

Processing a Written Text



Ways of Thinking

Thinking
Within
the Text

Thinking
Beyond
the Text

Thinking
About
the Text

Systems of Strategic Actions for Processing Written Texts

Solving Words	Using a range of strategies to take words apart and understand what words mean.
Monitoring and Correcting	Checking whether reading sounds right, looks right, and makes sense, and working to solve problems.
Searching for and Using Information	Searching for and using all kinds of information in a text.
Summarizing	Putting together and remembering important information and disregarding irrelevant information while reading.
Maintaining Fluency	Integrating sources of information in a smoothly operating process that results in expressive, phrased reading.
Adjusting	Reading in different ways as appropriate to the purpose for reading and type of text.
Predicting	Using what is known to think about what will follow while reading continuous text.
Making Connections	Searching for and using connections to knowledge gained through personal experiences, learning about the world, and reading other texts. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Personal• World• Text
Inferring	Going beyond the literal meaning of a text to think about what is not stated but is implied by the writer.
Synthesizing	Putting together information from the text and from the reader's own background knowledge in order to create new understandings.
Analyzing	Examining elements of a text to know more about how it is constructed and noticing aspects of the writer's craft.
Critiquing	Evaluating a text based on the readers' personal, world, or text knowledge and thinking critically about the ideas in it.

Thinking Within, Beyond, and About a Text

THINKING	DESCRIPTION	VALUE TO THE READER
Within the Text	<p>The reader processes the information in the text in order to gain the basic or literal meaning. Strategic actions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Solving words by decoding and recognizing the meaning. ▫ Monitoring and self-correcting as needed for accurate reading. ▫ Searching for and using all kinds of information in the text. ▫ Remembering information in summary form during and after reading. ▫ Maintaining rate and phrasing to produce fluent reading. ▫ Adjusting speed and technique according to purpose and type of text. 	<p>Thinking within the text enables the reader to gather essential information from the text. Thinking within the text allows the reader to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Derive the basic information from the text. ▫ Process the literal meaning of the text. ▫ Reconstruct the text in summary form if needed in order to remember the gist. ▫ Have basic information available as a foundation for thinking beyond and about the text.
Beyond the Text	<p>The reader brings information to the text that is not explicitly there. Strategic actions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Predicting what comes next. ▫ Bringing content knowledge to the understanding of a text. ▫ Making connections to one's personal experiences. ▫ Integrating existing content knowledge with new knowledge. ▫ Relating and comparing the text to others one has heard or read. ▫ Inferring what is implied in the text but not told directly. ▫ Synthesizing the information to realize the greater meaning of text. 	<p>Thinking beyond the text enables the reader to understand the text more fully, because the real meaning may be different qualitatively from the literal meaning. Almost all texts require thinking beyond the text for true understanding. Thinking beyond the text allows the reader to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Understand the motivations of characters in fiction and biography. ▫ Derive universal human truths from the reading. ▫ Learn about life vicariously by seeing through the eyes of another. ▫ Enjoy the connections between one's own life and the texts one reads. ▫ Learn from text through identifying new information and incorporating it into one's existing understanding.
About the Text	<p>Thinking about the text is analytical. The reader considers the text as an object, noticing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Aspects of the writer's craft. ▫ Organization and structure. ▫ Use of language. ▫ Use of literary devices. ▫ Aspects of the text that indicate high-quality writing. ▫ Underlying organizational structures that represent the ways the writer provides information, for example, temporal sequence, compare/contrast, cause/effect, description. ▫ Characteristics of the genre. ▫ Features that can be used to evaluate quality or authenticity. 	<p>Thinking about the text enables the reader to learn more about how texts work and, as a result, apply that information to achieve a high level of understanding and enjoyment. Thinking about the text allows the reader to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Follow and appreciate the complexities of plot design. ▫ Notice how the writer produces texts and apply this knowledge to appreciating other texts or to one's own writing. ▫ Identify underlying structures that the writer uses to provide information. ▫ Understand a variety of genres and use that knowledge as a tool for selecting, evaluating, and understanding texts. ▫ Evaluate texts for quality and authenticity. ▫ Think critically about reading.

Figure 3-1. Thinking Within, Beyond and About a Text

HELPING STUDENTS DEVELOP SYSTEMS OF STRATEGIC ACTIONS TO SUSTAIN PROCESSING

All readers, from the beginning reader to the fluent adult reader, have to use and integrate various kinds of information to create meaning from text.

—NEW ZEALAND MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

A written text prompts several kinds of thinking. In fact, systems of strategic actions are being used and expanded through the very act of thinking while reading. We want to support processing while at the same time realizing that heavy-handed teaching can actually interfere with text processing. Our goal as teachers is to enable readers to assimilate, apply, and coordinate *systems of strategic actions* without being fully aware that they are doing so. Readers' attention must be on the meaning of the text rather than on how to make their brains perform a particular operation.

Readers sustain the processing of a text by coordinating a variety of strategic actions for perceiving, internalizing, and using the information. While getting information by reading words, they must also sustain momentum and check on accuracy and literal understanding. Sum-

marizing the important information and adjusting the speed and style of reading make the process more efficient. The broad range of strategic actions related to reading introduced in Chapter 3 includes six systems for sustaining processing—for thinking within the text (see Figure 4-1).

WORD SOLVING

An efficient processor of text is one who reads the words with high accuracy, knows or can easily solve their meaning, and derives meaning from the larger units of language—phrases, sentences, paragraphs. It is obvious from the long list of operations in Figure 4-2 that readers use a wide range of strategic actions to solve words, but employ them in flexible ways.

Reading a text proficiently requires being able to recognize most of the words instantly and unconsciously, so that

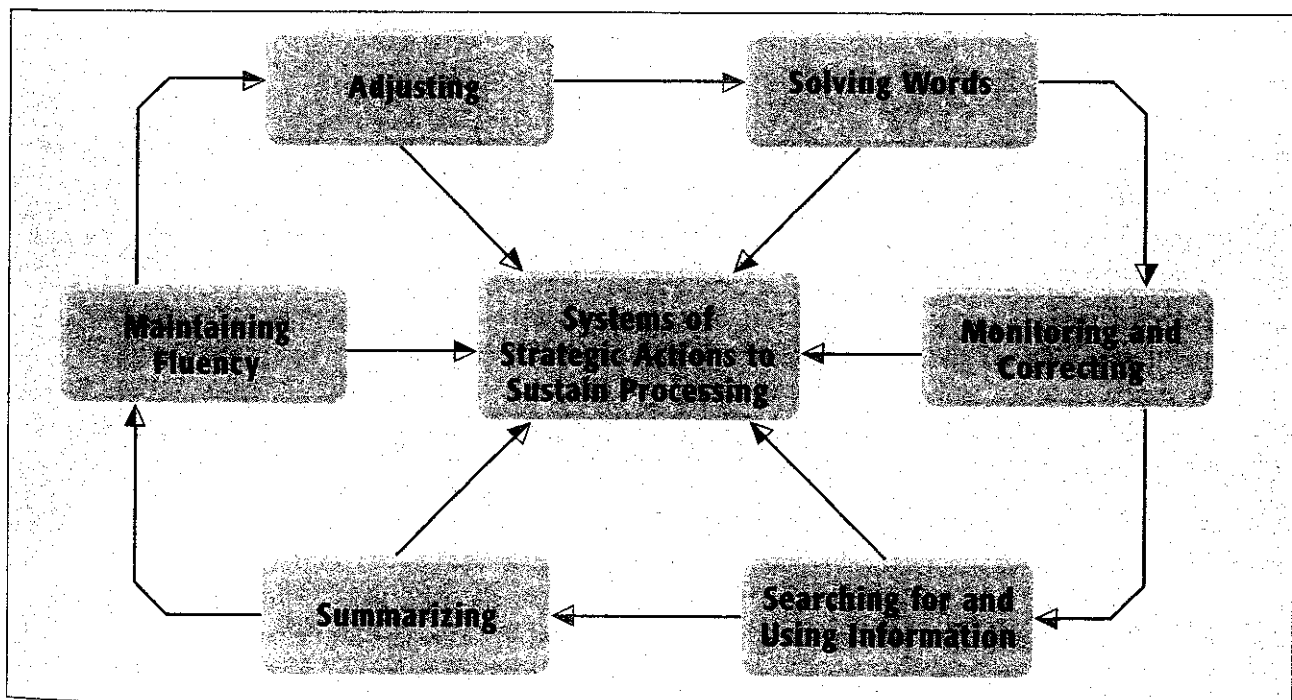


Figure 4-1. *Systems of Strategic Actions to Sustain Processing*

STRATEGIC ACTIONS FOR Solving Words

Readers:

