

Overview

In War Time

Students learn a third Reciprocal Teaching strategy, predicting. They build background for the unit novel *The Big Nothing* by reading about the Iraq War, September 11, and Philippe Petit, a high-wire artist whose true story helps students appreciate the cultural significance of the twin towers and the horror of September 11. There is an emphasis on language describing cause and effect, which students use in both the class debate and in argumentative writing.

LITERATURE

The Big Nothing (Fogelin) - Novel set in the early days of the Iraq War, detailing the anxieties of a family whose older son is serving in the military

War in Afghanistan and Iraq (Souter & Souter) - Appealing layouts and large photographs make this an engaging nonfiction text on the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan

The Man Who Walked Between the Towers (Gerstein) - Lyrical nonfiction account of the astonishing feat of acrobat Philippe Petit who walked on a tightrope between the World Trade Center's twin towers in 1974. Caldecott Medal winner

FLUENCY TOPICS

September 11, the timeline of the conflict in Iraq, everyday life for civilians during the Iraq War, military families, reasons for enlisting, IEDs, new roles for women in the military, rehabilitation of injured soldiers, PTSD

FOCUS

Literary analysis

- Characterization in fiction

Reading comprehension

- Predicting and confirming/disconfirming predictions as a component of Reciprocal Teaching
- Previewing nonfiction using the table of contents, index, and illustrations
- Skimming and scanning as nonfiction reading strategies

Decoding

- Pronouncing vowel teams
- Identifying syllables as units within words
- VC|CV syllable division rule

Debate

- Was Philippe Petit a criminal or a hero?
- What's next for Justin and Jemmie?