

STRATEGY #2: Using Self-Talk

Metacognition involves the self-talk that occurs when a person reads. Self-talk is effective in helping you recognize both moments of confusion as well as moments of understanding. Examples include internal statements such as: “This is an interesting idea. It seems to relate to _____ in the previous chapter. I’ll have to flip back and see how much the two are the same,” or “Because this says ____, I predict the next section will be about _____.”

Self-talk also occurs when you don’t understand a reading. Statements such as: “I’m confused. I do not completely understand _____. I will re-read, look up vocabulary, and/or write a question and find the answer” will help you pause and rethink what you have read.

Here are some directions you can follow to help with self-talk, such as asking questions and making predictions:

1. When you reach a point when your reading is confusing to you, stop for a moment, and mark this on your text. Think to yourself, “What is this trying to tell me? How does this relate to the previous information?”
2. Begin re-reading the previous passage, followed by the one you are struggling with. Does it make sense now?
3. Reflect for a moment and consider, “What might the writer tell me next?” Look for clues to identify where you believe the reading might be heading.
4. Read the next section of your text to see if your prediction was correct. If it wasn’t, how was it different?

Why was it different? Review your clues.

5. Return to the confusing passage and write a short summary of the content.

While working through these strategies, you may realize that you need to adjust your reading rate by reading slower, and you may need to repeat this process as you work through the entire reading assignment. In any case, “self-talk”--this process of asking questions, considering process and strategy, and gauging learning--should take place throughout the reading.

By employing these strategies you can self-correct and become a stronger reader.