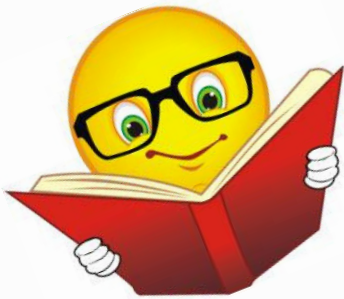


# READING in the middle



A MONTHLY UPDATE FROM YOUR MIDDLE SCHOOL  
READING INTERVENTIONISTS

ELIZABETH EAGLE & JACLYN REDMOND



## The Big Focus: Synthesizing

### Putting it All Together

This month we have been working on synthesizing information. Synthesizing occurs when readers change their thinking as they read. They are working to put together all of the strategies they have learned in order to form thoughts, opinions and conclusions.

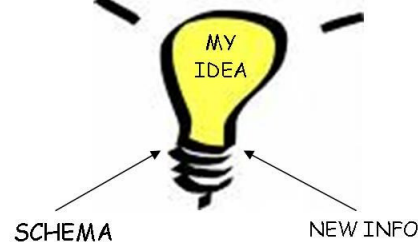
### TAKE A PEEK!

THE BIG FOCUS:  
SYNTHESIZING - 1

THIS MONTH WHILE  
SYNTHESIZING - 2

HOW TO HELP - 2

### Synthesizing



- Now I understand why...
- I'm changing my mind about...
- I used to think \_\_\_\_ but, now I think...
- My new thinking is...
- I'm beginning to think...
- After learning \_\_\_\_\_, I now think...

# While Synthesizing Information...

We have been continuing to expose students to high-interest informational texts. Informational texts allow students an opportunity to refer to prior knowledge and take more of an interest in reading. According to an ASCD article titled, *The Case for Informational Text*, “increased access to informational text can also better motivate the many students who prefer this kind of text or who have strong interests in the topics addressed in such text (Caswell & Duke, 1998; Jobe & Dayton-Sakari, 2002).”

We are finding that the students are bringing a lot of background knowledge to the table, as we have been discussing insects, animals and athletes- three topics they seem to be interested in. Additionally, we have read articles where topics were new to the students. They were about kids climbing Mount Everest and Daylight Saving Time. This is sparking the students to find out more information by researching on their own, which is so exciting to hear! Students have been using highlighters to find evidence in the text to support their answers at the end of each passage. They have also been participating in ranking activities, in which they worked in pairs to read about a topic, such as animals, and sort them in order from strongest to weakest. Students enjoyed engaging in a debate to support their choice and even took part in a kinesthetic activity to visualize how long an anaconda is compared to the size and height of an elephant. They even learned a few fun and gruesome facts about dung beetles! We have even engaged in debates about the various topics. A favorite was the pros and cons of having Daylight Saving Time. We look forward to more exciting discussions in April!

## How You Can Help

Adapted From: <https://blog.connectionsacademy.com>

Begin by asking for a summary. What happened in the story/chapter? Can you identify the most important ideas? What did you think about that idea? Reacting, responding—both are parts of the puzzle that is synthesis.

If your child is having trouble recognizing important information and pulling ideas together, help him or her look for prompts in the text. Authors leave clues to help readers determine the importance and synthesize information. Phrases like “as a result” or “in conclusion” are hints that the writer is about to wrap up a section or sum up a plot. Using these clues, a reader can stop and think, prepare to analyze, and recognize key concepts. This recognition is a major key to comprehension: a strategy that helps readers better understand the material they read.

Reading together and discussing books is always a great family activity, and the ideas shared above are applicable for all ages and grade levels.

