

Robert Price

102 Macdonell Avenue, Toronto, Ontario M6R 2A2, Canada • 416.536.9989

EMAIL: robert@eggplant.org

WEBSITE: www.eggplant.org

Using Anticipation Guides

An anticipation guide is a set of declarative statements to which students respond before they read (hear, view) the material. Because the statements are based on the information in the material, thinking about them helps students activate prior knowledge and set learning purposes. Students respond by marking each statement A or D (Agree/Disagree) or T or F (True/False).

Statements of fact or opinion can be equally good for eliciting thinking, as can either specific or general statements. For example, the statements below (from unrelated anticipation guides) have both provoked lively discussion and excellent thinking. The first is an example of a specific, factual statement; the second is a much more general statement of opinion.

The first Ferris wheel was built in 1830.

People who live on a piece of land have the right to own the land.

As you prepare statements, think about how your students would probably respond, given their probable background knowledge and the overall level of their thinking abilities. Phrase ' the statements in a way that students can use their common sense and reasoning abilities to respond, even if they don't know much about the topic. The statements need to sound plausible, but the correct responses shouldn't be obvious.

Before Reading

Have students work in small groups to discuss the items and decide on their responses. Then have groups share their ideas with the whole class. Encourage students to explain their reasoning by, asking, "Why do you think so?" You may wish to have students just share ideas, or you may challenge them with probing questions that require them to think more critically about their responses or debate one another. Whatever the level of probing, it's a good idea to accept all responses non-judgmentally, not letting students know who is wrong or right. This encourages students to keep thinking and arouses their curiosity.

After Reading

Have students review their original responses and revise as needed. In doing so, encourage them to reread to prove points, restate key ideas, comment, and ask questions, all of which will help students reflect on the new information. You may also have students write about what they learned, inviting response to questions like these:

- What was the most interesting thing you learned?
- What made that interesting to you?
- What was the most surprising thing you learned?
- Why was that surprising?
- Did you change your mind about anything? Why did you change your mind?
- Is there anything that you are confused about at this point?
- What new questions do you have?
- How could you find the answers?

Additional Ideas A series of Anticipation Guides, used in an instructional unit, can help students make connections from one part of the unit to the next. For instance, the facts and concepts that are the focus of one lesson are then included in the Anticipation Guide for a later lesson. In this way, students have a chance to make use of recently- learned information in preparing to learn new material.



The anticipation guide outline was created by Denise Nessel, Ph.D.
(NUA) DENISEN524@aol.com