

Reading Informational Text

Make Text-to-World Connections

Common Core Standards

Reading: Informational Text—Key Ideas and Details, RI.4.1–5.1 and RI.3.3–5.3; Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity, RI.3.10–12.10

Reading: Foundational Skills—Fluency, RF.3.4–5.4

Speaking & Listening—Comprehension and Collaboration, SL.3.1–12.1

NOTE: *The examples in this activity are about Tennessee’s economy, but you can change them to reflect another topic and lesson.*

In this lesson, students will practice connecting what they are reading to events or issues in the world. This may include a current event from the news, a social concern that has been around for a while, or anything else having to do with the world at large. Many examples can be found on television and in the news. For example, if students were reading a book about cars, they could connect what they read to the issue of pollution addressed in the news. If they are reading a book about tigers, they might hear on a TV special that tigers are in danger of becoming extinct. Point out that text can be connected to the arts, science, history, or even pop culture. Text-to-world connections can be serious or funny, but they give readers more to think about.

To model text-to-world connections, choose a short, informational picture book or a chapter from a longer nonfiction book to read aloud to the class. While you read the book, model how to make connections by thinking aloud for the students. Stop at certain places to explain a connection you made between the book and the world. As you continue reading, pause periodically to ask students if they made any connections they would like to share with the class. Tell students that they will be searching for connections as they read the lesson. They should record these on the “Text-to-World Connections” activity page provided. When they finish, give students time to share their best connections with the class. Discuss how such connections enrich our understanding of a text. You may want to encourage students to continue finding text-to-world connections for the lesson topic for another week.

DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTION

The reading activity can be differentiated in the following ways to accommodate students of varying abilities.

STRUGGLING LEARNERS

After introducing the lesson as indicated above, put a list like the following on the board. It has been designed to match a specific lesson about economics in the Tennessee textbook.

You will need to compile a similar list to match the lesson your class is going to read.

- News headline: “County Repairs Highway”
- TV program: “Making Missiles in Tennessee”
- News headline: “Factory Fined for Workers’ Safety Issues”
- Song title: “Tennessee River” by Alabama
- TV ad for FedEx
- Song title: “Taxman” by the Beatles
- TV program: “Doing Business with the World”
- TV ad inviting people to visit Tennessee’s state parks
- News headline: “Toy Recalled after Eight Children Are Injured”
- News headline: “City Government to Hire More Workers”
- TV program: “Child Labor in the Early 1900s”
- Internet bar graph: “Increasing Sales of Nursery Products in Tennessee”

Tell students that as they read the lesson, they should watch for the text-to-world connections listed on the board. Read the lesson as a class. See if students can catch the references from the list. Pause and help them if they don’t. Challenge them to find more text-to-world connections for the ideas in the lesson as they watch TV and go on the Internet in the next few weeks. Check in with students daily to ask them to share these examples with the class. You may want to offer a small reward such as stickers or extra reading time for students who bring examples to share.

GIFTED LEARNERS

After students complete the activity page, assign each of them to revisit the lesson and select one concept that they especially liked. As homework, students will conduct 10 mini-interviews in which they ask people of different ages and from different parts of their lives to make a text-to-world connection with the concept. Note that students should be prepared to explain the idea of text-to-world connections and give one or two examples to their interview subjects first. They will need to write down what the interview subjects say. Then students will compile the responses and select some of them to share with a small group or with the class.