

Growing our Readers

Volume: XI Asking Questions to Check for Understanding

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Successful reading is not simply the process of decoding words. It is a process of active inquiry.

Authors anticipate the readers questions and plant questions in the reader's mind. Reading is a collaboration between the reader and the author. The author's job is to raise questions then answer them or provide several possible answers. Readers cooperate by asking questions, paying attention to the authors answers and then asking questions of their own.



Asking questions while reading is important!

- When we ask questions while reading, it encourages us to have an active engagement with the text. It forces us to analyze the text as we read, rather than passively absorbing information.
- It deepens our comprehension by prompting critical thinking. Formulating questions helps us to go beyond the surface level of the text and consider different interpretations and perspectives.
- It helps to identify key ideas in the text. We are more likely to focus on important details in a text and identify the main idea of a text.
- It allows us to connect new information to our existing knowledge. This enhances our understanding and our memory retention.
- Asking questions allows us to self monitor our comprehension. If you are unsure about something while you are reading, asking questions can help identify areas where you need to reread or seek further clarification.



When is the right time to ask questions?

01 Before you begin reading the text

- Identify the purpose for reading the text
- Preview and make predictions
- Make connections with the text based on what is already known

02 While you are reading the text

- Refine predictions
- Use context clues to identify unknown words
- Understand the text structure and events/ information in the text

03 After reading the text

- Review important points in the text
- Evaluate the quality of the text
- Consider how the information might be used in the future



Questions to ask **before** reading a text:

Questions

- What do you think this book will be about? Why do you think that?
- What do you think the characters and setting will be like in this book?
- What does this book remind you of?
- Can you think of anything in your life or anything you've learned about that is similar to what's in the book?
- How does this story connect to other books you have read?
- What do you wonder about as you read the title and look at the cover and illustrations?
- What questions would you like to ask the author before you read this book?
- What clues does the title give me about the story?

Strategy

- Predicting
- Predicting

- Connecting
- Connecting

- Questioning
- Questioning
- Evaluating



Questions to ask while reading a text:

Questions

What do you think will happen next? Why?
How do you think the main character will react to this situation?
What do you think this paragraph suggests about the character's feelings?
What can we learn about the story from these details?
What does the author imply when he/she says...?
How does this part of the story connect with what we read earlier?
Can you relate to the characters in the story?
Does this remind you of another book we've read?
How does this part of the story connect to your own life experiences?
Does this part of the story connect to something else you've learned about?
Can you imagine what the setting looks like based on the author's description?
How do you picture this character in your mind? Describe the character to me.
What mental picture do you get from this part of the story?
What would it feel like to be in the character's situation?
What questions come to mind as you read this part of the story?
What would you ask the character if you could?
Can you summarize what has happened in the story so far?
Can you briefly explain this chapter in your own words?

Strategy

Predicting
Predicting
Predicting
Inferring
Inferring
Inferring
Connecting
Connecting
Connecting
Connecting
Visualizing
Visualizing
Visualizing
Visualizing
Questioning
Questioning
Summarizing
Summarizing



Questions to ask **while reading** a text cont:

Questions

Can you summarize the main character's problem or conflict?

Wait, what happened there?

What is confusing to you about the plot or characters?

Explain the character's motivations.

Identify the main idea or theme of the story.

Explain the relationship between the characters.

Do you have enough information to understand the story?

What are the most important events that have happened so far?

Which details are essential to understanding the story?

What is the most important problem the character is facing?

Strategy

Summarizing

Comprehension

Comprehension

Comprehension

Comprehension

Comprehension

Comprehension

Evaluating Importance

Evaluating Importance

Evaluating Importance



Questions to ask **after** reading a text:

Questions

Can you summarize the main events of the story in your own words?
What are the key points that the author wants you to remember?
What do you predict will happen to the characters after the book ends based on what you've read?
If there was a sequel to this book, what do you think it would be about?
What questions do you still have now that you've finished the book?
If you could ask the author one question about this book, what would it be?
What do you think was the most important event in the book? Why?
Which character do you think was most important to the story? Why?

Strategy

Summarizing

Summarizing

Predicting

Predicting

Questioning

Questioning

Evaluating Importance

Evaluating Importance



When asking questions about a text be sure to ask a variety of questions that...

