

SAY SOMETHING

Harste, J., Burke, C. & Watson, D. (as cited in Short, K.A., Harste, J. C. & Burke, C. 1996. Creating classroom for authors and inquirers. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.)

By highlighting the social nature of language, *Say Something* demonstrates that understanding develops and evolves from interactions with others. It is designed to help readers develop a more functional view of reading. Participants respond in terms of what the passage meant to them and how it does or does not relate to their own experiences, rather than in terms of what they think the teacher wants. As readers engage in *Say Something*, they are involved in the same active process of chunking a text, asking questions, finding connections, and making predictions that characterize the process of proficient readers.

PREPARATION

Identify a text for the class to read and discuss in pairs. Consider using texts at different reading levels, but that are conceptually linked. This will support less proficient readers and ensure accessibility to the same curriculum content.

With younger readers or for the first few times, *Say Something* is introduced, the teacher goes through the selection/text and identifies places, where s/he would like the students to stop and discuss. This can be done using adhesive dots or a color marker. As students become more proficient in using the strategy or with older students, they can decide where an appropriate discussion stop may be.

STEPS

1. Students choose or are assigned a partner. Each pair is given one copy of the reading selection. With younger or less proficient readers, the teacher may pair a more proficient reader with a less proficient reader.
2. Before reading, each pair (or the teacher) decides whether they will read the selection aloud or silently. If reading orally, the two share one text and take turns reading aloud the sections of text.
3. Students are informed that as they read the selection, they will “say something” about what they have just read. They may make predictions about what will happen next, share connections and experiences related to the selection, or ask a question about something that is confusing them.
4. *Optional.* Students write a brief summary of their discussion. This could be shared writing assignment or individual.
5. *Optional.* Teacher leads a whole class discussion on how the strategy helped them comprehend the text and how they may use the strategy, when they are reading by themselves.