- ▣ Solve words using a wide range of efficient, flexible actions.
- ▣ Engage in sound analysis of words left to right.
- ▣ Recognize known words quickly.
- ▣ Partially sound words and complete the solving using language and meaning.
- ▣ Analyze words quickly by attending to critical features.
- ▣ Analyze words from left to right, using letters, letter clusters, syllables, or other word parts.
- ▣ Use text meaning, language, and visual information to support word solving.
- ▣ Use what is known about other words to solve unfamiliar words.
- ▣ Take words apart efficiently while reading continuous text.
- ▣ Use base or root words, prefixes, and suffixes to take apart longer, unfamiliar words.
- ▣ Use letter/sound relationships and visual information in connection with meaning and language.
- ▣ Use language and meaning to understand individual words.
- ▣ Use meaningful parts of words (e.g., roots, inflectional endings) to understand individual words.
- ▣ Perform all word-solving actions efficiently while understanding the meaning of the text.

Figure 4-2. Strategic Actions for Solving Words

one is free to think about the meaning. Developing readers stretch themselves by reading texts that contain some new and challenging words. They need to learn how to take these words apart while still focusing on meaning. If they know a large number of words on sight and are familiar with appropriate strategic actions for word-solving, readers are all set to do some good thinking; but comprehension is much more than just reading the words accurately.

Adults must recognize several hundred thousand words without effort in order to read proficiently. Word-solving strategies are built over time. It's important that young readers acquire a core of high frequency words that they know in every detail and can recognize instantly. It's also important for them to learn quick ways of relating word similarities by noticing word parts and using letter-sound relationships in strategic ways. If too much word solving

is required or if it is very slow, the process breaks down. Thinking becomes more limited.

Vocabulary generally refers to words for which we know the meaning. We all have *speaking, listening, writing,* and *reading* vocabularies, and while these sets of words overlap in large part, they are not precisely the same. Our speaking and writing vocabularies include those words we choose to express our meaning. We vary our oral vocabulary to suit the occasion. For example, we might use *acquire* in a formal presentation, *get* in a more casual conversation.

Reading and listening vocabularies are *receptive* and include words we know the meaning of when others (speakers and writers) use them. We read and understand many words we do not usually think to use in speaking or writing. For example, suppose you are reading *Resistance*, a novel by Anita Shreve, and encounter the word *triage*:

Thérèse Dinant had not slept since the previous night, but, unlike Henri, she showed no signs of fatigue. She walked noisily into the house, as if all rooms in Belgium were open to her.

"We treat the aviator first," Dinant announced, as though there had never been any question. Claire knew the aviator would be a priority. Save the airmen at all costs. But it was also triage. Tend to those who had the best chance of life. (p. 72)

Hmmm. You pronounce the word correctly by implicitly recognizing its French origin and connecting it with *trio* and *collage*. You also rapidly recall that you have read the word *triage* in connection with the practice of providing extra educational programs to only those children who *nearly* passed the test and thus show the best potential for improving a district's scoring profile. All of this happens in the blink of an eye, and you may be only peripherally aware of the process by which you determined the meaning of the word.

If you as an adult are reading *Tell Me, Tree* (a book described in Chapter 3), the words will not be difficult, but you may give a little more attention to the ones that are new to you, are highly technical, or are used in new ways. For example, the author introduces the word *crown* as meaning the top of a tree, and you may make a lightning-quick connection to the top of a person's head or something worn by royalty.

Employing these rapid actions in an almost unconscious way is a characteristic of effective readers. They use a range of problem-solving strategies to take words apart

and understand word meanings while reading continuous text. These strategies include *anticipating* words, phrases, and sentences. For example, in the sentence “I see three little kittens” you know the noun *kitten* will end in *s* and do not need to give it a great deal of attention. The ability to anticipate comes from our knowledge of language. It is separate from the broader strategic action of *predicting*, which refers to putting together ideas to predict what might come next in a text or even after the conclusion, requiring the reader to think beyond the literal information provided. Prediction involves thinking beyond the text.

MONITORING AND CORRECTING

Proficient readers have strategies that operate in largely unconscious ways to check whether reading sounds right, looks right, and makes sense. They make sure there is a good fit among all sources of information (see Figure 4-3). The dissonance created by a mismatch alerts readers to search for more information, reconsider an idea, think about the meaning of a word, etc. If they read a word wrong, they may not even notice until a gap in meaning is detected, but then they will make repairs. Beginning readers often self-correct by returning to the beginning of the sentence, but as they become more proficient, they reread a phrase, or self-correct at the point of the word. Eventually this self-correction behavior is no longer overt as readers self-correct “in the head.” (Clay 1991)

Reading *Tell Me, Tree*, you may make quick little mistakes in processing that you spend fractions of seconds repairing. For example, realizing that the book is about trees and having previously read about “white pine cones,” you read the heading *Pin Oak Bark* as *Pine Oak Bark*. Dissonance is created as you wonder how a tree could be called a pine oak, then notice that *pin* has no *e*. You correct the mismatch, perhaps making a mental note to find out what distinguishes a pin oak tree.

After reading a few pages of *The Other Side*, you may realize that the story is told in the first person and you do not know the names of the two girls; thinking you simply missed the names, you search back quickly. Finding that there has been no mention of them, you become alert for when the names are revealed. Or, since *The Other Side* is written in childlike language, you may occasionally think you are misreading; using your own knowledge of syntax,

STRATEGIC ACTIONS FOR Monitoring and Correcting Reading

Readers:

- Check on themselves consistently while reading.
- Know when reading makes sense and when they don't understand.
- Use prior knowledge to notice whether reading makes sense, sounds right, and looks right.
- Notice errors and work at correcting them while reading.
- Work at fixing attempts that don't fit with the language, meaning, or print.
- Notice whether reading makes sense in the context of the text or whether their own understandings fit with what is being read.
- Stop, think, and search back or forward in the text to ensure correct understanding.
- Notice when words make sense or sound right but don't look right.
- Notice and use a range of punctuation or other textual features to check on or correct reading.
- Self-correct when essential for understanding or reading out loud.
- Use multiple sources of information to check on and correct reading.

Figure 4-3. Strategic Actions for Monitoring and Correcting Reading

you may even unconsciously rework the syntax, which in the case of this text would be inaccurate since the author has used a particular voice.

SEARCHING FOR AND USING INFORMATION

Understanding the literal meaning of the text requires searching for and using visible and invisible information. The strategic actions for acquiring and using information (see Figure 4-4) require the reader to be selective and to juxtapose many different sources. Information is used to monitor and check on reading accuracy, but it is also used to interpret, predict, infer, and otherwise construct meaning.

For example, reading *The Other Side*, you may wonder just what year the author is flashing back to (maybe the 1950s?) then search in the text for clues. By looking at the style of dresses worn by the girls and their mothers in the illustrations, you would have more information.

Reading *Tell Me, Tree*, you may encounter the unfamiliar words *phylum* and *cambium*, but you are unlikely to stop reading to look up the definitions. Simply by reading the

STRATEGIC ACTIONS FOR
Searching for and Using Information

Readers:

- Recognize and locate important information.
- Actively search for important information.
- Grasp the literal meaning of the text.
- Follow important events and characters.
- Select important facts and weave them together.
- Ask questions for which they want answers.
- Select information from narrative and expository texts.
- Use text structure to gain important information.
- Notice a variety of ways writers present information.
- Read the precise visual information to gain the exact meaning of the text.
- Recognize and use print features (punctuation, italics, headings), graphic features (diagrams, photographs, illustrations), and text tools (index, glossary, table of contents) to identify information.

Figure 4-4. *Strategic Actions for Searching for and Using Information*

words and mentally pronouncing them, you have already searched for and used the visual information in the words themselves. You then examine the context of the sentence and the paragraph and the graphic information in a labeled cut-away of a tree for information to help you understand what the words mean. In fact, your eyes would probably move to the illustration even before you read more of the text, because that is the most efficient way to get quick information.