- Can be used to gain a deeper understanding of the text
- Have answers that might be different for everyone
- Have answers that can be found in the text
- Clarify the author's intent
- Can help clarify meaning
- Help them make predictions
- Help them make inferences
- Help them make connections to other texts or prior knowledge
- Have a varying degree of difficulty



Different Levels of Questions:

Level 1

Questions are basic “wh” (who, what, where and when) questions where the answers can easily be found in the pictures or text. Level 1 questions can also introduce vocabulary. For example: While pointing to a picture you might ask, “What type of feet does this animal have?” These questions can typically be answered with one or two words.

Level 2

Questions are open-ended and asked to solicit the child’s feedback. For example you might ask: Explain what is happening in this part of the story. This question encourages the child to share what he/she is thinking about and make meaning from the text. These questions require more words from the child to fully answer.

Level 3

Questions are more advanced and are centered around story structure and text components. An example could be: Who was the main character and how did he feel? Tell me some examples from the text that proves that. You can also ask questions that help the reader to make a connection to the text such as: “If this were happening to you, how would it make you feel? What would you do about it?”



Sample Question Prompts That Can Be Used With Any Text:

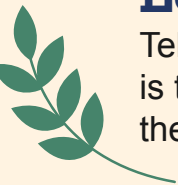
Level 1:

Where is... What did...Who was...When did...How many...Locate it in the story...Point to the...



Level 2:

Tell me in your own words...What does it mean...Give me an example of...Describe what...What is the main idea of...What would happen to you if...How would you solve the problem...If you were there, would you...Find information about...



Level 3:

What other ways could...What things are similar/different?What kind of person is...What things could not have happened in real life?What caused ____ to act the way she/he did? Rank the events in order of importance. Which character would you most like to meet? Why? Select the best ... why is it the best? Was _____ good or bad? Why? Would you recommend this book? Why or why not? What if...What would it be like if... What would have happened if... Tell/write a different ending... Use your imagination to draw a picture of... Pretend you are a...Design a...



How can you stretch your child's thinking?



Ask WHY?

Ask questions that begin with the word why.
Ex. Why do you think.....



Open Ended Questions

These questions require more than a one word answer.
Ex. What does Henry think about the assignment?



Require Proof

Ask, What is your proof for that answer? Have your child find it in the text.



Generate Questions

Having your child formulate questions related to the text that is being read encourages your child to be actively thinking about the information.

Think Alouds to Build Comprehension

Children learn when they make connections between what they read and what they know. One method parents can use to help make these connections is called a think aloud, where you talk through your thoughts as you read.

Personal Connections

“This book reminds me of a time when I had to adapt to a new school. Can you think of a time you had to adapt to a new place?”

Connections to Other Texts

“This story reminds me of The Wild Robot. Both stories are about building new relationships. Do you know any other stories where the characters must build relationships to help themselves? Let’s keep reading to find other ways the stories are similar.”

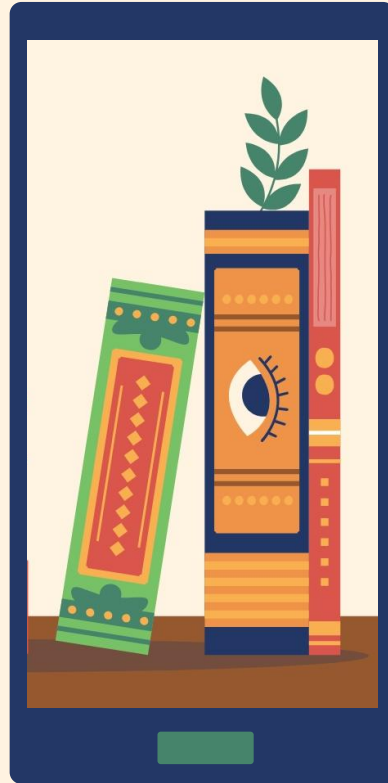
Connections to Big Ideas/Lessons

“This book helps me understand that we are all same in many ways, but it’s our differences that make us special.”



Video

Click on this [link](#) to listen to an example of Mrs. Wilson leading a read a loud and asking questions.



Please fill out this [brief survey](#) to help us better serve your child's needs. We thank you for your feedback!

