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## MRA Conference 2001 Teacher Ideas

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# MRA Conference 2001 Teacher Ideas

*Karen Edwards is co-editor of the Michigan Reading Journal.*

During the March 2001 annual MRA Conference in Grand Rapids there was a session called Planet MRA. During that session the editors of *Michigan Reading Journal* met with teachers in roundtable sessions to encourage them to write and submit for publication ongoing action research that they were conducting in their classrooms. We also had teachers share effective activities they were using to promote learning success. Below are summaries of some of those suggestions as best as can be remembered. This is just an idea of the variety of everyday activities that promote learning in the classroom. Please take these ideas and use them if you feel they will help your students.

- **TILT / Tell what I Learned Today:** At the end of every day the students write in their learning logs what they learned that day. The teacher then asks a few students to share what they wrote. This is a great way to have children summarize what they learned and also have a record of that learning. When parents ask what they did at school, the students will have a ready answer.

– Jim Kern, Mesick Consolidated Schools, Mesick, Michigan

- Put lamps (any kind, including lava lamps) all around the room. This gives a nice, soft, homey atmosphere. Play some baroque music while the students are working. This calms the

children and seems to help them stay a little more focused.

- To help children remember the sequence of steps when dividing a number the following acronym for division has proven to be successful:

**Does McDonalds sell cheese burgers?**

<b>Does</b>	<b>Divide</b>
<b>McDonalds</b>	<b>Multiply</b>
<b>Sell</b>	<b>Subtract</b>
<b>Cheese</b>	<b>Check</b>
<b>Burgers</b>	<b>Bring down</b>

– Lynne Morrison, Mill Creek Elementary, Elk Rapids, Michigan.

- My 6<sup>th</sup> grade students have been learning about the reading process – BEFORE, DURING, and AFTER reading activities. I compare the act of reading to what a basketball player does BEFORE, DURING, and AFTER the game

Examples:

BEFORE the GAME	BEFORE READING
Players and coaches scout the team.	Readers preview the text.
DURING the GAME	DURING READING
When things aren't going well, players call a timeout.	When the text gets confusing, readers use comprehension fix-up



## AFTER the GAME

Players view videos and talk about the game.

## AFTER READING

Readers reread parts of the text and talk about

Success comes in approaching these activities in a positive and exciting way.

– Dona DeRossett, Goodrich Middle School, Goodrich, Michigan

- SIM – Strategic Instructional Model – Word Decoding for Older Struggling Readers  
“DISSECT”: Word Identification Strategy

“DISSECT the word	Discover the context Isolate the prefix (beginning) Separate the suffix (ending) Say the stem (middle of the word) Examine the stem
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Example: Unfairly

Un fair ly  
Prefix stem suffix

- “SCENE”: Visual Imagery Strategy – Improving comprehension of narrative and informational selections.

“SCENE”	Search for picture clues Create or change the scene Enter lots of details Name the parts Evaluate your picture
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– Ardena Duren, Steele Middle School, Muskegon Public Schools, Muskegon, MI

- After reading *Paddle to the Sea* encourage students to write their own Paddle to the Sea story, but instead of traveling the great lakes, have them

paddle/travel the chain of lakes. They will eventually reach Lake Michigan. This familiarizes students with lakes in Michigan, along with Northern Michigan locations.

– Becky Loose, Bellaire Elementary, Bellaire, Michigan

- To encourage enrichment reading during DEAR (Drop Everything and Read) time the following motivator has been an effective motivator: “Coca Cola Classics” – Students choose from selected “good literature” and read independently. After reading and conferencing with the teacher six times they receive a paper coke. When they fill their paper six pack they receive a Coke - the real thing, in a glass bottle! I have students who will read 36 books. Great reading incentive!

– Barb Prior, Traverse City Area Public Schools, Traverse City, Michigan

- In order to encourage the children to generate a writing topic, we draw our house plans including yards, then we brainstorm things that have happened to us in areas of our domain. I model this and encourage dialogue to formulate ideas

– Maureen Cooper, Lewton Elementary, Lansing, Michigan

- Share, Care, and Listening Board creates a caring atmosphere in the classroom. The children nominate other students each day for the board. I copy down the nomination and post it on our board. Example: Seth shared his pencil with Brittany.

– Jeannine Miller, Warrendale Elem., East Detroit, Michigan

- Community Circle – a strategy for wrapping up or beginning the day. Students sit in a circle. Any type of ball can be used as the “Community



Circle Ball.” Only the student with the ball may speak. Students are given a topic and speak. For example give a compliment to a peer.

– *Carrie Shannahan, Albion Schools, Albion, Michigan*

- **In /Out**

A method for reviewing content. The topic is selected for review by the leader. The leader gives several examples of what is characteristic of the topic. Students then ask if their choice is correct, and the teacher tells the student whether it is correct (In) or not correct (Out). From the clues the

students guess the topic. Example: The topic might be Primary Colors. The teacher starts with clues, e.g., “red.”

The students say, “hot,” “orange,” “color,” “blue,” “schoolhouse,” “yellow.”

In	Out
Red	Hot
Blue	Orange
Yellow	Color
	Schoolhouse

Student guesses: primary colors

– *Contributor unknown*

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