Sticky Note Strategy

The sticky note strategy is an inexpensive option to engage students by allowing them to interact with their learning. Sticky notes are most often used to improve reading comprehension by letting students mark up the text with questions, key words, themes, literary device recognition, plot points, etc. It can be used across all subject areas and with students of all ages and abilities. It is particularly useful in improving reading comprehension for students who are English Language Learners (ELL) and improving organization and focusing students who have Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

Sticky Notes for Reading Comprehension for All Students:
-write down questions
-locate key words and the definitions
-mark place in text
-use at the starting and ending point of required reading to know how far you have read and how much you still need to read
-keep track of plot, major points, theme
-reference sticky notes for assignments, discussion, essays, etc.
-create concept maps to demonstrate relationships (Weisenberg, 1997)

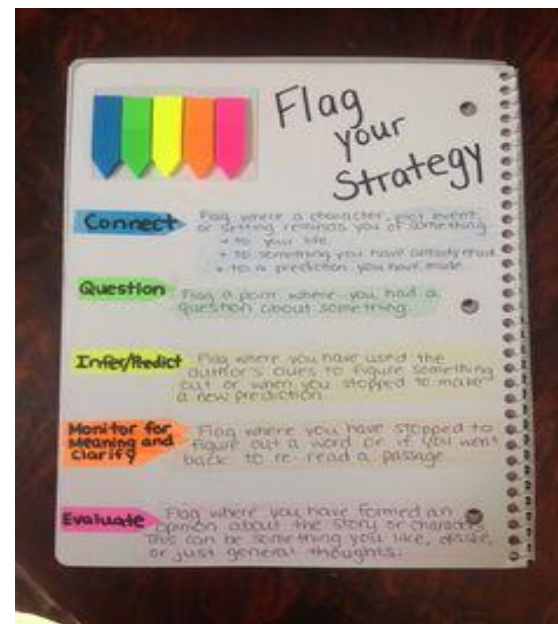**Sticky Notes for Students who are ELL (Fagan, 2003):**
-valuable scaffolding strategy for reading
-teacher must model how to use sticky notes
-teaches students to actively respond and question a text
-locate key words to define and describe why these words are important to the text
-keep track of main events and their sequence
-encourages students to engage with the text, not just decode.

Sticky Notes for Students with ADHD (Stormont, 2008):
-make lists of what to do in the order it should be done
-write reminders
-determine completion time for task to help with time management (will need teacher support)
-write down questions or comments during a time in which they cannot interrupt
-create list of things to do when completed with a task or stuck on a task
-color code for organization

Implementing Sticky Notes in the Classroom

Image A

It is super easy to begin implementing sticky notes in your classroom! Sticky notes are sold in grocery stores, convenience stores, office supply stores, or online for a low price. Buy a lot—you'll use them!
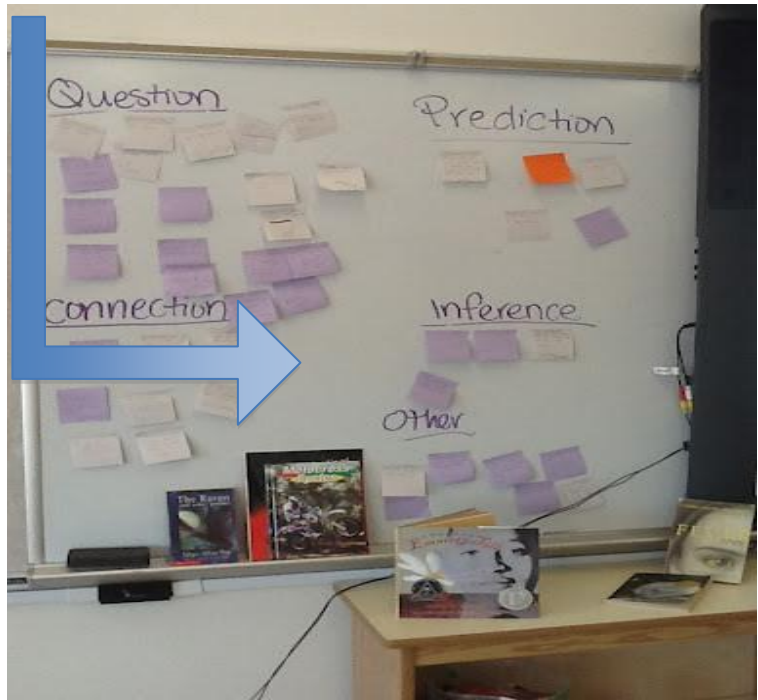

READING STRATEGY CODES

C = Connection
T-S
T-T
T-W

V = Vocabulary Word
I am not sure what this word means or how to pronounce it.

? = Question
Why...
I wonder...
How...

I = Inference
I think...because...

! = LOVE IT!
I like the way the author...
I could really visualize...
Aha!

Image B

-have sticky notes on each group of desks or provide each student with a small stack to have with them at all times
-organize sticky notes into Questions, Connections, Predictions, Inferences, and Other categories to put on display for students to reference (Image A)
-use a color coding system to help students stay organized
-have students write questions or comments on sticky notes during lecture or discussion to ensure they do not forget them
-have a coding system for students to use while reading to not interrupt reading rate (Image B)
-use sticky notes as reminders for students; they can tape it to their desk, notebook, folder, etc. to reference how to complete a task without always asking
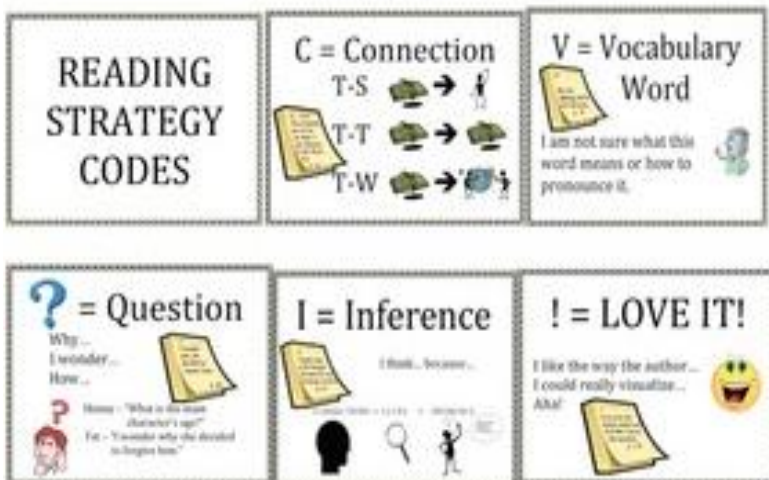
References
Fagan, B. (2003). Scaffolds to help ELL readers. *Voices From the Middle*, *11*(1), 38-42.
Stormont, M. A. (2008). Increase academic success for children with ADHD using sticky notes and highlighters. *Intervention in School and Clinic*, *43*(5), 305-308.
Weisenberg, R. C. (1997). Appropriate technology for the classroom—Using "Post-it Notes" as an active learning tool. *Journal of College Science Teaching*, *26*(5), 339-344.