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# Prompting Guide <sup>PART</sup> 2

for **COMPREHENSION: Thinking, Talking, and Writing**

*Thinking  
Within  
the Text*

A teacher with long curly hair is sitting at a blue table with three students. They are all looking at books. The teacher is pointing at a page in her book. The students are also looking at their books. The background is a classroom setting.

*Thinking Beyond the Text*

A teacher with long curly hair is sitting at a wooden table with three students. They are all looking at books. The teacher is pointing at a page in her book. The students are also looking at their books. The background is a classroom setting.

*Thinking About  
the Text*

A teacher with long curly hair is sitting at a wooden table with three students. They are all looking at books. The teacher is pointing at a page in her book. The students are also looking at their books. The background is a classroom setting.

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# Prompting Guide

PART 2

## for Comprehension: Thinking, Talking, and Writing

## SECTION I

### Introduction

#### Readers and the Reading Process

Reading is a highly complex process. Each reader builds a system for processing texts that begins with early reading behaviors and becomes a network of strategic activities for reading increasingly challenging texts. The construction of the systems “in the head” is unique for each student. Marie Clay (1991) described readers’ paths to proficient reading as “different paths to common outcomes.”

Reading is, essentially, thinking in response to written language. Your precise language in teaching directs the readers’ thinking before, during, and after reading so they can expand their in-the-head systems for reading and reflecting on texts with deep understanding. Observe your students’ oral reading, talking, and writing about reading for behavioral evidence of their processing strengths and needs to gain information that can shape your teaching.

#### Texts

Your students will have the opportunity to think and talk about a variety of texts. When you read aloud, share the reading of a text, or lead a book club that is grade and age-appropriate, your questions or prompts will foster your students’ deep thinking about a variety of texts. When you use texts placed along a gradient of difficulty (leveled texts) to guide children’s reading at their instructional levels, you will be able to facilitate a productive discussion that supports thinking not only within, but beyond and about the text as well. The text will allow for the students to process it with a high level of accuracy and independence and your facilitative talk will expand their understanding.

In a reading conference with an individual child be sure the text is one that he can read with understanding and fluency on his own (independent level). Your language interactions in the conference can expand his thinking through talk as well as his written responses in his reader’s notebook.

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## Teaching

Your role is to notice each student’s precise reading and writing behaviors and provide teaching that supports change in what she can do over time. As you infer from the observable behaviors how a reader or writer is building a system of strategic actions in-the-head, you can make effective instructional decisions. The language in this guide is designed to help you teach readers how to focus or expand their thinking through talk and writing before, during, and after reading.

### Evidence of Reading Competencies: Oral Reading, Talking and Writing

**ORAL READING** In oral reading, you notice how your students think or problem-solve through the text—how they solve words, notice and correct errors, use the meaning, language, and print information, adjust their reading, and use the dimensions of fluency to interpret the author’s message with the voice.

**TALKING AND WRITING** Through observing the students’ talk and writing about reading, you gain more evidence of their understanding or comprehension of the text. Your students’ talk about how their reading reflects their thinking. When they write about reading, they get their thinking down on paper.

## Contents of the Prompting Guides

### Observable Behaviors that Indicate Reading Competencies

The chart on the next page shows the behaviors that are evidence of students’ thinking within, beyond, and about the text. We hope the language we provide in this guide will help you deepen and expand your students’ comprehension and enjoyment of text through rich discussions and a variety of written responses.

*In Prompting Guide, Part 1 for Oral Reading and Early Writing, you find language for teaching, prompting, and reinforcing effective reading behaviors during oral reading and in early writing. The teaching includes using meaning as one important source of information. Refer to this tool to support your students’ effective problem solving for accurate, fluent oral reading and efficient early writing skills.*

*In Prompting Guide, Part 2 for Comprehension: Thinking, Talking, and Writing, we provide language for teaching readers how to focus or expand their thinking through talk and writing before, during, and after reading. Our goal is to help students think in three broad ways: They need to think within the text, noticing and using the information that is directly stated in the text; they need to think beyond the text about what is implied, not explicitly stated; and finally, they need to think about the text, analyzing the writer’s craft and thinking critically about the whole text. Refer to this tool to support your students’ thinking, talking, and writing about reading, or their reading comprehension.*

