



Endeavor and the STAR Project

Below are some important instructional strategies of the STAR Project and an explanation of how they are reflected in *Endeavor*.

The STAR Project targets intermediate readers as defined by NRS levels 3 and 4 (Grade Levels 4–8.9).

The *Endeavor* series has a range of reading levels from 3.0–8.9

The STAR Project emphasizes Explicit Instruction which consists of four components:

- Explanation: the teacher explains the purpose of the instruction and describes the key concepts or procedures.
- Modeling: the teacher gives students examples of the concepts or demonstrates the procedures.
- Guided Practice: the students practice using the new concepts or procedures while the teacher gives them feedback and assistance.
- Application: the students practice using the new concepts or procedures on their own while the teacher monitors their success.

***Endeavor* uses Explicit Instruction in several ways:**

- Each lesson begins with a lesson opener which identifies the topic of the reading selection, the reading comprehension skill emphasized, the key (Tier 2) vocabulary from the story, and the writing activity. The teacher uses the lesson opener to explain what students will be doing/learning in the lesson and why. At the end of the lesson, the teachers and students revisit the objectives in the lesson opener to evaluate learning.
- In **Before You Read**, students are provided with an explanation of two reading comprehension strategies. Questions provide students guided practice as they apply the strategies, and the **Think About It** feature models how a good reader would apply the strategy.
- Students have an opportunity for guided practice in applying the comprehension strategies as they read by answering questions and following suggestions that are built into each passage.
- In the **Word Building** activities after each lesson, students read an explanation of how word structures (such as prefixes and suffixes) affect the meaning of words. They see examples, then have an opportunity to apply their new word-building skills through writing definitions of words and using them in sentences.
- In **Use Reading Skills**, students read an explanation of a specific reading skill needed to understand the text. They see an example of the skill applied to the passage, and then have an opportunity to use the skill on their own with the aid of a graphic organizer.
- In **Write About It**, students are directed through the writing process by answering a series of questions and using graphic organizers to generate and organize ideas in the **Prewriting** stage, expanding on their ideas in **Thinking Beyond Reading, Write a Draft**, and then **Revising and Editing** their work with the aid of the **Revising and Editing Checklist**.

The STAR Project identifies these fundamentals of effective instruction:

- The more students are actively engaged during instruction, the more likely it is that they will learn.
- Students need numerous opportunities to practice applying new concepts or procedures.
- Lessons include a way to monitor the effectiveness of the instruction.

Endeavor exemplifies these fundamental instruction principles in several ways:

- Lesson themes (such as health, work, community, school and education, sports and recreation, consumerism and money) reflect the everyday issues in students' lives. Because the lessons are self-contained and do not need to be completed in sequential order, teachers can identify the lessons that are of most interest to the students.
- The guided practice questions in **Before You Read** and during the reading passage can be done independently as writing activities, or as discussion activities in small or large groups.
- A consistent lesson structure of Before/During/After reading helps students understand that reading is an active and engaging process and gives them opportunities to apply the process to a variety of reading topics and genres.
- Tools, such as the **Vocabulary Knowledge Rating Chart**, help students identify their understanding of new vocabulary words and provide a framework for evaluating their vocabulary development.
- Reading comprehension skills, strategies, and tools are repeated from lesson to lesson and across levels, so students have many opportunities to practice applying new skills, strategies, and tools.

According to the STAR Project, Alphabetic instruction for intermediate level students should focus on identifying common affixes and multi-syllabic words, and the connection between the structure of words and their meanings.

Each lesson in *Endeavor* contains a **Word Building** activity that does exactly this.

According to the STAR Project, Fluency is a key component of good reading instruction and should focus on three things:

- Accuracy
- Rate
- Prosody

Teaching strategies included in the *Endeavor Teacher's Guide* address accuracy, rate, and prosody:

- Echo Reading
- Choral Reading
- Paired Repeated Reading
- Reading to the Teacher
- Popcorn Reading
- Performance Reading

The STAR Project identifies three tiers of vocabulary and states that the emphasis of vocabulary instruction should be on Tier 2 words, emphasizing both breadth and depth of understanding.

Endeavor uses this same three-tiered approach to vocabulary.

- Tier 2 words are identified in the lesson opener. Students learn these words before they read the passage, improving comprehension. The vocabulary activities after the reading passage focus on these Tier 2 words and are encouraged to use these words to express ideas in discussion and writing.
- Tier 3 words are identified in the reading passage and the definitions are provided in the margins, at the point of instruction, so fluency is not interrupted and comprehension is improved.
- The **Vocabulary Knowledge Rating Chart** provides a framework for students to identify their depth of understanding of new vocabulary words. Students and teachers can use the chart to monitor increased understanding of vocabulary.

The STAR Project identifies good reading comprehension instruction as helping students connect sentences to form ideas; relate those ideas to what students already know; and recognize when an idea is missed and know what to do about it. It is more effective to teach a small set of strategies that students know how to use well than to briefly expose students to a wide variety of strategies.

Endeavor provides explicit instruction in reading comprehension skills and strategies such as:

- Using what you know
- Rereading
- Asking yourself questions
- Making predictions
- Summarizing
- Making personal connections
- Previewing
- Identifying main idea and details
- Classifying information
- Drawing conclusions
- Comparing and contrasting information
- Identifying cause and effect
- Making inferences
- Synthesizing key ideas
- Identifying fact and opinion

These are the skills and strategies students need to be able to connect sentences to form ideas, relate those ideas to what they already know, and recognize when they don't understand and apply a corrective strategy. Students learn and practice these skills in an explicit instruction model. These skills and strategies are repeated from lesson to lesson and across levels, so students have an opportunity for repeated practice in a variety of contexts.