1. Focus

Introduce the Mentor Research Report

Say: Reading research reports can help us become better report writers. Today we’re going to read a short report about the history of silk. We will identify some of the key features of research reports.

Read aloud the title of the selection on page 12 and two of the headings. You may also wish to display the text using the interactive whiteboard resources.

Say: The title of the report is “History’s Amazing Cloth.” I can see from the headings that one topic of the report is “A Secret Treasure” and another is “How Traditional Silk Is Made.” What do you think we’ll learn from this report? Allow students to share their predictions. If your class includes English learners or other students who would benefit from vocabulary and oral language development to comprehend the report, use “Make the Mentor Text Comprehensible for ELs.”

Read Aloud the Mentor Research Report

Read aloud the text, stopping at some or all of the places indicated (or at other points you choose) to highlight key features of a research report:
1. Research reports have strong leads that hook readers.
2. There is a logical sequence of concepts.
3. Research reports have strong endings that make readers think.

Strong Lead
Page 12, after first paragraph. Say: By describing the scene and beginning in the present tense, the author hooks me right away. I can imagine being with the scientists making an important discovery. I am drawn into the mystery of the silk that the scientists have invented based on ancient knowledge.

Logical Sequence of Concepts
After reading page 12. Say: I like how the author organizes this section showing a progression of ideas within the topic of the history of silk fabric. She uses words and phrases that help me follow the sequence of events and ideas. For example, she tells in the second paragraph that silk was first produced in China, the year it was produced, and by what type of moth. In the next paragraph, the author uses the phrase from the time, which signals to me that she is continuing the sequence from the time of silk creation onward.

Logical Sequence of Concepts
Page 14, after second paragraph. Say: Again, I like the way the author takes us through processes in logical sequence. On page 13, she describes how a
**Make the Mentor Text Comprehensible for ELs**

**Beginning**
Share a piece of cloth or clothing made of silk. Let students feel it. **Say:** This is silk. Display illustrations or photographs from the life cycle of a caterpillar (these need not be for silkworms). Use self-stick notes to label keywords from the article such as silk, silkworm, thread, and cocoon. Use words, gestures, and pictures to demonstrate that silk was traditionally wound by silkworms into cocoons and unwound by people for thread.

**Beginning and Intermediate**
Display photographs using the interactive whiteboard resources or photographs you have gathered to support students’ introduction to the report’s topic. **Say:** This report is about silk and how silk is made. Silk is made from the cocoons of silkworms.

**Intermediate and Advanced**
Point to China on a map of the world. **Say:** This is China. This is where silk was first made. It was first made long ago.

Ask students if they own or have seen an item of clothing made from silk. Encourage a background-building discussion about students’ knowledge of the life cycle of caterpillars and how silk is made from the cocoons of silkworms.

**All Levels**
If you have students whose first language is Spanish, share these English/Spanish cognates to help them understand the content of the mentor text: history/la historia; scientists/los científicos/las científicas; traditional/tradicional.

Use the images provided in the interactive whiteboard resources to front-load key content vocabulary and concepts for the read-aloud.

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**Strong Ending**
**Page 15, after last paragraph. Say:** In the last few paragraphs of the report, the author summarizes the article and relates it back to the topic introduced at the beginning—the scientists who are inspired by traditional silk making. The last sentence also left me with something to think about—what new things will scientists discover about silk in the future? An ending that makes us think is strong because it holds our interest in a research topic.

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**2. Rehearse**

**Respond Orally to the Mentor Research Report**

After reading, invite students to share their personal reactions to the text by asking questions such as:

- What did you find particularly interesting in this report? Why?
- How do you think the author felt about silk making? Have you ever felt that way about something? What was it and why did you feel that way?

If necessary, model the following sentence frames to support ELs and struggling students:

- The most interesting thing to me was ______.
- The author thinks silk making is ______.
- Something I have felt this way about is ______.

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**3. Independent Writing and Conferring**

**Say:** When we write research reports, we want to hook our readers from the beginning. We want to present a logical progression of ideas and describe any processes in a logical sequence. At the end, we sum up our topic with a strong ending, often leaving readers with something more to think about.

Invite students to write as many facts as they recall from the mentor text.

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**4. Share**

Bring students together. Invite volunteers to share the facts and details they remembered. Discuss the concept that research reports synthesize facts and details from many sources the writer has researched.