

Thinking Minds

What is Thinking Minds and why is it important?

Thinking Minds (Carr & Patberg, 1999) is a strategy that helps students think critically and creatively about what they read. This strategy encourages students to become independent thinkers and helps them check their understanding as they read.

How can I use Thinking Minds with my students?

Thinking Minds takes students through a series of five questions that help them understand and evaluate persuasive text. As students read, you may select one or more of the questions to discuss. Rephrase the questions if necessary so that they are appropriate for your students.

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1. What is the author's message?
2. What is the author's viewpoint or purpose in writing the text?
3. How does the author support his argument?
4. Does the author convince me that his argument is sound?
5. What difference does the information make and of what value is it to me?

- For the first question, use the "About Point" strategy to guide your students. "What is the text about? What point is the author making?"
- For the second question, tell students that they need to examine the author's purpose in writing. "Is the author's viewpoint clear and easy to recognize?"
- For the third question, ask students why particular information or evidence is important and why the author may have introduced the evidence at specific points in the text. Encourage students to use what they already know and have read about the topic as the basis for deciding if the information makes sense.
- For the fourth question, encourage students to evaluate the positive and negative aspects of the author's position and to develop a personal viewpoint. "Do you agree or disagree with the author?"
- For the fifth question, help students judge the importance of the argument and think creatively about the value and use of the information. "Does it have any value to us and our community?"

Use the Thinking Minds strategy often. Not only can students better understand the author's viewpoint, but they can also apply what they have read to their own lives.



Name: _____ Date: _____

Thinking Minds

Question:

Response:

Question:

Response:

Question:

Response:

Question:

Response:

Question:

Response:

