

## READING APPRENTICESHIP

“If we want to write, it makes sense to read—and to read like a writer.”  
Francine Prose, *Reading Like a Writer* (268).

*This chapter includes strategies for students to become better readers through writing within the Reading Apprenticeship program.*

### Reading Apprenticeship

**Definition:** Reading Apprenticeship is an approach for improving students' comprehension by using specific strategies learned in the classroom as taught by the teacher to his or her student apprentices.

**Philosophy:** The goal of the Reading Apprenticeship approach is to assist students in becoming more competent readers of both academic and recreational materials. Strategies are used by students for “Making Thinking Visible” by writing what they think while they are reading.

### Terms to Know

- ◆ **Metacognition:** Metacognition is becoming aware of one's thinking and being able to communicate this process. Simply put, metacognition is thinking about thinking. Through metacognition, apprentice readers begin to become aware of their reading processes and can learn to self-correct when necessary.
- ◆ **Think Aloud:** This strategy is to say aloud what it is that a reader is thinking while reading. The strategy, often implemented in the classroom in pairs, allows practice in identifying and categorizing the reading strategies used while reading for comprehension. Bookmarks are used for the Think Aloud strategy (see page 8).

**Writing to Understand**

Within the Reading Apprenticeship program, the following are specific writing strategies and tools to help improve reading comprehension.

- ◆ **Talking to the Text:** This strategy enables readers to better understand difficult text material by writing their thoughts about what they are reading with prompts from Think Aloud Bookmarks. These thoughts can be written directly on the text when appropriate, on post-it notes, or on charts. This strategy fosters independent metacognition when faced with a comprehension problem.
- ◆ **Journaling:** The process of writing a reader's thoughts promotes deeper understanding of difficult reading material. Readers are encouraged to focus on how they are reading and asked to write their thoughts so they could reflect on their own reading processes.
- ◆ **Questioning:** Writing questions help readers to understand difficult text. Question-Answer Relationships (QAR) include four different categories of interaction with the text: *right there*, *pulling it together*, *author and me*, and *on my own*.

<p>A <b><i>right there</i></b> question is a question whose answer is right in the text-- all the reader has to do is copy it down.</p>	<p>A <b><i>pulling it together</i></b> question is a question whose answer is in the text, but the reader has to pull it together from different parts of the text-- he or she cannot simply copy from one place.</p>
<p>An <b><i>author and me</i></b> question is a question whose answer is not in the text. The reader has to use the information provided in the text <i>and</i> his or her own experience to develop an answer. In other words, the author provides information that can help answer the question but does not answer the question itself.</p>	<p>An <b><i>on my own</i></b> question is a question whose answer is not in the text. The reader, however, should reference the text to support their answer. An on my own question is one whose answer is not found in the text, but is developed by relating the content of the text to the reader's own experiences.</p>

## Summarizing

Writing summaries is a method for clarifying comprehension. Summaries may vary from single sentences to multiple paragraphs. Strategies to aid in writing summaries include underlining, highlighting, or copying phrases containing the most important information. Readers should write concise summaries, based on their notes, that contain the most important information. Details and examples should be excluded from the summary.



Schoenbach, Ruth, et al. *Reading for Understanding: A Guide to Improving Reading in Middle and High School Classrooms/ The Reading Apprenticeship Guidebook*. San Francisco: John Wiley & Sons, Inc. 1999.

Strategic Literacy Initiative. Printed materials. San Francisco: WestEd. 2004.

**Reading Apprenticeship Materials**

**Think-Aloud Bookmarks**

Use these bookmarks while reading fiction or non-fiction pieces to help you understand the text better. Think Aloud prompts can also be used for journal prompts.

**Think-Aloud**

- I predict that...
- I can picture...
- A question I have is...
- This is like...
- This reminds me of...
- I'm confused about...
- I'll reread this... (fix up)
- The big idea here is...
- I think/believe/wonder... (commenting)
- I felt confused when...
- I started to think about...
- I got stuck when...
- I figured out that...
- A word I didn't understand was...
- I made a connection to...
- I finally understood...

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Adapted from the Strategic Literacy Initiative, WestEd

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## ***Double Sided Journal!***

<b>Page</b>	<b>W.A.S.</b>  <b>(What the Author Says)</b> <i>Evidence/quotes from the text</i>	<b>W.I.T.</b>  <b>(What I Think)</b> <i>My thoughts, reactions, questions</i>