SUMMARIZING

A summary is a reconstruction of the important information in a text. The reader remembers the text by selecting and sometimes organizing ideas and information (see Figure 4-5).

It is neither possible nor desirable for readers to remember every detail of what they read. Preparing for a test, we may try to remember pieces of information as we encounter them, but we quickly discover how helpful it is to select the important information and place it into categories. It's almost impossible to remember a string of unrelated facts.

All texts demand that the reader put together and hold in memory what has already been read while at the same time continue to process new information. As we process a text, we gain momentum. We carry information forward, using it to help us interpret the rest of the text. We store this

STRATEGIC ACTIONS FOR
Summarizing

Readers:

- Accumulate and organize information extracted from a text.
- Select important information after reading and bring it together in a concise report.
- Remember and discuss important ideas, events, details, or other information related to comprehending the whole text.
- Distinguish between remembering/retelling all the details of a text and constructing a more selective account that serves as a brief report of important information.
- Put together text information in order to engage in ongoing interpretation.
- Put together what has been read while continuing to process the text.

Figure 4-5. *Strategic Actions for Summarizing*

information as a continually revised summary. You have probably had the experience of raising a sudden question about a character or event in a novel and searching back in the text for some important information you've left out of your ongoing summary. This is especially true with mysteries, because seemingly unimportant details may turn out to be essential in solving the crime.

The Cam Jansen mystery series makes the process of remembering details very easy for second-grade readers. Cam (short for Camera) is a young detective with a photographic memory. When she says "click," she stores the details she sees; at certain points in solving a mystery, she explicitly recalls these visual images. For example:

Cam stood at the corner. She faced the park. "This is where I first saw the UFOs." Cam said. "Sometimes, if I stand where I first saw something, it helps me to remember."

Cam closed her eyes. She said, "Click."

Then she said, "I see it! It's a small tree between two evergreens. Come on, Eric. Let's go there and take a look. Maybe the UFOs left something behind."

"Something," Eric said, "or someone." (Adler, p. 25)

This simple device scaffolds the reader's thinking as Cam remembers the important information.

The textual information that you access when you make connections among texts depends in part on your

ability to remember them in summary form. In a sense, you carry a great deal of information around with you—probably thousands of text summaries on which you can draw to expand your thinking while reading. It is no wonder that good readers have the possibility of becoming better readers—the more you read, the more you have to bring to the comprehending process.

MAINTAINING FLUENCY

With all of these operations going on at the same time, the reader must sustain good momentum through the text. Reading is a fast-moving process related to the way language operates—all systems working smoothly together. Slowed down too much, it becomes unintelligible. Readers need to use language, meaning, and print in an integrated process that results in phrased, expressive reading. Figure 4-6 lists the evidence of fluent processing that good readers exhibit.

Reading fluency is a complicated business: every kind of strategy needed to achieve comprehension—rapid word solving, anticipating, monitoring, accessing and using information—works together to propel the reader through the text. In addition, fluency is related to the reader's purposes and the kind of text being read. You might skim over the print, looking for some specific piece of information. You might read slowly to savor beautiful language patterns or help you remember vital information.

Fluency is often described as speed or "expression," but it is much more. It is true that readers must maintain a good momentum simply to process the language with meaning, and it is obvious that expression is not identifiable in silent reading. Here, the reader is simply thinking about the ideas in the text, although some particularly poetic language might lead the reader to appreciate the sound of the words or the voice of a character. In oral reading, speed and expression become tangible. Of necessity, oral reading is much slower than silent reading and the voice reflects the meaning of the piece.

Fluency incorporates both phrasing and speed. Efficient processing means that readers group their words to reflect meaning and also move along at around 200 words per minute. Speed varies according to the reader's purpose, the type of text, the context for reading, and the level of difficulty. You might quickly read *The Other Side* to yourself to get ready for reading it aloud. When you read it aloud, you

STRATEGIC ACTIONS FOR *Maintaining Fluency*

Readers:

- ▣ Recognize words rapidly and take apart unfamiliar words efficiently, automatically, and quickly.
- ▣ Engage processing actions at a good rate (in oral reading, not too slow and not too fast).
- ▣ Anticipate meaning and syntax.
- ▣ Notice and use phrases as meaning units.
- ▣ Use a rising and falling voice (intonation) to interpret the text.
- ▣ Use appropriate stress on words to convey meaning.
- ▣ Notice punctuation and use it (pausing appropriately) to produce accurate phrasing.
- ▣ Slow down to problem-solve when needed but speed up for smooth, expressive processing.
- ▣ Process all sources of information in a smooth, orchestrated way.

Figure 4-6. *Strategic Actions for Maintaining Fluency*

would read much more slowly, to communicate meaning to your listeners. You might also reread parts of the text slowly with emphasis to enjoy the language or reflect on the concepts. Consider how your reading rate would vary if you read *Tell Me, Tree* for these different reasons:

- ▣ Skimming to find out about a particular tree.
- ▣ Looking at the details in the pictures.
- ▣ Figuring out a lot of new words.
- ▣ Preparing for a test.
- ▣ Finding the answers to particular questions.
- ▣ Making a close comparison between bark textures.
- ▣ Taking notes for a report.

But fluency and phrasing also figure in silent reading. Certainly, your eyes are gathering the information from print rapidly, moving through the text with good momentum. But you are probably also processing the language by parsing the sentences into meaningful units. A great many factors work together to achieve fluent, phrased reading, including:

- ▣ Recognizing and analyzing words rapidly.
- ▣ Monitoring accuracy and understanding.
- ▣ Using prediction to make reading efficient.
- ▣ Recognizing meaningful phrases.

- Thinking about the meaning while reading.

It is essential to help readers maintain fluency as they read continuous texts every day, and matching books to their current abilities is a critical factor in providing support.

ADJUSTING READING

Efficient processors of text vary their reading in many different ways, depending on the demands of particular texts, the context for reading, and their purposes for reading (see Figure 4-7). They skim over ideas that don't interest them and slow down to examine a particular section closely. They slow down to problem-solve a word or resolve a question and then speed up again. They turn back in the text to check a hypothesis or search for information.

In addition, readers read different types of texts in different ways. You must read *The Other Side* from beginning to end, spending enough time on each page to appreciate the mood and feelings the pictures evoke. And this is definitely a book for rereading several times, not because you don't know how it turns out but because you need to think more about the layers of meaning. You read humorous stories in a different way than you read newspaper articles; you read mysteries by searching for and noticing clues that fill

STRATEGIC ACTIONS FOR Adjusting Reading

Readers:

- Adapt reading for different genres and purposes.
- Vary rate and intonation as appropriate to text, audience, and purpose.
- Vary speed to accommodate problem solving.
- Skim or scan a text to search for particular information and slow down to examine some sections of a text in detail.
- Read some texts slowly, searching for and remembering important information.
- Scan for particular information as appropriate.
- Reread texts or parts of a text to confirm understanding.
- Read sections of a text as appropriate.


Figure 4-7. Strategic Actions for Adjusting Reading

in pieces of the puzzle. Reading *Tell Me, Tree*, you might start at the beginning but turn pages rapidly, looking for sections of interest. Once you've read this book, you probably won't reread it unless you are searching for a particular piece of information or studying for a test.

Readers also read for different purposes. If you know you are going to discuss a text with others, you read it with a different lens than if you are just browsing. If you think you will be tested on the book, you may get very involved in trying to remember details. All of these adjustments are important for readers and are a rationale for having students read a great variety of texts: they need to become flexible as readers who can adjust.

SUGGESTIONS FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

ANALYZING READING BEHAVIORS: SUSTAINING PROCESSING

- 1 Listen to Sheila and Francesca reading on the DVD included with this book. We have provided typed copy of the text for your reference. 
- 2 First, listen to each reader, making notes of anything you notice about the way the reader processes the text. If you are working with a small group of colleagues, share your notes afterward. Be specific about the behaviors that prompt each comment.
- 3 Then, examine the summary chart *Systems of Strategic Actions to Sustain Processing*, in Figure 4-1. Use the following form (Figure 4-8) to categorize your comments. Provide examples from your observations. You can also print this form from the DVD accompanying the book.
- 4 Share your findings with your colleagues. What particularly productive reading behaviors do you want to help each reader to use more often? Is anything getting in the way?
- 5 Don't worry if some of your observations seem to fit more than one category. Remember that all of these systems of strategic actions are happening simultaneously and the lines between them are not exact.

