

Handout:

# Using the Frame graphic organizer to facilitate Reading Comprehension

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The Frame graphic can be an excellent device for promoting reading comprehension, and there are a variety of ways it can be used. Specific examples are noted below:

## Class-wide Mediated Reading

Many content-area teachers either read a short passage from the text to students (or call on individual students to read short passages out loud) and then ask questions to promote discussion or understanding of the text. An alternative class-wide reading activity is to provide students with blank copies of the Frame organizer, and then, as specific passages are read by the teacher or individual students, promote a discussion regarding what ideas, if any, presented in the passage should be noted on the Frame organizer. Here, the teacher's role is to co-construct the graphic with students as the passages are being read and discussed.

**Key Topic**  
Byron

**Is about...**  
a character in the book, "The Watsons go to Birmingham"

**Essential Details**

- He picks on kids most of the time.
- He could be nice and show his feelings.
- He was disliked because he was a bully and mean.
- Daddy Cool.
- He feared his mom. Disobedient

Sometimes being cool does not result in making friends

The example above shows how the one-main idea Frame was used to record essential information during a character analysis as a story was read in a fifth grade class.

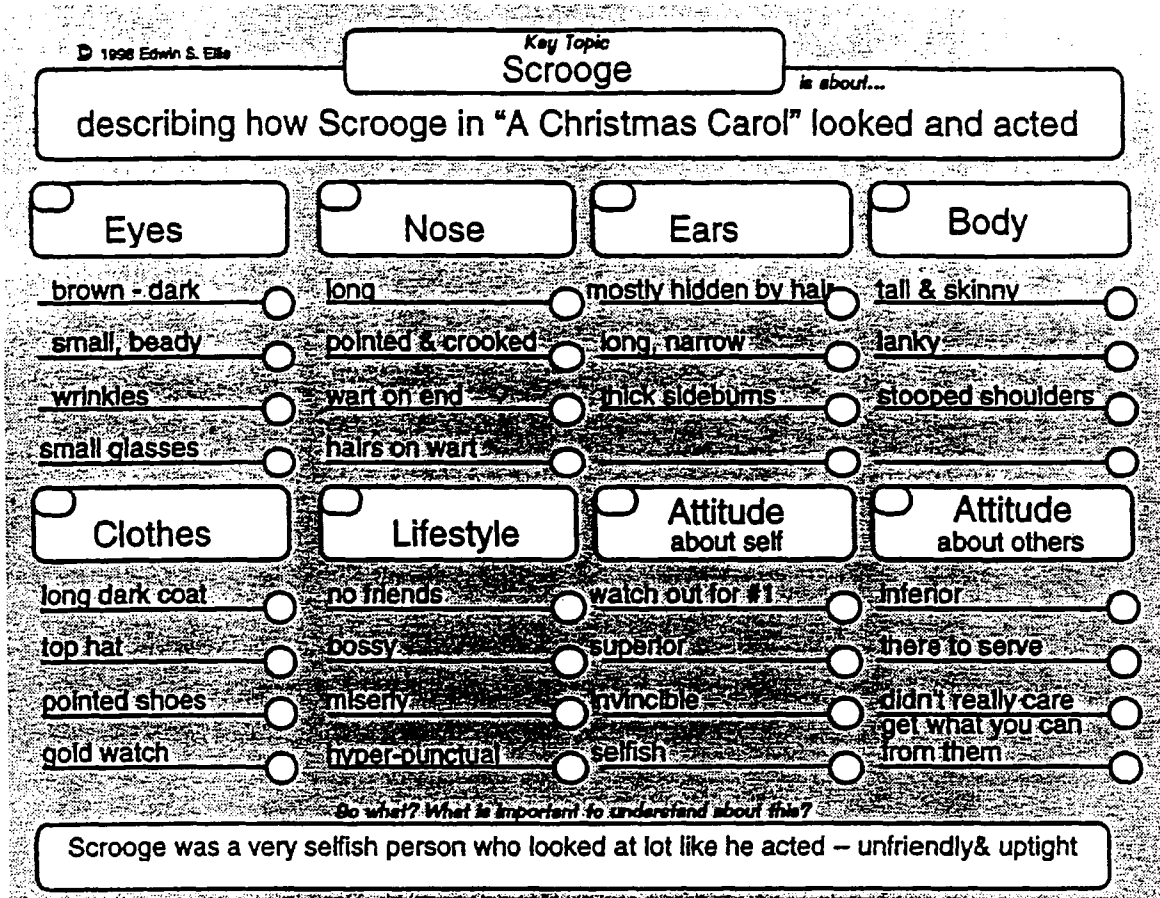
In the example below, a more structured use of the one-main idea Frame was used to facilitate a character analysis as a story was read in a eighth grade class.

