

Metacognition

Great readers think and read at the same time ...
Metacognition is "thinking about your thinking."



Metacognition is not a separate strategy all in its own to be taught. According to Eilin Keene and Susan Zimmerman, it is "an umbrella under which the other strategies" fall (Keene, Zimmerman p. 24, 25).

Teaching students to be aware of what they are thinking as they read involves the following three step process as described by the Benchmark Education Company: *planning, monitoring during reading, and evaluating.*

Planning

Use think alouds to model your thinking about the topic of the book or poem before you begin.

Attend to text characteristics such as pictures, charts, labels, captions, different types of print, etc. in order to try and understand the topic further.

Activate your background knowledge (schema), and discuss any connections that you can make with the text.

Pay attention to the text's organizational features and story elements such as problem/resolution, cause and effect, and sequence of events.

Monitoring During Reading

Good readers rely upon all of the comprehension strategies to tell them if they are understanding their reading or not. Teach your students to make connections, visualize their reading, predict what

will happen next, infer meaning/draw conclusions, synthesize, determine importance, and ask questions during the reading process.

Metacognition is a concept that you will teach throughout the year as you systematically introduce each of the above comprehension strategies.

Another strategy that allows readers to monitor their reading is "Check for Understanding." Introduce it early in the year. It involves stopping at the end of a sentence, paragraph, or page and asking "who" and "what." If they cannot answer the above questions, they should go back and reread slowly until they can recall who and what happened (Boushey, Moser, p. 154).

Another simple strategy to teach is called "Monitor and Fix Up." According to the authors of "The CAFE Book," "Readers must think while they are reading, constantly asking themselves, "Does this make sense?" (Boushey, Moser, p. 156). If it does not, then students should be taught the following "fix up" strategies throughout the year.

- Summarizing
- Rereading slowly
- Reading on to see if the story becomes clear
- Skim and scan the selection to gain meaning
- Ask for help

Evaluation

Good readers should be taught to reflect on which reading strategies they used after they are done reading. A simple check off sheet/nubric for students will allow them to self evaluate while reinforcing the metacognitive process.

Lesson Components

1. *Modeling reading behavior*
2. *Think aloud*-teacher and students create anchor chart to make thinking visible.
3. *Guided practice*-students turn to a partner and practice the skill you are teaching.
4. *Independent practice*-Students can work independently or in pairs and practice the reading strategy.
5. *Time to share/reflect/respond*-Gather the class back together for students to talk about how they used the strategy.

*Helpful hint: Debbie Miller encourages us to prepare our lessons in advance by marking the pieces in the text with a sticky note that best illustrate our teaching points. We should think about what we will say and how exactly we will say it.

Resources

- "Benchmark Education Company-Metacognitive strategies." [Read about Best Practices in Metacognitive strategies](#) 18 Jan. 2020
<http://www.benchmarkeducation.com/educational-leader/reading/metacognitive-strategies/>.
- "Mosaic of Thoughts: Teaching Comprehension in a Reader's Workshop" by Elin Keene and Susan Zimmermann
- "Reading with Meaning: Teaching Comprehension in the Primary Grades" by Debbie Miller
- "The CAFE Book: Engaging all Students in Daily Literacy Assessment + Instruction" by Gail Bousthery and Joan Moser



Metacognition

I'm thinking...

I'm noticing...

I'm wondering...

I'm seeing...

I'm feeling...

Teaching Ideas

Grantsburg Elementary School