Let's Vote On It!

by Janice Behrens

How do you make a choice in school or with friends? You can take a vote! Kids and adults vote as a fair way to make choices for a group.

Create Successful Reading Habits

Current research from the What Works Clearinghouse shows the importance of explicitly teaching academic language skills.* Students typically develop social language skills naturally. Those are the language skills used to communicate informally with family and friends. Developing academic language skills, however, usually requires instruction. By guiding students to develop their academic language skills, teachers can mitigate some of the challenges that students encounter when learning to comprehend text.

After introducing students to new words, encourage deeper understanding by providing extended opportunities for them to use and discuss the words. Activities that support deeper understanding allow students to:
- make connections between a new vocabulary word and other known words.
- relate the word to their own experiences.
- differentiate between correct and incorrect uses of the word.
- generate and answer questions that include the word.

* U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, What Works Clearinghouse. (n.d.). Practice Guides. https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/PracticeGuides

SCIENCE OF READING – EXPLICIT AND SYSTEMATIC INSTRUCTION

Effective reading instruction is systematic, explicit, and scaffolded; it provides multiple examples and opportunities for students to practice the skill or concept being taught.

Systematic instruction is …
- thoughtfully outlined, builds upon prior learning, and is delivered on a continuum from simple to complex skills.
- broken down into manageable step-by-step chunks that are appropriate to the instructional goals and pacing of instruction.
- a carefully planned scope and sequence of instruction.

The goal of **systematic instruction** is to ensure that whenever students are asked to learn a new skill or concept, they already possess the appropriate knowledge and understanding to efficiently learn the new skill or concept.

Explicit instruction is …
- making the skill taught obvious to the student.
- scaffolded and typically follows the "I Do, We Do, You Do" instructional routine.
- an instructional routine that gradually shifts the responsibility from the teacher to the student.

The following scaffolding should occur during explicit instruction:
1. **I Do:** The teacher explains and models the skill or concept by showing exactly how to do what was explained. The teacher should provide multiple examples and, when appropriate, nonexamples.
2. **We Do:** The teacher provides guided practice with scaffolding. The teacher monitors and scaffolds instruction by prompting and giving corrective feedback as students practice the skill or concept with the teacher or a peer.
3. **You Do:** The teacher provides independent practice. Students practice the skill or concept independently while the teacher monitors and gives feedback.

STANDARDS ALIGNMENT FLORIDA'S B.E.S.T. STANDARDS

The Florida B.E.S.T. standards emphasize the importance of providing explicit instruction to help students read and understand grade-level academic vocabulary words. One important aspect of providing vocabulary instruction is identifying if the word provides students with an opportunity to use context to determine the meaning of the word (p. 198).

Look for standards alignment in each section of this guide.

WORD WORK – VOWEL TEAMS

Support your students in decoding by explicitly teaching them about **vowel teams**.

Vowel teams are two vowels that work together to make one sound. Some vowel teams make a long-vowel sound, and the first letter in the vowel team will say its name. For example:
- The *ea* vowel team in s*ea*t makes the long /ē/ sound.
- The *ai* vowel team in w*ai*t makes the long /ā/ sound.

Here is an example of how to talk about words with the *ea* vowel team using a word from this book:

<div align="center">read (p. 6)</div>

Tell students that they are looking at words that have the vowel team *ea* and that when words have the *ea* vowel team, it makes one sound.
- Write the word *read* on the board and ask students to say the word out loud.
- Say, "This is the word read. It has three sounds: /r/ /ē/ /d/." Ask students to say the three phonemes with you as you run your finger underneath each one.
- What long-vowel sound do you hear when I say the word read? (/ē/)
- Underline the *ea* in read. There are two vowels in this word that work together to make one long /ē/ sound.
- Point to the first vowel, *e*, and say, "What vowel is this?"
- Point to the second vowel, *a*, and say, "What vowel is this?"
- Say, "When *e* and *a* are next to each other in a word, most of the time, the first vowel says its name, /ē/."
- Ask students to read the whole word, *read*.

Continue practicing as you see other words in the book with the *ea* or *ai* vowel team.

ELA.2.F.1.3: Use knowledge of grade-appropriate phonics and word-analysis skills to decode words.
a. Decode words with variable vowel teams (e.g., *oo, ea, ou*) and vowel diphthongs (e.g., *oi, oy, ow*).

ELL and SWD suggestion: Use Elkonin boxes to help students see that a "team" represents a single vowel sound. Elkonin boxes help students learn how to segment words into sounds and build a better understanding of how to decode words.

TALK ABOUT NEW AND INTERESTING WORDS

Tier 2 vocabulary words can be used for explicit vocabulary instruction. When teaching vocabulary, it is important to create and share student-friendly definitions that are appropriate for the level of your students. Help students make connections to the word by providing contextual information that relates to the text being read and builds upon their background knowledge. Here are some examples of Tier 2 vocabulary words from the book:

<div align="center">**fair** (p. 16)   **booth** (p. 21)   **lever** (p. 21)</div>

Affixes are word parts that change the meaning of a word when they are added to the beginning or end of a base word, like **pre**school**ers**.

