

## **Intervention: Foldables**

### **Foldables (All Grade Levels)**

An Excerpt from "Foldables: Improving Learning with 3-D Interactive Graphic Organizers" (*Classroom Notes Plus*, August 2007)

*The feature "Foldables: Improving Learning with 3-D Interactive Graphic Organizers," by Douglas Fisher, Dinah Zike, and Nancy Frey, describes how to use graphic organizers—specifically, a type called "the Foldable"—for meaningful learning in the English language arts. The authors give general tips for creating and using Foldables, describe the benefits, present sample activities, and give how-to instructions and student examples for six types of Foldables.*



### **The Possibilities of Foldables**

Foldables are a type of graphic organizer that students manipulate with their hands and minds. They are multi-dimensional and often colorful. Students cut, fold, and glue as they transform information and learn. You don't have to purchase Foldables—they are an innovation that any teacher can use with her students to help them interact meaningfully with ideas and information.

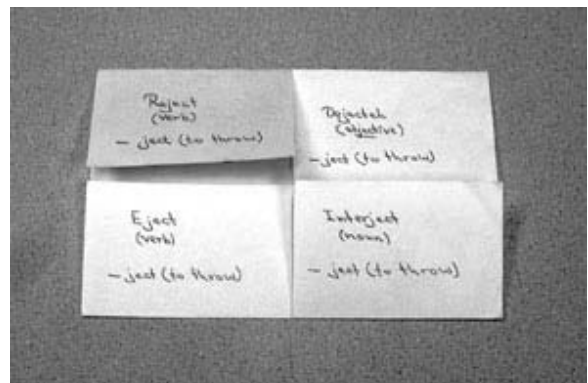
### **Overview of Steps for Introducing Foldables**

Students are quick to master the folds needed for constructing Foldables, but it is wise to introduce them one at a time. Here are some recommendations for a successful experience. It typically takes no more than ten minutes to do the actual construction, and experienced students will do this in less time.

### **Creating the Foldable**

Gather and distribute the necessary materials to students. This usually consists of 8 1/2 " x 11" paper and scissors. Certain Foldables may also require glue.

Show students samples of each completed Foldable and state a common purpose for each type, such as comparing



and contrasting, summarizing, etc. (The section beginning on page 3 of this issue provides suggested purposes and student examples for six different types of Foldables.)

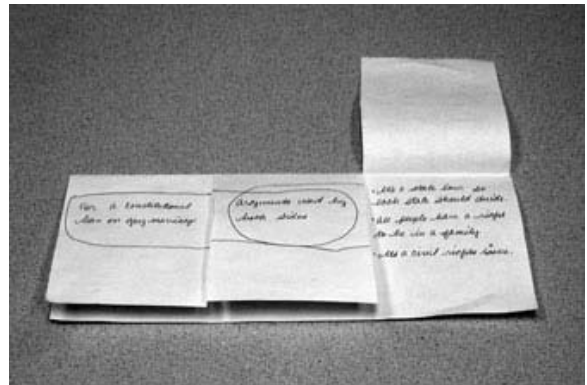
Model each step of the construction for each Foldable, using clear terminology. For example, say “fold the paper lengthwise” rather than “like this.” Encourage students to help one another and talk through the instructions. After the Foldable is constructed, ask students to put away their supplies.

### Using a Foldable with a Lesson

The teacher now models the use of a Foldable with a specific task. For instance, if students are in the middle of a reading assignment, the teacher might use this as an opportunity to model note taking strategies using a Foldable, or to demonstrate how a Foldable can be used to record questions about plot, characters, or motivations during reading.

If students are studying an aspect of writing or grammar, the teacher might model using a Foldable to compile and organize examples of proper usage. The completed Foldable might also be used as a tool to foster classroom discussion of a topic, or to warm up to a summary- or essay-writing assignment.

Once the assignment has been introduced, students should have a chance to look over the sample Foldables, talk about their purposes, and select the Foldable they want to use in organizing their information. The more involved students are in thinking about their purpose and planning how they will achieve it, the more benefits they will obtain from their work with Foldables.



Students should also be encouraged to collaborate on the creation of the Foldables and to work in pairs or small groups, as appropriate, as they pursue the assignment. The communication and interactions fostered by these efforts can be as enriching to students' literacy and language learning as the achievement of the specific lesson goals.