

BEFORE READING LESSON PLAN: The Importance of Setting a Purpose for Reading

THE HOUSE

From Cris Tovani, *I Read It, But I Don't Get It*(2000)

Objective: To help students realize that readers have different purposes when they read, and setting a goal or purpose BEFORE reading can make the process and outcome much easier.

Materials:

- Copy of text, The House for each student plus a copy for smart board or overhead projector
- Two different colors of highlighters for each student
- Students will also need a pencil or pen

Procedure:

1. Hand out copies of texts to each student
2. Ask students to listen carefully and follow along silently as the teacher reads the text aloud
3. Now, ask students to underline items within the text that they found important with their pen or pencil—don't spend a lot of time on this part
4. Ask students to volunteer to share what they found important and why they found it important (I almost always have one or two students who seem stymied by what is important and say none of it was!)
5. After a student or two shares, ask the class if they found it hard to decide what was important—then tell them it was because you didn't provide them with a purpose or goal for the reading.
6. Tell students you will help out by giving them a purpose; that they should choose one of their highlighters to highlight anything a ROBBER would want to know about the house.
7. Give students time to read through, and highlight items in the text, then ask volunteers to share what they found with the class.
8. Next, pause to debrief and compare the first reading (without a plan/purpose) with the second reading; setting a purpose by looking for things within the text a Robber would want to know.
9. Now ask the students to use their other color highlighter this time as you change the purpose for reading: students should highlight information in the text that a HOME BUYER would want to know.
10. Repeat steps 7 and 8.
11. As a conclusion to the lesson, remind students that if a purpose is not set for reading by a teacher, that they may still set their own by looking at the questions first, exp.: if reading comes from a chapter or section in a textbook or on a high stakes assessment..

Remind students that while purposes for reading may vary, it's important to know your specific purpose before reading in order to best understand what you're reading.