You may have some observations that simply do not fit into the framework of sustaining processing. Consider whether this evidence indicates that the reader is thinking beyond the text or about the text.

Analyzing Reading Behaviors Related to Sustaining Processing

QUESTIONS	COMMENTS	EXAMPLE(S)
1 Is there evidence that the reader is solving words (for example, using the first letter, taking words apart, recognizing words rapidly, using sentence context)?		
2 Is there evidence that the reader is monitoring and checking (for example, making several attempts, self-correcting, or asking for help)?		
3 Is there evidence that the reader is searching for and using different kinds of information (for example, rereading or turning back to search, searching for information in pictures, examining the text closely by repeating)?		
4 Is there evidence that the reader is remembering information in summary form (for example, recalling something previously read, self-correcting by using previous information, gaining momentum and ease toward the end of the reading)?		
5 Is there evidence that the reader is using fluent, phrased reading (for example, parsing language into phrases, reading the punctuation, reading at a good rate, making the voice reflect the meaning)?		
6 Is there evidence that the reader is adjusting reading pace or focus across the reading of the text (for example, slowing down to problem-solve and then speeding up)?		
General comments:		

Figure 4-8. Analyzing Reading Behaviors Related to Sustaining Processing

HELPING STUDENTS DEVELOP SYSTEMS OF STRATEGIC ACTIONS FOR EXPANDING THINKING

*I am always reading or
thinking about reading.*

—JOYCE CAROL OATES

Knowledge of what texts demand in terms of strategic actions is the foundation for *teaching with a lens of comprehension*. Taking this stance, you keep strategic actions in mind during every form of reading instruction—interactive read-aloud, shared reading, literature circles or book clubs, guided reading, and independent reading.

Teaching decisions during reading instruction are made on the spot. You have an overall lesson plan, and this planning is very important, but moment-to-moment interactions during lessons focus readers' attention and show them how to engage or prompt them to engage in effective strategic actions. It is impossible to preplan all of those interactions, but you will be ready for them if you base your teaching on an integrated foundation of information. As shown in Figure 5-1, you have three sources of information to inform your teaching, each of which is important:

- ▣ Your students' present reading abilities as revealed by ongoing systematic observations of their oral reading, their talk about texts, their writing, plus your hypotheses about what they need to know and learn how to do as readers.
- ▣ The strategic actions that comprise proficient processing systems and that generate the kind of thinking that readers must do. You always teach with this processing system in mind. At whatever level students are currently reading, you want them to engage these strategic actions in a proficient way.
- ▣ The demands of the particular text you have selected to read aloud and use as a basis for a whole-group minilesson or have chosen to introduce in a shared or guided reading lesson.

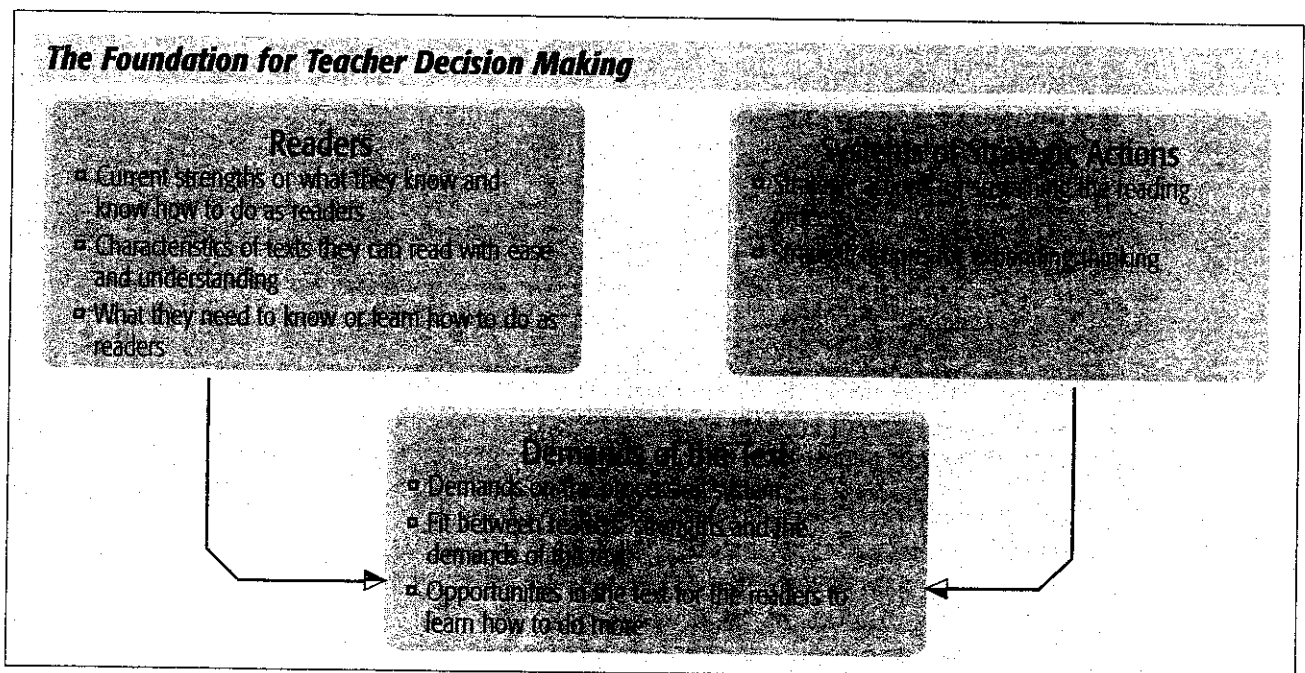


Figure 5-1. *The Foundation for Teacher Decision Making*

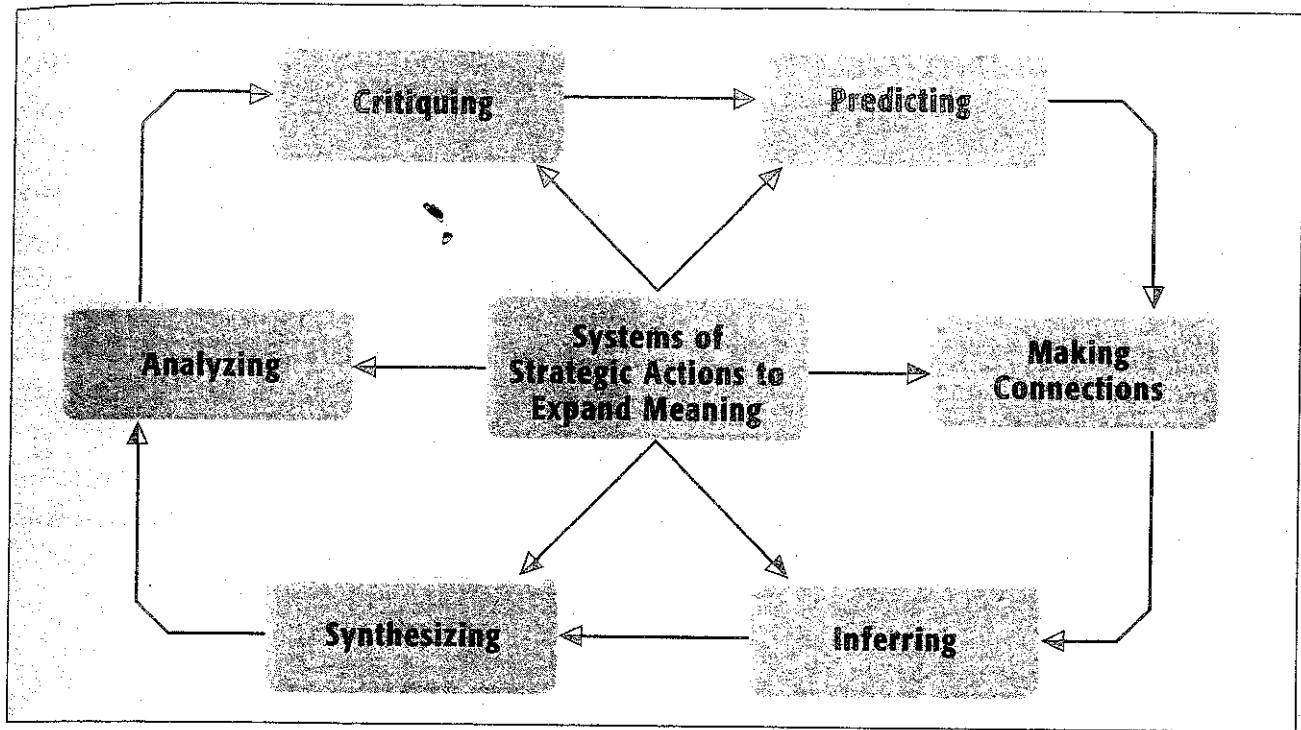


Figure 5-2. *Systems of Strategic Actions to Expand Meaning*

A wide range of strategic actions allows readers to expand their thinking about texts (see Figure 5-2).

