

## LITERACY NOTES

### A. Key Strategies for Reading Comprehension

1. Finding the Main Idea
2. Recalling Facts and Details
3. Understanding Sequence
4. Recognizing Cause and Effect
5. Comparing and Contrasting
6. Making Predictions
7. Find the the Meaning of Words Through Context.
8. Drawing Conclusions
9. Making Inferences
10. Distinguishing Between Fact and Opinion
11. Identifying Author's Purpose
12. Interpreting Figurative Language
13. Reading Pictures
14. Distinguish Between Real and Make-Believe
15. Summarizing

### B. Strategies Used by Proficient Readers

1. *Making Connections between prior knowledge and the text:* Readers naturally bring their personal knowledge and experience to what they read. This enhances engagement and allows them to comprehend better.
2. *Asking Questions:* Questioning keeps readers engaged. This is how they clarify their understandings of what they are reading.
3. *Visualizing:* Active readers create visual images in heir minds based on the words they read in the text. This enhances understanding of what is read.
4. *Drawing Inferences:* Inferring is taking what the reader knows, gathering clues form the text and making a judgment about what might come next in the text.
5. *Determining Important Ideas:* Good readers are able to differentiate between less important ideas and key ideas that are central to the meaning of the text.
6. *Synthesizing Information:* Synthesizing involves combining new information with existing knowledge to form an original idea or interpretation.
7. *Repairing Understanding:* If the reader is confused, he needs to stop and clarify his understanding. Readers use all the strategies in their repertoire to do this.

### C. Higher Level Questioning Prompts

1. Knowledge:
  - a. When did?
  - b. Can you recall?

- c. How would you show?
  - d. Who were the main?
  - e. List...
  - f. Which one?
2. Application
    - a. What questions would you ask in an interview with ...?
    - b. What would happen if ...?
    - c. What facts would you select to show...?
  3. Synthesis
    - a. How would you improve..?
    - b. What would happen if ..?
    - c. How would you change the plot .. ?
    - d. Suppose you could....what would you do...?
    - e. Can you propose an alternative ...?
  4. Comprehension
    - a. Explain
    - b. Show
    - c. Identify
    - d. What facts or ideas show?
    - e. Can you explain..?
    - f. How would you summarize...?
  5. Analysis
    - a. What evidence can you find...?
    - b. What is the relationship between..?
    - c. Why do you think...?
    - d. What conclusions can you draw...?
    - e. What was the problem...?
    - f. Was there a message..?
  6. Evaluation
    - a. Judge
    - b. Rank
    - c. Justify
    - d. Prove
    - e. Recommend
    - f. What is your opinion of ...?
    - g. How would you prove...? Disprove...?
    - h. How would you prioritize..?
    - i. Based on what you know, how would you explain...?
    - j. Was there anything that you found troubling...?

**D. Connection Stems**

1. That reminds me of..
2. I remember when ...
3. I have a connection ...
4. An experience I have had like that ..
5. I felt like that character when..
6. If I were that character, I would..
7. I remember another book about that ..

E. **Switching**

1. Gender
2. Theme (peace is good / force is good)
3. Setting
4. Body Style
5. Clothing
6. Emotion
7. Ethic
8. Race
9. Language
10. Relationship / Organization

F. **Alternative Perspective**

1. Alternative texts
2. Character substitution
3. Character perspective
4. Juxtaposing - texts, photos
5. Mind and Alternative Mind Portraits

G. **Problem Posing**

1. Who or what is focus of the text and whose viewpoint is expressed?
2. Whose voices are missing or discounted?
3. What does the author want the reader to believe?
4. How might alternative perspectives be represented?
5. how would an alternative perspective contribute to understanding?
6. What actions might readers take based on what they learned?

