

BOX 7.4

Clarification Chart

PURPOSE

A clarification chart helps students focus on where they lose comprehension in a text and what they can do about it. This graphic organizer suggests that reading is not magical, but rather a process of solving problems. The reader is in charge—of identifying roadblocks or confusions, trying problem-solving strategies, and taking a best guess at what the difficult passage may mean. For the teacher, the chart reveals where students struggle and what strategies they have appropriated for taking control of their reading. As students gain control and become increasingly metacognitive, the use of the chart should fade.

PROCEDURE

- Project a chunk of text that students will be reading. Demonstrate identifying and writing down a roadblock and filling in the other associated columns of the clarification chart.
- Have students create their own version of the chart.
- Invite students to nominate additional roadblocks and, as a class, work to complete the associated columns in the chart.
- Assign students to continue working with the text and the clarification chart, either individually or with a partner.
- Bring the class back together to discuss the roadblocks students selected to work with, what strategies they used, and what tentative meanings resulted.
- Assign a text for homework and have students practice using the clarification chart as part of the assignment.
- Go over the charts the next day in class and discuss the different strategies students used.

Clarification Chart

Roadblock (what it says)	Question (what's confusing?)	Strategy (my next step)	Clarification (what I think it means)

Visualizing and Visual Texts

Visualizing and visual texts help readers make abstract concepts or complex processes more concrete and more comprehensible. Yet inexperienced readers may not know how to use either and so benefit from explicit instruction.

Readers who visualize as they read activate schema prompted by the text but called up from prior knowledge or experience. Some readers naturally