

## Stances, Signposts, and Strategies: Teaching Nonfiction with The New Notice & Note Book!

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**Session Description:** Do your students *Notice & Note* the “Signposts” as they read? If the answer is yes, then you are probably familiar with *Notice & Note: Strategies for Close Reading* by Kylene Beers and Robert E. Probst. This practical guide identified six signposts that help students to notice significant moments in literature. Last fall, teachers eagerly awaited the release of their new book, *Reading Nonfiction: Notice & Note Stances, Signposts, and Strategies*. Although you will want your own copy of the book, take home lessons, materials, and ideas to try in your classroom today!

### English Language Arts Standards College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Reading:

#### Key Ideas and Details:

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.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.

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.2](#)

Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.3](#)

Analyze how and why individuals, events, or ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

#### Craft and Structure:

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.4](#)

Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.5](#)

Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.6](#)

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

#### Integration of Knowledge and Ideas:

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7](#)

Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.<sup>1</sup>

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.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.

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.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.

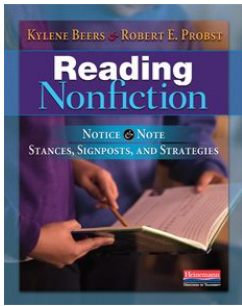
#### Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity:

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.10](#)

Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.

**Rationale:** Kylene Beers and Bob Probst write: “Fiction invites us into the writer's imagined world; nonfiction intrudes into ours and purports to tell us something about it.” So *Reading Nonfiction* presents *interlocking nonfiction scaffolds that move every student beyond a superficial reading—to challenge authors’ claims, be challenged by them, and skillfully make up their mind about purported truths.*

“When we looked at nonfiction we said, ‘All roads lead to author's purpose’ and sometimes with author's purpose, what you really find is author's bias.” - [Kylene Beers](#)



The authors begin with the seemingly simple task of defining nonfiction while explaining the responsibilities of readers of nonfiction to identify that the author is “not offering the truth, but *one* vision of the truth.” Part two emphasizes “The Importance of Stance” as students read attentively to consider possible bias with these questions in mind: **\*What surprised me? \*What did the author think I already knew? \*What changed, challenged, or confirmed what already knew?**

Part three announces “The Power of Signposts” with five new nonfiction signposts that, as the fiction signposts demonstrated, give students solid signals to guide their reading and thinking. Struggling readers are empowered with concrete examples and skilled readers are encouraged to slow down and notice the details they are missing.

- **Contrasts & Contradictions:** When the author shows you how things/people/ideas contrast and contradict one another, or shows you something that contrasts or contradicts what you already know, you need to stop & ask yourself... What is the difference and why does it matter?
- **Extreme or Absolute Language:** When the author uses language that is extreme or absolute, you need to stop and ask yourself... Why did the author use this language?
- **Number and Stats:** When the author uses specific numbers or provides statistical information, you need to stop and ask yourself... Why did the author use these numbers or amounts?
- **Quoted Words:** When the author chooses to quote someone, you need to ask yourself... Why was this person quoted or cited and what did this add?
- **Word Gaps:** When the author chooses to use a word or phrase that you don’t know, you need to ask yourself... Do I know this word from someplace else? Does it seem like technical talk for this topic? Can I find clues in the sentence to help me understand the word?

Finally, in “The Role of Strategies” the authors provide seven scaffolds “to make the invisible thinking process visible.”

- **Possible Sentences:** “A before-reading strategy that helps students think about the content of a text before they begin reading. Choose eight to fourteen words (or phrases) from the text, and students then write five ‘possible sentences’ that might appear in the text, using three to five of the given words in each sentence” (185).
- **KWL 2.0:** A slight revision to the classic KWL strategy with students asking specific questions instead of the imprecise “What do I want to know?” (193).
- **Somebody Wanted But So:** “SWBS scaffolds students’ thinking and provides a structure that helps them write a one-sentence summary of a text” (201).
- **Syntax Surgery:** “A during-reading fix-up strategy that students use to help clarify confusions that might occur as they are reading.” Students will need a copy of the text they can write on to identify how parts of the text (a word, phrase, sentence, or punctuation mark) relate to another part while drawing lines and arrows to show the connection (209).
- **Sketch to Stretch:** A during-reading strategy students can use to fix-up confusion while trying to visualize what the author was describing. The students underline the specific parts of the text causing the confusion, reread those parts, and, while rereading, try to draw in the margin what the author was describing. Then students label their drawing with terms the author used in the text (221).
- **Genre Reformulation:** Similar to a “[Copy Change](#)”, the “power of narrative” is used as students take an expository structure and reformulate it into a narrative structure using [patterns](#) (230).
- **Poster:** Tape a short passage in the center of a sheet of chart paper (several will be needed for each class). After students have read their copy of the passage, have them gather in groups of three to five around the large sheet to write their reactions silently. No talking is allowed during the annotating! (240).

Students will be energized and challenged to go back to the text, to engage in academic conversations with classmates, and to solve puzzle like activities revolving around nonfiction text. With humor and honesty, Beers and Probst detail their classroom experiences as they shared these tools with students.

