

Flying by Wire

by Anna Kenna

Summary

The Fly by Wire is an unusual and thrilling adventure flight. This text explores how it works and describes the safety features involved. At the end of the text, readers get a sense of the adventure in an interview with someone who has just taken the flight.

Features of the Text

- Descriptive language to convey factual information
- Comparisons
- Labeled diagrams
- Multiple text forms – explanation, interview
- Specialized vocabulary – *aerodynamic, basin, gravity, momentum, throttle*

Purpose

Flying by Wire can be used to introduce and reinforce the following skills:

- S** analyzing text organization and structure;
- S** summarizing and restating information;
- S** drawing conclusions based on evidence from the text;
- S** examining the different ways information can be presented.

The Guided Reading Lesson

- S** Analyzing text organization and structure
- S** Summarizing and restating information

Introducing the text

Ask the students to look at the title and photograph on the front cover.

- *What can you infer from the title and photograph?*

Reading and discussing the text

Ask the students to read to the end of page 3. Compare the text on page 2 with the text on page 3 (first person/third person).

- *Why do you think the author introduces the text in this way?* (hooks the reader in, gets the reader asking questions)

Ask the students to flick through the text noticing its organization and layout.

- *What organizational features does this text have?* (contents page, chapters, fact boxes, labeled photograph and diagrams, close-up photographs, interview)
- *How do these features help you as a reader?*

Explain that texts are written for different purposes. Ask the students to read to the end of page 5.

- *What is the purpose of this text? Why do you think it was written?* (to explain Fly by Wire)
- *Why would people read an explanation?*
- *What are other examples of explanations?* (health or social studies texts, books that answer “why” and “how” questions)

Point out that an explanation usually contains a definition of the subject. Ask the students to locate the definition.

- *Why is the definition located here?*

Discuss the information the students expect to find in the rest of the text.

Using pages 4 and 5, model how to orally summarize a section of the text, using both the text and graphics.

The students can now read the rest of the text. When they have finished reading, ask the students to summarize several sections of the text aloud. Encourage them to refer to both the graphics and text.

Following Up

The students can:

- use the blackline master on page 81 to summarize and restate information in this text
- use the structure of an explanation to write about a flying machine of their own invention
- draw a diagram of their flying machine and label its parts
- write a description of Neil Harapp’s dream that inspired Fly by Wire.