

Parent's Guide to Comprehension Strategies



The Six Strategies:
Making Connections Questioning
Visualizing
Inferring
Determining Importance
Synthesizing



Strategy #1 – Making Connections

Children connect their background knowledge to the text they are reading.

How to help your child use this strategy:

To help your child make connections while they are reading, ask him/her the following questions:

- What does the book remind you of?
- What do you know about the book's topic?
- Does this book remind you of another book?

Strategy #2 – Questioning

Through your use of questioning, children will understand the text on a deeper level, because your questions will clarify any confusion they may have and will stimulate further interest in a topic.

How to help your child use this strategy:

- model questioning in your own re-reading
- ask "I wonder" questions (open-ended)
- ask your child 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

Strategy #3 – Visualizing

Children could create mind pictures and visualizations when they read.

How to help your child use this strategy:

To help your child visualize while reading, try the following:

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

Strategy #4 – Inferring

Children should make inferences about text they are reading to interpret meaning and develop deeper understanding. You should discuss their answers with them to confirm or correct their inferences, so they can learn from your reading experience.

How to help your child use this strategy:

Ask them:

“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 characters feels?” “Does it remind you of anything?”

Strategy #5 – Determining Importance

When children are reading non-fiction, they have to decide and remember what is important from the material they read.

How to help your child use this strategy:

To help your child determine importance while they are reading:

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

Discuss and pay attention to:

- First and last lines of a paragraph
- Titles
- Headings
- Captions
- Framed text
- Fonts
- Illustrations
- Italics
- Bold faced print

Strategy #6 – Synthesizing

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

How to help your child 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 opinion.
- Ask questions with no clear answers.