PREDICTING

Prediction is a human trait, one that is essential for survival. Based on what we already know, we predict and prepare for what is coming next. Prediction makes reading more efficient and “safe,” just as it does in connection with driving, cooking, or other activities. Efficient readers make predictions all the time (see Figure 5-3).

Language redundancy is a key factor in predicting. Readers use their implicit knowledge of the structure of language to narrow possibilities when decoding words. For example, reading the sentence “She walked noisily into the room,” your knowledge of grammar predicts the *-ily* on the end of *noisily*, so less attention is needed to solve the word. The phrase “into the room” is also quite predictable for the reader with an implicit knowledge of English. We are not suggesting that the reader does not see or use the *-ily* ending; indeed, the proficient reader can always use it (for example, to check on the reading) if needed. But prediction provides a forward motion, which enables the reader to spend much less attention on letters and word parts.

STRATEGIC ACTIONS FOR Predicting

Readers:

- Generate expectations based on genre, author, illustrator, or topic.
- Use knowledge of language syntax to narrow possibilities when decoding words.
- Parse the text into meaningful syntactic units that reduce the attention needed to decode words and allow the reader to determine meaning.
- Use knowledge of language syntax and meaning to propel reading forward.
- Use language redundancy to read words efficiently.
- Use meaning and syntax to anticipate and predict, making processing more efficient.
- Use knowledge of characters, plot, setting, or theme to anticipate what will happen next.
- Given the topic or organization, anticipate kinds of information in the text.
- Use prior knowledge to anticipate text content before reading, attend to content while reading, and reflect on content after reading.

Figure 5-3. *Strategic Actions for Predicting*

Readers also use prediction to help determine meaning. You may occasionally find it difficult to sort out the setting, characters, and conflict of a novel when you first begin reading it. Then, as you read on, you become completely immersed, following the characters and feeling with them through event after event. Prediction allows that to happen. Readers use not only their own background experiences but also what they have come to know about this particular group of characters, plot, setting, and theme to anticipate what will happen next. Using and holding this information (in summary form) in their minds, they gain momentum.

Earlier, we described how your thinking about *The Other Side* involves predictions as soon as you hear the title and look at the front cover. As you read the book, you predict that the girls will eventually meet, that they will become friends, that barriers may be broken down. You may even be a little disappointed that the integration the girls achieve is so slight. But you may also predict, beyond the story, that these girls will grow up and their memories of that summer will make them better people.

It is humanly impossible to encounter phenomena without making predictions. Even when reading an informational text like *Tell Me, Tree*, you do not sit passively waiting to be fed more information. Here are just a few of the kinds of predictions you make:

- ▣ You use the structure to anticipate the kind of information that will be presented in the book.
- ▣ You know to look for information in the labels.
- ▣ You know that when you see a section title you will find certain kinds of information.
- ▣ You know that a list means you will be following a series of events in sequence.

MAKING CONNECTIONS

Readers also make connections between the text and a wide variety of other kinds of knowledge. These connections create a rich fabric for expanding one's thinking, as shown in Figure 5-4. The kinds of connections readers make can be categorized as those based on personal knowledge, knowledge of the world, and knowledge of text.

PERSONAL KNOWLEDGE

Personal knowledge is made up of our everyday life experiences and our memories of those experiences. These experi-

STRATEGIC ACTIONS FOR **Making Connections**

Readers:

- ▣ Bring background knowledge to the reading of a text.
- ▣ Understand purposes for reading texts.
- ▣ Interpret texts using personal experiences and knowledge of the world.
- ▣ Connect the topic, characters, plot, and setting to personal experience, knowledge of the world, and knowledge of other texts.
- ▣ Make connections between and among texts, noticing similarities and differences.
- ▣ Relate words to visual images.
- ▣ Relate feelings and emotions to the meaning in the text.
- ▣ Search for relationships among texts using a wide range of criteria—the same genre, author, illustrator, topic, theme, issue, setting, historical period, character (or a similar character), culture, ethnic group, or age group.

Figure 5-4. Strategic Actions for Making Connections

ences and memories are often tied to emotions, which we feel again as we interpret texts. Personal knowledge may include memories of people, events, and places. Memories can evoke sensory images. In reading *The Other Side*, for example, you may look at the illustration of Clover's mother hanging clothes on the line and remember the smell of fresh laundry that has been dried outdoors. You may look at the picture of the girls in town and remember wearing black patent-leather shoes with anklets. Reading *Tell Me, Tree*, you might remember the smell of leaves when you walk in the woods in the fall. Texts that evoke a great deal of personal knowledge are very interesting—even gripping—for readers. And even when we read about things far outside our personal experience, we can still use our personal knowledge to enhance our understanding.

KNOWLEDGE OF THE WORLD

We develop our knowledge about the world we live in—facts and the deeper implications of those facts—in many ways, including direct observation (most effective but not always possible), reading, being told by others, and watching films. When you approach an informational text like *Tell Me, Tree*, you automatically summon up what you already know about trees and recognize it in the text. Your attention

is then directed to the information you don't know.

The Other Side is fiction, but your knowledge about the world is very helpful here too. Knowing something about interracial relationships in the U.S. is essential to truly understand this book. At its most basic level, the book is about two children who become friends. A reader who understands only that an African American and a white child got to know each other over one summer still misses the point. Only a reader who knows what segregation meant in those times (and is aware of the separations that still exist today) can richly understand the text.

KNOWLEDGE OF TEXT

Previous reading experiences have everything to do with processing a text successfully. The more you have read, the more information you carry with you the next time you read. An adult who has read *To Kill a Mockingbird* will have a richer understanding of *The Other Side*. Younger readers of *The Other Side* can make rich connections to books like *White Socks Only* (Coleman). Connecting texts is something readers do automatically; our individual reading histories figure strongly in our interpretations of texts. It does not matter which texts; the point is that we remember the texts that have strongly influenced us or raised our emotions. What you are reading provides the prompt, and you find yourself thinking of some book you read or a film you saw many years ago and haven't thought about since! But it is there in your repertoire. These connections may take any form—the setting, the time in history, the theme or problem, a character, the style of writing, the genre, and so on. Throughout Section III we discuss how teachers can deliberately foster students' ability to make connections to texts.

Connecting texts is the source of much of the pleasure of reading. We are drawn to texts that help us remember and better understand our own experiences and emotions, creating links between our own lives and those of other human beings who may be far distant in terms of culture, geography, or time. These personal connections arise from both fiction and nonfiction, and connections among texts enrich understanding in every genre. You might read a historical account of the Vietnam War, for example, and remember your own or your parents' or grandparents' experiences during that time. You might read *The*

Tapestries (Nguyen 2002), a fictional account of Vietnam before the war, and be struck by how starkly the war changed things. These personal and textual elaborations add interest and understanding, perhaps raise feelings and emotions, and create visual images.

INFERRING

As shown in Figure 5-5, true understanding means going well beyond what the author has explicitly stated. Proficient readers construct subtle meanings that the writer has implied through text or illustrations. They develop theories to explain characters and their actions. They often build elaborate visual images that they can recall even years later. You may have had the experience of first reading a book and picturing a character or setting and then being quite disappointed by the screen images shown in a film based on the book. That is why casting and screenplay were so important in *Harry Potter* films. Young fans were alert to detect any discrepancy. Impressed by a riveting performance, we can sometimes be persuaded to change our mental images, but the influence of the text is strong.

