THREE HIGHLIGHTS

A FACILITATION STRUCTURE FOR MULTIPLE CLOSE READINGS OF A SHORT TEXT

This is a “during reading” structure designed to invite students to engage with a text three times, each time employing a different modality.

**Step 1: Highlight with your eyes.**
- Instruct students to read the text in silence and highlight words and phrases that seem particularly notable to them.
- Nothing special here. Just plain ol’ reading and highlighting. However, you may elect to use the language “highlight with your eyes” as a way to foreshadow the later moves in this structure.
- Also, in service of your lesson’s learning objectives, you may choose to guide your students by offering them a lens through which to read. For example, you may ask them to highlight particular parts of speech or words and phrases that speak to a certain theme.

**Step 2: Highlight with your ears.**
- Invite students to close their eyes and listen to a reading of the text. You may choose to present your students a recorded reading, perhaps by the author, or read the text yourself.
- Instruct them to “highlight with your ears.” That is to say, as they listen, they should make mental note of words or phrases that catch their attention or “ring in your ears.”
- After the reading is complete, invite students to open their eyes and use their highlighters to mark the words and phrases that stood out to them during this reading.

**Step 3: Highlight with your voice.**
- Invite students to “highlight with your voice” by reading aloud the words and phrases they have already highlighted with their eyes and ears. That is to say, tell students that you will read the text aloud and that as you come to words and phrases they have highlighted, they should speak them along with you.
- For example, if a student’s text looks like this, “It was a queer, sultry summer, the summer they electrocuted the Rosenbergs, and I didn’t know what I was doing in New York.” They should only speak the words “it was a queer, sultry summer” and “I didn’t know what I was doing in New York.”
- You may wish to model this step before beginning the full reading, perhaps by offering students an image of an actor’s script in which their lines are highlighted.
- Often, I give the direction that just as a highlighter’s ink stands out brightly against the plain whiteness of the paper, so too should a student’s voice stand out against the plain silence of the classroom. Their voices should be as bright and clear as a highlighter’s ink.

After these readings, invite students to engage in a conversation about the text or express their understanding of it in the manner that seems best to you.

Adapted by Brian Veprek from a workshop by Adele Bruni Ashley and Nathan Blom Center for the Professional Education of Teachers - cpet.tc.columbia.edu