamous 30 Clues mystery and adventure series, Amy and Dan Cahill are back! Spies have reported that the duo have been seen in the company of Alistair Oh, a dangerous revelation. Picking up where *One False Note* ended, the pair find more information on the Cahill quest and take on yet another clue, but this time the results could be deadly!

***Fablehaven: Secrets of the Dragon Sanctuary (Book 3).* By Brandon Mull. 2009. Shadow Mountain. (978-1606410424).**

Two artifacts found, three to go, and the hunt continues! Kendra may have found a clue to another artifact in Patton's Journal of Secrets, and she and the Knights of the Dawn must try to find it. Book three takes Kendra and her crew to Wyrmoost, the dragon sanctuary, a very unsafe place for humans. Will they survive to find the next artifact?

***Tunnels Books: Deeper (Book 2).* By Roderick Gordon. 2009. The Chicken House. (978-0459871785).**

Book One found Will on a quest for his missing father, and he wound up deep underground in a mysterious world. Will continues his hunt in Book Two, and faces Styx and his evil plan to release a dangerous plague on those who live aboveground. Will must stop the plot, but he's also running out of time to find and save his father. Which path will he choose?

***100 Cupboards: Dandelion Fire (Book 2).* By N. D. Wilson. 2009. Random House. (978-0375838835).**

When Henry was forced to visit his aunt and uncle's farm he found mysterious cupboard walls hidden behind his bedroom walls, cupboard that allowed him entrance to other worlds. He knows his family secrets and the truth behind who is his can be found in those other worlds, but does he have the bravery to go through the doors and find out? *Dandelion Fire* follows Henry's journey through the cupboard doors once more.

***Percy Jackson & the Olympians: The Last Olympian (Book 5).* By Rick Riordan. 2009. Hyperion. (978-1423101475).**

The conclusion of the Percy Jackson series, *The Last Olympian* will not disappoint. The time for the battle against the Titans has finally arrived, and Percy and his half-blood army are ready, or as ready as they can be. It is also the time of Percy's sixteenth birthday, the day his prophecy will be revealed. Will the prophecy come true? Will Percy be able to stop Kronos and save Mount Olympus? Readers will not be able to stop turning the pages and find out the truth, for once and for all.

## Teacher Resources

By Jonathan Bennett

Brown, David West. (2009). *In other words: Lessons on grammar, code switching, and academic writing*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

The conflict between Standard English (SE) and Vernacular English (VE) is not emerging for the first time. Even from the relative youth of the language itself, English has faced a battle between what is spoken and what is academically/socially accepted. We, as teachers, face the daunting task of bridging the gap between SE and VE. Choosing how to address this dichotomy can alienate and frustrate students, dismiss culture and/or leave students disadvantaged and powerless.

From the beginning, Brown acknowledges there are no quick fixes in language differences. The main goals in his lessons are to develop academic writing skills and create a better understanding of the English language. Though he gives agency to VE, his lessons are geared towards creating academic writing that satisfies the highest standards. There is purpose when teachers present writing assignments, which takes into account content and audience. Brown's lessons build cognizance of these rhetorical situations, helping students to then choose language to address these devices in language and writing. It is the awareness of the multidimensionality of English, combined with practice, which will build students who can adjust their writing to fit whatever purposes and pressures that are placed upon them.

In one great example, he uses to describe the various discrepancies is the "don't end a sentence with a preposition" rule. Like table manners, Brown states, this rule is more based on social conventions rather than communicative necessity. It is

therefore important to make students aware of these pressures, when they should be addressed and when they should be challenged. In this section, Brown distinguishes between descriptive and prescriptive grammar: the schism between VE and SE usage. This approach to language centers on a singular concept known as code-switching: how to translate VE to SE, and when to do i

The lessons themselves are set to be 15 minutes each, which is an appropriate amount of time to give importance to the content while not usurping the multitudinous skills English teachers are required to cultivate throughout the day. Brown provides important definitions for terms that will guide the lessons, for example: discourse marker (like, I mean, you know, well).

Most useful is the background that is provided for each rule preceding sets of lessons. Brown provides an academic approach to VE devices and creates a framework to build connections to SE while maintaining the validity of VE's existence. The lesson plans contain the objectives, procedures, handouts and suggestions for outside materials. Lessons themes vary from uses of 'like', reflexive pronouns, and language variation to nominalization.

While this book is advertised as for grades 7-12, the lesson ideas can be adapted for middle grades with relative ease. At all age levels, students should find a level of awareness that there are various versions of English being used around the world. While it may be unfair, SE is the "high form" that is socially accepted as the norm. But SE isn't necessarily the more commonly spoken dialect. This book provides lessons that can help teachers combat the unfamiliar terrain many students find in SE. Perhaps more importantly, Brown gives ideas, insight and context to empower teachers and students alike. I'd recommend this book especially for teachers with urban and ELL students.

