Synthesize Information

Readers create original insights, perspectives and understandings by reflecting on text(s) and merging elements from text and existing schema. When readers synthesize, they:

- Stop and collect their thoughts before reading on
- Sift important ideas from less important details
- Summarize the information and use it to determine larger concepts and bigger ideas
- Make generalizations
- Make judgments
- Integrate new information with existing knowledge to form a new idea, opinion or perspective

Coaching your students to make connections:
- What are you thinking?
- What’s your opinion on . . .?
- I’ve had an experience like that.
- I feel like that character when . . .
- How have your thoughts changed throughout the story?
- How do you feel about what has happened?
- What does this all mean to you?
- Why are you reading this?
- How did you decide what was most important?
- How do you think the author felt about this topic?
- What will you remember most about the story?

TEACH

- Explicitly name the strategy, describe it, and then tell when and why it is used.
- Make a poster with this key information.
- Model with a passage or memorable book in which connections can be made.
- Explain to students that proficient readers let themselves be “reminded of things” as they read.
- Think aloud to demonstrate the synthesis you are doing as you read the text.
- Demonstrate how background knowledge is combined with ideas, actions, opinions and personal perspectives to interpret text.

PRACTICE

Synthesis is the integration of many of the other comprehension strategies. It’s like a cake. There are many ingredients that have to be combined to make a delicious bigger product.

1. Can the students retell sequentially?
2. Can the student summarize?
a. After reading the text, share the summary given on the teacher page and discuss whether you agree or disagree with it. Be sure students give opinions as to why they feel the way they do.
b. After reading the text, have the students write a summary. Compare this with the one given on the teacher page. Discuss similarities and differences. Rewrite if necessary.
c. Gist – have the students summarize the passage in 20 words or less. Start with one chapter/section and have the students alter the summary as they go.
d. Somebody (main character), Wanted (motivation), But (problem), So (solution)
e. Main Idea Glove/Hand – Setting, characters, problem, event and solution go on the fingers. The story meaning/personal meaning goes on the palm.

3. Does the student understand the difference between background knowledge and new information gained from a text?
   a. Model using a form of a KWL

4. Can the students interpret a characters’ underlying motivation, attributes and feelings?

5. Do the students express changes in ideas after reading the text?

6. Do the students demonstrate learning from the text?

7. Can the students synthesize across longer texts?

8. Can the students mentally form categories of related information and revise them as new information is acquired?

9. Do student perspectives change as the story unfolds?

10. When reading chapters, connected short stories, or sequels, can students incorporate new knowledge to better understand characters and plots?

11. Do students acquire new content and perspectives through reading both fiction and nonfiction text about diverse cultures, times and places?

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**INDEPENDENT PRACTICE & ASSESSMENT**

1) Have students mark their thoughts with post-its
2) “This reminded me of” lists
3) Use multiple entry journals
   a. Main Ideas/ Details/ Response/ Lingering Thoughts/ Questions and Connections
   b. Background knowledge/New Information/Synthesis
   c. What I Know/What I Learned/What are my thoughts now
4) Code the text by strategy and then write a reflection based on the information
5) Use highlighting tape to mark areas where your thinking changed
6) Think marks/book marks to record main ideas and connections
7) Index cards can be used like a double entry journal, just use both sides
8) Copy the text, have the students write their reflections in the margin
9) Use a grid to track prior knowledge, new information and student perspective after considering both
10) Reading response logs / letters

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