Response to Literature: Prove It!

Purpose: This organizer provides students with specific steps necessary to collect evidence for a response to narrative or expository text. In order to respond to text, students need to form an opinion, back it up with evidence from the text, analyze the evidence, and finally make connections to other texts, to themselves, or to the world. The Prove It! activity makes these steps interactive and fun.

Overview: The teacher states an opinion, then writes it on the opinion line. Notice this particular response (sample on page) displays an opinion about a character’s trait from Scott O’Dell’s Island of the Blue Dolphins: Karana was brave. To ensure success in this activity, the teacher provides a mini-lesson on bravery (What does brave mean?)

After defining bravery, the teacher then repeats the opinion, Karana was brave, for to continue on with the Prove It! activity. When the students hear the teacher’s opinion, they then slap their hands together yelling: Prove it! Prove It! Next the teacher explains that she needs to find proof in the text to back up her opinion. She then reads text from the page that proves Karana was brave. Next, she records the text on the chart as a direct quote or paraphrase.

After the proof, the students put their hands on their hips and chant: What does that mean? How does that evidence support your opinion that Karana was brave? The teacher analyzes the proof (using the mini-lesson information on bravery), and then explains how it supports her opinion. After analyzing, she records the analysis in the middle box.

Finally, the students say aloud: Connections! The teacher uses the reading connection team (Chapter 5) to help her connect this type of character trait to another book, the world, or her own experiences. Once a connection is made, she then uses it to make a prediction, ask a question, or have an emotional response. This information is recorded in the bottom box on the organizer. This is a fun and interactive technique for students to respond to the text. The next step is to encourage students to state their own opinions and follow the steps to back up their thoughts.