ASKING QUESTIONS
A COMPREHENSION STRATEGY

Asking Questions Instructional Plan

Essential Question

How does the explicit modelling of think alouds help students effectively question the text in order to deepen comprehension?

Explicit Teaching Concepts

1. Asking purposeful questions is a strategy that helps readers focus and gain a deeper understanding of the text
2. Good readers and writers ask questions before, during and after to help them understand the text better
3. Readers understanding that many of the most intriguing questions are not answered explicitly in the text, but are left to the reader’s intention (questions can be thick or thin)
4. Answers may be found in the text, from background knowledge, inferred, or obtained from an outside source
5. Good readers ask questions for many reasons:
   o clarify meaning
   o speculate about text yet to be read
   o determine an author’s style, intent, content, or formal
   o focus attention on specific components of the text
   o locate a specific answer in the text or consider rhetorical questions inspired by the text.
6. Answers might be different for everyone
7. Asking questions helps readers make predictions
8. Asking questions helps readers make connections to other texts or prior knowledge
9. Good readers understand that hearing others’ questions inspires new ones of their own; likewise, listening to others’ answers can also inspire new thinking
10. Good readers understand that the process of questioning is used in other areas of their lives, both personal and academic.

Adapted from Keene and Miller

Assessment: Evidence of Student Understanding

1. Anecdotal notes from lessons
2. Post its (anchor charts)
3. Questioning webs
4. Thinking journal
5. MPIR (Major Point Interview for Readers)
Focus – Good Readers Ask Questions for Many Reasons

Readers determine whether the answers can be found in the text, from background knowledge, inferred, or obtained from an outside source.

Readers ask questions for many reasons: clarify meaning, speculate about text yet to be read, determine an author’s style, intent, content, or format; focus attention on specific components of the text, locate a specific answer in the text or consider rhetorical questions inspired by the text.

Asking questions related to expository texts (text features and structures) helps readers focus and gain a deeper understanding of the text.

Time Frame

Third Week

Lessons

Strategies for reading comprehension are conscious plans — a set of steps that good readers use to make sense of text. Explicit instruction in comprehension strategies help students become purposeful, active readers.

1. Readers Answer Questions With The Help of Text Features
   Sample Lesson – “Text Features” (Effective Instructional Strategies)

2. Readers Ask Questions For Many Reasons (Expository Texts) – Questioning The Text
   Sample Lesson – “Ask questions to discover new information” (Strategies That Work, p. 22)
   “Using Question Webs To Expand Thinking” (Strategies That Work, p. 121)
   “Ask Questions To Gain Information” (Comprehension Toolkit; Asking Questions, p. 24-25)
   “Locating Specific Information” (Reading For Meaning, p. 150)