

Reading From Different Perspectives + Prosocial Twists

Adapted from sources cited and prosocial twists suggested by Beth Breneman, Ph.D., Consultant (ret.), California Department of Education; recommended for grades four through twelve.

Reading From Different Perspectives is a strategy that guides students through repeated readings of a selection and helps them discover alternative ways to interpret and respond to a text depending on a reader's point of view.

Prosocial twists provide students opportunities to participate in democratic processes: rereading and researching the given topic from still different perspectives, selecting the best evidence to support various claims, presenting arguments while role playing in an enacted public hearing, discussing new insights, and voting on the issue.

Goals

1. Help students achieve understanding of different perspectives and become aware of the influence of a reader's

point of view on interpretations of a reading.

2. Help students acquire skills and dispositions needed to participate in a democracy.

Teacher Preparation

1. Select one story, article, or book for a reading that contains some controversy. "Tug of War Over Wolves" (page 5) may be printed and duplicated.
2. Identify some perspectives on important concepts and ideas in the reading. Selections may be reread from various perspectives: father, mother, sister, doctor, labor union member, or governor, for example; or reread from different ideological positions: Marxist, Freudian, Republican, Libertarian, environmentalist.
3. See "My Perspective on Reintroducing Wolves into the United States." on page 6 for an example of a Perspective Guide and how to use the technique. The blank Perspective Guide on page 7 can be printed and duplicated.

Instructional Procedures

1. Have students read the selection to get the gist of the material.

2. List a number of perspectives on the chalkboard or an overhead transparency. Model how a person from one of these perspectives would react to the material.

3. Divide the class into small groups and assign each group a perspective to assume as they reread the selection. Guide each group as it defines the concerns and needs of that perspective and identifies the most important. Assist students as they complete their Perspective Guides.

4. Have students identify key statements from the text that are most important to their assigned perspectives as they reread the passage. Guide students in listing these statements and noting their reactions based on their perspectives.

5. Guide students as they determine whether there is any information missing from the selection that would be important to them.

6. Discuss with the entire class the insights that students gained by rereading from different perspectives. Direct students to write a summary position statement on both the text

information and the different perspectives.

Prosocial Twists

1. Have students choose a new and different role each will assume in a public hearing on a controversial topic e.g., reintroducing the wolf: rancher, hunter, national park visitor, animal researcher, environmentalist, or other and have each student write a position statement.

2. Have students select statements from the article, which they judge to be the strongest evidence in support of their position statements.

3. Have students conduct further research for additional evidence--including visual and quantitative in diverse media and formats, if possible, to strengthen their arguments. Encourage students to note the use of loaded language and avoidance of certain facts from written statements of various camps.

4. Appoint a student volunteer to preside over a student-conducted public hearing. Have students role-play as they present their arguments to the

class in the voices of their assigned roles.

5. Invite students to reflect on insights gained by reading and speaking from different perspectives and discuss their own personal conclusions on the topic.

6. Hold a vote to determine the class's position on the issue.

Relevant Common Core State Standards

Visit:

<http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy> to see the K-12 English language arts standards for various grade levels which correspond by number to the College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards (CCR). The CCR and grade-specific standards are complements—the former providing broad standards, the latter, additional specificity. (There are additional standards that can be addressed through the use of Reading From Different Perspectives + Prosocial Twists.)

Anchor Standards for Reading: Key Ideas and Details

R.1 Read closely to determine

what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

Anchor Standards for Reading: Craft and Structure

R.6 Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.

Anchor Standards for Reading: Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

R.7 Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

R.8 Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.

R.9 Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

References and Further Resources

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McLaughlin, D. (2013). National Park, National Tragedy & The War on Wolves Continues. *Defenders*. 88(1), inside covers & 9.

McNeil, J. D. (1984). *Reading Comprehension: New Directions for Classroom Practice*. Glenview, Ill.: Scott, Foresman.

Pritchard, R. and Breneman, B. (2000). *Strategic Teaching and Learning*. Sacramento: California Department of Education.

“Tug of War Over Wolves”

She was big. She was beautiful. She was such a powerful hunter that she was once observed bringing down an elk single-handedly.

The female wolf 832F spent the majority of her time in Yellowstone National Park. She was the mother to many litters of pups and a favorite of the “wolf-watchers” who visit the park to gaze in awe and admiration at the magnificent gray wolves from the Lamar Canyon pack. She was a “famous,” visible wolf, filmed by cinematographer Bob Landis, who has produced many films for *Nature* and *National Geographic* programs.

But just a few weeks before Christmas she was shot down needlessly—the eighth Yellowstone wolf to be shot in recent months, and the ninth wolf to be shot outside of the park’s border wearing a radio collar. Unfortunately, a roaming wolf will sometimes cross outside park borders—where, all too often, hunters fail to see their radio collars and shoot to kill. Though no hunting is allowed within the park, wolves often roam in search of food or mates. Once across the invisible park boundary, they are no longer protected.

As heartbreaking as the death of 832F is, it’s really evidence of a much bigger problem: irresponsible wildlife management plans in states such as Idaho, Wyoming, and Montana. Since the federal government took away federal protection for wolves in these states, hunters have killed at least 650 wolves.

Environmental groups are working aggressively to rally the public against such senseless killing. They are also working with policy-makers in these states and in Washington, D.C, to ensure the creation of strong, science-based wildlife management policies. Recently, the state of Montana temporarily stopped allowing wolves to be hunted in most park border areas. But it is only a temporary measure.

The Yellowstone wolves are some of the most intensely studied wild animals on the planet. For years, scientists have monitored wolf activity under conditions where humans were not a threat to wolves’ survival. Now it appears these wolves will face the same risks as wolves elsewhere in the Rockies, potentially jeopardizing research on their behavior in the wild.

In the long term, wolves like 832F, and all of America’s wolves, can only be safe when sound, science-based wildlife plans and policies are in place that treat wolves not as vermin, but as critical parts of their ecosystems—*not to mention majestic wild creatures loved by millions of Americans.*

**My Perspective on
Reintroducing Wolves into the United States
(Rancher, Hunter, National Park Researcher, Environmentalist)**

Role: Rancher

Needs	←--→	Concerns
I need to know I could coexist		Would dogs sound an alarm?
Safety of cattle		Would my cattle be safe?
Everybody wants rights		What are my rights?
I need control of my land		How much would new fences cost?
Text Statements -----→ Your Reaction		
832 F brought down an elk.		My cat wouldn't have a chance.
Policies in place treat wolves as vermin.		Some use herders & flags on rope.
Wolves are majestic wild creatures.		My farm animals are majestic.
Wildlife management is a problem.		My grandkids do love wildlife.

Summary Statement

As a rancher, I am worried about the success of human co-existence with the growing wolf population in the United States. While some of these wolves are in national parks, there have been incidents of wolves crossing the boundary lines. These could threaten my livestock.

I am in favor of the rights of the wolves to live in the United States, but I believe that as a person trying to earn a living, I have rights also. Does the environmentalist value the rights of wolves over the rights of a rancher? I am a person, and a wolf is an animal.

I don't like treating wolves as vermin, so I would like to see a balance of rights for wolves and ranchers. I'd be willing to try out new fences, trained dogs, and flags strung on rope to keep the wolves away. I might even hire some range riders or herders. If those measures failed to protect my livestock, though, I would not be happy.

NAME

DATE

Perspective Guide

Topic: _____

Your Point of View _____

Needs

←--→

Concerns

Text Statements -----> Your Reaction

Summary Statement
