

Something Cool To Make

Get a head start on the coming school year by making Study Packets for each of the students you'll have in your class. Students are sure to think that these are "way cool" as they learn to use them! These packets will be available throughout the school day for students' personal use and at the teacher's direction during lessons in all content areas.

Here are ideas for the materials you might include in each student packet:

- ◆ 2 Wikki-Stix (or similar product)
- ◆ a highlighter
- ◆ a small pack of Post-It-Notes (or similar brand)
- ◆ a window envelope with the back cut away
- ◆ a clear plastic overlay or a rectangle of transparent book cover material in a bright color
- ◆ a snap-sealed baggie as a container for all of the items

How will these materials be used? Here are a few ideas, and, no doubt, you'll think of many additional uses:

1. Let students choose any of these items (Post-Its might not be the best choice here) to highlight vocabulary words in the text they're reading. This will help them to focus on the words as you have a chance to talk about their meanings. You'll say, "We're going to be reading about the pyramids of Egypt. Look on page 82 and find the circle the word *pyramid* when you find it."
2. Have students use these materials to mark pieces of evidenced they find at the teacher's direction. Place a Post-It note beside each clue you find that tells you something about the setting, character, etc.
3. Have students highlight the section of text that provides information that answers any question the teacher asks about the text.
4. Have students highlight a section of text that they like best and ask that they practice reading it several times until they can read it with complete fluency.

Follow-Up Idea to Something Cool to Make

Nancy Barnes, a special education teacher at Gautier Middle School in Gautier, MS, has a great follow-up idea to the Student Study Packet posted in the Fun Stuff section in July. Nancy says,

"I was looking at the packet of supplies you posted for student use in the Good Idea section in July, and I thought I would tell you what I did. I laminated a sheet of construction paper for each of my students. Then, I cut lot of strips of the plastic bookcover material. I gave each student several strips of two different colors. They kept these strips on the laminated construction paper in their reading folder. We used them all year-for example, to cover the cause with orange and the effect with green. We covered the word they didn't understand with a strip or the part of the text that helped them to make an inference. I found that keeping the strips on the construction paper was a lot better then having them loose, and I didn't have to replace them all the time."

Thanks for sharing with us, Nancy! I know readers will put your idea to good use!

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