Affixes added to the beginning of a word are called **prefixes**.
Affixes added to the end of a word are called **suffixes**.

Help your students identify **suffixes** to determine the meaning of unfamiliar words. A **suffix** is a word part that, when added to the end of a base word, changes the meaning of a word. Base words are single words that cannot be broken into smaller word parts and still have meaning.

Base Word	Suffix	New Word	New Meaning
friend	**ly**	friendly	Like a friend

Here are some examples of suffixes from the book and a description of what they mean.

Example from the book	Base Word	Suffix (Meaning)	Meaning
Book**s** (p. 6), vote**s** (p. 13)	book, vote	**s** (more than one)	more than one book / more than one vote
Count**ing** (p. 12), vot**ing** (p. 16)	count, vote	**ing** (present tense)	to count in the present tense / to vote in the present tense

Point to the word counting.
- Say: "The word is *counting*. This word has a base word and a suffix."
- Ask:
  - "What is the base word?" (*count*)
  - "If *count* is the base word, what is the suffix?" (*-ing*)
- Say:
  - "This word has the suffix *ing* at the end. The suffix *ing* means 'present tense.'"
  - "When we add the suffix *ing* to the base word, *count*, the meaning of the word changes to *counting* (to count in the present tense)."
  - "The word *counting* means that something is being counted in the present, or "right now." The teacher is *counting* the votes right now so that she can tell the class which pet is the winner."

Find more opportunities to practice identifying and analyzing words with suffixes as you read the book together.

ELA.2.V.1.2: Identify and use base words and affixes to determine the meaning of unfamiliar words in grade-level content.

ELL and SWD suggestion: Students who need additional practice identifying word parts can highlight the prefixes and suffixes in a word. Highlighting will help students to clearly see each part (chunk) of the word.

READ FOR MEANING – IDENTIFY AND EXPLAIN THE MORAL OF A STORY

- **ELA.2.R.2.2: Identify the central idea and relevant details in a text.**
- **ELA.2.R.3.2: Retell a text to enhance comprehension.**
  - **b. Use the central idea and relevant details for an informational text.**
- **ELA.K12.EE.1.1 Cite evidence to explain and justify reasoning.**

The **central idea** of a text refers to what a text is mostly about. Central idea represents the most important idea or concept an author wants readers to know and understand about a topic. Authors use details to convey the central idea. Details are the pieces of information that help readers derive meaning from the text and build a better understanding of the central message or idea of the text. Identifying the central idea is key for tying together all the information provided in a text so that students can understand what they read.

Before:
- Activate prior knowledge using the **Think Pair Share** strategy.
  - Ask students to **Think** about what they know about voting.
  - **Pair** students up, and ask them to share what they know about voting. You can have them pair up more than once.
  - Invite students to **Share** either what they know or what they have learned about voting.
- Tell students that they will read a nonfiction text called *Let's Vote On It!*. Explain that this book is separated into five chapters. For each chapter, students will identify two supporting details and determine the central idea of each section. After reading all five chapters, students will work together to determine the central idea of the whole book.

During:
Use the gradual release model while reading this text to shift the responsibility from the teacher to students as they practice identifying central ideas and details.
- **Vote for a Class Pet (pages 4 - 7) – Model using Read-Aloud Think-Aloud**
- **Time to Choose (pages 8 - 11) – Guided practice**
- **Which Pet Wins? (pages 12 - 15) – Guided practice**
- **Let's Keep Voting (pages 16 - 19) – Collaborative practice with peers**
- **My Mom Votes (pages 20 - 21) – Independent practice**

For each chapter of the text, use the following questions to help guide a discussion. After reading and discussing each chapter, students will fill out their graphic organizer.
- What is the topic of this section?
- What is this section mostly about?
- What is the central idea of this chapter?
- What details help you know that this is the central idea?
- What important words does the author use to give readers information about the topic?

