

Real Reading: Mixing thinking with text!

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(Heinemann, 2007)

THINKING STRATEGIES FOR REAL READING:

1. **Create mental images.** Readers create a wide range of visual, auditory, and other sensory images as they read. Help your child learn to "make a movie in their head".
2. **Use background knowledge.** Readers use their prior knowledge before, during, and after reading to enhance their understanding of the text. Help your child by making connections to experiences you've had or to movies, songs, or other books.
3. **Ask questions.** Readers generate questions before, during, and after reading to clarify meaning. Ask your child what they are wondering about as you're reading together.
4. **Make inferences.** Readers use their prior knowledge and information from what they read to make predictions, seek answers to questions, draw conclusions, and create interpretations that deepen their understanding of the text. Don't forget to "read between the lines" when you talk with your child...go beyond the literal.
5. **Determine the most important ideas or themes.** Readers identify key ideas or themes as they read, and they can distinguish between important and unimportant information. During or after reading, discuss with your child "what mattered most" in the story.
6. **Synthesize information.** Readers track their thinking as it evolves during reading, to get the overall meaning. Talk to your child about how your thinking changed as you read.

Remember:

- ❖ Using thinking strategies can help your child learn that reading is not a chore to be endured, but is an adventure that lasts a lifetime.
- ❖ When readers have trouble understanding the text, they need a wide range of tools for problem-solving. That's where the thinking strategies come in!
- ❖ Real reading is not just "word calling". Sounding out words is just a part of the reading puzzle. If kids don't understand what they're reading, they're not really reading at all.
- ❖ Reading is a social process. Readers need to talk to others about what they're reading to deepen comprehension.

**Want to learn more?
Check out the following resources!**

Books for parents/teachers:

- ❖ *7 Keys to Comprehension: How to Help Your Kids Read It and Get It!* By Susan Zimmerman & Chryse Hutchins (Three Rivers Press, 2003)
- ❖ *Comprehension Connections: Bridges to Strategic Reading* By Tanny McGregor (Heinemann, 2007)

Thinking Strategy Songs:

- ❖ Visit www.songsforteaching.com to purchase "Reading Strategy Songs" (purchase downloads or audio CD)

Websites for book ideas and reading tips:

- ❖ www.trelase-on-reading.com (click on book lists)
- ❖ www.readinglady.com (click on "mosaic listserv", then on "teaching tools", then scroll down to "parents")
- ❖ www.ala.org (click on "awards and scholarships", then on "awards" to find lists of award-winning books for kids of all ages)