

## Can I use multiple strategies?

Yes! Experienced readers use more than one strategy at a time. Read this paragraph to see how each strategy helps you notice and understand different things.

Rani pushed the door open slowly. Creeaaaak! She peered down the stairs into the pitch-black basement. *Should I really be doing this?* She swallowed hard.

← **Visualize** I can really picture this scene in my mind. It gives me the chills!

“He-hello?” she called timidly.

There was no answer. Then she heard it again! *What was that noise?* It sounded almost like a giggle.

← **Make Predictions** I’ve read stories like this before! I think that giggle means her friend is hiding down there.

Rani crept quietly down the stairs. She felt for each step in front of her, counting as she went. One, two, three, four . . . finally her foot hit the last step. She reached for the light switch, but something grabbed her arm! She squeezed her eyes shut and began to scream when all of a sudden—

← **Make Connections** Wow, is she brave! I would never walk into a dark room like that!

“Surprise! Happy birthday to you . . . ,” her friends began to sing.

← **Check Predictions** Aha! I knew it was going to be her friends!



# Ask and Answer Questions

## What does it mean to ask and answer questions?

Readers ask themselves questions before, during, and after reading. Sometimes there are questions someone else asks at the end of a selection. Readers find answers in the selection, from their own experiences, or both!

## Why do readers ask and answer questions?

Asking and answering questions helps readers check their understanding. It helps them think more deeply about the selection so they better understand it.

**Step 1 Before You Read** As you preview the selection, ask questions to activate prior knowledge and set purposes for reading. For example,

- What is this selection going to be about?
- What do I already know about this topic?
- Is this picture going to be important?

**Step 2 As You Read** Continue asking questions about things you don't understand or things you'd like to find out more about. Keep reading to look for answers to your questions.

**Step 3 After You Read** Are there any questions you have not yet answered? Is there anything new you wonder about now that you have finished reading?

**TIP** Keep track of your questions in a chart like this one. When you find the answer, write it down! If you don't find the answer, write down other places you could look for it.

Questions	Did you find the answer?		
	Yes	No	Need more information
	✓		



# Determine Important Information

## What does it mean to determine important information?

Fiction and nonfiction selections include many details that make the writing interesting. But the most interesting ideas may not always be the most important. Determining important information means figuring out the big ideas in the selection.

## Why do readers determine important information?

Separating the big ideas from the details helps readers understand the important information the author wants them to know.

- Step 1** Look for key words. Key words may be
- in the title, chapter names, and subheads;
  - boldface or highlighted;
  - repeated in many parts of the selection.
- Step 2** Look at the text features. They could be clues about the important ideas in that chapter.
- Step 3** Carefully read the first and last sentences in each paragraph. Authors often put important information here.
- Step 4** Stop after each section and ask questions.
- What is the most important idea of this section?
  - Can I pick out a sentence that tells the most important idea?
  - Which information is interesting but not that important?

**TIP** Use a chart to help you determine important information as you read. Write the big ideas in the left column. Write the supporting details in the right column.

Big Ideas	Supporting Details



# Make Connections

## What does it mean to make connections?

Readers make connections when something they read reminds them of other things they know. Readers make connections to their own experiences, to other things they have read, and to what they know about the world around them.

## Why do readers make connections?

Readers understand a selection better when they can find ways to connect it to things they already know.

**Step 1** Before you read, preview the selection and look for words, pictures, or ideas that are familiar to you. Ask yourself:

- What do I already know about this topic?
- What else have I read about this topic?

**Step 2** When you read a part of the selection that reminds you of something, stop and jot it down.

- **Text-to-Self** Does it remind you of your own experiences?
- **Text-to-Text** Does it remind you of something else you have read?
- **Text-to-World** Does it remind you of something you know about the world?

