

Story Impressions

Source: *Reading Strategies for the Content Areas* by ASCD

"Story impressions" is a pre-reading strategy that introduces students to the vocabulary they will need to know for a particular unit of study. It provides students the opportunity to create semantic relationships amongst the words by asking the students to write a paragraph using the words in the order in which the words are listed. In addition, this strategy allows the teacher to assess the students' prior knowledge based on the paragraphs that are written.

How to use it:

- ☑ Preview a section of text and identify the 10 - 12 important terms (words, phrases, concepts, or names) you want students to know
- ☑ List the words in the order in which they appear in the text
- ☑ Students should be given enough words to form an impression of the text but not so many that they can easily recreate the text
- ☑ Have students work independently or in small groups to brainstorm connections among the words
- ☑ Ask students to then create a possible version of the text by using all of the words in a paragraph
- ☑ Ask student volunteers to share their paragraphs with the whole class
- ☑ Then read the section of text and compare the students' version with the original text
- ☑ Finally have students rewrite their paragraphs so that these new vocabulary words are used correctly within the context of the paragraph

“Story Impressions” - Example

Important Terms:

- | | | |
|------------------|--------------|-------------------|
| 1. cell theory | 5. cell wall | 9. phospholipid |
| 2. cell membrane | 6. nucleus | 10. lipid bilayer |
| 3. cytoplasm | 7. organelle | |
| 4. ribosome | 8. cilia | |

Student Sample:

Cell theory explains how cells are organized and what they consist of. To begin with, cells have an outside layer called the cell membrane. The cell membrane regulates all the things coming into and out of a cell. Cytoplasm is contained inside the cell. In addition, cells contain ribosomes, a cell wall, a nucleus, and organelles. Organelles move around the cell by tiny hair-like projections called cilia. Finally, cells contain fatty tissues called phospholipids. These phospholipids are sometimes stacked on top of one another to form a lipid bilayer.

Portion of the Actual Text (excerpt from *Holt Biology*, 2004):

The Cell Theory

It took scientists more than 150 years to fully appreciate the discoveries of Hooke and Leeuwenhoek. In 1838, the German botanist Matthias Schleiden concluded that cells make up not only the stems and roots but every part of a plant. A year later, the German zoologist Theodor Schwann claimed that animals are also made of cells. In 1858, Rudolph Virchow, a German physician, determined that cells come only from other cells. The observations of Schleiden, Schwann, and Virchow form the cell theory, which has three parts:

1. All living things are made of one or more cells.
2. Cells are the basic units of structure and function in organisms.
3. All cells arise from existing cells.

Common Features of Cells

Cells share common structural features, including an outer boundary called the cell membrane. The cell membrane encloses the cell and separates the cell interior, called the cytoplasm, from its surroundings. The cell membrane also regulates what enters and leaves a cell - including gases, nutrients, and wastes. Within the cytoplasm are many structures, often suspended in a system of microscopic fibers called the cytoskeleton. Most cells have ribosomes. Ribosomes are the cellular structures on which proteins are made. All cells also have DNA, which provides instructions for making proteins, regulates cellular activities, and enables cells to reproduce. Some specialized cells such as red blood cells, however, later lose their DNA.