**Brain Warmers**

The use of these activities is an excellent pre-reading “hook”. The activities

motivate and activate the background knowledge of readers, helping to prepare them for the process of reading/understanding.

Teacher chooses one or two of the following Brain Warmers:

**• Backward Predictions**: Read the ending of a text or story and have students

predict the beginning; then read the entire story to see if the students were correct.

• **Debate:** Debate an issue that students will encounter in a text. For example,

present the issue on the board, then take the less likely position (devil’s advocate)

to spark some argument that will arise in the reading.

• **Read-Alouds**: Read aloud the title and first part of the text and then have

students visualize and predict what the rest of the text will be about.

• **Read-Alouds II**: Read aloud and discuss a poem, short story, picture book or

quote that deals with the same issue as the textbook/other reading assignment.

• **Reading Reason Vote:** Have students generate reasons to read the specific text

after they have done some previewing of the text. Write down their reasons, add

any of your own, and then hold a class vote for the top three reasons to read the

text.

• **Role Plays**: Have your students role play an event or idea related to a story. Pick

a scene or event from the text and have students create or participate with you in a

simply role play. (Examples: balancing an equation, Revolutionary War protests, a

few poignant lines from a story/play, the water cycle)

• **Show and Tell Pictures and Objects**: Use real items or pictures to prompt

discussion or provide good material for a Quick Write activity.

• **Video Clip**: Show a relevant five-minute video clip that provides some

background and gets students a little more motivated to read the upcoming text.

Resource: Amy LaPierre, Howard-Suamico School District, based on the work of Jeff Zwiers in Building Comprehension Habits in Grades 6-12: A Toolkit of Classroom Activities