

*Reading Comprehension Strategies

Strategy	Description
Pre-Reading	<p>Before reading a book, take a good look at the cover art and read the summary on the back of the book.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What facts do you know based on this information? • What inferences can you make based on this information? • What questions do you have about this book before you start reading? • Using what you already know, what do you think might happen? • Does this story sound like any other stories you have heard or read before? If so, what are some possible similarities and differences?
First Page Read	<p>The first paragraph and/or page of a book usually contains a lot of important information.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You will likely get introduced to at least one character (probably the protagonist), a potential conflict, and a setting. • You will also be able to determine what point of view the story is told in.
Re-Reading	<p>Re-reading is a great way to go back and work through important details. When you are reading a passage for the first time or when you are re-reading that passage, some important details to look for are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Character names and physical, emotional, intellectual descriptions of characters • Place names • Times • Dates • Conflicts between characters • Emotions a main character (the protagonist) is feeling
Reading Aloud	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading aloud can help you to build your fluency and increase reading speed. When you hear the words out loud, you can often identify when they sound wrong. • Listening to a fluent reader while you follow along silently can help you to develop a more extensive vocabulary and better reading fluency. • An adult will be able to pronounce words that you might not know, and hearing them read can help you to understand the intonation (how the volume and pitch of your voice sounds) that should be used. The intonation used when reading a passage can totally alter the meaning, so you want to make sure that you are reading it correctly.

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<p>Inference Making</p>	<p>Inferences are like educated guesses. You can use clues to help you figure out what a character might be thinking or feeling. Pay careful attention to: Facial expressions, body language, dialog, clothing, setting etc can help you to figure out how the character might be feeling.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facial expressions • Body language • The tone of the dialog. • The punctuation used in dialog. • A character’s clothing or accessories • The setting
<p>Identify Symbols</p>	<p>An author often uses symbols to illustrate important meanings. Symbols may appear only once in a book or they may appear many times in different ways. Some common symbols you might find while reading are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water: It can often represent rebirth, religion, life, a new start, or a struggle. • Sky/Clouds: Can often represent heaven, God, or a new beginning. Dark clouds can represent a conflict or something bad. • Names: They can sometimes have a double meaning. Some names may reference mythology, others may reference the bible. If you come across a name like this, look up the story that it relates to and see if there are any similarities between the character in the book and the character in the myth. Names can also be representative of the character’s personality. • Eyes/Eye color: Often eyes can reveal how a character really feels or they can often represent surveillance. • Colors: The repetition of or emphasis on colors often indicates deeper meaning. Red, green, and blue are commonly used to express meaning. Red things can often represent love, anger, blood, death, evil. Green: green things can often represent money, greed, nature, life. Blue things can often represent sadness, loneliness, the ocean/water, calmness, serenity.
<p>Identify Themes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Themes are ideas or things that get repeated throughout a text. Keep an eye out for recurring conflicts, actions, images, objects, symbols, needs or desires, and feelings. • Often times themes can help us figure out the author’s intent. Understanding the author’s motivation or message helps us to create our own meanings. • Themes are not morals or the message, they are recurring ideas.

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<p>Identify the Message</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The author wrote this book for lots of reasons. As a reader, it is your job to figure out what some of those reasons are. • In order to figure out the author’s messages, ask yourself <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What did the author want me to learn or think about? ○ What happened to the main characters by the end of the book? Did good characters end up happy? Did bad characters end up unhappy? Etc. ○ Did the author use repetition? What got repeated (ideas, character traits, conflicts etc)? Why do you think this repetition occurred?
<p>Know What You Are Looking For</p>	<p>For assignments that involve answering questions about a text, you should</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read the question or questions before reading the text. • While reading the passage, look for the key words those questions used. Oftentimes tests ask you to answer questions about very specific details in the passage. Looking for key words from the questions will help you find those answers more quickly. • Pay careful attention to the first one or two paragraphs. Usually, (especially on standardized tests and in articles) most of the important information will appear in these paragraphs. That information will likely include most of the items I listed in the re-reading section. • Look for repetition, bolded, <i>italicized</i> or <u>underlined</u> words. These words and concepts are probably important.
<p>Build a More Extensive Vocabulary</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read an article every day. Good articles could come from all different sources: magazines, local newspapers, national newspapers, blogs that you like, etc. When you find a word that you don’t know, look it up. Keep a list of all the new words you learn and their definitions. Try to use these words in a conversation that day. When we use new words it helps us to remember the meanings. • Use Context Clues to figure out words you don’t know. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Do you think the word means something good or something bad? ○ Can you break the word into different parts and figure out what it means based on what the parts mean? ○ Study <i>prefixes and suffixes</i>. Lists of these can be found in books that prepare students for tests like the SATs or GREs. Knowing the general meanings of parts of words can help you to determine what the whole word might mean. ○ If you think you know what the word might mean, try to think of a synonym for that word and use the synonym in the sentence. Does the sentence make sense?