A Community of Readers, 8e, Instructor's Resource Manual

TABLE OF CONTENTS

4

Note: The Answer Key for this text is located on the Instructor Companion website, which can be accessed at login.cengage.com.

Part 1: Teaching Suggestions

Setting the Tone

It has been our experience in teaching reading that when students become part of a classroom (including digital) community, when they get to know one another well and work together, their

rate of success goes up dramatically. They have increased self-confidence because they are comfortable in a classroom where their answers, ideas, and opinions are respected. To establish the classroom community, we dedicate part of the first two or three meetings for students and instructor to get to know one another. We explain to our students that we are doing so because they will often be working as a group in this class (and in future classes and workplaces), and to work effectively, we all benefit by knowing one another and respecting our diverse backgrounds; we want each person to be able to contribute his or her personal strengths to our class. Here are some suggestions for establishing a positive tone during the first few days of class:

• Have students introduce themselves, working in pairs or groups of three or four. Give the groups a designated amount of time like 15 minutes. Then, have students introduce their group members to the rest of the class. Often shy students feel more comfortable introducing others rather than themselves. After the introductions, asking for volunteers, you can make a game of who can remember all the names in the class. In a subsequent class you can give a "quiz" asking students to list all the names. Another activity is to have students write about their names, the origin of their names as well as any stories about their names. Make learning students' names a priority for yourself. It is a good way to let students know that you care. As students leave the first class session, shake hands with each one, if culturally appropriate.

• Encourage students to familiarize themselves with both the college's web services as well as campus-based support services such as tutoring/resource centers, health centers, and counseling. When navigating these systems becomes more comfortable, students can better adopt an identity of a college student and a learner, helping them to focus more clearly on relevant material.

• Use collaborative learning groups in your class. Allow students to ease into discussion by sharing with partners or small groups first, then the class at large. Often students are more willing to share opinions and analysis if they first receive validation in smaller group settings.

Using the Themes

Each chapter of the text is unified around a particular theme, or issue, such as "Living with Technology" (Chapter 2), "Our Food, Our Culture" (Chapter 3), and "Exploring Gender" (Chapter 6). The illustration and quotation at the beginning of each chapter give a quick introduction to the theme. The chapter opener is designed to elicit initial student responses to basic questions about the topic. Frequently these questions will require students to think about the quotation and/or the visual. Take class time to discuss these illustrations and questions to help students activate their individual schema, so that they are prepared to better comprehend the

5

readings in the chapter. This activity is very important for all our students, and it is especially important for students who are not native speakers of English or those who have learning disabilities. Besides the opening questions, the *Prepare to Read* section as well as the skillsbased exercises provide students with a framework for approaching the longer readings in the chapter.

Since some of the issues raised are controversial, expect students' opinions to vary greatly. The

opinions expressed will often contradict your personal opinion as well. As you begin these large or small group discussions, it's important to establish with students the "rules" of mutual respect and openness to listening to each other's views; such rules are essential to a positive learning environment. You might consider having students generate "discussion rules or expectations" at the beginning of the course; that way, they may be more committed to them.

Taking time to read and discuss the introductory section will help to ensure student involvement in the questions raised about the theme. In many cases, media material, such as online videos, can also be used at this point to stimulate interest, develop student background on the issue, and help students organize their thoughts about the issues. An additional project or extra credit can be asking students to provide relevant material that they have discovered.

The main readings of each chapter develop different aspects of the theme. For example, in Chapter 4, students are introduced to many elements of the theme, "Staying Well," in the skillsand content-based pedagogy and exercises at the beginning of the chapter. So, by the time they

are assigned the first reading in Chapter 4 "Stressed Out," they have already been exposed to concepts of what good health actually encompasses, how to address the problem of childhood obesity, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' publication *Healthy People 2020* about the need to improve the health of all Americans, smoking risks, dating violence, sexual safety, and the relationship between health risks and levels of education. The subsequent reading discusses alternative health care. The Work the Web section suggests an activity to further develop the theme of health that students can complete through guided research on the Internet that gives them choice of the focus they want to take. The Mastery Test presents ways to think about drugs and health concerns related to drug use.

Using PRO

PRO is a reading and study system intended to guide students through the process of *Preparing to read, Reading actively and thinking critically,* and then *Organizing what they have read for study*. The system is introduced in detail in Chapter 1. It is extremely important to emphasize the preparing to read and the critical thinking and reflecting aspects of this study system since forming these habits will enable students to become lifelong independent readers and learners. Try to take the time to briefly introduce the sections when you are giving homework assignments, and when reviewing the assignments, discuss with students how successful they were at reading actively, and thinking critically about the material.

The following list is a resource to help you remember what kinds of questions to ask depending on the material that your students are reading/studying. You can assign students to answer your questions in pairs or small groups and/or report back to class.

6

Possible Preparing to Read Questions

1. Preview the reading and consider what you already know about the material. Do you have previous knowledge? How difficult do you think it will be for you? How long do you think it will take for you to read/study it?