**Step 3** Think about how the connection you made helps you better understand the selection.

**TIP** Use sticky notes to record connections you make!

Label them like this:

**S** = self

**T** = other texts you've read

**W** = the world

**T:** I read an article online about this! It also talked about how

**S:** This character reminds me of my friend Brian. They both get into trouble but they mean well.

**W:** I don't think the character understands that it's hard for everyone to make friends sometimes.



# Make Inferences

## What does it mean to make inferences?

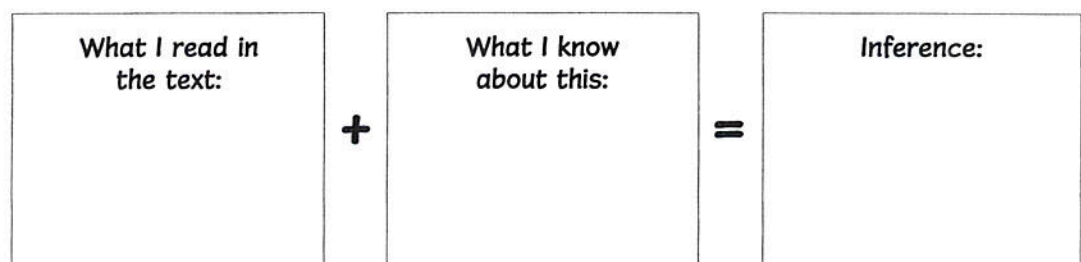
Readers make inferences by using what they know to fill in information that is not stated in the selection.

## Why do readers make inferences?

Authors don't always include every detail, so readers need to make inferences. Readers understand a selection better when they add what they already know to the information on the page.

- Step 1** As you read, pause to ask yourself:
- What information is the author giving me?
  - What other information do I need to understand this?
- Step 2** Think about what you already know.
- Think about your own experiences.
  - Recall other books you have read about the topic.
  - Think about the world around you.
- Step 3** Use what you know to better understand the information in the selection.

**TIP** You can also make inferences to figure out unfamiliar words and understand text features. Use a chart like this one to help you.



# Make Predictions

## What does it mean to make predictions?

Making predictions means making informed guesses about what you are reading. If you're reading fiction, think about what might happen next. If you're reading nonfiction, think about the kinds of information you might learn.

## Why do readers make predictions?

Readers make predictions to get ready to read and to check their understanding while they read.

- Step 1** Before you read, preview the selection by looking at
- the title, chapter names, and subheads;
  - illustrations, photos, captions, and other text features.
  - Think about whether any words or pictures look familiar.
- Step 2** As you read, use clues from the selection and things you already know to make predictions. For example:
- I think what might happen next is . . . because . . .
  - I think I'll find out that . . . because . . .
- Step 3** Stop once in a while to check your predictions.
- The selection **confirms** my prediction about . . . because it says . . .
  - I need to **revise** my prediction about . . . because I found out that . . .

**TIP** Use a chart like this one to help keep track of your predictions!

My Predictions	What Actually Happened	My Revised Predictions



# Monitor Comprehension

## What does it mean to monitor comprehension?

Experienced readers pay attention not only to *what* they read, but also *how* they read. They recognize when they don't understand something. When their comprehension is breaking down, they use fix-up strategies.

## Why do readers monitor comprehension?

At some point, all readers have trouble understanding something they read. Monitoring comprehension helps readers notice when they don't understand something and figure out how to fix it.

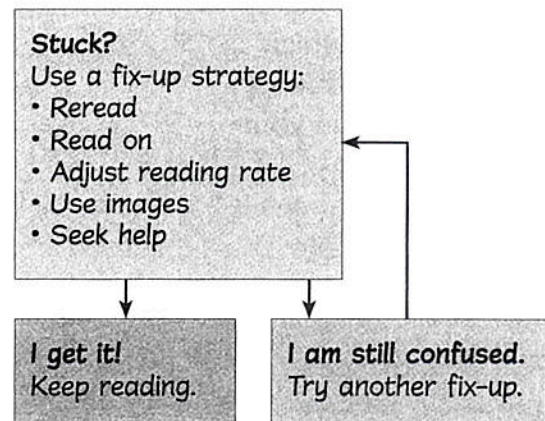
**Step 1** Pause and ask yourself: Do I understand? Try to summarize what you just read. If you can summarize it, keep reading.

**Step 2** If you are not sure you understand, use a fix-up strategy.

- **Reread** the section.
- **Keep reading** to see if the author explains further.
- **Slow down** so you don't miss important information.
- **Speed up**—reading one word at a time makes it difficult to put ideas together.
- **Use the images** to see if they *show* what the text says.
- **Seek help.** Use a dictionary. Ask someone to help you.