H. **What Proficient Readers Do** (from *Reading with Meaning - Debbie Miller*)

1. Activate relevant, prior knowledge (schema) before, during and after reading text. (Andersen, Person 1984)
2. Creating visual and other sensory images from text during and after reading. (Pressly 1976)
3. Drawing inferences from text to draw conclusions, make critical judgments, and create unique interpretations. (Hansen 1981)
4. Ask questions of themselves, the authors, and the texts they read (Raphael 1984)

5. Determine the most important ideas and themes in a text. (Palinscar and Brown 1984)
  6. Synthesize what they read (Brown, Day and Jones 1983)
- I. **Schema at a Glance p.71** (from *Reading with Meaning - Debbie Miller*)
1. Readers activate prior knowledge before, during and after reading
  2. Readers use schema to make connections between the text, their lives, and between one text and another, between the text and the world.
  3. Readers distinguish between connections that are meaningful and relevant and those that aren't
  4. Readers build, change and revise their schema when they encounter new information in the text, engage in conversations with others and gain personal experience.
  5. Readers use their schema to enhance understanding.
- J. **Mental Images at a Glance** (from *Reading with Meaning - Debbie Meir*)
1. Proficient readers create mental images during and after reading. These images come from all five sense and the emotions and are anchored in the readers prior knowledge.
  2. Proficient readers understand how creating images enhance understanding.
  3. Proficient readers use images to draw conclusions, create unique interpretations of the text, recall details significant for the text and recall a text after it has been read.
  4. Images from reading frequently become part of the readers writing.
  5. Readers use images to immerse themselves in rich detail as they read. The detail gives depth and dimension to the reading, engaging the reader more deeply and making the text more memorable.
  6. Readers adapt their images in response to the shared images of other readers.
  7. Readers adapt their images as they continue to read. Images are revised to incorporate new information in the text and new interpretations as developed by the readers.
  8. Evolving mental images help readers create images in writing.
  9. Artistic Response (see p. 83 - "Duck on a Winter Night" )
- K. **Inferring at a Glance p. 121** (from *Reading with Meaning - Debbie Miller*)
1. Determine the meaning of unknown words by using their schema, paying attention to contextual and picture clues, rereading, and engaging in conversation with others.
  2. Make predictions about text and confirm or contradict their predictions as they read.
  3. Use prior knowledge and textual clues to draw conclusions and from unique interpretations of the text.

4. Know to infer when the answers to their questions are not explicitly stated in the text.
  5. Create interpretations to enrich and deepen their experience in a text.
- L. **Asking Questions at a Glance p. 140** (from *Reading with Meaning - Debbie Miller*)
1. Spontaneously and purposefully ask questions before, during and after reading
  2. Ask questions to: clarify meaning; speculate about text to be read; determine an author's style, intent, content, or format; focus attention on specific components of the text; locate a specific answer in the text or consider rhetorical questions inspired by the text.
  3. Determine whether answers to questions can be found in the text or whether they will need to infer the answers from the text, their background knowledge, and/or an outside source.
  4. Understand that many of the most intriguing questions are not answered explicitly in the text, but are left to the readers interpretation.
  5. Understand that hearing others questions, inspire new ones of their own, inspire new thinking.
  6. Process of questioning deepens their understanding.
- M. **Determining Importance at a Glance** (from *Reading with Meaning - Debbie Miller*)
1. Distinguish the difference between fiction and non-fiction
  2. Distinguish important from unimportant information in order to discover key ideas or themes
  3. Use knowledge of narrative and expository text features to make predictions about text organization and content.
  4. Utilize text features to help distinguish important from unimportant information
  5. Use knowledge of important and relevant parts of text to answer questions and synthesize text for themselves and others
- N. **Synthesis at a Glance** (from *Reading with Meaning - Debbie Miller*)
1. Monitor overall meaning, important concepts, and themes in text as they read, understanding that their thinking evolves in the process.
  2. Retell what they have read as a way of synthesizing.
  3. Capitalize on opportunities to share, recommend, and criticize books they have read.
  4. Extend their synthesis of literal meaning of a text to inferential level.
  5. Synthesize to understand more clearly what they have read.
- O. **Questions to Ask Before Joining a Conversation (G2-3)**
1. Does what I have to say connect to the question or topic?

2. Can I connect what I have to say to what someone else has said?
3. Can I support what I have to say? What evidence or personal experience do I have to make my point?
4. Has someone else already said what I have to say?
5. If I am speaking to disagree, can I state what I heard to the other person and explain how and why my thinking is different in a nice way?
6. Does what I have to say take the conversation deeper?

