

Figure RIT 6.7

## INTENSIFYING THE INSTRUCTION

### Evaluating

*Evaluating* is a comprehension strategy that involves considering author intents and viewpoints and how they might influence what is in a text. Students who rarely show critical thinking or who seem hesitant to identify authors' viewpoints or express agreement/disagreement with such viewpoints can benefit from support with evaluation. The lesson may be used with the whole class, or with students receiving small-group or intervention-based instruction.

1. Choose a text for discussion. (This may be a text you have already read or viewed with the class, or one you choose to read/view solely for the purposes of this lesson.) Figure RIT 6.2 provides a starter list of recommended informational text for teaching point of view. Let students know that you want to talk with them about the author's purpose or point of view.
2. During or after reading, use questions such as the following to support students in evaluating the text and thinking critically about the impact that the author's point of view has on content and style. Demonstrate your own thinking in relation to answering the questions as well as allowing time for student discussion.
  - What topic did the author write about?
  - What did the author teach about that?
  - What evidence or examples did the author provide?
  - What do we know about the author?
  - How do you think that makes a difference in what this author has to say?
  - How do you think the author feels about the topic? How can you tell?
  - Do you agree with this author's views?
  - Do you think that people or issues are fairly portrayed in this text? Why?
  - Are people from parallel cultures (boys/girls, men/women, people of color) presented realistically or in stereotypical roles?
  - How does this information compare with other accounts you have encountered?
  - How could you use the information in this text?

## Collaborative Engagement

1. **Choose the literature and the reading context.** You may use text that has been read aloud to the whole class (providing at least one copy per group) or students may be arranged in groups to read different texts. For kindergarten and first-grade students, choose literature that will allow for consideration of the important role that both the author and illustrator take in creating a book. For grades 2 through 5, with the focus moving to author point of view, look for texts with issues that will inspire discussion about the author's perspective on issues. Figure RIT 6.2 features a recommended starter list.
2. **Arrange for students to read or listen to the text.** Before the reading, let students know what they will be doing afterward. (See Figure RIT 6.8.) If students are doing the reading, provide support for those who cannot read the material independently with success.
3. **Hold the meetings.** Arrange for students to come together after the reading (or before, depending on the group assignment) to discuss point of view. Give students key prompts (as in Figure RIT 6.8) to help focus their discussions.
4. **Arrange for a follow-up discussion.** When all groups are working on the same text or text set, organize for a whole-class discussion as a follow-up to the group activity.

Figure RIT 6.8

**READING ANCHOR 6:**  
**Prompts to Support Student-Led Group Discussion of Text**

**Kindergarten and First Grade**

- Give each group a large piece of chart paper with a line drawn down the middle. Write *Author* at the head of one column and *Illustrator* at the head of the other. Each group member draws something the author taught in one column and something the illustrator taught in the other column. (Figure RIT 6.3 provides a template that may be used if students will eventually be doing this project independently.)

**Second Grade**

- Students work as a group to record a response to the following questions:
  - Why do you think the author wrote this text?
  - What did the author want to explain?
  - How do you think the author feels about the topic?

Figure RIT 6.4 provides a template that may be used if students will eventually be doing this project independently.

**Third Grade**

- Students work with their group to record a response to the following questions:
  - Why do you think the author wrote this text?
  - How do you think the author feels about the topic/this issue?
  - Do you feel the same? Why or why not?

Figure RIT 6.5 provides a template that may be used if students will eventually be doing this project independently.

- Before reading, students draw a picture or map related to the topic being considered (for example, the uses of a cow in the world), and then they draw an updated picture or map after reading. This experience shows students how perspective changes after reading something.

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**Fourth Grade**

- Students work with their group to compare and contrast the focus taken in firsthand and secondhand accounts addressing the same topic. Figure RIT 6.2 provides some suggested literature for getting started. For each text, the group records a response to the following questions:
  - Why do you think the author created this text?
  - How do you think the author feels about the topic?
  - What was the author's focus in relation to this topic?
  - What special insights does this author offer?
  - Who do you think should read or view this text? Tell why.

Figure RIT 6.6 provides a template that may be used if students will eventually be doing this project independently.

- Before reading, students draw a picture or map of what something looks like (for example, Christopher Columbus' entry into the new world), and then they draw an updated picture or map after reading. This experience shows students how perspective changes after reading something.

**Fifth Grade**

- Students work with their group to compare and contrast the point of view presented in different informational texts addressing the same topic. Figure RIT 6.2 provides some suggested literature for getting started.
  - Why do you think the author wrote this text?
  - How do you think the author feels about the topic?
  - What was the author's point of view in relation to this topic?
  - What special insights can this author offer?
  - Who do you think should read this text? Tell why.
  - Do you think that people are fairly portrayed in this book? Why or why not?

Figure RIT 6.6 provides a template.

- Students draw a picture or map of what something looks like before reading (for example, United States Expansion or the relationship between a proton, neutron, and electron), and then they draw an updated picture or map of what it looks like after reading. This experience shows students how perspective changes after reading something.