**Step 3** Ask yourself again: Do I understand? If not, try another fix-up strategy.

**TIP** Follow the arrows to help you decide what to do when you get stuck!





# Summarize

## What does it mean to summarize?

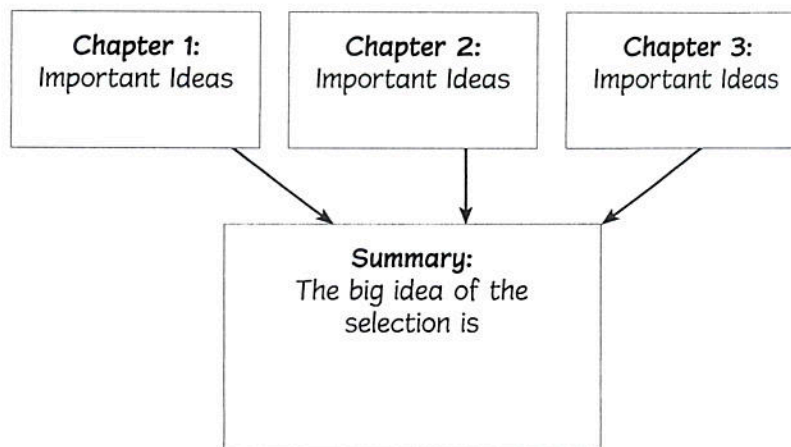
Summarizing means using your own words to explain the most important ideas of a selection you have read. A summary of a nonfiction text tells the most important information. A summary of a story tells who the main characters were and what happened to them.

## Why do readers summarize?

Readers summarize to check their understanding and to help them remember what they have read. Readers might stop as they read to summarize part of the text. They might also summarize the entire text once they have finished reading.

- Step 1** When you finish a paragraph, chapter, or selection, stop and think about the most important ideas. Make a list.
- Step 2** Look over the list and cross out details that are interesting but not that important.
- Step 3** Think of a topic sentence that tells the main idea. Ask yourself: What is this text mostly about?
- Step 4** Use your list to write sentences that explain the big ideas.

**TIP** Use a chart like this one to decide which information to include in your summary.





# Visualize

## What does it mean to visualize?

When readers visualize, they use the words on the page to create pictures in their minds. Readers picture the people, places, and things the author describes.

## Why do readers visualize?

Visualizing helps readers see, feel, and hear what the author describes. When readers visualize, they can imagine being a part of the story.

- Step 1** Look for clues in the selection that signal it might be a good time to visualize:
- Descriptive words
  - Actions
  - Comparisons
- Step 2** Think about your own experiences. Use the selection and your own ideas to create a picture in your mind.
- Step 3** As you read on, use new information from the selection to add to or revise your mental picture.

**TIP** You can draw pictures to help you visualize!

Words from the Selection	The Picture in My Mind



# Strategies at a Glance

Use this chart to help you decide which strategies to use.

<p><b>Ask and Answer Questions</b> Do you find yourself wondering about something you read? Asking and answering questions helps build understanding.</p>
<p><b>Determine Important Information</b> Which ideas are important, and which ones are supporting details? Figuring out what is important will help you better understand the selection.</p>
<p><b>Make Connections</b> Does something you read remind you of your own experiences? Does it remind you of something else you have read or something in the world?</p>
<p><b>Make Inferences</b> Did the author leave out some information? Sometimes readers need to “fill in the blanks” by using what they already know. Making inferences helps you make sense of what you read.</p>
<p><b>Make Predictions</b> Are you wondering what is going to happen next? Make a prediction and then check it as you read.</p>
<p><b>Monitor Comprehension</b> Not sure you understand something? Stop and check your understanding. Then try using a fix-up strategy, such as rereading, using images, or reading on.</p>
<p><b>Summarize</b> Can you sum up what you just read using your own words? Try summarizing to help you remember what you have read.</p>
<p><b>Visualize</b> Is the author using descriptive words or figurative language? Use the words to make a picture in your mind.</p>