OBSERVABLE BEHAVIORS THAT INDICATE READING COMPETENCIES	
Oral Reading (Prompting Guide, Part 1) <sup>1</sup>	Reading Comprehension: Talk and Writing (Prompting Guide, Part 2)
<p><b>Thinking <i>Within</i> the Text</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>SOLVE WORDS</b> Use a range of flexible strategies to recognize, take apart, and understand words</li> <li>■ <b>MONITOR AND CORRECT</b><sup>2</sup> Check on accuracy and understanding and work to self-correct errors when all sources of information don't fit together</li> <li>■ <b>SEARCH FOR AND USE INFORMATION</b><sup>2</sup> Notice and use all information sources (meaning, language structure, and visual information)</li> <li>■ <b>MAINTAIN FLUENCY</b><sup>3</sup> Read at a good rate with phrasing, pausing, intonation, and appropriate stress</li> <li>■ <b>ADJUST READING</b> Take action in flexible ways to solve problems or fit purpose and genre</li> </ul> <p><sup>1</sup>This prompting guide also includes prompts for early writing.  <sup>2</sup>These categories include a focus on using meaning information and monitoring meaning.  <sup>3</sup>This category is highly related to reading for meaning.</p>	<p><b>Thinking <i>Within</i> the Text</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>SUMMARIZE</b> Remember important information and carry it forward</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Thinking <i>Beyond</i> the Text</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>PREDICT</b> Think about what might happen next</li> <li>■ <b>INFER</b> Think about what the writer means and has not explicitly stated</li> <li>■ <b>MAKE CONNECTIONS</b> Connect the text to personal and world knowledge as well as other texts</li> <li>■ <b>SYNTHESIZE</b> Adjust present understanding to accommodate new knowledge</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Thinking <i>About</i> the Text</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>ANALYZE</b> Notice aspects of the writer's craft</li> <li>■ <b>CRITIQUE</b> Think critically about the text</li> </ul>

## Language for Teaching for Systems of Strategic Actions

The prompts in this guide are designed to help you demonstrate, prompt for, or reinforce effective reading behaviors related to comprehension in three categories—thinking within, beyond, and about the text. They include: self-monitoring and self-correcting meaning, searching for and using meaning, summarizing, predicting, inferring, making connections, synthesizing, analyzing, and critiquing (*Teaching for Comprehending and Fluency: Thinking, Talking, and Writing about Reading, K–8*, Fountas and Pinnell, 2006). You can find specific behaviors and understandings to notice, teach for and support in *The Continuum of Literacy Learning, Grades PreK–8*, Pinnell and Fountas (2011). You will notice that many prompts fit into more than one category as they elicit complex thinking that involves more than one “in the head” action.

### Thinking Within the Text

**SELF-MONITOR AND SELF-CORRECT** Readers need to use all sources of information in the text to confirm their predictions or notice when they don't understand a part of a text, and work to solve the problem. Problem-solving related to gathering information, solving words, or deriving meaning must take place against a backdrop of accurate

## INFERRING

Use language that helps the reader think beyond the literal meaning of the text to derive what is not there but is implied by the writer.

### General

Sometimes the writer says something and means more.

What did \_\_\_\_\_ make you think about?

What is the author really trying to say?

That's what the writer said. What does he really mean?

Think about what the writer really means but does not say.

Try to visualize what you think the writer means but is not saying.

Why do you think \_\_\_\_\_ did that?

What were the writer's feelings about the topic? How do you know?

What does this book (story) say to you?

**TEACH:** *You need to think about what the writer really means but does not say. (Demonstrate)*

**PROMPT:** *What do you think the writer really meant when he said \_\_\_\_\_?*

**REINFORCE:** *You thought about what the writer really meant.*

## Nonfiction

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### Organization/Topic

Is the topic of the book stated or implied?

Why do you think the author chose to present key ideas/important information this way?

### Style/Tone

What were the writer's feelings about the topic? How do you know?

Why did the author say \_\_\_\_\_?

What did the author really mean when she said \_\_\_\_\_?

What is the author implying when he says \_\_\_\_\_?

What is the author's perspective? What details reveal the author's perspective?

### Accuracy

What is the writer's purpose?

Why did the writer choose not to include \_\_\_\_\_?

Why did the writer leave out facts about \_\_\_\_\_?

Was the writer objective about the subject/topic? How do you know?

### Illustrations/Graphics

Why did the author choose to include these particular illustrations/graphics?

Why did the author give information about \_\_\_\_\_ through illustrations rather than in the text?

The author used a map (photograph, drawing, diagram, cross-section) instead of a plain text because \_\_\_\_\_.

## Fiction

### Character

How do you feel about this character? Why do you feel that way?

What things do you know about the character from the way he thinks or behaves?

What do the character's choices tell about him?

What values does the character stand for?

What does the main character really want?

What do you think this character really meant by saying that?

What do you think this character might do?

Why does the main character want \_\_\_\_\_?

What lessons does the main character learn?

Why does the main character \_\_\_\_\_?

Are there any powerful (weak, manipulative) characters in the story? What makes them that way?

This character doesn't usually act/talk this way. What might be behind his actions/words?

That's what \_\_\_\_\_ (character) said. What did she really mean?

How do you know \_\_\_\_\_ (character) has changed?

Think about what \_\_\_\_\_ (character) said and what that makes you think about him (how character looks, what character did, what others say or think about him).

### Plot

What is this story really about?

What events in the story were not written down, but could be understood as happening by reading between the lines?

What can you infer about the conflict in the story?

What can you infer about the resolution?

What can you infer about the ending or the outcome of the story?



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