

# LITERACY NEWS

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## What Does the Research Say about Making Sense of Text?

- **Recasting** is a strategy where students **transform** one kind of text into another type of text. This strategy greatly improves **comprehension**. There are a variety of ways to utilize this strategy including turning expository texts into narratives or patterned stories, poems into newspaper articles, or short stories into songs. All help students understand what they are reading. Teachers and parents can both have students show what they know using this technique. Researcher David Buckingham argues that Recast-

ing is **one of the most valuable literacy skills** a person can practice because he or she must fully understand the text in order to be able to convert it.

- **SWBST** is a technique that teaches students to go beyond summaries. This acronym stands for **Somebody Wanted But So Then**. It forces students to think about who the somebody is, what he or she wanted, but what happened to prevent it, and so finally how everything worked out and then what else happened. In **Science** classes, this strategy could be

modified to teach predictions such as **Something Happened... and then this occurred**.

(This month's source is *When Kids Can't Read What Teachers can do* by Kyleene Beers)



## Best Practices and Strategies for Success

- Always model a strategy for students before having them try it. Ask your Literacy Coach to come and model it for you!
- Try a strategy a few times a

semester. Don't give up after one try! Have students do some at home, too!

- Debrief the strategy after students have worked with it a few times. Allow them

to give you an exit card about what worked and what didn't work for them. Use that to plan.

- Remember that comprehension is a process, not a product. Give strategies throughout a unit.

## Am I...

- Willing to put in the work up front to ensure my students "get it"?
- Trying different strategies out and seeing which work for my students?
- Reflecting on how students learn differently and planning accordingly?
- Having fun by learning some new ideas?
- Planning with my colleagues and sharing best practices?