

Think-Aloud Process

1. Choose a short mentor text-preferably picture book- that presents multiple opportunities to teach the targeted strategy. It works well to choose a text that presents an opportunity to teach with a think-aloud in the first few pages. Struggling readers especially tend to lose focus quickly. An explicit example at the beginning of the read-aloud helps get them off to a fast start.
2. Explain to students how a think-aloud works and what strategy you will be trying out. Also, explain/brainstorm why and how these strategies will be helpful to them in their reading.
3. State the teaching point. Tell students that as you are thinking aloud, you want them to pay attention to the strategy you use so they can explain what, why, how, and when to use the strategy to transfer to other texts at other times.
4. Read the entire text aloud and return to selected pages to perform the think-aloud. Select 2-3 stopping points in the text to model your thinking for the target strategy. It's helpful to script the think-aloud on a post-it note.
5. Think-aloud about **what caused you to stop to** apply the strategy. **Show** students how to activate prior knowledge, **how** you give yourself directions as you think through how to make sense of the text, ask yourself questions, and consider alternative strategies that you might use.
6. Students are to observe how you think-aloud and not ask questions or talk.
7. DO NOT ASK STUDENTS QUESTIONS WHEN THINKING ALOUD. ASK YOURSELF QUESTIONS AND GIVE YOURSELF SELF-DIRECTED STATEMENTS TO GUIDE YOUR THINKING. THIS IS THE TIME THAT THE TEACHER DOES THE WORK OF "SHOWING" STUDENTS THE THINKING PROCESS. THIS IS NOT THE TIME TO ASK STUDENTS BECAUSE STUDENT FOCUS SHOULD BE ON HOW YOU ARE THINKING WHILE READING.
8. Pause following the think-aloud to inform students how you noticed the phrases/ clues/signals in the text that helped you decide what, when, why, and how you thought and problem solved. For example, when teaching students to notice FACT! clues return to the specific part to the text that caused you to stop to think.
9. Invite students turn and talk with a partner to explain to each other the "thinking moves" you made..
10. Ask students to identify other situations in which they could use the strategy. Student reflection helps transfer the learning to other texts.

11. Reinforce the think-aloud with follow-up lessons. Distribute the practice over time returning often to the what, when, why, and how knowledge base. Students must be able to elaborate on their thinking about the use of the strategy.

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