

Helping students “chunk” texts in ways that increase their ability to synthesize information, paraphrase ideas, and better organize their thinking.

by [Vivett Dukes](https://teachingpartners.com/member/vivett-dukes/) (<https://teachingpartners.com/member/vivett-dukes/>)

Grades 6-8, Grades 9-12

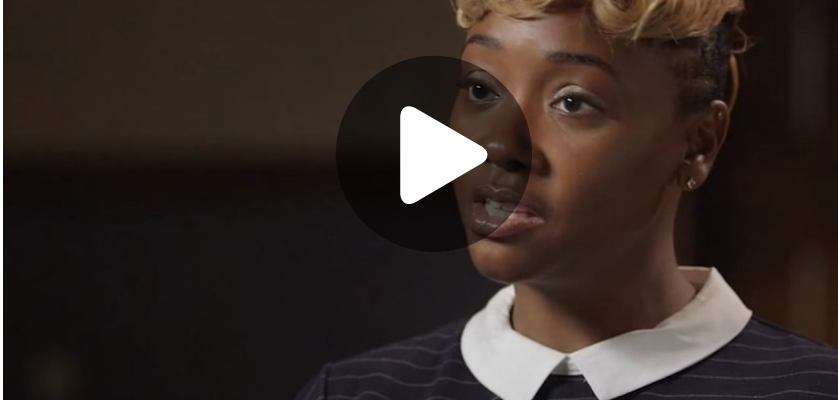
GET STARTED



[WORKSHOP \(HTTPS://TEACHINGPARTNERS.COM/STRATEGIES/HELP-STUDENTS-DEVELOP-THE-CAPACITY-TO-CHUNK-TEXTS-IN-WAYS-THAT-INCREASE-THEIR-ABILITY-TO-SYNTHESIZE-INFORMATION-PARAPHRASE-IDEAS-AND-BETTER-ORGANIZE-THEIR-THINKING/WORKSHOP/\)](https://teachingpartners.com/strategies/help-students-develop-the-capacity-to-chunk-texts-in-ways-that-increase-their-ability-to-synthesize-information-paraphrase-ideas-and-better-organize-their-thinking/workshop/)



About Vivett



Dukes

Vivett is currently the English Department Chair at Eagle Academy for Young Men in Queens, New York. She has over 6 years teaching experience in th...

Introduction

The strategy I'm presenting is teaching students to take a large piece of the text and "chunk" it—meaning to break it up into smaller pieces (line-by-line if necessary) and summarize as they go. This allows the students to get an understanding of the author's meaning in a small section and from that be able to extrapolate what the author is saying in a larger sense.

The approach I use to teach "chunking" in my classroom:

–First I present any challenging vocabulary words in the text. Then I give a mini-lesson presenting the first two to three paragraphs. As a class we discuss the meaning—who or what is these paragraphs are about.

–Next I ask the students to cite some textual evidence that directly explains and supports the meanings we just discussed. We go through this process two or three times as a class.

[Find out more \(https://teachingpartners.com/dukes/\)](https://teachingpartners.com/dukes/)

-Then I break the class into smaller groups-tuos or threes or independent-and ask them to continue to do the same thing. Each group takes a different page and works on the meaning. Finally, we come back together as a class and each group presents the meaning of their page so that everyone ends up teaching each other.

This step-by-step approach can be used for any subject matter. I see the students gain confidence when they legitimately understand what the author is saying. Having this insight and ability makes them want to read more challenging text that otherwise would have scared them away.

I've also observed special needs students being able to use this approach with very rigorous and jargon-heavy text. I know my students have internalized this process and that it's useful for them because I've seen them outside the classroom helping fellow students with "just chunk it and summarize it."

I believe that having the ability to to break things down and think about them translates into better decision-making across all areas of the students' lives; it's not just for a piece of text in English class. I think this process helps them make sense of not only the text but the world and where they fit into it.

Reflections

What I did well...

I think that the chunking and summarizing activity really worked to make the content pedagogically accessible and relevant to teachers from a wide variety of content-areas and grade-levels.

What I would be more of, better, or differently...

I wish I had allotted more time for teachers to engage with and discuss the activity.

I still want to grow in this practice by...

I would like to incorporate more multi-media, artwork, and music analyses in this practice.

[Workshops](https://teachingpartners.com/workshops/)

[\(https://teachingpartners.com/workshops/\)](https://teachingpartners.com/workshops/)

[Groups](https://teachingpartners.com/groups/)

[\(https://teachingpartners.com/groups/\)](https://teachingpartners.com/groups/)

[About](https://teachingpartners.com/about/)

[TeachingPartners](https://teachingpartners.com/about/)

[\(https://teachingpartners.com/about/\)](https://teachingpartners.com/about/)

[Series](https://teachingpartners.com/series/)

[\(https://teachingpartners.com/series/\)](https://teachingpartners.com/series/)

[Videos of Practice](https://teachingpartners.com/videos-of-practice/)

[\(https://teachingpartners.com/videos-of-practice/\)](https://teachingpartners.com/videos-of-practice/)

[Getting Started](https://teachingpartners.com/getting-started/)

[\(https://teachingpartners.com/getting-started/\)](https://teachingpartners.com/getting-started/)

[Podcasts](https://teachingpartners.com/podcasts/)

[\(https://teachingpartners.com/podcasts/\)](https://teachingpartners.com/podcasts/)

[Organizations](https://teachingpartners.com/organizations/)

[\(https://teachingpartners.com/organizations/\)](https://teachingpartners.com/organizations/)

[Our Privacy Policy](https://teachingpartners.com/our-privacy-policy/)

[\(https://teachingpartners.com/our-privacy-policy/\)](https://teachingpartners.com/our-privacy-policy/)

[Contact](https://teachingpartners.com/contact/)

[\(https://teachingpartners.com/contact/\)](https://teachingpartners.com/contact/)

Search



[\(https://www.facebook.com/teachingpartners/\)](https://www.facebook.com/teachingpartners/)



[\(https://www.linkedin.com/company/teachingpartners/\)](https://www.linkedin.com/company/teachingpartners/)



[\(https://twitter.com/teachingpartners/\)](https://twitter.com/teachingpartners/)



[\(https://www.instagram.com/teachingpartners/\)](https://www.instagram.com/teachingpartners/)

© 2021

TeachingPartners.