

Self-Monitoring

(In-the-Head Strategies)



Why?

- Prompts the reader to use fix-it strategies when encountering difficult or confusing passages or words.
- Students can readily identify, confirm and think about what is understood and what is confusing (thinking about thinking).
- Empowers emergent readers to become independent and to read for meaning.
- Elicits self-correction at miscues.
- Focuses struggling readers' attention toward meaning and proper syntax.

How?

- Excellent resources are available for the novice or to assist with young at-risk readers: *Reading Recovery: A Guidebook for Teachers in Training* (Marie Clay) and *Apprenticeship in Literacy* (Linda Dorn, et al.).
- Laura Robb's *Teaching Reading in Middle School*, chapter 6, outlines explicit methods to use to develop strong, self-monitoring readers.
- Model self-monitoring in a whole class setting through a think-aloud or a read-aloud. Teachers make an intentional miscue and stop to ask, "Did that make sense?"
- Explain and demonstrate reasons for using metacognition to problem solve in reading: unknown or difficult words, confusing passages, pausing to recall and reflect while checking for understanding, and questions that the reader may have after reading.
- Model fix-it strategies for each: context clues, reading ahead, rereading, etc.
- Use individual prompts with struggling readers to facilitate the development of self-monitoring.
- Offer enough guided practice that self-monitoring and fix-it strategies become habituated and a natural part of reading.
- Observe and monitor self-monitoring during reading conferences: discuss how students recognize when things make sense and what they do when they don't.
- Praise a child who uses self-correcting to repair faulty comprehension. This occurs when they recognize an error without being prompted and use an assortment of strategies to correct the miscue.
- Keep a tally of fix-it strategies that your younger students use during a guided reading session. Talk about possible problems they may encounter *during* their reading, review solutions, and *after* they have read, discuss strategies that they actually used. Circulate while they are reading the new book independently and listen for self-correcting.