

# PARENTS AS PARTNERS IN READING

Reading comprehension is the construction of meaning based on the interactions between the author's words and the reader's language, knowledge and life experiences. Proficient readers think about their thinking as they interact with the text. They are active, thoughtful problem solvers who can identify when and why the meaning might be unclear. Readers use the following thinking strategies to deepen understanding while they read. The following questions will guide you as a parent when working with your child on reading assignments.

## The traits of a proficient reader. . .

### MAKING CONNECTIONS

The reader makes connections through activating prior knowledge before, during and after reading. A reader connects to one's own life, another book or author read, or to real world events.

#### Questions to ask your child:

- Are there topics you know about or events in your life that help you to understand this book?
- When you read the story did it remind you of anything you know about?
- We have talked about the connections you made to this text. What do you understand now that you didn't understand before?

### INFERRING

The reader draws inferences (conclusions, predictions or new ideas) from text. Author's clues + prior knowledge = inference.

#### Questions to ask your child:

- Can you predict what is about to happen? Why did you make that prediction?
- What did you already know that helped you make that prediction?
- What words or ideas from the author helped you know that?

### QUESTIONING

The reader asks questions to interact with the text and author. Questions clarify and focus reading.

#### Questions to ask your child:

- What did you wonder about while you were reading this story or article?
- What questions do you have about this story now?
- How do your questions help you better understand the story?

### DETERMINING IMPORTANCE

The reader determines the most important ideas and themes in a text. Fiction organization: setting, characters, problem, goal, events, resolution. Nonfiction organization: sequence, cause/effect, problem/solution, compare/contrast.

#### Questions to ask your child:

- Are some parts of this story more important than others? Which ones?
- What do you think the author thought was most important so far in this story or article?
- What are the essential new ideas to remember?

### VISUALIZING

The reader creates visual and other sensory images from text during and after reading.

#### Questions to ask your child:

- What do you picture as you read this paragraph? Page?
- When reading this story did you make any pictures or images in your head? What did you see, smell, and feel?
- How did these pictures or images help you understand the story better?

### SYNTHESIZING

The reader reflects on new understanding and responds personally to new thinking.

#### Questions to ask your child:

- If you were to tell someone about the story you just read, what important facts or new understandings would you share?
- Think of the three most important ideas in the story or article. Why are they most important to your understanding?
- What do you now understand that you did not understand before?