

Suggestions for Parent(s)/Guardian(s)

February - March 2008

Vocabulary in Context

When reading with your child, encourage them to use context clues to figure out unknown words. Context clues are words around the unknown word that they do know. Here are some other helpful tips for using context clues:

- Read the sentence with the new word.
- Read the sentences that come before or after that sentence.

Also, when trying to figure out the meaning of a word; make sure to read the entire paragraph! Sometimes a word's definition may become clearer by reading the entire paragraph where it appears.

Making Inferences/ Drawing Conclusions

Draw conclusions about characters in a story, from a comic strip (great resource for this skill) or on TV. Based on the story or clues from the program and what they already know, what conclusions can they make?

We like to use this organizer when thinking about inferences/ drawing conclusions:

Story Clues + What I Know = Conclusion

Main Idea and Supporting Details

The main idea is the most important idea in a story or passage.

When reading with your child, ask them what they think is the main idea of the story or chapter. You can ask them, "*What was this story (or chapter) mostly about?*" Be sure to ask for supporting details!

Text Connections (connecting fiction and nonfiction)

Discuss the differences between fiction and nonfiction with your child. When looking through nonfiction material, make predictions based on headings. Make note of bolded words, pictures with captions, and any graphic aides such as charts or graphs. If you don't have any nonfiction material at home, ask your child to take a nonfiction book out of the library.

Also check out....

www.growparents.com → now www.nysparents.com/nys
www.pde.state.pa.us

These websites provide useful information about the state assessment.

If you are interested in seeing some examples of PSSA questions for each grade in the areas of math, science, reading or writing they can be viewed online at www.pde.state.pa.us.

Select K-12 tab at top, select Assessment on left toolbar, select Resource Materials on left toolbar. You may scroll down to view each subject's sample items.