

READING POWER

We read for MANY reasons! **Yet, without a doubt, one of the most important purposes of reading is to increase our understanding!** We live in a complex world — and reading enables us to find information, develop new skills and solve difficult problems.

With that in mind, it can be helpful to think about reading as a kind of **Treasure Hunt!** **Just like explorers don't find pirate gold without a lot of digging, many people find reading to be a very frustrating experience!** They often fail to find all the meaning hidden in what they read! They may know all the words but still miss the point!

If you ever feel like that — even a little! — then this page could really help you! **The good news is that weak readers can be taught the skills that turn them into highly effective readers.** In the boxes below, you'll find notes about **a whole bunch of great strategies** for doing just that! Study them, practice them — and pretty soon you'll have mastered them!



A ONE MINUTE SURVEY



1. Read the title — and any subtitles that break the text into parts.
2. Take a quick look at any pictures and graphics to help you get a sense of the story.
3. Are any words highlighted in **bold** or *italics*? Does the chapter include a Vocab List? Study it!
4. If it looks like this passage will contain a lot of words that are hard for you, get a good dictionary before going any further.

QUESTIONS, QUESTIONS

1. If this reading was assigned by a teacher, you've probably got some questions to answer, too. Those questions will hint at the most important ideas in the passage — giving you a head-start on understanding! Read them **BEFORE** the text!
2. As you read, look for details or other information that can help you answer the assigned questions!
3. Try to come up with your own questions, too! Ask **who, what, where, when, why, and how!**

MONITOR AND SELF-CORRECT

- Admit to yourself when you don't understand!
- Re-read fuzzy parts out loud, slower or standing up!
- Note punctuation you may have missed or misread!
- Chunk long reading tasks into parts. Take breaks!
- Look for topic sentences and concluding statements. Restate them in your own words.

FIGURE OUT UNKNOWN WORDS

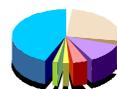
- Don't let yourself stay stuck for long! Put in a word that makes sense and read to the end of a sentence.
- Check the glossary (if the book has one) or a good dictionary for difficult words that seem important.
- Look for meaning in prefixes and root words.
- Text-to-speech can help when you're online.

CREATE MENTAL PICTURES

- Use your imagination to visualize the setting. Try to put yourself into that time and place!
- Have you ever felt, heard, smelled, or tasted things like those in the story? Engage your senses!
- If you've seen it on film, remember that the book may well include more — or different — details!

LEARN FROM THE GRAPHICS

- Pictures, charts, graphs, maps and other graphics can offer valuable clues to help you understand.
- Note that poor readers often ignore them — not realizing how useful they can be!
- Creating your own diagrams sometimes helps, too!



MAKE PREDICTIONS

- As you read, use what you've already been told as well as your common sense to try to figure out what will happen **next** — or **later** in the story!
- Think about cause and effect. What's **likely** to happen as a result what's already gone on?

MAKE CONNECTIONS

- Think about similar experiences you've had.
- Relate what you're reading about to your own memories, knowledge and understandings.
 - **ASK: What does this remind me of? and What else do I know about this topic?**

LOOK FOR SEQUENCE CLUES

- Identify words that show order, organization and importance (i.e. **first, next, then, while, after, during** and **finally**).
- Use information such as the time of day, days of the week, months of the year, seasons or years to help you figure out the sequence of events.



“READ BETWEEN THE LINES”

- Beyond the information, details and facts that are clearly stated, there are two more kinds of meaning:
1. **HINTS** that can point you towards conclusions or inferences the writer wanted you to pick up on.
 2. Elements of a story that can lead you to make personal connections to what you've read.

TAKE NOTES, RECITE AND RESPOND

- Learn to take notes as you read! **Writing while you read** really improves your overall comprehension!
- At the end, try to restate the main ideas **out loud!!**
- A good practice is to try to sum up **the whole story** in just 10 to 15 words!
- If new questions have come up, research them!
- Discuss what you read with someone else!
- Write your reflections! Again, writing helps!!