

Final Word

Final Word is a dialogue strategy that is useful for assisting students in processing an informational text selection. It provides a structure for students in small groups to dialogue about the reading which can deepen comprehension and meaning making for students.

The strength of this strategy is that ideas can be presented without interjection and are examined critically as participants are listening to listen, not listening to speak. After using this strategy, participants commented on the depth of their reading and understanding of the text compared to reading it alone.

How to implement the strategy:

1. Have the students form groups of four.
2. Explain to the students that they will use a strategy called Final Word to help them process a text selection.
3. Give the students a copy of the instructions for Final Word and review them with the students.

Final Word:

- a. First person reads out something they have highlighted in the text without comment.
 - b. Each person around the group makes a comment or observation about the part of text that was read out, without interjection or comment from others in the group.
 - c. First person then summarizes what each person has said and then has their say.
 - d. The next person in the group now takes on the first person role and reads out a section of the text they have highlighted without comment.
 - e. The strategy continues until each person has had a turn as first person.
4. Ask the students if they have any questions about the instructions and provide clarification as needed.
 5. Provide each student with a copy of the text selection and explain that each one will read the text and highlight text that means something to them, or that they have a thought or opinion about.
 6. Provide students with an appropriate amount of time to read and highlight the text and have them begin their dialogue in their groups when all members have finished reading the text.
 7. Monitor the students as they dialogue in their groups.
 8. Have students think about and discuss with their group members how using this strategy to help them make meaning of the text compares to them reading the text alone.
 9. Have some volunteers share out with the whole class.

Adapted from:

- Garmston, Robert J. and Wellman, Bruce M. (2009). *The adaptive school: A sourcebook for developing collaborative groups*. 2nd Edition. Norwood, MA. Christopher-Gordon.

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Directions:

6. **First person** reads out something they have highlighted in the text without comment.
7. **Each person** around the group makes a comment or observation about the part of text that was read out, without interjection or comment from others in the group.
8. **First person** then summarizes what each person has said and then has their say.
9. **The person to the right of the first person** now takes on the first person role and reads out a section of the text they have highlighted without comment.
10. The strategy continues until each person in the group has had a turn as first person.

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