# Fostering a school wide climate of literacy

By Amy Alexandra Wilson

Across all disciplines, students make sense of *texts*--from equations in mathematics, to three-dimensional models in science, to online newspapers in social studies, and more. Because reading and writing are part and parcel of any content area, reading and writing instruction is authentic to each discipline as well.

Nonetheless, seeking to develop school wide goals for literacy instruction can be difficult when goals and texts across the content areas do not always seem to have much in common. For instance, how could approaching an algebraic equation possibly be similar to approaching a poem?

Though common texts in different disciplines are certainly read according to discipline-specific conventions, middle school teachers can still work together to develop common goals and a common language for literacy instruction. An underlying premise of this literacy instruction is the concept that *metacognition*, or the recognition and regulation of one's approach to texts, increases students' ability to solve, engage with, comprehend, or interpret those texts.

In support of this goal, the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (2000) has stated: "Good problem solvers become aware of what they are doing and frequently monitor, or self-assess, their progress or adjust their strategies as they encounter and solve problems. Such reflective skills (called metacognition) are much more likely to develop in a classroom environment that supports them" (p. 54; parentheses in original).

Supporting students to develop self-regulation of their approach to texts, has been

shown to improve students' comprehension in the other content areas as well. How, then, can middle school teachers and administrators collaborate to encourage students to develop strategic, reflective stances toward texts as they participate across different content areas?

1. *Develop a school wide vocabulary that is reinforced across content areas.* Teachers can work together to develop a core list of strategies for reading texts that they can reinforce across the disciplines as they immerse students in the language of comprehension strategies. The following terms can serve as examples of terms and their attendant strategies that teachers can reinforce. Students can *monitor comprehension* when approaching texts and recognize when they don't understand something, and they can *ask questions* of any text, including questions to help them to clarify their understanding. They can *predict* solutions to mathematics problems, outcomes for lab experiments, or the ending of a novel, and they can *check and revise their predictions* as more information becomes available.

Students can *visualize* what's happening in a word problem by drawing a picture, or they can *visualize* historical events. They can *make inferences* regarding why certain historical figures made the decisions that they did, or they can infer why scientific phenomena react the way that they do. They can *make connections* between what they are reading and previous experiences. In sum, though the conventions and practices surrounding texts are different from discipline to discipline, some key approaches to texts can be modified and applied, whether those texts are word problems, maps, or the natural world.

Teachers may want to place these key terms on a card that they post next to their computer screen or in another visible place. They can

explicitly use these terms in their assessments and in their discussion prompts—for instance, asking why do you *infer* the character made that decision? instead of why do you *think* the character made that decision—to signal to students that they are expected to apply a specific type of thinking as a strategy for engaging with the text. Moreover, teachers can continuously reinforce these words through the natural language of their instruction; for example, through praising a student for sharing her grandfather’s experiences in World War Two as a great way of *making connections* to a video shown in history, or praising a student who asked a clarification question on a scientific passage for *monitoring his comprehension* and *asking questions*.

Comprehension instruction is not a “one-shot” deal: A reading teacher cannot show a student how to make inferences, for instance, and then declare that the “job is done.” Instead, fostering metacognition means supporting students in developing particular ways of thinking and approaching texts.

2. *While acknowledging commonalities in comprehension strategies across the disciplines, also note how strategies may need to be modified to meet the conventions of each discipline.* Generalized reading strategies alone are not sufficient to induct students into what it means to speak, write, and read like a historian, a biologist, a mathematician, or a literary critic. For instance, though students can *predict* what the answer to a numeric problem may be, in disciplines of mathematics, these predictions are often instead called *estimations*, and they require particular actions (e.g., rounding numbers) that are different from making predictions about what a character will do next in a novel.

Likewise, students may make sense of *labs* or *experiments* as key texts in various scientific disciplines, and these texts also require students to predict and revise predictions. However, though hypotheses in science may propose predicted relationships among phenomena, the standards and

evidence required for testing and revising these hypotheses are different from standards required for revising predictions in the reading of other texts. In sum, though content area teachers can work together to develop a common vocabulary that shows students how metacognition is the same across various disciplines, it is just as important to highlight how approaches to texts are different as well.

3. Along with teaching comprehension strategies that can be applied to individual texts, *give students opportunities to develop overarching frameworks for thinking about how the forms, nature, purpose, and uses of texts may vary from discipline to discipline.* To accomplish this goal, students can engage in conversations with prompts such as the following:

- What does it mean to read and write like a mathematician, historian, chemist, biologist, geologist, poet, or novelist?
- What forms of representation would you use (as a mathematician, biologist, etc.)?
- How would you prove your points (as a poet, a historian, etc.)?
- What would count as evidence for you?
- What topics would you cover?
- What are some purposes behind what you read and write?

As students begin to notice how the forms and purposes of texts vary according to discipline-specific conventions, they can develop overarching frameworks for thinking about these texts. These overarching frameworks can work in partnership with the comprehension strategies that students have learned to help students approach texts in powerful and discipline-appropriate ways.

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