

SUMMER READING - PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

PREPARING YOUR CHILD FOR FALL CLASS DISCUSSIONS!

By Illene Courtright, Language Specialist

Summer readings should be enjoyable! By using the following information to guide discussions with your child, parents can create positive reading experiences. Parents and grandparents - take the challenge! Read the books and provide an even more enriched learning environment in your home.

1. DISCUSS THE REASONS FOR ASSIGNED SUMMER READINGS

- Introduce students to curriculum that will be presented next year.
- Expose students to well-written, award-winning literature.
- Present the best and worst in mankind and provide examples of how people respond under difficult circumstances.
- Familiarize students with different cultures, values, and eras.
- Keep students reading.

2. ESTABLISH THE TONE FOR SUMMER READINGS

- Check the information provided on the back or flaps of the book.
- Discuss the genre - biography, history, horror, mystery, science fiction, journal, adventure, art, poetry, self-help, etc.
- Read about the author - What intrigued or motivated him/her to write this book?

3. PLACE THE NOVEL IN TIME BY REVIEWING EVENTS IN THE STORY OR WORLD

- Help your child fit the book into history or a different culture.
- Do some background research.
- Discuss events that led up to the time frame of the story. What problems were people facing? What values were practiced/accepted? How did people react under duress?

4. DISCOVER THE MEANING OF THE TITLE

- What is the "surface" meaning?
- Is there a "deeper" meaning?
- Did the title appear in the text?
- Is the title part of a poem, song, or well-known saying?
- Do you understand the meaning of the title? What might be a better title?

5. RECORD THE MAIN CHARACTERS AND THEIR ROLE IN THE PLOT

- Make a list of the main characters.
- Design a chart showing how they are related.
- Discover if a character's name reveals anything about the person.
- Note the main characters' traits at the beginning of the story.

- Discuss obstacles the main characters face.
- Determine if and how the main characters change as a result of either overcoming or failing to meet their objectives.

6. DETERMINE WHO IS PROVIDING INFORMATION TO THE READERS

- Point of View - Who is telling the story? What is his/her role in the story?
- Narrator - The person telling the story may or may not be a character in the story.
- Knowledge - What does the character know about the other characters? Can the narrator tell you what the other characters are thinking or feeling?
- Protagonist - Character around whom the story revolves.
- Antagonist - Character or force that opposes the protagonist.

7. SUMMARIZE EACH CHAPTER

- Write 2-3 sentences or make an outline in the book at the end of each chapter.
- Note the actions or responses of the main character(s) to events in the chapter.
- Record new characters and their role in the plot at this point in the book.
- Highlight new actions, information, or thoughts of the characters.

8. PREDICT WHAT WILL HAPPEN IN THE NEXT CHAPTER(S)

- Does the title give you any ideas about the content?
- Did the information on the back or flaps of the book provide clues about the outcome?
- Can you draw any conclusions from a character's traits?
- When an unexpected turn of events occurs, what might the consequences be?
- At the conclusion of the book, were your predictions correct? Why or why not?

9. RECORD NEW VOCABULARY

- Write the meaning of how the word is used in the text in the margin of the page on which the word appears.
- List the new words and pages on which they occurred - make a quick reference sheet.
- Practice using the word in your conversational speech.

10. NOTE THE AUTHOR'S TECHNIQUES TO KEEP YOU READING

- Provide clues about the setting, a character, or actions, or emotion.
- Enhance text by employing figurative language, similes and metaphors, hyperbole, personification, dialect, archaic language, etc.
- Unusual formatting of the book - combining pictures, original sources, timelines, maps, graphs, etc., along with the text
- Interesting titles for each chapter

11. DETECT THEME(S) THE AUTHOR IS SENDING TO THE READER

- The theme can be a main idea or an underlying meaning stated directly or indirectly.
- Minor themes may support a major theme in the same story.

- Themes usually stand true for people of all cultures. Through themes, an author gives readers insight into how the world works or how he/she views life.
- Common themes found in summer readings include friendship, war, revenge, mystery, change, truth, survival, isolation, honor, heroism, decision-making, greed, injustice, evil, etc.

12. RELATE INFORMATION TO YOUR FAMILY LIFE AND EXPERIENCES

- Tell about an event when something similar to the story happened to you - how you responded, what you learned, who else you told, etc.
- Encourage grandparents and great grandparents to read the books and share their perspectives from a different generation. These are great conversations and build relationships!
- What would you do in a similar situation as the character in the book?
- How do your religion, culture, and/or values help shape your actions?

13. RESEARCH SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

- Maps
- Images
- Original - Pictures/Cartoons/Newspaper articles
- Music
- Fashion
- Values
- Vocabulary - meaning as used in the text
- Quotes
- Movies
- Additional Books