

# **Making Connections**

## **Definition:**

- Students connect their background knowledge to the text they are reading.

## **Purpose of the strategy:**

- Readers comprehend better when they actively think about and apply their knowledge of the book's topic, their own experiences, and the world around them. Stephanie Harvey and Anne Goudvis in their book, *Strategies that Work* state that, "When children understand how to connect the text they read to their lives, they begin to make connections between what they read and the larger world. This nudges them into thinking about bigger, more expansive issues beyond their universe of home, school and neighborhood."

## **How to help your student use this strategy:**

- model questioning in your own rereading
- ask "I wonder" questions (open-ended)
- ask your student to come up with questions before reading to see if it's answered in the text
- keep track of questions verbally or in an informal question log
- stop and predict what will happen next
- discuss what questions you still have after reading

# **Asking Questions**

## **Definition:**

- Through the use of questioning, students understand the text on a deeper level because questions clarify confusion and stimulate further interest in a topic.

## **Purpose of the strategy:**

- Through questioning, students are able to wonder about content and concepts before, during and after reading by:
  - constructing meaning
  - enhancing meaning
  - finding answers
  - solving problems
  - finding specific information
  - acquiring a body of information
  - discovering new information
  - propelling research efforts
  - clarifying confusion

(Strategies that Work, 2000, p.22)

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# **Visualizing**

## **Definition:**

- Students create mind pictures and visualizations when they read.

## **Purpose of the strategy:**

- The reader uses the text material and their own prior knowledge to create their own mind pictures of what is happening in the text. "Visualizing personalizes reading, keeps us engaged and often prevents us from abandoning a book." (Strategies that Work, 2000, p.97).

## **How to help your student use this strategy:**

- share wordless picture books with your student - have your student tell the story
- make frequent stops while reading aloud to describe the pictures in your minds
- after reading time have the students draw what they see in their mind

# **Making Inferences**

## **Definition:**

- Students make inferences about text they are reading to interpret meaning and develop deeper understanding.

## **Purpose of the strategy:**

- Readers comprehend better when they make connections and construct their own knowledge (using prior experiences, visualizing, predicting and synthesizing) to interpret the "big idea." It is like a mental dialogue between the author and the student.

## **How to help your student use this strategy:**

- "How did you know that?"
- "Why did you think that would happen?"
- "Look at the cover and pictures, then make predictions."
- "Discuss the plot and theme."
- "What do you think this story was about?"
- "How do you think the character feels?"
- "Does it remind you of anything?"

# **Finding Out Important Ideas**

## **Definition:**

- When students are reading nonfiction they have to decide and remember what is important from the material they read.

## **Purpose of the strategy:**

- The purpose is to teach students to discriminate the "must know" information from the less important details in a text. "When kids read and understand nonfiction, they build background for the topic and acquire new knowledge. The ability to identify essential ideas and salient information is a prerequisite to developing insight." (Strategies that Work, 2000, p. 119).

## **How to help your student use this strategy:**

- Initiate discussion before reading by asking what your students know about the topic and what they would like to learn.
- After reading discuss what important information they have learned.
- While reading, help your students look for clues in the text to determine importance.

## **Pay Attention to:**

- first and last lines of a paragraph
- titles
- headings
- captions
- framed text
- fonts
- illustrations
- italics
- bold faced print

# **Synthesizing**

## **Definition:**

- Students weave together what they read and their own ideas into new complete thoughts.

## **Purpose of the strategy:**

- Readers comprehend better when they sift through information to make sense of it and to act upon it - such as judging or evaluating the author's purpose to form a new idea, opinion, or perspective. This is the highest and most complex form of comprehension.

## **How to help your student use this strategy:**

- Use questioning strategies such as, "How has your thinking changed from reading that piece?"
- Discuss current events with an emphasis on judgments and opinions.
- Ask questions with no clear answers.

# **Retelling**

***\* This strategy is generally utilized with fiction texts.***

## **Definition:**

- Students can restate the meaning of the text in their own words in sequential order.

## **Purpose of the strategy:**

- The purpose is to check students' understanding, interpretation and ability to draw conclusions from the text.

## **How to help your student use this strategy:**

- Model with short selection.
- Explain that the purpose is to recreate something that has been read, watched, or experienced.
- Use the five finger retell strategy. In this strategy, each finger represents story elements.

# **Summarizing**

***\* This strategy is generally utilized with non-fiction texts.***

## **Definition:**

- Summarizing is the ability to produce a condensed version of information. The summary includes only important elements and retains the order of the original information.

## **Purpose of the strategy:**

- To provide an opportunity to communicate what is important
- To check understanding
- To provide practice in decision making and sequencing

## **How to help your student use this strategy:**

- Relate summary to text structure. The summary of a story will be different than the summary of expository material.
- Identify a short selection for modeling. Choose a selection that is a clear example of a particular text structure
- Have students read the selection with the purpose of focusing on the text

# **Text Structure**

## **Definition:**

- Expository text presents information in different text structures based on the purpose of the text.

## **Purpose of the strategy:**

- Teaching students to recognize common text structures found in expository texts can help students monitor their comprehension. Attempting to identify the text structure early on in the reading of a new text encourages the reader to question how subsequent sections of the text fit into the identified text structure.

## **How to help your student use this strategy:**

- Introduce the idea that expository texts have a text structure. Explain to students that expository texts (such as the text in their science and social studies textbooks) have different organizational patterns. These organizational patterns are called text structures.
- Explain that text structures can often be identified by certain signal words.

<b>Text Structure</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Clue Words</b>
Descriptive	Describes something	About is, are, has, have, does
Sequence	Provides a series or steps	First, second, third, next, finally
Problem/Solution	Identifies a problem and a solution to the problem	Problem, solution, solve
Compare/Contrast	Compares and contrasts the similarities and differences	Different from, same, as alike, similar to, resemble, but not
Cause/Effect	Presents cause-and-effect relationships	So that, because of, as a result of, since, so, in order to