<i>Key Topic</i>	
<b>Mrs. Whitlaw (Dragon Wings)</b>	<i>is about...</i>
...a women in the story who everybody hates and then loves	
<i>Essential Details</i>	
<b>Looked like</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>  Prim and proper</li> <li>  Fancy clothes</li> <li>  Always frowning</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>  Hair in tight bun</li> <li>  Very tall &amp; thin</li> <li>  Long straight nose</li> </ul>
<b>Acted like</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>  Holier than thou</li> <li>  Stuck-up</li> <li>  Superior to everyone</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>  Stingy</li> <li>  Superior intelligence</li> </ul>
<b>Relationships to others</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>  Nobody liked her, no friends</li> <li>  Very bossy</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>  Most were afraid of her</li> </ul>
<b>How changed</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>  Earthquake causes mass destruction, many injuries.</li> <li>  Mrs. Whitlaw rolls up her sleeves and tries to help.</li> <li>  Turns her beautiful home into a hospital.</li> </ul>
<b>Importance to Story</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>  Whitlaw character used to show differences in classes/society at turn of century.</li> </ul>
<i>On what/What is important to understand about this?</i>	
<p>You don't get respect by demanding it -- you get it by earning it.</p> <p>Sometimes what you see on the "outside" of the person is not at all like who they really are on the inside.</p>	

# Using the Frame graphic organizer to facilitate Reading Comprehension

- \* Class-wide Mediated Reading
  - \* Team-topic reading
  - \* Reading the news
  - \* Individual-topic reading
  - \* Homework reading
  - \* Using Frame in conjunction with  
The Paraphrasing Reading Strategy
-

The multiple main idea Frame (below) was used to record specific features about a character from literature.



## Team-topic reading

Team-topic reading is another way to promote reading comprehension. Here, the class is divided into groups of about four students each. Each group is then assigned one of the main idea topics that appear on a Frame organizer. Since you will likely have more groups than main ideas, different groups may be assigned the same main idea. Each group then reads a passage from text while searching for essential information or details related only to the main idea they were assigned.

One approach is to assign each group the *same* reading passage, but also assign each group a different main idea from the same passage for which they search for essential details. Thus, the whole class is engaged in reading the same passage, but groups within the class are searching for different types of information (naturally, the text passage should contain information about all of the main ideas in these situations).

After the teams have read the passage and listed what they believed to be the essential information related to the main idea they were assigned, each

team then reports to the class what they found. The role of the teacher is to facilitate this reporting, clarify information and ensure that it is accurate as needed, and add any essential information about the main idea that the group may have over-looked. As each group reports their findings, the teacher also models note taking on the Frame organizer using an overhead projector, and the rest of the class takes notes about the main idea the group is discussing. Once the first main idea has been thoroughly discussed, the groups who searched for essential information about each of the subsequent main ideas reports their findings, and the teacher facilitates in like manner.

## Reading the news

A number of adult news magazines publish children's versions (i.e., Sports Illustrated For Kids, Time for Kids). To help students learn to identify main ideas and essential information, the multiple-main ideas version of Frame can be used. As individual students read each article, they record interesting facts they learned or important information. The example below illustrates a fifth grade student's responses to Time For Kids published during the week of September 19, 1997.

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**Time for Kids**  
is about...

...what's in the news this week (September 19, 1997)

<p>1 The Death of a Princes</p> <p>Princes of Wales From England People's Princess She helped a lot of charities</p>	<p>4 5 highest temperatures</p> <p>El Aziza, Libya Death Valley, Calif. Tirat Tsvi, Israel Concuny, Australia Seville, Spain</p>	<p>3 The Great Classroom Crunch</p> <p>over crowded w/ kids there wasn't enough room you can barely walk in the halls</p>	<p>5 Welcome Back, Pack</p> <p>Alpha leader wolves are coming back author writing about wolves</p>
<p>2 Spotlight</p> <p>Cynthia Cooper Houston Comets WMBA #14</p>	<p>A Farewell</p> <p>Mother Teresa she helped the poorest of the poor Frail health won Nobel Peace Prize award</p>	<p>Pigs Invade the Arcade</p> <p>Stanley Curtis animal scientist Hamlet &amp; Ormelet (pigs) learn how to play video games M&amp;Ms</p>	<p>6 Party On, Darth</p> <p>Jake Lloyd Plays Darth Vader in first 3 movies In theaters in 1999 8 years old</p>

Go what? What is important to understand about this?

Princes Diana & Mother Teresa's deaths were most important news

## Individual-topic reading

This activity is very similar to Team-topic reading. Here, the teacher first provides students with a copy of the Frame graphic with the main ideas already noted on them. Next, the class is divided into groups. The number of students in each group should match the number of main ideas on the Frame graphic. Next, each student in the group selects one of the main idea topics. Each member of the group then reads the same passage searching for essential information about their main idea topic. Next, all students from all groups who were searching for information about the first main idea then convene to share their findings, those that addressed the second main idea convene, and so forth. This allows students to discuss among themselves what they learned about the main idea they were assigned and fill in any gaps they personally may have missed. The students then return to their original teams and share with their team the essential information about the main idea they were exploring. Individual team members then copy onto their own Frames the essential information about each of the main ideas.

## Homework reading

In lieu of the tradition homework assignments where students are expected to form written responses to study guide questions, specific reading passage can be assigned, and students are asked to complete a Frame organizer about the main ideas of the passage. For novice readers, the teacher can list for students the main ideas in the passage, so that they are only searching for essential details related to each. More sophisticated readers, however, can be expected to identify for themselves the main ideas as well as essential details for each are when reading the passage. Thus, the homework assignment would be to read a particular passage, and then to develop a Frame graphic that depicts what the passage was about.

## Using Frame in conjunction with The Paraphrasing Reading Strategy

For students who are just beginning to develop reading comprehension skills or for those who struggle in this area, use of the Paraphrasing Strategy (cite?) can be combined with use of the Frame organizer. Steps to the Paraphrasing Strategy are:

**R**ead a paragraph.

**A**sk yourself what was the main idea and two important details?

**P**ut the main idea and details into your own words.

As students are reading and paraphrasing each paragraph, they can also take notes showing main ideas and details on the Frame organizer. The multiple-main ideas Frame organizer (see page XX) may be the most appropriate for use in this context.