



# Friday Focus

## Carter County Schools

### FALL HAPPENINGS

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NOVEMBER 20, 2015

- Nov. 24 Middle School Academy
- Nov. 25-27 Thanksgiving Break
- Nov. 30 Mike Rutherford
- Dec. 8 DAT @ 3 pm

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## PVR: It's Brain Training

PVR: Preview, Vocabulary, Review is a memory strategy used to train the brain to pick up on critical vocabulary in challenging text. Students and teachers all over Carter County are implementing this technique in order to help kids answer high-level questions about lengthy passages that can often seem overwhelming. PVR helps us approach these texts with a strategy for pulling out key details by identifying critical vocabulary.

In order to create a PVR experience for your students, you must first select your informational reading standards—usually standards 1 and 4 will be included. Next, pick your text. Kentucky Virtual Library is an excellent source for finding passages on the appropriate Lexile measure for your students. Always use a passage that is on grade-level, even for struggling students, when

you do PVR. Once you've chosen your text, use some question stems (perhaps Bloom's Taxonomy would help) to create some rigorous questions to go along with it. Remember, questions that ask "why" and "how" are higher level than "what" and "where" questions.

When you teach PVR to your students, post the questions and have them identify key vocabulary. For years, we have told our kids to read the questions first...that's right! Now, we are going to help them with a strategy for how to read and remember those questions! In order to identify key vocabulary, start with nouns, bold or italicized words, etc. Do this with every question. As you move from question to question, keep going back to previous questions

and having students give you the gist of each one. By the end of this process, you should be able to have the class help you list all the questions from memory. Reciting key vocabulary, and the constant spiraling rehearsal, has been helping your kids store these questions in memory.

During reading of the text, students should watch for answers to the questions they posted. An amazing thing will happen—the key vocabulary from the questions will start to appear in the text. Before you know it, they will be able to predict the answers to those questions. Finally, you can show students the multiple choice responses available and help students look for matches.

PVR can be taught, practiced, and gradually released to students. Eventually, your children can own this strategy and start to use it on all of their passage/question sets... particularly in testing situations where the text is challenging and lengthy.

## What To Do With Struggling Readers

What happens when kids can't read? They give up. They become disengaged, defiant, and desperate. If you are a teacher who wants to help struggling readers, the good news is that explicit reading instruction can make a difference.

Kylene Beers created two categories of readers: independent and dependent. She said independent readers are able to: figure out what is confusing them, set goals for getting through the reading, use many strategies for getting through the text, and make the mostly invisible process of comprehension visible. On the other hand, dependent readers: stop, appeal to the teacher, read on through, and keep the mostly invisible process of comprehension at the invisible level. Don't we all recognize these students from our own classrooms? Are you already think-

ing about explicit strategies that you can utilize to transform those type two kids into independent readers?

Our goal is not to tell kids that they will never struggle with text. Rather, we must teach our children how to *successfully struggle* with text. This is why we help them use tools such as text annotation. This is why we ask them to identify the purpose for their reading. This is why it is critical for our kids to be able to predict, infer, summarize, visualize, etc. about the text in front of them. And, this is why our word walls are crucial pieces of our classroom environment. Readers—independent and dependent—need these experiences to cope with the texts before them. It is up to us to explicitly teach them how to handle their daily reading.