Quaker Read Activity Protocol

What is a Quaker Read?

Quaker read is a meeting of students to share responses to a piece of literature – each student shares a particular sentence/paragraph where the student was able to make a text-to-self/text-to-text/text-to-world connection, whatever is directed by the teacher.

This activity is appropriate for ELL students that are at Intermediate (I) and Advanced (A) Proficiency Levels.

This strategy is excellent in helping ELL students to develop the following skills:
- Rereading Text
- Skimming and Scanning
- Recalling Details
- Listening carefully and attentively

Possible language functions:
- Giving an opinion or personal response
- Giving an explanation

How do you implement this strategy with English Language Learners (ELLs)?

You can do this activity either whole class or in a small group – if appropriate, you can form a large circle. Allow the ELL students to reread and identify a particular section that holds a special meaning for them. At random, the ELL students stand (one at a time) and read aloud from their passages.

ELL students can also make text-to-self, text-to-text connections or text-to-world connections through personal reactions: This allows them to express themselves in a risk-free environment. To ensure that all students will be successful in this communicative activity, you can provide the ELL students a language frame/sentence starter to get them to respond and to fully participate. The following are some examples of what you could provide to ELL students in a pocket chart/smart board to spawn a good Quaker Read Session:

This text makes me think of a time when____________________________.

This text reminds me of (title of other book) because______________________.

This text reminds me of what is currently happening ___________________.

Other ways to ‘tweak’ the Quaker Read Activity:

Quaker Share

A Quaker Share can be set up where all the participants/students read the same text/piece of literature and then respond to it by writing in their professional journals/Writer’s Notebook. At random, participants/students then volunteer to read aloud from their writing, just as the Quakers tend to do in a meeting. What is critical here is protocol: While one participant/student reads, the other participants/students listen actively.

ELLs in the early stages of writing can illustrate their thoughts in a Writer’s Notebook/Journal and share (orally) the illustrations (through an overhead projector/Smart Board document projector) in lieu of reading.