2. What is your purpose for reading? For fun? In preparation for an exam, quiz, or

classroom discussion? How long do you think it will take?

3. What information will you get from the graphs, charts, and illustrations included in the reading?

4. After previewing the text, what questions do you think will be answered in the reading? Write at least two questions.

Possible Reading Actively and Thinking Critically Questions

1. Did you check your comprehension while you were reading? Did you stop and think about what you just read?

2. Did you get distracted while you were reading? Why? What can you do to improve your concentration?

3. Did you interact with the text, indicating in the margins whether you were surprised by something, agreed with something, have questions about something, or want to remember something?

4. Did you consider what other information you know about the topic, other points of view?

5. Did you identify patterns of organization and relationships among ideas?

6. Did you recognize the author's purpose, world view, and point of view?

7. Did you evaluate facts versus opinions?

8. Did you form an opinion about the reading?

Possible Organizing and Using What You Have Read Questions

1. Did you annotate the text? Did you put question marks for material you didn't understand so you can bring it up in class?

2. What did you *do* to help you remember the information in the text? Did you make a list, map, or outline? Did you write a summary?

Remind students to preview the reading and generate prereading questions prior to reading a selection. This attention by the instructor to these aspects of the reading process will help students understand the importance of reading as a *process.* Try this with outside readings as well, reminding students of PRO before jumping into other reading assignments you have given them. Students might also bring in reading from other courses to show how PRO applies across disciplines. Even mathematics word problems can benefit from this method. Students and instructor can work together to look for varied ways to apply the reading steps, to make it second nature outside of class.

Using Collaborative Groups

To set up successful collaborative work groups, consider following some accepted practices for classroom and digital collaboration:

• Assign students to groups. Your goal is to get students to know one another, and not to

7

simply stay with the friends that they already know. We would encourage that you mix students of different backgrounds and with different strengths. At the very beginning of the semester, you might simply have students count off, having all the "1s" to get together, "2s," etc. Remember, it can be awkward and frustrating for some students who may feel left out if you just say "get in a group."

• Give students working in cooperative groups a specific project that they are to complete. Many exercises in the text lend themselves easily to group work. (In addition, you might have them check each other's homework, fill out a chart, make lists, design an illustration, write a group summary, map a reading, record a variety of opinions in the group, or simply prepare to report their discussion back to the class.) All cooperative work should have some kind of follow-up.

• Give students clear directions and a clear time framework.

• Have students in a group introduce themselves briefly.

• Consider having students pick a "secretary" for the group who will take notes, a person who will report back to the class regarding their group's work, a timekeeper, and a person who praises members of the groups.

• Monitor group progress. Circulate among the groups to see how they are doing. If the groups turn in a product to you, be sure you mark it in some way, record it, and return it to them so they can see how they did. You might want to keep separate grades—those done individually, and those done in groups. Students usually like this system because the group grades are often stronger than their individual grades, and in any case, they know you have the two types of grades separated.

• Encourage collaborative learning outside of class.

Applying Classroom/Learning Assessment Techniques

Have you ever had the experience of thinking that one of your lessons went badly because one or two vocal students told you that they didn't like it? Sometimes we are misled by the responses of a few outgoing students, but there is a simple, easy-to-use technique for finding out what everyone in the class is thinking and how much they are working for your course, as well as for getting brief feedback on whether or not they are comprehending.

If you simply want to find out how something you have done worked for your students, you can pass out slips of paper ($4'' \times 2''$), and ask them to answer a few questions for you *anonymously*. Emphasize that you just want the information. For this, if students worked together, you could ask such questions as:

• How did you like working in your group?

• Did each person in your group do his or her job?

• Did everyone participate?

• Was everyone prepared?

• What could you have done to help your group work better?

• What would make your group work even better?

Or you may want to know how much time people spent doing the homework. (Sometimes students complain about how difficult a reading was, but then you find out that they spent only

8

10 or 15 minutes working on it, when you had expected they would spend an hour or more!) You might ask questions like:

• How much time did you spend on the homework/assignment?

• What did you most enjoy?

• What was clear for you? (in class or from the homework)
• What was confusing for you? (in the homework or in the class session)
• What would you differently next time?
• What grade do you think you earned?

You may want to ask only two or three questions, and keep it simple. *It is important to report back to the students the results of these surveys, and you should discuss any problems that come up either during the same class session or at the beginning of the next.* For example, if students say that they like the group work, but that some people were not prepared, be sure to discuss that problem, emphasizing to everyone the importance of being prepared and explaining ways that you will make sure that students are accountable individually as well as in groups for their work. If students say that a particular reading was too difficult, you may want to discuss with them the circumstances under which they studied. Did they preread? Did they read actively, with concentration and making connections? And finally, they need to understand the demands of real college reading and the necessity of learning to read material that is not "interesting" to them. Emphasize that when reading for pleasure, prereading is built into the choice of text. When reading is assigned, the steps in PRO are essential for best (and fastest!) comprehension.

