

Stop, Think, and React to Information



See this lesson in action on pages 149, 172, 178, 211, and on the website.

→ **TIP:** Secondary kids can annotate right on the page. Rather than writing down inner thoughts, they can simply code the text with an **L** when they learn something new, **★** for surprising, **!** for important, **?** for a question, and similar short codes. They may jot marginal thoughts when they need to but will primarily just code the text. We ask kids to stop, think, and react to images and videos as well as text. Whenever kids are presented with information of any sort, we expect them to interact with it.

WHEN and WHY: When kids are reading for information, they often have trouble deciding what is important to remember. Before we ask them to pick out important information, we teach them to simply stop, think, and react to new information. This awareness of new learning will help them understand what they are reading and sift out the most important information later on.

INITIATE: Explain that when we read nonfiction, we are reading to learn information and that we almost always learn something new. Tell students that nonfiction readers merge their own thinking with the information to understand it. If they are unfamiliar with the word *merge*, talk about how traffic merges onto a freeway. Share that readers put their thinking together and merge it with the words and ideas to make sense, just as cars merge into traffic.

TEACH/MODEL: Share that when you read nonfiction you have to stop, think, and react (STR) to information. Read a paragraph from a nonfiction piece and stop when you learn something new. Share what you hear your inner voice say, something like, "Wow, I never knew that sharks don't really like to bite people." Then mark a Post-it with an **L** for learn, jot down your learning, and place the note near the spot in the text where you learned the new information.

GUIDED PRACTICE: Ask kids to turn and talk about the voice they hear in their head when they meet new information. Then have them share with the class some of their language of new learning—*I never knew; I didn't know; No way*—whatever they come up with. Explain that those phrases are signals that the reader is learning something new. Hand out a sheet of paper with six 3 x 3 Post-it notes attached to a clipboard. Continue reading aloud to them. Engage them in the process by continuing to read and having them stop and mark an **L** on a Post-it note or in the margin when they learn something new.

L
I knew dogs could be smart. I just never knew how smart. They can sniff out survivors in collapsed buildings.

L
In ancient China only boys were educated.
No Fair!

L
Amazing! Over half of the world's gold is in South America.

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE: Send kids off with their inquiry circle texts and have them jot their new learning on Post-its. Remind them to **STR—stop, think, and react** to new information, whether in a book, on the web, or on a video.

Harvey + Daniels (2009). *Comprehension & Collaboration*.
Heinemann, Portsmouth NH