Sometimes we build whole worlds based on an author's sketchy descriptions. In one scene in *The Other Side*, Clover's mother watches the two girls on the fence. She says nothing, but as readers, we imagine the thoughts that may be going through her mind:

STRATEGIC ACTIONS FOR *Inferring*

Readers:

- ▣ Understand what is not stated but is implied in the text (both print and illustrations).
- ▣ Make conclusions that are not stated but are based on information found in the text or illustrations.
- ▣ Make judgments about characters, events, theme, and plot that have not been explicitly stated.
- ▣ Think about the deeper meanings of text.
- ▣ Recognize symbolism and use it to interpret the text.
- ▣ Develop theories that explain characters' motives or events.
- ▣ Develop empathy for characters.
- ▣ Use background knowledge and information from the text to form theories about the significance of events.

Figure 5-5. *Strategic Actions for Inferring*

- ❑ "I hope this doesn't get Clover in trouble."
- ❑ "Annie seems like a nice girl, but I can't trust her."
- ❑ "Clover may be losing her other friends."
- ❑ "I'd better watch to be sure they don't go any further."
- ❑ "I wonder when things will change."

We don't know precisely what the author intended, but one purpose for including this scene may have been to raise such ideas in our minds.

Inferences spring from the language a writer uses. It is often more powerful to *show* than to tell. For example, instead of saying someone felt offended, a writer may say, "Her shoulders stiffened." It is left to the reader to seek the meaning through inference. We learn about characters in fiction by reading what they say or think, what they do, and what others say about them, and we draw conclusions and create theories based on that information.

When reading a biography, we search for insights into the thoughts, feelings, influences, and underlying motivations of the subject. Even if the author is not able to tell us what his subject said or thought, the information can be presented in such a way that the subject comes alive through inference.

Almost every text we read requires some understanding of its implications. Even a simple story such as *Baby Bear's Present* (Cowley) demands that readers make inferences. In this story (two pages are shown in Figure 5-6), Mother and Father Bear take Baby Bear to the store to buy a present. Baby Bear wants a car, but Father Bear tries to persuade him to get a train. It is not hard to figure out from the illustrations and

text that Father Bear wants to play with the train himself, but this is not explicitly stated until Mother Bear intervenes on the next-to-last page. Working with children on a text like *Baby Bear's Present*, you would want to be sure that the discussion of the text involves talk about what Father Bear might have been thinking or why he was looking at the train.

This simple example makes very clear that literacy requires complex understanding that must be part of the reading process from the very beginning. The ability to make inferences is required in order to comprehend ever more challenging texts. It is not possible suddenly to begin to read between the lines in third or fourth grade. There is some demand for inference in every level of text, and we can intentionally foster the growth of this kind of strategic action in our teaching.

SYNTHESIZING

Learning is an integral part of reading. Whether we are reading fiction or nonfiction, we expect to gain something—enjoyment, ideas, amusement, escape, new information, different perspectives and insights, and so on. We expect reading to change us in some way. We take these new insights and information, and reorganize our previous thinking and knowledge. Most of the time, new information only adds to or slightly changes our existing knowledge, but there is always the chance that we will receive startling new insights or information that will force a major change in our own knowledge. Figure 5-7 lists some aspects of synthesizing.



Figure 5-6. *Baby Bear's Present*

STRATEGIC ACTIONS FOR *Synthesizing*

Readers:

- ▣ Develop new understandings from reading a text.
- ▣ Add new information to existing personal, environmental, and literary knowledge.
- ▣ Integrate new information into existing personal, environmental, and literary knowledge.
- ▣ Reorganize personal, environmental, and literary knowledge based on new information.
- ▣ Think about what the text really means.
- ▣ Think about how the text fits or doesn't fit with what is known.
- ▣ Deepen understanding of topics, concepts, or ideas by integrating new knowledge with prior knowledge.
- ▣ Expand personal understandings by incorporating experiences lived vicariously through texts.

Figure 5-7. *Strategic Actions for Synthesizing*

Students with little understanding of segregation may listen to *The Other Side* and not understand why the fence was such a "big deal." If that's the case, it would be important to provide some background information and help students develop new insights about the text. Chances are, they will then have a revised set of understandings to bring to the reading of texts like *Dear Willie Rudd* (Gray), a memoir in which a middle-aged lady in the South remembers the societal restrictions surrounding her dealings with an African American servant when she was a girl, or *Chicken Sunday* (Polacco), in which a little girl has a close relationship with a family of another race.

We find an informational text like *Tell Me, Tree* uninteresting unless it provides either new information or new ways of looking at what we already know. While reading, we quickly recognize, and perhaps confirm, the information we already know, but we especially notice new ideas that stand out as important. Synthesizing information gained by reading simply means learning, which makes reading worthwhile and pleasurable. As we synthesize, we deepen our understanding of topics, concepts, or ideas and expand our personal understanding of our own lives and those of others.

ANALYZING

As we experience many texts, we come to recognize the scaffolds that underlie understanding (see Figure 5-8). Most of

STRATEGIC ACTIONS FOR *Analyzing*

Readers:

- ▣ Examine a fictional or informational text closely to better understand its elements and how it is constructed.
- ▣ Discover how writers craft meaning for readers.
- ▣ Understand how a text "works."
- ▣ Understand how texts are organized to provide important information.
- ▣ Understand how language is used in a text to convey meaning and emotions.
- ▣ Recognize various genres and their characteristics.
- ▣ Support thinking with textual evidence or evidence from personal experiences.
- ▣ Notice how word choice conveys particular meanings.
- ▣ Examine illustrations or other graphic features and how they evoke aesthetic responses and convey meaning.
- ▣ Recognize and use graphic features of texts (such as maps and charts) to increase understanding.
- ▣ Recognize and use literary features to expand understanding.
- ▣ Examine the whole text to determine how illustrations, text, and format communicate meaning in an integrated way.

Figure 5-8. *Strategic Actions for Analyzing*

us are so familiar with narrative structure we don't even think about it as we read, but this implicit knowledge helps us follow a story:

- ▣ Presentation of central and supporting characters and the setting.
- ▣ Presentation of a problem.
- ▣ Episodes or events.
- ▣ High point or climax of the story.
- ▣ A resolution of the problem or conclusion.
- ▣ Brief closing or denouement.

Of course, narrative texts can be much more difficult than the simple outline above. Some ways of introducing complexity into a narrative include:

- ▣ Multiple or parallel stories involving different characters.
- ▣ Changes of setting, each having a different impact on characters.
- ▣ Presentation of episodes in some order other than chronological.

- ▣ Surprise endings that present additional high points after the story seems to be finished.
- ▣ Devices such as flashbacks or “stories within stories,” in which the narrative switches to a character’s own memories.
- ▣ Changes of perspective to reflect different characters’ stories or points of view.

The more complex the structure, the more demands are placed on the reader. In *The Kitchen God’s Wife* (Tan), for example, the central character, Pearl, begins the narrative, and the book is told from her point of view. At a point, however, the story becomes that of Pearl’s mother, also told in the first person. The reader is required to construct the larger meaning by weaving together the stories of both women.

The structure an author chooses is related to genre. For example, fantasy is usually narrative, but the writer first spends a lot of time creating the imaginary world, so that the reader can suspend reality and accept the parameters of the new world. Once this world is established, the writer may not violate it by suddenly introducing elements that clash with it. In fantasy, dealing with the characteristics of the setting often increases the demands on the reader.

Nonfiction texts are organized in quite different ways from fiction. Even a quick examination of *Tell Me, Tree* reveals that the information is not presented in narrative form. Instead, the reader explores information that is organized into categories: types of trees, how trees grow, descriptions of trees, as well as descriptions of the processes of growth and photosynthesis. Writers of nonfiction employ underlying structures in ways that help them present information. For example, by contrasting the different kinds of trees and where they grow, the reader can build concepts about trees in general. The idea that the sun is a causal agent, triggering photosynthesis, which, in turn, helps trees grow, is a fundamental understanding. Readers of nonfiction learn to look for underlying structures, including:

- ▣ Enumeration (presenting information in sequence).
- ▣ Description (providing language that helps to build visual images).
- ▣ Chronological sequence (telling something in the order it appears).

- ▣ Cause and effect (presenting something that has happened and telling one or more reasons or causes).
- ▣ Comparison and contrast (presenting two objects, characters, issues, situations, settings, etc., and telling how they are alike and different).
- ▣ Problem/solution (presenting a problem and posing a solution or solutions.)