If you wish, you can use this small-slip-of-paper technique to give very brief quizzes on the content of the homework or of the class sessions at the beginning or end of class. You can adjust your class discussion to address the comprehension problems the students might be having. In addition, this short content-based quiz is sometimes also useful when students don't seem to be doing the homework—a frustrating situation for class work and very frustrating for collaborative work among students. For this type of quiz, ask only the simplest questions to make sure that they have done their work, not to test them too severely on whether or not they understood difficult sections that need to be discussed in class before they are tested on them. Some instructors give a short survey at the end of each class meeting, or the end of each chapter.

Teaching Critical Thinking Skills

Since students focus on one theme at a time and have the opportunity to understand it and its context in depth, critical thinking is easily evidenced throughout the course in class discussions, assigned exercises, and writing. As an instructor, you should take every opportunity to emphasize the importance of critical thinking. Encourage students to question what they read, what they hear on various media sources, and what others say. The text provides many chances to teach the various aspects of critical thinking. The PRO reading and study system emphasizes active reflection such that critical thinking is an integral part of all the readings and exercises in each chapter. In Part 2 of this Instructor's Manual we have provided additional activities for each chapter which include "Critical Reflections in the Classroom Community" and "Write About It" prompts as well as other ideas and assignments.

9

Chapters 7 and 8 further emphasize critical thinking skills. Chapter 7 focuses on distinguishing facts and opinions, as well as identifying an author's worldview, point of view, purpose, bias, and tone. Chapter 8 emphasizes using critical thinking to solve problems and evaluate arguments logically and ethically.

Incorporating Writing Assignments

The teaching of reading and writing skills is intricately interwoven. Fluency in academic discourse requires students to become proficient in both. The assignments in this text recognize this challenge. The questions asked frequently require more than an "objective" answer of a letter or a few words, especially in the "Think Critically" exercises after readings. They require a short paragraph, a summary, an outline, or another organizing technique such as a personal reflection. For additional writing assignment ideas and prompts, see Part 2 of this Instructor's Manual.

Students are uniquely well prepared to write on the issues in the text because of the strong contextual background provided by the thematic readings in each chapter. Also, the "Work the Web" activities give students practice using the Internet in a variety of ways, including research and additional writing opportunities.

Extended Reading

When time permits, it is extremely valuable to give your students the opportunity to read extensively. You can choose a book that best fits the needs and interests of your students, give them five or so books to choose from, or allow students to choose what they want to read independently. With any outside readings—especially the nonfiction texts—students can apply the skills they are learning from their text chapters, including the PRO system and vocabulary comprehension. If you assign your students books to be read in groups, the Reading Circles suggestions in Part 3 of this Instructor's Manual are useful (see page 18).

ESL Students in Reading Classes

All of the teaching strategies that we've discussed so far are keys to good instruction; they are therefore important to ESL students as well as to native speakers of English. In addition, you should keep a few more things in mind as you teach classes with non-native speakers in them.

• Vocabulary acquisition. Discuss vocabulary learning with your ESL students. Encourage them to not memorize long lists of every word that they look up in the dictionary. Suggest to your students that they try to read first, and after picking out words that they can't figure out by using context clues and that they think are essential, go to the dictionary.

• Emphasize to your ESL students that when they do look up a word in the dictionary, they should pay close attention to *how* that word is used in the text and what part of speech the word is. This will make it easier for them to use the word if they need to.

• ESL students must work longer and harder than native speakers to be successful in our classes. This is a natural part of language acquisition. Make sure that your students know that you are aware of the extra work it takes for them to succeed. Be positive and encouraging. Remember, some of your students are coming to your class with advanced literacy skills in

10

their language, good study habits, and a love of reading. Others do not have these advantages. Your ESL students are not all alike, but they all can be successful with hard work and your encouragement. Consider how you would feel in a classroom in which you had to read, write, and speak Spanish or, better yet, Chinese.

• It is especially important with ESL students to use the opening sections of chapters. Be sure

to devote time to ask students what they know about a topic and to provide some background on a topic before they are assigned to read about it on their own. Do everything you can to allow your ESL students enough time to do their best on tests.

• Some ESL students are uncomfortable reading or speaking in front of the class. Discuss their boundaries, but challenge them when possible to work collaboratively and ask for help.

• Working in collaborative groups is especially good for your ESL students. It helps them participate under less threatening circumstances, they can practice speaking the language, and often because they have worked especially hard or have had a variety of life experiences, they enrich collaborative groups of native speakers. Make sure all students understand that they will work together with mutual respect and that they all bring something unique and special to the group.

• Enjoy and benefit from the diversity of students in your classroom. With a well-defined atmosphere of respect and acceptance, your students of varied backgrounds will keep things interesting. And, remember, you too can learn from your students!