

# READING in the middle



A MONTHLY UPDATE FROM YOUR MIDDLE SCHOOL  
READING INTERVENTIONISTS

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## The QFT Strategy

Students tried a new strategy this month which helped them set their own purpose for reading. The QFT strategy stands for Question Formulation Technique. Prior to reading a text, students were shown a picture from the article and had five minutes to work as a group and come up with as many questions as they could that they wanted answered. Students were given a question stem [reference sheet](#) to encourage them to ask deeper-level questions rather than asking too many “right there” questions that could be answered with a simple yes/no or one word. The students were so excited to find the answers to their questions as they read, and the activity encouraged them to do further research to find the answers to their remaining questions. According to an article titled “The Right Questions” on ASCD.org, “Question formulation promotes student voice and critical thinking. As students learn to produce their own questions, they are thinking divergently—that is, more broadly and creatively. When they focus on the kinds of questions they are asking and choose their priority questions, they are thinking convergently—narrowing down, analyzing, assessing, comparing, and synthesizing. And when they reflect on what they have learned through the process, students are engaged in metacognition—they are thinking about their thinking.”

### TAKE A PEEK!

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[Click here](#) to read the entire article and learn more about QFT if you are interested in trying it out with your child at home.

# What Do They Believe?

This month, we supported the 6th grade curriculum by analyzing evidence in persuasion articles and being able to differentiate between facts and opinions. We used the popular mobile video game Pokemon Go as a topic. Students read two different articles entitled “Pokemon Go is Past Its Prime” and “Pokemon Go is Still Awesome.” Students were able to explain how two different authors used elements of persuasion in their essays to build their arguments. Some students were even able to be persuaded to change their own opinions on the game. As a review, we played a dice game to answer questions relating to the author’s purpose, use of persuasive strategies, and to summarize the main idea of each article. Students also got a head start in practicing responding to multiple choice questions.

## Coming Up in May

We are beginning to discuss multiple choice test taking strategies. We have given students color-coded, laminated bookmarks filled with a variety of strategies to use when answering a multiple choice question. It is important for students to realize that not only is it important to choose the right answer, but they must first be sure they fully understand the question itself. We will dive in to breaking down the language used in multiple choice questions, focusing on key words such as: “all”, “always”, “never”, “none”, “few”, “many”, “some”, “sometimes”, and “all of the above.” We will also review academic vocabulary words that often appear in these questions. In order to prepare for the NJSLA (formerly known as PARCC) we will be reviewing all of our close reading strategies by using a practice passage. We will then work through the multiple choice strategies together. Please encourage your child to eat a healthy breakfast, take their time, and read carefully on testing days.

