Text-to-Text, Text-to-Self, Text-to-World

Reading comes alive when we recognize how the ideas in the text connect to our experiences and beliefs, events happening in the larger world, our understanding of history, and our knowledge of other texts. “Text-to-Text, Text-to-Self, Text-to-World” is a strategy that helps students develop the habit of making these connections. By giving a purpose to students’ reading (i.e. focusing students on paying close attention to text to find connections), this strategy helps students comprehend and make meaning of the ideas in the text. This strategy can be used when reading any text – historical or literary – and it can also be used with other media as well, including films. It can be used at the beginning, middle or end of the reading process – to get students engaged with a text, to help students understand the text more deeply or to evaluate students’ understanding of the text.

**Procedure**

**Step one: Preparation**  
This strategy works best with a text that raises universal themes that might resonate with students’ own experiences and with material they have studied previously.  Teachers often give students their own copy of the text so that they can mark it up, although this is not required. 

**Step two: Active reading with Text-to-Text, Text-to-Self, Text-to-World**

Below is an example of directions you can give to students to guide them through this activity. Let students know if they should record their answer directly on the text or in their journals. Some teachers provide a graphic organizer to help students record their answers. The questions in the directions are general but you can make them specific to the material your class is studying. For example, you might ask students to connect what they read to specific texts or events you have studied earlier in the school year.

**Directions for Text-to-Text, Text-to-Self, Text-to-World**

Read the text once. Then read it again to find ideas that you can use to answer the following questions.

**1)      Text-to-Text –**How do the ideas in this text remind you of another text (story, book, movie, song, etc)? Complete one of the following statements:

* What I just read reminds me of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (story/book/movie/song) because...
* The ideas in this text are similar to the ideas in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ because….
* The ideas in this text are different than the ideas in ­­­\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ because….

**2)      Text-to-Self** – How do the ideas in this text relate to your own life, ideas and experiences? Complete one of the following statements:

* What I just read reminds me of the time when I….
* I agree with/understand what I just read because in my own life...
* I don't agree with what I just read because in my own life...

**3)      Text-to-World –**How do the ideas in this text reading relate to the larger world – past, present and future. Complete one of the following statements:

* What I just read makes me think about \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (event from the past) because……
* What I just read makes me think about \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (event from today related to my own community, nation or world) because….
* What I just read makes me wonder about the future because….