

Monitoring Comprehension

(Paying attention to my inner, thinking voice and understanding)

This is a complex “in the head” activity that can be difficult to put into words. We label this thinking an *inner conversation*, and we should have two voices active while we read. The first voice is the reading voice or the one that is saying the words on the page. The second voice is the thinking voice or the one that is making connections, asking questions or getting the meaning from the text. Students learn there are options for keeping track of the inner conversation to enhance meaning. One way is to use sticky notes to record ideas, thoughts, aha’s and questions and mark the place in the text. Another way is to highlight and make notations directly on text that has been copied. These tracks of thinking can be used to clarify and discuss ideas after reading. They may even be helpful when responding to text in writing.

Learning to use the inner conversation is a way to monitor comprehension and to recognize when meaning or understanding is breaking down. Good readers are not ones who read perfectly, but rather, they are ones who know what to do when meaning is not being made. Read various texts to practice identifying different causes for break down and meaning. Then, identify fix up strategies to help create meaning and reading for understanding back on track. The chart is for you and your child’s reference at home. Keep it in a safe place to pull out when your child is reading as a reminder of the fix up strategies that good readers employ as students or adults!