

Teaching Your Students To Be Metacognitive

Part 1: Informational Text

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Reading research informs us that skilled readers are metacognitive, i.e., they think about their own thinking and reading behaviors and know what it means to be a good reader.

It is not complicated to help your students become more metacognitive, which will pay huge dividends in their reading performance. Talk with your students about what it means to be a good reader and compliment students when they are using these good metacognitive behaviors while they are reading informational texts.

- I know as a good reader, I always try to make sense of what I am reading.
- I begin with what I already know about the topic I am going to read.
- I think ahead and often predict what the answers to my questions might be.
- While I am reading, I ask myself what I have learned so far and what questions I still have.
- After reading, I ask myself what I have learned, what is the most important information I have learned, what is most interesting or surprising, and what questions I still have.
- I know as a good reader I often will need to read the text or parts of the text two or more times in order to comprehend well.

Some teachers construct a chart in their room to remind students of these good metacognitive reading behaviors. Students may not use all of these every day or even every week, but if they use them often over the course of a school year, they will improve their reading performance and will gain habits of mind that will serve them very well for years to come.

A variation of this approach to cultivating metacognition is explained more fully in Hammond, W.D. & Nessel, D.D., (2019), *The Comprehension Experience: Engaging Readers Through Effective Inquiry and Discussion* (pp 162-165), published by KDP and available on Amazon in paperback and e-book formats.

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