P. **Options for Response**

1. Sticky Notes: keep track of thinking, record strategy, draw images, make and confirm predictions
2. Notebook Entries: written and artistic response, keep track of thinking at a read-aloud, questions, important ideas
3. Two Column Notes: Quote from Text - My Thinking, I Learned - I Wonder, Quote - My Image
4. Venn Diagrams - Relationships between: characters, authors, type of text, 2 books etc.
5. Webs
6. Story Maps - How elements work together to create meaning: i.e.. Theme in center / Setting / Characters / Problem / Solution

Q. **BDA Strategies - School Library Media Activities Monthly/Vol XXII, Number 1/Sept 2005**

1. **BEFORE Reading**

- a. *Ask Questions*: Use the cover, title page, and/or table of contents to ask questions about the book or story.
- b. *Skim Through the Story or Book*: Do a picture walk; give a brief overview of the story or use the blurb on the cover of the book.
- c. *Use Background Knowledge*: Use a curriculum map or informal discussions with the classroom teacher and/or the students to bridge to background knowledge.
- d. *Make Connections*: Connect to other authors, books by the same author, or related subjects.
- e. *Draw Conclusions*: Ask questions such as "How do you think this story will end?"
- f. *Make Predictions*: Use the cover, title of the book, chapter titles, the pictures, or a brief discussion of the story in order to set the stage for students to make predictions.

2. **DURING Reading**

- a. *Ask Questions, Make Predictions*: Engage the students in the reading process by asking questions and having them make predictions as they are reading independently or listening to the selection.

- b. *Make Inferences. Draw Conclusions:* Pause during the read-aloud and encourage the students to look for clue in order to make inferences and draw conclusions. Take a few minutes during each library period to talk with students about what they are reading. Establish book clubs, library guided reading opportunities etc.
  - c. *Notice Relationships. Make Connections:* Discuss the relationships between the characters or have the students make connections with other titles by the same or a different author. Use graphic organizers, book displays, or student-created bulletin boards to make book/author/ information connections.
  - d. *Recognize Important Events:* Keep the students involved by emphasizing the important events. Have the students design graphic organizers or timelines.
  - e. *Identify the Problem and Solution:* Highlight the problem the character(s) encounter(s) and take time to examine possible solutions. Use creative dramatics and have the students act out possible endings or solutions or provide opportunities to write their own endings for stories.
  - f. *Look for Answers to Questions:* When there are questions, look for the answers by discussing the events of the story, dialog between characters, and sue of picture and word clues.
  - g. *Monitor Understanding by Rereading the Parts that are Not Making Sense:* During a read-aloud, reread sections if the students do not seem to understand certain parts. Look for nonverbal expressions of communication when reading. Encourage students to reread sections if necessary in order to answer questions or clarify issues.
  - h. *Determine Word Meanings:* Use the context of the story to introduce word meanings.
  - i. *Visualize the Events:* Tell, as well as read aloud, to encourage students to visualize the events. Students can draw the events of the story in correct sequence.
  - j. *Summarize What is Already Known:* Have the students keep a reading log in which the record not only what they are reading, but a paragraph that tells the plot or the subject(s) presented.
  - k. *Evaluate Story, Content, and Illustrations:* Discuss the effectiveness of the author's style of writing and the overall content or presentation of information. Do the illustrations compliment the story and are they appropriate? Ask the students if they like or do not like the story and why.
3. **AFTER Reading**
- a. *Respond to the Story or Information:* After the read-aloud session, engage the students in a discussion about the story or information.

- b. *Talk with Others About What was Read:* Encourage students to talk about what they read. Use formal and informal literature circles.
- c. *Ask Questions:* Ask a variety of recall and higher level thinking questions. Be careful not to overdo this strategy.
- d. *Make Connections:* Connect the reading to other books and authors with similar plots, characters, settings, or information. Guide students in comparing and contrasting.
- e. *Use the Story's Structure to Retell the Important Events:* Facilitate informal and formal discussions; use creative dramatics, puppets, and book props.
- f. *Evaluate Story, Content and Illustrations:* Have the students discuss if the author was able to meet the intended purpose of his/her work. Did the illustrations assist in telling or presenting the work? Was the content of value to the reader? Finally, encourage the students to reflect on what they liked or did not like, what they learned, and if they want to read other books by the same author or on the same topic/subject.

