Pre-Reading Strategy

ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN ARE DEAD
GROVE PRESS, 1968 EDITION
ANTICIPATION GUIDE ACTIVITY

CONTEXT:
This strategy is to be used before introducing the book to the students at all.

PURPOSE:
An Anticipation Guide, according to Frank Smith (1978) allows the reader to make predictions about the text that will be read by eliminating possibilities that are unlikely. This is a way to prepare a reader prior to a reading assignment by asking them to react to a series of statements related to the content of the material. Three reasons for using anticipation guides according to Erickson, Huber, Bea and McKenzie (1987) include: (1) relating prior knowledge to new information to enhance comprehension, (2) creating interest which stimulates discussion on the topic, and (3) creating possibilities for integrating reading and writing instruction.

RATIONALE:
This strategy will get students to start thinking about issues related to the play so that their minds are geared prior to beginning the reading to look for these issues. It is a great strategy to use since the students will need to discuss and defend their ideas on each issue within a group; this will allow their minds to explore possibilities of each issue without being intimidated by the text.

DIRECTIONS:
MATERIALS NEEDED: Anticipation Guide handouts
TIME: 30 minutes

STEP ONE:
READ PLAY
Read and analyze the play to identify the major concepts (both explicit and implicit).

STEP TWO:
DECIDE ON MAJOR CONCEPTS
Decide which concepts are most important and should be addressed in class. Use these to create student interest and to agitate or stimulate reflection on prior knowledge or beliefs.

STEP THREE:

Culp, BYU, 2009
WRITE STATEMENTS ON MAJOR CONCEPTS
Write a series of short, declarative statements about the major concepts (usually about 7-10). The statements should be thought-provoking and reflect the students’ backgrounds. General statements are better than abstract or overly specific ones. Famous quotations and idioms work well. The statements should be written in a format that will elicit students to predict and anticipate.

STEP FOUR:

WRITE QUESTIONS THAT PRECEDE A RESPONSE TO THE STATEMENT
Consider what students need to ask themselves before they can respond to the statement already written. The question should be simple and tied directly to the concept that statement asks them to consider. Questions can refer to their philosophies/experiences/beliefs, etc.

STEP FIVE:

DISPLAY THE GUIDE
To allow students time to react to each statement, display the guide either on the blackboard or on an overhead, or distribute individual worksheets. Give clear directions for what the students are to do with the guide, such as writing an “A” for agreeing or a “D” for disagreeing in the left-hand column for each statement. Make sure to leave space for responses on the sheet. Students should complete the guide individually before getting into pairs groups to discuss.

STEP SIX:

DISCUSS
Conduct a class discussion about the concepts before the students read the text. Students are expected to support their answers with more than a “yes” or “no” response. Students are to give examples from past experience and explain the decision-making process by which they arrive at their answers.

ASSESSMENT:

Students have now considered, discussed, and defended their thoughts and feelings on the issues you have presented. Make sure each student has participated in his/her group and decided to agree or disagree. This activity has allowed the students to take charge of their own learning and to focus on their reading. You can use their guides to preview the students’ beliefs and knowledge about the concepts.