

## Comprehension Strategy Overview

### Activating and Connecting Prior Knowledge

- This comprehension strategy involves you connecting your learning to your experiences, events in the world, and to other learnings you may have in and out of school.
- We simply can't understand what we hear, read, or view without thinking about what we already know.
- We teach learners to
  - ★ Relate to prior experience
  - ★ Make connections between text, media, and personal observation
  - ★ Connect the new to the known – use what they know to understand new information
- You may say statements like...
  - ★ This reminds me of...
  - ★ I noticed...
  - ★ It made me think of...
  - ★ I never knew...
  - ★ This is different from...
  - ★ That changed my mind...

### Determining Importance

- This comprehension strategy involves you evaluating information, making judgments about information, and identifying key ideas and concepts.
- When we read nonfiction we are reading to learn, understand, and remember information.
- We teach learners to
  - ★ Target key information
  - ★ Choose what to remember
  - ★ Construct big ideas from smaller ideas
- You may say statements like...
  - ★ This is really important...
  - ★ This information makes me think...
  - ★ I think this part means...
  - ★ My background knowledge tells me...
  - ★ So far, I have learned that...

## Visualizing

- This comprehension strategy involves you making mental pictures and/or mind maps of ideas and how they interconnect.
- We teach learners to
  - ★ Gain information from the images they construct and view
  - ★ Create mental images drawn from background knowledge and observations
- You may say statements like...
  - ★ I can see (smell, hear, taste)...
  - ★ I have a picture in my head...
  - ★ I'm visualizing...

## Summarizing and Synthesizing

- This comprehension strategy involves you recalling, retelling, creating new meaning, and remembering information.
- Synthesizing information allows us to see the bigger picture as we read or observe. Thoughtful readers merge their thinking with information to come to a more complete understanding.
- We teach learners to
  - ★ Add to their knowledge base
  - ★ Paraphrase information
  - ★ Move from facts to ideas
- You may say statements like...
  - ★ I never knew... now I know...
  - ★ I think the big idea is...
  - ★ Now I understand that...
  - ★ I have learned that...
  - ★ This gives me an idea...

## Monitoring Comprehension

- This comprehension strategy involves you recognizing and acting on your own confusion, and self-questioning to determine understanding.
- We monitor our comprehension and keep track of our thinking in a number of ways. We notice when text makes sense and when it doesn't. We ask questions, infer, activate background knowledge, and make connections, all in the effort to promote understanding.
- We teach learners to
  - ★ Become aware of their thinking as they read
  - ★ Notice when meaning breaks down and their mind wanders
  - ★ Employ 'fix up' strategies – reread for clarification, read ahead to construct meaning, use context to break down unfamiliar words, skip difficult parts and continue to see if meaning becomes clear, check and recheck answers and thinking, examine evidence.
- You may say statements like...
  - ★ I understand...
  - ★ This feature makes me think...
  - ★ I don't understand...
  - ★ This doesn't make sense...
  - ★ Oh, now I get it...
  - ★ A part I had trouble with...

## Making Inferences

- This comprehension strategy involves you predicting, hypothesizing, interpreting, and making conclusions.
- Inferential thinking allows learners to grasp the deeper essence of text and information. Readers infer by taking their background knowledge and merge it with clues in the text to draw a conclusion or arrive at a big idea that is not explicitly stated in text.
- We teach learners to
  - ★ Use context clues to figure out meaning of unfamiliar words
  - ★ Draw conclusions from evidence
  - ★ Predict outcomes, events, and observations
- You may say statements like...
  - ★ I'm inferring...
  - ★ I'm thinking...
  - ★ It seems to me...
  - ★ Probably...
  - ★ I'm guessing that...
  - ★ I predict...

## Asking Questions

- This strategy involves you actively wondering about topics, and questioning facts and information.
- Questioning is the strategy that propels learners on and is at the heart of inquiry-based learning. Humans are driven to make sense of the world, and questions open the doors to understanding.
- We teach learners to
  - ★ Wonder about the content, concepts, outcomes, and genre
  - ★ Question the author
  - ★ Read to discover answers and gain information
- You may say statements like...
  - ★ I wonder...
  - ★ Why...
  - ★ I don't get this...
  - ★ My big question is...
  - ★ I still wonder...