FOR-PD's Reading Strategy of the Month

Rationale:
An important element of reading comprehension is the ability to summarize text. Summarizing requires readers to focus on the major elements of a text and to decide what is important. When reading longer texts, this strategy helps readers by allowing them to review what they read in one part before moving on to the next.

Steps:
The idea is to summarize some key ideas, rethink them in order to focus on those that one is most intrigued by, and then pose a question that can reveal where understanding is still uncertain.

Students fill out a 3-2-1 chart with something like this:

- **3 Things You Found Out**
- **2 Interesting Things**
- 1 **Question You Still Have**

Now, that's just the suggested version. Depending upon what a teacher's focus is, the strategy can be modified anyway that deems necessary. For instance, if a class has just been studying the transition from feudalism to the rise of nation-states, you might have students write down the following:

- **3** differences between feudalism and nation-states
- **2** effects of feudalism on economy
- **1** question they still have about the topic

In an elementary classroom this strategy would work well with a variety of content topics found within science and social studies standards. When studying animals and their habitats, a primary teacher can use the 3-2-1 Strategy to have students dive into the text and relate to their new knowledge.

- **3** ways in which animals have adapted to living in the Arctic
- **2** characteristics of the climate of the Arctic
- **1** question about animals living in the Arctic

Upper elementary teachers could adapt this strategy for use with literature circle groups. Below is an example using *Holes* by Louis Sachar.

- Describe **3** ways Stanley's perception of Camp Green Lake changes in the book
- Describe **2** characters and their relationship to each other
- Provide **1** question about something you, at first, found confusing in the book, then explain how and where it was resolved in the text

How to Use the Strategy:
This strategy can be used as a post-reading activity (as described above) after the students

complete a unit of study. It could be a during reading strategy that teachers and students build together as they learn more of the related content. The choice is up to the instructor on when he/she best feels it would be appropriate. Make sure you first **model** how to use the strategy to your students and e**xplain how and why** you chose the 3-2-1 points.

Ideas for Assessment:

One of our goals in reading is to maximize students' interaction with text - the more students get involved with text, the higher the probability of comprehension. Often, teachers use this strategy in place of the usual worksheet questions on a chapter reading, and when students come to class the next day. Their responses form the basis for class discussion of the reading and will help the teacher informally assess students' understanding of key concepts. The students are motivated because the discussion is based on the ideas that they found, that they addressed, and that they brought to class. While evaluating the students' written work, it's important to keep in mind the following responses:

- Concepts/ideas relevant or key to the content/topic at hand
- Look for critical thinking questions
- Group like questions together
- Eliminate responses that definitely do not fit
- Discuss the responses with the class - focus on how responses show understanding of the content/topic at hand

(Click on the graphic above to go to a pdf file of the 3-2-1 Strategy worksheet or go to the html file.)

(Click on the graphic above to go to a pdf file of an elementary example of the 3-2-1 Strategy.)
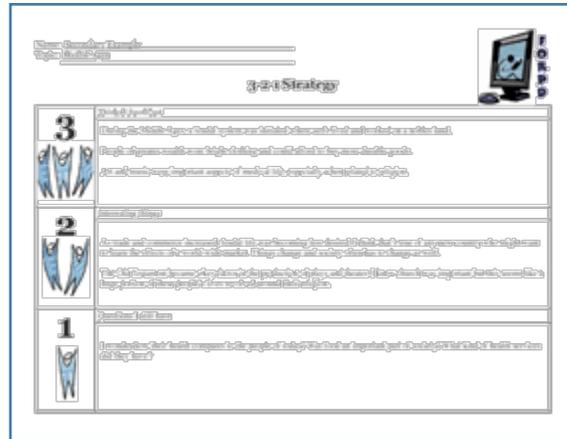
(Click on the graphic above to go to a pdf file of a secondary example of the 3-2-1 Strategy.)

For more informative links on the 3-2-1 Reading Strategy: http://curry.edschool.virginia.edu/go/readquest/strat/321.html

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Go to Adobe PDF instruction page.

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forpd@mail.ucf.edu | (866) 227-7261 (FL only)

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