After:
Discussion Questions
- Why is learning and talking about choices an important part of voting?
- Do you think it would be harder or easier to pick a class pet if there were more choices? Why?
- Why do you think it's important for your vote to be a secret?
- Why do you think only adults are allowed to vote for our leaders?
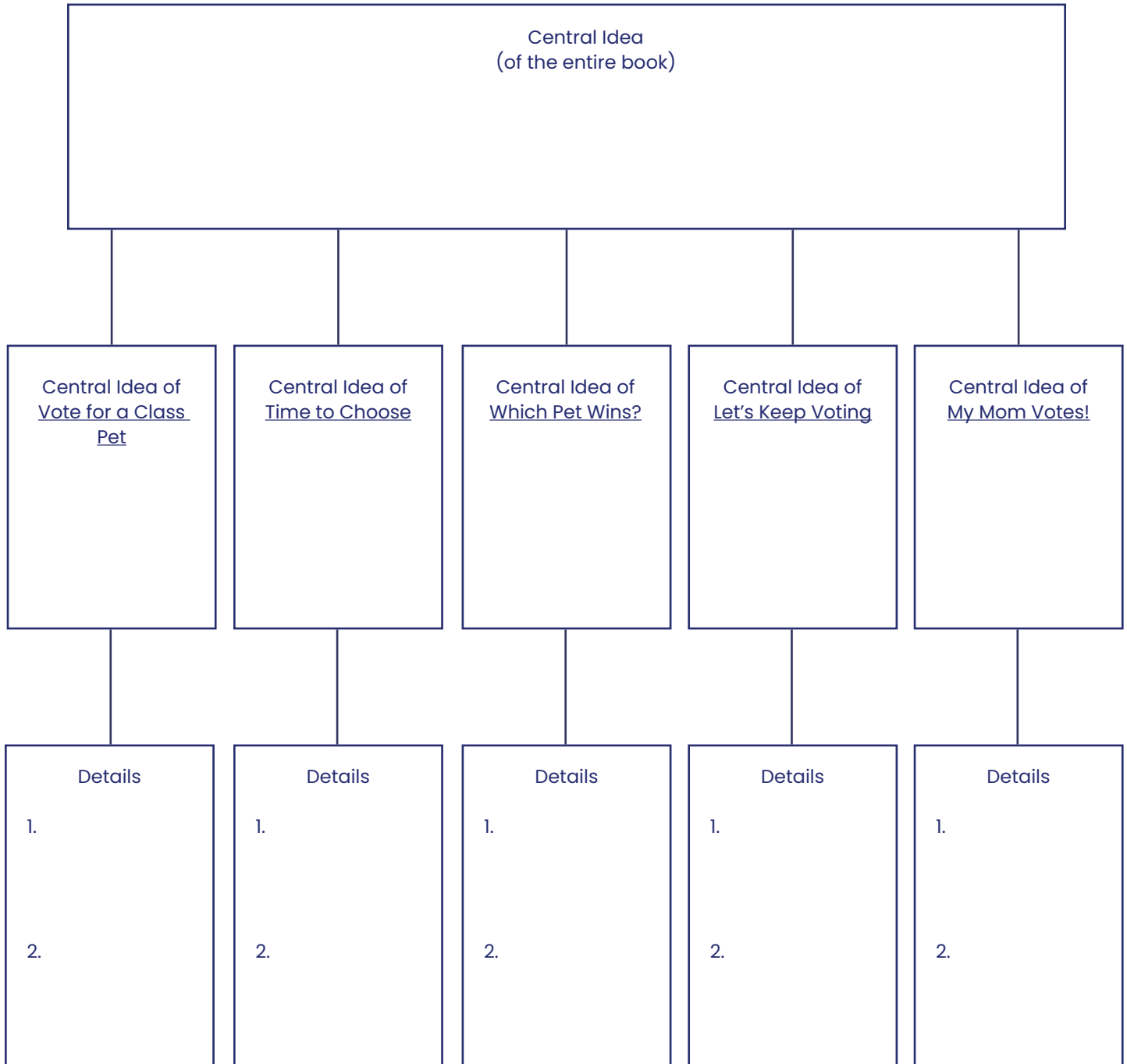- What other kinds of things would you like to vote for?

Central Idea
- After reading *Let's Vote On It!*, work with your students to help them determine the central, or main, idea of the whole book. Help them understand how to use the information they put in the graphic organizer to write a one-sentence central idea or message for the entire book. Determine the central idea with the whole class.
- Write the central idea on the board.
- Then using sticky notes, ask students to write down one detail from their graphic organizer that they think BEST supports the central idea. Tell students to put their sticky notes on the board when finished.
- Next, read through the details with students and sort them into one of three categories: Does Not Support, Kind Of Supports, and Best Supports the central idea. This practice will help stuents begin to understand how to select relevant details that support the central, or main, idea.

Extension Activity
Hold a vote in your classroom. Create a topic for students to vote on, create ballots, set up a voting booth, and allow students to experience the process of voting. Include new learning and vocabulary words from the text to support their understanding and application of what was learned.

Central Idea
(of the entire book)

Central Idea of Vote for a Class Pet	Central Idea of Time to Choose	Central Idea of Which Pet Wins?	Central Idea of Let's Keep Voting	Central Idea of My Mom Votes!

Details	Details	Details	Details	Details
1.	1.	1.	1.	1.
2.	2.	2.	2.	2.

ELL and SWD suggestion:
Use small group instruction to reteach and reinforce identifying the central idea and details. Start by using a shorter piece of text that contains one main idea with a few details. While working in small groups, students will mark up the text using a coding system to identify important details. Then ask students to use the details to determine the central idea. Once students can identify the central idea and details in a short piece of text, they can practice applying what they have learned to longer pieces of text.