To process description, readers gather and integrate important details that may raise visual images. Illustrations are often present in informational texts because it is so important for readers to be able to see as well as read about what is being described. Temporal sequence, on the other hand, requires not only noticing order but also understanding that the order of events, steps, procedures, or processes is extremely important. Compare/contrast entails still other demands. Readers must accurately derive descriptions or details of two different phenomena or events and identify what is similar or different between them. Cause and effect requires readers to relate an effect to its cause. Problem/solution provides a related demand. Here, readers need to recognize aspects of a problem and then search the text for solutions. They also need to see relationships between problems and ways to solve them in order to understand why solutions are workable.

All About Frogs, by Jim Arnosky, begins by presenting a comparison between frogs and toads (see the sample pages in Figure 5-9). By helping the reader see how these two “look alike” animals are similar, as well as how they are different, the writer not only imparts useful information and perhaps clears up common misunderstandings but also helps the reader understand frogs better—their size, their habitat, their color, and so on. He also describes the life span of frogs from egg to adult, a temporal sequence. Finally, at the end of the book, Arnosky points out how environmental pollution may pose problems for frogs—a problem with an implied solution.

All About Frogs uses all the underlying structures mentioned above. In fact, almost no text will be “pure” in that it includes only one kind of structure; writers typically use them in combination. Readers recognize and use these structures in combination and in sequence, largely unaware of how they are processing the information.

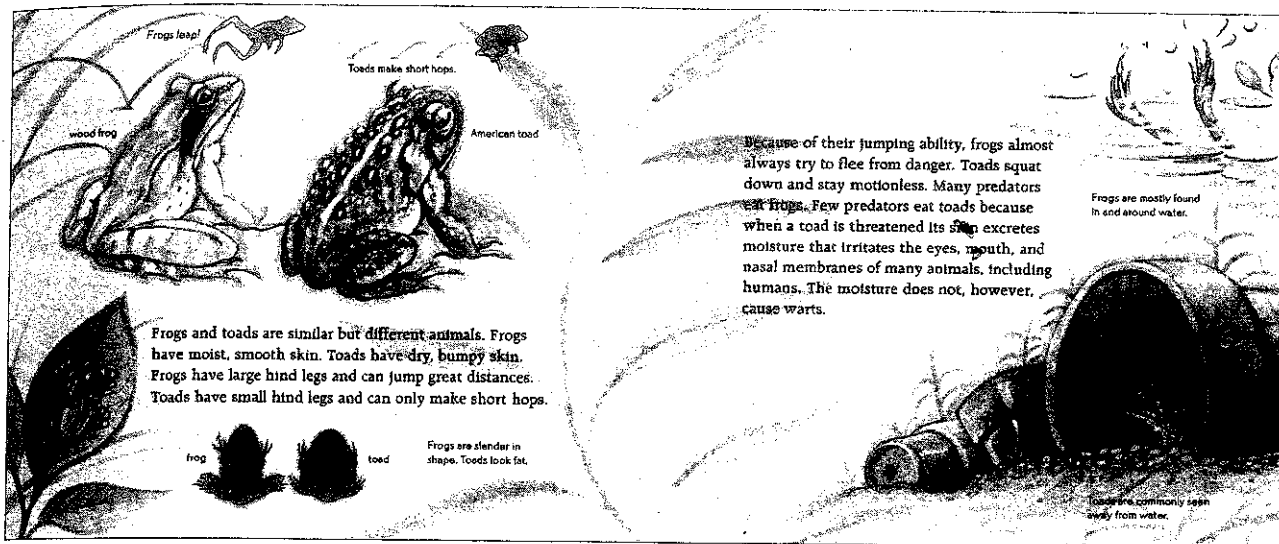


Figure 5-9. All About Frogs

Novices, however, may not know how to look for and use text structure to assist their understanding. Chapters 13 and 14 provide more information about text structure, and you will find instructional approaches.

Analyzing a text involves stepping back and considering it as an object, a highly sophisticated set of strategic actions. Another aspect of analysis is to recognize aspects of the writer's craft:

- ▣ How has the writer used language to create mood or help us understand the significance of an event?
- ▣ What details and events has the writer chosen to help readers understand how a character feels?
- ▣ What language helps us understand what motivates characters in the book?
- ▣ How is the writer showing us rather than telling us?
- ▣ How does the writer engage us from the very first sentence?
- ▣ How does the writer signal that time has passed (or employ other signals)?
- ▣ What language lets you know what the character is really like?
- ▣ How does the writer help us feel that the character is real—through what he says or thinks, what he does, and what others say or think about him?

By closely examining texts, readers not only better understand the meaning but also gain insights into the writer's craft, which contributes to their own writing ability. They

notice word choice and figurative language such as metaphor, understand the importance of symbolism, and examine how writers use illustrations or other graphic features to evoke aesthetic responses. Viewing a text as an object usually requires revisiting and discussing it.

CRITIQUING

The ultimate requirement of the reader is to take a critical stance (see Figure 5-10). Reading critically is a necessity in a free society. Not everything you read is accurate; often persuasive material must be judged on its merit and connected to its source. One perspective may be presented, but the reader must seek other perspectives. Moreover, readers are required to judge the quality of a text. Questions to ask of fiction texts include:

- ▣ Do characters and their actions seem real? Are plot, characters, and events consistent with life experience?
- ▣ Do characters develop in a plausible way? Are their motivations believable? Would people really act this way, given the motivations stated or implied?
- ▣ Is the writer's use of language skillful?
- ▣ Is the plot believable? Is it engrossing?
- ▣ Does this story come from the writer's own experience? If not, how could this writer have learned about this kind of story?
- ▣ Am I enjoying this reading?

Questions to ask of nonfiction texts include:

- ▣ What are the qualifications of the writer to produce this text?
- ▣ What references are offered to support the information in the text?
- ▣ Has the writer organized the information in a coherent way?
- ▣ How well has the writer selected the information presented? Are there any gaps?
- ▣ What is the writer's perspective? Are there other perspectives?
- ▣ What is the writer trying to persuade the reader to think or do? Is it warranted?
- ▣ Are there underlying messages that the writer is trying to convey? Are they justified?
- ▣ Does the writer have biases? What are they? How are they justified? What are the competing points of view?

It is obvious from this array of questions that critical reading demands highly sophisticated strategic actions. Yet, even young children can talk about which version of *The Three Little Pigs* they like best and why. As students become more sophisticated, they delve more deeply into texts. Upper ele-

mentary students, for example, may explore a text like Lowry's *The Giver* not just as a good story but as a warning against an oppressive governmental or religious presence in society.

A FINAL CAVEAT

It is always hazardous to try to describe what is going on in a reader's mind, and any discussion of strategic actions risks simplifying the complex process of proficient reading. There are hundreds of ways to describe mental processing, and we have not dissected all the thinking we do while reading. But we must be explicit about some of the important systems of strategic actions that are part of the complex processing network that goes on in our heads so that we can use this knowledge as a lens for teaching. Paying attention to and understanding these systems of strategic actions is a foundation for planning explicit lessons, helping students during individual conferences, introducing texts in guided reading, and guiding discussion after reading.

SUGGESTIONS FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

ANALYZING READING BEHAVIORS: EXPANDING THINKING

- 1 Gather a group of colleagues. Make a plan to audiotape reading conferences with two readers at two points in time. Select two readers who are reading at two very different levels.
- 2 Sit next to each reader and invite him to share what he is thinking about a text he is reading as you take notes. You may want to ask probing questions related to the six systems of strategic actions for expanding thinking as outlined in the chart below. You can also print this form from the DVD that accompanies this book.
- 3 Gather together and discuss each of the six areas using examples from your conference notes.
- 4 Finally, talk about key understandings about the systems that you gained from the activity with your students and your collegial discussion. List the key understandings on a chart.
- 5 Share your findings with your colleagues. In what areas is the reader's thinking particularly productive? How do you want to expand this reader's thinking?
- 6 Don't worry if some of your observations seem to fit more than one category. Remember that all of these systems of strategic actions are happening simultaneously and the lines between them are not exact.

