

Q & A on Say, Mean, Matter with Amanda Childress

1. In terms of student background knowledge, what do student already know before you use this strategy?
 - By the time students enter my class, they have been taught by a sixth grade teacher who utilizes Inquiry Stations. Therefore, they have prior knowledge of how to begin looking at a document to answer a particular question.
2. What does each term mean Say-Mean-Matter?
 - **Say** is where students are actually looking for factual evidence to support their claims.
 - **Mean** is where the students actually express the factual evidence in their own words.
 - **Matter** is how the students use the evidence to answer a question.
3. What is the purpose of the strategy?
 - This strategy is utilized when students are analyzing a text source. This helps students take a primary/secondary document “apart” and “put it back together” in order to understand what the document is saying.
4. How often do you use this strategy?
 - This strategy is used approximately two-three times a week as students are having to support claims with guided reading in class.
5. How long does it take to complete the activity?
 - Students can complete this strategy in about 10-20 minutes, depending on the length of the text. Students are given the text prior to class. At times, depending on the Lexile and length of the text, they might be given the text the day before to do a “rough read” in order to allow them time to absorb the vocabulary.
6. How do you structure the activity?
 - This strategy is utilized a variety of ways. If it is a constructed response task, students will complete this individually. When students are working on a full inquiry lesson with 5+ documents, I usually do allow the class discussion within groups. Therefore, the way I select groups also usually varies. At the beginning of the year, I utilize a variety of surveys to determine students' learning styles. Groups contain a mix of learning styles (usually) or abilities.
7. In the end, what is the desired student outcome?

- At the end of the use of this strategy, I always tell my students that there may not be a “right or wrong” answer, but if they have textual evidence and an inference to support their claim, then it is the correct end result.

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