



Literacy connects

*A Content Literacy Newsletter from Regional
Professional Development Program-Issue 1*



THINK-ALOUDS—Modeling the reading process to teach active reading

When you think aloud—verbalize YOUR thinking process—during a mini-lesson, an oral reading, or problem solving exercise, you are offering students strategies that can enhance their comprehension and self-monitoring abilities. During a reading think-aloud, you are modeling for your class how a reader approaches and understands text. To think aloud, readers pause periodically, think about and verbalize what they remember, understand, and visualize, while integrating the name of the reading strategies they are using. In this way, students actually experience what occurs behind the invisible veil of active reading. Repeated use of this strategy will help students internalize and integrate effective comprehension strategies into their own reading.

Procedure:

1. Explain that thinking aloud means that you say what is going on in your mind as you read and try to understand what you are reading.
2. Before you begin reading, list the strategies you will use while you read:
 - Predicting—What will the reading be about? What do I know about this topic? Why am I reading this piece? What do I need to learn from this passage? What will I do with this information once I've finished? How should I read this (closely, skimming...)?
 - Pre-viewing text—scan headings, subheadings, words in bold/italics, graphs, pictures, etc. Make predictions based on the preview.
 - Picturing—What do I see when I visualize what the author is saying?
 - Making connections—What do I know about this? How does this topic relate to me/to my experiences? This is like...this reminds me of...I remember when...
 - Fixing problems—I need to reread this. I don't know this word, let me see if I can use context clues? If I look at the root/prefix/suffix, can I figure this word out? I don't understand this part, maybe I should read on and see if that helps.
 - Summarizing—I understand now, this means...; putting this in my own words...; let me repeat that sentence....
3. Present your demonstration while the students read along with you. For the first few sessions, I proceed slowly, dramatizing each strategy for emphasis. As the students become more accustomed to this activity, you can have them keep track of the strategies you use; this will allow you move more quickly through the text.
4. Spend time discussing the activity. Explain the strategies you used, why you used them, and how they helped you comprehend the passage. Allow time for the students to ask questions and to share their own reading problems and strategies.
5. After students have several opportunities to listen to you model think-alouds and to identify the strategies you use, have them practice think-alouds with a partner. Each student should read a passage, pausing to make think-aloud statements as his or her partner listens. Invite partners to comment and question one another.
6. Reserve some time for you and your students to continue practicing thinking aloud with any new strategies you introduce or when teaching problem solving.



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