STRATEGIC ACTIONS FOR **Critiquing**

Readers:

- ▣ Make judgments about a text.
- ▣ Reflect on and evaluate a text.
- ▣ Consider thoughtfully the strengths and weaknesses of every aspect of a text.
- ▣ Use information from a text to think about social issues, world issues, human problems.
- ▣ Assess whether a text is consistent with what is known through life experiences.
- ▣ Judge whether a text is authentic in terms of plot, setting, or characters.
- ▣ Judge whether a text provides accurate information.
- ▣ Judge the qualifications of a writer to produce an authentic fiction or nonfiction text.
- ▣ Examine and discover gender, racial, cultural, religious, or age bias in a text.
- ▣ Appreciate the aesthetic qualities of a text.
- ▣ Evaluate the completeness of a text.
- ▣ Judge the writer's perspective.
- ▣ Evaluate the effectiveness of a text.

Figure 5-10. Strategic Actions for Critiquing

Analyzing Reading Behaviors Related to Expanding Thinking

QUESTIONS	COMMENTS	EXAMPLE(S)
1 Is there evidence that the reader is making predictions (for example, making comments while reading, acting surprised or validated, responding to invitations to predict, making predictions about what will happen next after the story ends)?		
2 Is there evidence that the reader is making connections (for example, connecting any ideas in the text to his own life, to his background knowledge of the world, or to other texts)?		
3 Is there evidence that the reader is making inferences (for example, interpreting characters' motivations, expressing what the author might have meant)?		
4 Is there evidence that the reader is synthesizing new information (for example, identifying new learning, expressing curiosity about learning more)?		
5 Is there evidence that the reader is analyzing the text (for example, commenting on the author's writing style, noticing how the text is organized, noticing particular techniques the writer uses to provide information or make the text believable)?		
6 Is there evidence that the reader is thinking critically (for example, going beyond opinion to agree or disagree with something in the text, providing evidence for comments)?		
General comments:		

Figure 5-11. Analyzing Reading Behaviors Related to Expanding Thinking

Comprehension Strategy Prompts

Strategy	Helpful questions to ask readers
Monitoring	<p>Before reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good readers notice when something is wrong and they try to help themselves. <p>During reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where did you get confused? Try to explain in words what was confusing to you. • Was there a place where you didn't know what was happening or what the author's message was? What could a reader do? If child names something good, reinforce or direct their attention to something that could help. • Model: I wonder... • Model: I am confused about... <p>After reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did you notice or discover about your reading as you read this text? • As a reader, what did you have to do to understand the author's message?
Retelling, Summarizing, & Determining Importance	<p>Before reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good readers try to remember the important bits of what they read—they keep the story in their head so they can talk or write about it afterwards. <p>During reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you think is most important about what you just read? • Is that something important to remember? • What does the author think is important for readers to know? How do you know? • Model: I think there's something important to remember here. I'm thinking... <p>After reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What was the text mainly about? • What have you learned? • Pretend I've never heard this story and tell me as much as you remember. • What is a good way to rethink this text to remember the important bits? • What were the most important events in this story? • What are the main ideas behind the story?
Connecting	<p>Before reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good readers try to make connections to themselves or to other books they've read. Connections help us to feel how characters feel and help us predict what might happen. <p>During reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does _____ remind you of any character in another book you've read? Explain why. • Do _____'s feelings remind you of feelings that you have had? Explain how. • Have you ever had similar experiences to _____? • Model: This reminds me of... <p>After reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find a character in this story that is like/unlike someone you know. Tell how they are either alike or different? • Think about a connection that you made while reading—text to self or text to text, and tell how this connection helped you understand the book better. • This (story/character) reminds me of... • What characters in this book are you most like or unlike?
Visualizing	<p>Before reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good readers try to see pictures in their mind of what the author is saying. This helps them understand reading better. Good readers "make movies" or "paint pictures" in their mind. <p>During reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On this page, could you really (see, smell, touch, feel, or hear)... • Model: When the author said this, I could really see, smell, feel... <p>After reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find a passage where the author caused you to visualize something—see, taste, hear, feel or smell. Tell how this visualization helped you to understand the reading better. • Make a list of phrases or words that caused you to visualize in some way.

Predicting	<p>Before reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good readers use their connections about themselves and what they know about how stories work to make predictions and guess what's going to happen next. Then they read on to see if they were right. <p>During reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What might happen next in the story?—Read on to see if you are right. Model: I predict... <p>After reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Did the story end the way you thought it would end? What clues did the author give to help you predict the ending?
Inferring	<p>Before reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good readers understand that they have to make up some parts of the story themselves because authors don't tell us everything we need to know. We make inferences to understand what is happening. Watching what characters do or say can help us to infer what they are feeling or doing. <p>During reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How does the character feel about...? How do you know? What does _____ probably mean? How do you know? Why did _____ do that? How do you know? What do this character's actions tell you about the character? Model: I think this means... <p>After reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What kind of person is the main character? How do you know from the story?
Questioning	<p>Before reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good readers ask themselves questions as they read when something doesn't make sense or when they wonder what is happening. They read on to see what might happen or they talk to others to help them understand. <p>During reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What questions do you have during your reading. I'll write them down and then we'll read on to see if your questions are answered. What questions would you like to ask if the author were here? Model: I still wonder about... I was wondering... <p>After reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is there anything that you still wonder about?
Critiquing	<p>Before reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good readers know what they like and don't like about an author's writing or about how a story works. This helps them choose books, authors, or genre that they like to read. <p>During reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What do you think about this part? Why did the author write this? Model: I disagree... I agree... I loved... I disliked... <p>After reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What did you really like about this story? Character? Author's way of telling the story?
Analyzing	<p>Before reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good readers know how fiction, poetry and non-fiction works and they use this to help them predict or understand what is likely to happen. Readers also make judgments about characters or events as they read. <p>During reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Let's talk about the choice that _____ made. Was it good or bad and why? Model: I know how stories work and I think... <p>After reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What makes this a good story? What is your favorite part of the book and tell why it was your favorite part. Who is the bravest/ nicest/ most fair/ most interesting/ most important/ character? Why?

Connection questions require students to connect what they already know from experiences (real or imagined) to the ideas in their reading.

Did you know anything about this topic before reading this book?

If you did, did the information you already knew help you understand this story?

Does this story remind you of another story, TV show, poem, or movie? Which one, and why?

Is the story fiction or non-fiction? How do you know?

How is this character similar to or different from someone you know or have read about?

What current event does this call to mind? Explain.

Critical stance questions ask students to take a perspective outside of the text and consider its organization, its construction and its effectiveness.

Would you recommend this story to a friend? Who and why?

How would you solve the problem if you were in the story?

What part of the story was your favorite? Why?

Who do you think was the most interesting character in the book? Why?

Would you like to live where the story takes place? Why or why not?

What did you think about the ending?

Tell us about the most exciting part of the story and what makes it exciting.

Give an example of the author's use of humor. Is it effective and why?

What is the mood of the story and what does the author do to create it?

Monitoring understanding questions help students to check their comprehension while they are reading.

- Do I know what this story is about?
- Do I know where the story takes place?
- Can I tell what the problem is going to be?

General comprehension questions encourage students to explore what a story, book, or article is generally about or to extract the most obvious or outstanding ideas from the text.

- Who is the main character in the story?
- Who are the characters in the story?
- Who is _____?
- Where did the story take place?
- Describe the setting.
- What is the problem in the story?
- How was the problem solved?
- Write the three most important events that happened in the book.
- Draw a picture of what the story is mostly about.
- Write what the story is mostly about.
- Make a list of important facts in the book.
- What happened at the beginning? The middle? The end?
- When did _____ happen?
- Where did _____ happen?
- What was the story mostly about?
- What is the main idea of the story? How do you know?
- Can you retell the story in your own words?

Interpretation questions ask students to extend the information in the text by making inferences and predictions.

- What do you think will happen in the rest of the story?
- What caused this event?
- Why do you think the author wrote this story?
- What questions do you have about the story?
- Could you make up another ending for the story?
- What might have happened if the characters had done something different?
- How could the characters have prevented the problem in the first place?
- What questions would you ask the characters if you could talk to them?
- Was there a "bad guy" and a "good guy" in the story? Who were they?
- How are the characters _____ and _____ different? How are they alike?
- Why did the character decide to do this? Use examples from the story to support your answer.
- What things do the pictures show us that we didn't learn in the words of the story? (Examine the pictures together).
- According to this text, would "xx" be a good idea? Explain using ideas from your reading.