

CRISS Cornerstones

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CRISS® Cornerstones Overview

CRISS® Cornerstones is designed as a follow-up to a two- or three-day initial CRISS in-service. These materials will serve both as a review and as way to extend your knowledge about the project. You will need your CRISS training manual, this follow-up guide, and the Video Journal of Education's *Reading in the Content Areas* video or CD (found inside this booklet).

The activities in this guide are designed to be done collaboratively. As a result, you will learn more and, more importantly, you will have more fun! These materials could be used as part of a graduate course or for in-district credits.

While *CRISS® Cornerstones* can be used in a variety of ways, we recommend using these materials with small study teams organized by a facilitator. The facilitator should be the teacher, reading specialist, or administrator who has taken-on the major responsibility for CRISS dissemination in your school or district.

The study teams can be small groups of teachers or simply study partners. We recommend study teams meet weekly. If possible, select team members or partners who share a common planning period. This eliminates the necessity to meet before or after school or on weekends. We also recommend the facilitator establish a schedule for team meetings and plan to bring all teams together at least two times during this follow-up program for sharing applications and learning plans.

We have organized these *CRISS® Cornerstones* materials into fifteen weekly mini-lessons. To prepare for the mini-lesson, teachers read a brief assignment from the CRISS training manual. After reading this background information, each mini-lesson is designed to last about an hour. Most of the mini-lessons are accompanied by segments of the *Reading in the Content Areas* video. The topics of the mini-lessons are listed below:

- Mini-Lesson 1: Getting Started on your CRISS Strategic Learning Plan
- Mini-Lesson 2: CRISS Principles and Philosophy
- Mini-Lesson 3: Text Comprehensibility and the Author's Craft
- Mini-Lesson 4: Charting the Author's Style
- Mini-Lesson 5: Understanding Patterns and Structure
- Mini-Lesson 6: Creating Conversations of Learning
- Mini-Lesson 7: Using Active strategies for Learning
- Mini-Lesson 8: Summarizing
- Mini-Lesson 9: Organizing for Learning–Part 1
- Mini-Lesson 10: Organizing for Learning–Part 2
- Mini-Lesson 11: Informal Writing to Learn: Learning Logs
- Mini-Lesson 12: Formal Writing to Learn: Writing Reports and Essays
- Mini-Lesson 13: Vocabulary
- Mini-Lesson 14: Teacher Research
- Mini-Lesson 15: Evaluation–CRISS Strategic Learning Plan

As you thumb through this booklet, notice how the lessons are structured. We have designed activities for each to keep you actively engaged (sound familiar?) and to guide you through the materials. To build your background knowledge for each mini-lesson, we have included a reading assignment from the CRISS manual. While reading, we invite you to participate in a variety of CRISS strategies such as Reciprocal Teaching, Read-and-Say-Something, Magnet Notes, etc. In this way, you can become more familiar with active ways of reading which you may want to try out with your own students. After reviewing information in the CRISS manual, most lessons include a seven to ten minute segment of the *Reading in the Content Areas* video. We have included additional activities to go with the video clip and/or to complete the lesson. These include discussion questions, some specific assignments, and ideas for written reflections. With the mini-lessons, you have an opportunity to review some of the strategies presented in the initial Level I workshop and to expand your knowledge of CRISS with some new ideas.

To inspire classroom experimentation and application, we invite you to do three different kinds of activities:

1. **Design a comprehensive CRISS Strategic Learning Plan** that you will implement at the completion of these mini-lessons. This comprehensive plan will be a collection of daily lesson plans or a unit of study centered on several enduring understandings that may take two to three weeks to complete. As you progress through these lessons, you will be building this plan. The first mini-lesson presented in *CRISS® Cornerstones* launches you on the development of this comprehensive plan.
2. **Try out new strategies in your classroom** using whatever content you are currently teaching. In this way, you will know whether or not you may want to include these activities in your comprehensive CRISS Strategic Learning Plan.
3. **Keep a teaching journal** for personal reflections and for capturing ideas to bring to your study group. Also keep samples of student work to share with your group or partner. We have included additional journal pages at the end of this booklet for you to use if the space provided within each mini-lesson is insufficient. (See Appendix 7, pages 75-82.)



Mini-Lesson 6

Creating Conversations of Learning

Purpose: To understand why discussion is such a critical part of learning and to learn how to incorporate discussion strategies into your learning plans.

Preparing for the Lesson: Read pages 56-78 (Chapter 4 of the CRISS manual, from “Paired Discussion Strategies” to the end). For now, skip reading the introduction on pages 55-56, and the introduction to “Questioning Strategies” found on pages 67 to 68. You will read these selections later using discussion strategies illustrated in the video.

View Video Clip, Part 1: Creating Conversations of Learning (the viewing time will be divided into three segments.)

- Pause the video after you have watched Think-Pair-Share, Mind Streaming, ABC Brainstorming, and Three-Minute Pause (36:22 to 39:40). With your study group do a Three-Minute Pause relating to the video information. Include the three tasks explained on page 57 of the CRISS Manual.
- Next, view Read-and-Say-Something, Sticky-Note Discussions, and Seed Discussions (39:40 to 45:37). Pause the video and “Say Something” to your partner(s) about what you viewed. Follow the procedure described on pages 58-59 of the manual.
- Finally, watch the last segment on QARs. (45:37 to 47:00) Now, go back to the manual and read pages 55-56. With your study team create the four types of QARs over the most important concepts in this introductory piece. Record below.

Right There:

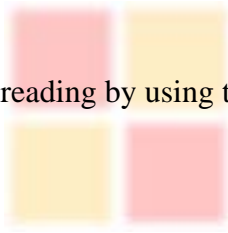
Think & Search:

Author & You:

On My Own:

1. Use any one of the strategies from the video or from Chapter 4 to read the introduction to “Questioning Strategies” on pages 67-68. Discuss the following two questions:

- How did using the discussion strategy keep you actively engaged in the reading?



- Did you get more out of the reading by using the discussion strategy?

2. How did these process questions (the two preceding bulleted questions) help you think about your own learning? Develop some process questions you can use with your students to help them understand how a particular strategy works for them.

3. **Application:** Now choose several of these discussion strategies to try-out in your classrooms.

Strategy used _____

Reflection Journal (How did it work for you and your students? Include ways to improve the application.)

Strategy used _____

Reflection Journal

Strategy used _____

Reflection Journal

4. **CRISS Strategic Learning Plan.** Return to your Learning Plan. Are there any ideas from this mini-lesson you could include in your plan?