

## Think-Write

This reading strategy involves using a copy of a text selection on which you can write to jot down the thoughts, ideas, questions, and personal connections you make as you read. Here's an example of a think-write based on a poem.

**What happened in the first two battles?**

### The Third Battle of Ypres

**Where are these places?**

**What else did this author write?**

by Raymond Souster

My old man dropped his piece of bread in the Passchendaele mud, picked it up again, wiped it off a little and ate it. He stood in the water to his waist at the guns and stopped only long enough from loading to watch a fellow gunner spin round three times before he fell with his head blown off.

**will this affect him later in his life?**

**graphic description**

A shirt my mother sent him he wore three weeks without changing it.

**stanza break shows change in place/time**

Finally it walked off his back.

**exaggeration — but effective in showing how long he wore clothes without changing (or washing?) them**

**history doesn't record the "ugly" parts of war**

None of this has ever become part of history, which is battles and generals. Well, those generals tried hard enough to kill my father, but he somehow escaped them.

**the ones on his side? or the opponents? — maybe both!**

Still, if he lives

**he lived**

a few years longer they may get him yet.

**irony**

- how can "they" still get him?
- is the trauma of war still affecting him?
- did he go crazy—or will he in his old age?

**This poem reminds me of, I think it's called, "Dulce decorum Est" which depicts the horrors of war—not the glory!**



If you turned headings and subheadings into questions, read to find answers to those questions. If there are questions following a reading selection, you should begin gathering information to answer them.

Good readers will have new questions at the end of their reading that haven't been answered by simply reading the text once. Sometimes you will find answers by rereading the text and synthesizing the information it contains. At other times, you will need to dig more deeply into the text and into your own knowledge and experiences. Since some answers can be found *on the lines*, *between the lines*, or *beyond the lines* of a text, you may need to apply different kinds of thinking (see p. 11) in order to answer some questions correctly.

**Rereading** will help you to find things you missed in your first reading. It is also a good approach to use when you need to remember important details or when you are trying to understand words or sections that didn't make sense the first time you read them. Be sure to examine illustrations and diagrams during a rereading, and keep reading to see if information presented later in the text adds clarification. If, after rereading a text several times, you still don't understand something, try **seeking assistance** from a peer or teacher. Often, just listening while someone else reads the text aloud is helpful in clearing up any confusing passages or words.

The meaning of a word is influenced by the way in which the word is formed (root word with a prefix or suffix, compound word), its part of speech (noun, verb, adjective), and by the context of the sentence in which it appears. **Context clues** that signal meaning include

- **definition** (A *virtuoso* is a person who collects art objects.)
- **example** (A *vintage car*, such as the *Model T*, is expensive.)
- a **modifier** used to describe the unknown word (The *oboes* in the school band *played a melancholy tune*.)
- a **restatement** using more familiar words (They fired him because of his *indolence*. He was the *laziest* employee they'd ever had.)
- an **inference** of the unknown word (The *roulette wheel* in the *casino* was a popular *game*.)
- **parallel structure** (Each shelf contained some type of *genre book*. On one was *mystery*, on another *fantasy*, on another *tall tales*, and on another *picture books*.)
- **familiar connective** (Bullies often provoke trouble by acting in a *domineering or authoritarian* manner.)

*SQ3<sup>®</sup> is a strategy that is particularly useful when reading informational texts, such as a news article or a chapter from a textbook. To learn more about SQ3<sup>®</sup>, see page 14.*

**Hint** If, after using these strategies, you still don't know the meaning of a word, look it up in the dictionary. It is important to read all of the meanings of the word, not just the first one. Check the pronunciation of the word as well.

## Effective Reading Strategies

Activate prior knowledge	<i>What do I know about this topic? Have I ever read any books like this one?</i>
Understand the purpose for reading	<i>Why am I reading this? What do I plan to do with what I learn?</i>
Visualize images	<i>What is the setting of this story? How can I keep track of the different characters?</i>
Focus on reading task	<i>How can I make sure I remember the important points in what I am reading?</i>
Anticipate and predict	<i>What's going to happen next in the story? How will the writer support this argument?</i>
Confirm and adjust predictions	<i>How might this event affect the outcome of the story? How does this action change the way I see this character?</i>
Ask questions and read to find answers	<i>What information am I looking for in this chapter?</i>
Monitor understanding	<i>How does this relate to what the author said at the beginning of the article?</i>
Clear up any confusion or misunderstanding	<i>Do I need to go back and reread the first chapter of the book?</i>
Use context clues to help with word meanings	<i>How can I use the rest of the paragraph to help me figure out the meaning of this word?</i>
Seek assistance	<i>Do I need to check this word in a dictionary?</i>
Use text structure to aid understanding	<i>Does the author give the main idea of the paragraph in the first sentence?</i>
Stop and reflect	<i>Does this argument really make sense?</i>
Recall details	<i>What did the author say earlier about this character's family life?</i>
Organize and integrate new information to make connections	<i>How does this information support the ideas the author presented in the introduction?</i>
Summarize main ideas	<i>What is the most important point the author is making in this piece of writing?</i>
Obtain additional information	<i>Do I need to read another book on this topic?</i>

**Summarizing** means restating what you have read by condensing the information into your own words. When summarizing,

- identify the topic sentence that states the main idea in each paragraph. Ask yourself, "What is the most important thing I learned in this paragraph?"

- omit trivial and redundant information.
- create terms that label or categorize lists of details.
- use the structure of the text to guide the organization of your summary: “What does it begin with? What is in the middle? How does it end?”
- read the opening and closing paragraphs, headings, and sub-headings to find key points.

**Inferring** involves combining clues in the text with prior knowledge to draw conclusions about objects, actions, locations, time, causes or effects, feelings, pastimes, or occupations. For example, imagine you are standing next to a middle-aged woman at a street corner during the early evening hours. Her pager goes off and she mutters, “Hmm, the hospital already....” You might infer from her comment that she is a doctor.

**Hint** It is important to monitor and adjust your inferences as you acquire more information during your reading. There is a chance that further information you receive later in the text might cause you to change your inference.

**Story grammar** and **story maps** can assist you with summarizing and inferring, and can help you make sense of what you are reading. Here is an example of each.

**Story Grammar**

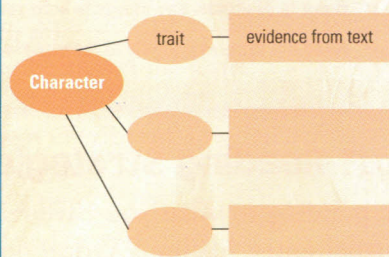
Title: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Author: \_\_\_\_\_

Characters (descriptions)	Setting (description)
_____	_____
_____	_____

Plot (key events)

Beginning	Middle	End
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

**Story Map : Character**



**Visualizing** is forming a picture in your head to help you understand what you are reading. You might create mental pictures of the setting and characters in a story while you read, or you might actually sketch a complicated time line of historical events, or a map to see the setting of the story.



Visualizing what you are reading can aid your comprehension.