

Parent School

Newsletter #6 – Synthesizing



...A Monthly Parent Education Newsletter to help explain the what, and how of your child's new reading vocabulary.

The comprehension strategy of Synthesizing is best explained using the analogy of a moving car merging onto a speeding highway. Like a car who heads down the on ramp, as soon as it merges onto a freeway of other moving cars, it must adjust its speed and lanes, whether it needs to speed up or slow down, it changes depending on the flow and speed of traffic.

The car is like our thinking. We begin thinking a story is about one thing and using our background knowledge to help us form that prediction. However, as we read on further, our thinking changes. We do not let go of our original prediction, but rather we mold it, and sculpt it into something new. By the end of the story, we have made a lot of changes to our original thinking and it has morphed into some new, bigger and different than it was....not wrong, just different and new based on our interactions with the story.

Another analogy— if our original thinking is like the rock we throw into a pond, the rings of that rock represent how our thinking changes; each ring affects the next ring and so on and so forth.

When strong readers read, they not only read the words on the page, but they listen to the “inner voice” that processes the meaning of the story. Strong readers use their schema, connections and other worldly and literary experiences to form new ideas as they read. Strong readers know that answers are not always found in the book, but in their head. A synthesizing reader uses details and inferences from the story and integrates them with their own ideas, evaluations and opinions.

Synthesizing is about creating something new from by bringing together many different pieces of information and continually changing our thinking depending on new information.