

Think Aloud

Why?

- Teachers model how they apply a reading comprehension strategy or how they solve a problem in the text while offering students a strategy that can enhance their comprehension and self-monitoring abilities (Alvermann, 1984; Baumann, Jones & Siefert-Kessel, 1993).
- Allows the teacher to observe and obtain information about students' processing and comprehension.
- Prompts students to pause at certain points in their reading and reflect on what they are doing and what they understand and feel as readers.
- Students who are encouraged to think aloud during reading become better at summarizing information.
- Thinking aloud leads students to make connections, to infer and to draw conclusions, particularly in a well-matched one-on-one peer experience.

How?

- Laura Robb (2000) suggests that students pause periodically, think about what they remember and understand. They also name the fix-it strategies they use as part of their approach to reading. This is similar to developing self-monitoring skills in *Reading Recovery*, but at a more sophisticated level.
- Explain the rationale and purpose for using a think aloud strategy as a tool for understanding text. Provide examples of problems readers might encounter during reading that may be worked through with a think aloud.
- Model the think aloud strategy. Ask for student responses or observations.
- Ask students to verbalize their thoughts, questions, and connections to their own lives as they read a text or poem, line by line. As they work together, students clarify or extend understanding of confusing words or phrases through comments and/or questions.
- Each participant is responsible for supporting the other's thoughts and interpretations while probing for deeper understanding.
- After most students are comfortable with the think aloud process, move the class to using their in-the-head voice. When appropriate, students may use INSERT (Interactive Notation System for Effective Reading and Thinking, Vaughn and Testes, 1986) to respond to the text.

INSERT Notations

I agree : √ I disagree : x That's new = + I don't understand = ?? WOW! That's terrific! = !