

Common Elements of the Textbook

Elements	Function
Boldface terms	Signals reader to pay attention
Charts	Give information, show process, or make comparisons
Glossary	Alphabetical list of key people, places, events, and terms
Graphs	Show information through pictures and symbols
Headings and titles	List topics covered from broadest to narrowest – can be used as topics for notes
Index	Page numbers for topics, terms, people. At back of book.
Maps	Visual information showing where something is or where it happened.
Photos and illustrations	Emphasize key points and add interest.
Preview	Helps students look ahead to what is important in chapter.

So what can you do to use textbooks more effectively?

- Have empathy – remember you are a grownup and a subject matter expert
- Help kids get started – show them the parts of your textbook and how to more efficiently read the textbook. Front-load your teaching (see table in back) and give support before, during and after reading.
- Don't leave kids alone with their textbooks. There is power in collaboration.
- Choose wisely. Make more selective assignments; instead of plowing through, make strategic choices.
- Supplement richly.
- If some kids are still struggling, call me. I'm here to help you help them.

Before Reading Activities	
Checking out the textbook	Usually teacher editions have suggested activities for teaching students how to use your textbook.
Jigsawing	Divide up larger chapters into smaller chunks, divide students and students are only responsible for their part of the puzzle. Share out.
Guide – O – Rama Study Guides	Two column guide. First column lists page number(s), second column lists tips for their reading (advice, your connections, questions, etc.)
Vocabulary word sorts	Give students key words for chapter as well as words they know, have them work in groups to try and categorize words in anticipation of the topic covered
Brainstorming, clustering, KWL	Taps into their prior knowledge before they read.

During Reading Activities	
Post-it response notes	Students place sticky notes on parts that are confusing, and write a question or explain why it's confusing.
Coding text	A set of interactive notation systems that help students signal things like: ~ confirms what I thought; x contradicts what I thought; ? puzzles me; ?? totally confusing; * seems important, etc.
Bookmarks	For questions, AHA's, vocabulary, etc.
Double Entry journals	What I read, what I thought
Sketching my way through text	Sketching to understand concepts
Say something	Enables kids to think as they read by enabling frequent, brief conversations between partners.
It Says/I Say/And So	Helps students to practice inferring. Teacher poses 3 or 4 questions that require students to draw inferences rather than just find information. Students respond by a)finding & summarizing b)write out their own thinking c)draw a conclusion