Always read with the End-Zone in mind.
• Review the Common Core State Standard (CCSS) and simplify the learning objective, then before the start of every lesson share the kid-friendly version with your students
• Before you read, outline the connection(s) between the selection and CCSS
• During guided reading, point out and discuss the connection(s)
• Summarize the connection(s) when you are finished reading the selection
• Through class discussion, assess how effective the selection was in meeting the CCSS

Take Time-Outs to introduce and develop the fundamental skills of active reading...
• Skin the selection prior to reading (note the format, headings, charts, or graphics)
• Visualize the text
• Write your thoughts or take notes in the margins (Gall, Gall, Jacobson & Bullock, 1990)
• Talk to the author by agreeing, disagreeing, or commenting on an interesting point
• Sketch as you read (Extra points for providing lessons on basic drawing skills)
• Circle key words and highlight unknown words

Prepare your students for the Hard-Hitting complexity of informational text...
• Share and compare simple and complex selections
• Before assigning a selection, point out and describe the elements of a complex section(s)
• Model how to work through the complex sections
• Discuss the structure of the selection. Is the writer presenting a problem and solution, is there a sequence of events, is the work descriptive, are there causes and effects, or are various issues being compared and contrasted (Common Core State Standards Initiative, 2010)
• Discuss guiding questions to help students make progress through a complex section, e.g., What is the author's intent? How is the perspective in this selection different from the perspective in a related text? Why did the author use this format, graph, chart, word, or image? (Extra points for providing your students with a tip sheet of guiding questions)

Score a Touchdown when you evaluate and assess with inquiry and interactive strategies...
• Students use inquiry to review a selection, then formulate, share, discuss, and investigate their questions
• Integrate technology as students research key words and ideas, the author, or related works with similar or contradictory positions
• Students demonstrate their comprehension by designing a presentation with programs like PowerPoint or Prezi. They can also create tables, charts, graphics, or infographics with PowerPoint or other Office programs, a drawing program, or online sites with free basic access like Piktochart
• Allow students to follow the instructions in an informational text to build a model, complete a task, create a design, plan, or write a companion piece for the text
• Provide immediate and effective feedback as you facilitate independent and group work (Jensen, 2005, Marzano, Pickering, and Pollack, 2001)