R. **Partnered or During Read Aloud**

- 1. Read, Pause, Predict - "Look at the cover, predict, read - confirm or adjust
- 2. Read, Pause, Discuss - Pair children and ask each other a question about what was read. (Developing a good question...)
- 3. Read, Pause, Make Connections
- 4. Read, Pause, Sketch
- 5. Read, Pause, Bookmark
  - a. Write about a part of the text you find most interesting
  - b. Write about part of text you found most confusing
  - c. "Word" you want to discuss with whole class
  - d. Choose an illustration, graph, map that helped you.
- 6. Read, Pause, Summarize

S. **How to Support Accountable Talk in the Classroom**

- 1. Group children together so they can hear each other.
- 2. Encourage all children to participate
- 3. Expect every child to take risks
- 4. Ask for evidence to back up a statement
- 5. Ask children to back up answers by going back to the text *(Create a game called Prove It!)*
- 6. Ask children to back up a claim by reading exactly where the answer came from
- 7. Ask children to repeat or rephrase what another child said.
- 8. Create a class atmosphere that permits mistakes
- 9. Share different ways to reach an answer in literacy and numeracy

10. Direct children toward accountable talk
11. Insist on polite behavior in conversations
12. Teacher and students maintain eye contact when speaking
13. Model body posture that indicates interest in the speaker
14. Encourage students to make connections to their peers' responses
15. Encourage students to respond to each other -- one answer builds on another
16. Ask students to pose questions and give positive feedback
17. Ask students to draw conclusions
18. Ask Students to rephrase for clarification
19. Insist that students stick with the discussion topic
20. Ask students to provide evidence of their thinking in math and reading
21. Probe for a more robust response when a student gives a simplistic answer to a question

T. **Word Walls** (from *Word Matters* by Fountas and Pinnell)

1. Must be interactive to be effective in helping students to learn more about how words work, and which ones are the most common that we need to learn automatically over time.
2. You have to teach students how to use the word wall. It is a tool for tackling words, and a resource for finding words, not a display.
3. Teachers should teach from it, showing the important general principles about how words work; what the differences are and what patterns we notice to help use to remember.
4. They are a great support for early writers who can be taught to use the word wall as their first dictionary. This is one of the times when copying is encouraged. It is helping children attend to print, and ultimately become automatic spellers for the high frequency words/
5. The more writing that is done, and the more modeling about how to use the word wall, the quicker children will commit high frequency words to their mind. We learn to write by writing and we learn to spell by writing. Children need to do lots of independent, personal writing during writer's workshop.
6. Effective word walls provide a scaffold toward independence in writing.
7. Word walls provide a visual map to help children remember the links between words, and the characteristics that will help them to form categories.
8. Word walls promote group learning or shared learning as classes notice things about words, and share them during word work time, or writing time.
9. New words must go up on the word wall after the teacher has introduced them to the class, talked about the words going up on that day, noticed the features of each word, and hopefully linked the words to others on the word

- wall. Attending to how the words sound, look, mean and are connected to other words has to be modeled during this teaching time each week.
10. The words need to be placed on the word wall while the children are learning about them.
  11. The words should be written by the teacher, not purchased as commercially printed words. This allows the teacher to write the word in front of the children, modeling how it looks. Penmanship could also be demonstrated during this writing time.
  12. There is no evidence that cards cut to the shape of the word make a difference to how the words are remembered.
  13. Alphabetically organized library pockets along the base of the word wall containing words written on cards provides students with the option of taking the words to their tables in order to copy the word, rather than trying to find it on the word wall.
  14. There should be some teaching done off the word wall whenever you have a minute or two to play.
  15. When introducing a new word, the following sequence would be a thorough introduction:
    - a. Introducing because...
      - (1) Because has two parts - clap them.
      - (2) There is a part at the beginning of this word that is the same as *before* and *begun*
      - (3) There is an s near the end and it sounds like z.
      - (4) There is an e at the end that you don't hear.
      - (5) The au sounds like the o as in hot
      - (6) After the conversation, the teacher might:
        - (a) Encourage the children to use because in a sentence.
        - (b) Ask the children to examine because closely.
        - (c) Ask them to share what will help them to remember how to write it.
        - (d) Show them where it is going to be placed on the word wall.
        - (e) Remind them to check because on the wall when they want to use it in their own writing to make sure it is spelled correctly.
  16. So... Word Walls are most effective when:

New words are introduced and discussed before being placed on the word wall.

The teacher continues to model making connections to words on the word wall so that the children are noticing useful ways to remember. This can most effectively be done as the students and teacher are doing Interactive Writing, but can also be at any time during the day, such as when reading rhythmic poetry.