

STRATEGIES TO MAKE MEANING IN READING AND WRITING

The essential purpose of both reading and writing is to make meaning. Effective readers and writers use a range of strategies in a variety of combinations when interacting with text (Keene and Zimmerman, 1997).



- *Reading, writing, talking, listening, thinking, viewing, and representing are reciprocal literacy processes.*
- *Literacy instruction must be explicit and relevant to students' lives.*

Proficient readers and writers know how to select appropriate strategies and use them in combination to serve their particular purpose. They are able to think independently, and they use critical-literacy skills to recognize when they are being manipulated in a variety of media, to determine an author's intent, and to identify the techniques the author uses to achieve his or her purpose. Students need to learn to use a variety of strategies to support and enhance their critical literacy. These strategies (which are discussed below in more detail) include the following:

1. Determining the purpose and audience for writing
2. Determining a purpose and an appropriate stance for reading
3. Activating prior knowledge and schema for reading and writing
4. Generating ideas for writing
5. Making connections
6. Determining important information
7. Determining the key message when writing
8. Determining which writer's-craft techniques to apply
9. Establishing and identifying tone and voice when writing and reading
10. Questioning
11. Visualizing
12. Summarizing
13. Inferring
14. Predicting
15. Synthesizing
16. Evaluating
17. Monitoring and repairing understanding

Teachers must introduce these strategies one at a time by modelling the strategy and then providing students with ample time to practise. Teachers must also read students' written responses and discuss with them whether and how they have used strategies, to ensure that the use of strategies becomes integral to students' reading and writing processes.