

I Read It, But I Don't Get It by Cris Tovani

In *I Read It, But I Don't Get It*, Cris Tovani shares with readers her stories working with struggling readers and how she helped them build interest, confidence, and skills in reading. In her book, “access tools” are specific materials and strategies that help students organize and synthesize their thought as they read. They make material more accessible. Students of all grade levels can use these tools with almost any type of material. (Tovani, 2000) Therefore, we choose to share these valuable teaching tools with you with the hope that you, too, will benefit from these strategies.

Double Entry Diaries

1. Students divide a piece of paper in half
2. On the left: Direct quotes from the text
3. On the right: Reader reaction to the quoted text

DED can be constructed in a variety of ways in different content areas such as math, science, and social studies. Students can ask questions, identify confusion, and make connections to content.

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Comprehension Constructor

First line: Reader writes down direct quotation from text that confuses the reader.

Second line: Reader explains why the quote confuses them.

Third line: Reader proposes a fix-up strategy to try clear up their confusion.

Fourth line: Reader synthesizes their thinking and decides how using fix-up strategies repaired their confusion.

What's Your Thinking?

What are you wondering?

What do you think might be a possible answer to your question?

What connections can you make?

Tips for Reading a Poem

1. Read the poem all the way through, twice.
2. Think about any background knowledge that you have that will help you connect to the people, animals, or objects in the poem.
3. Try to make a picture in your head of what's happening in the poem.
(Insert poem)
4. What do you think the poem is about?

Textual evidence

Background knowledge

Name:

Hour:

1. Read "Man at the Well."
2. As you read the piece, you will have questions. Jot the questions you have in the margins where the questions arise. You should have at least three questions.
3. After finishing the piece, write a response. It should be at least a paragraph long with no less than four sentences.
4. Notice the questions you asked. Write the three best ones below and then decide where the answers to the questions could be found: in the text, in the reader's head, in another source.
 - a)
 - b)
 - c)
5. What do you know about: war, Vietnam, the elderly, bullies? Jot down background knowledge you have about any of the above topics.

Time to Draw Some Inferences

Name:

Choose a question from your reading that hasn't been answered to your satisfaction. Record the question below. Then, using the clues in the text, add any background knowledge you have to supply an inference. Remember many of these questions don't have one right answer. Be brave!

1. Record a question you have from your reading that you are most curious about.

2. Go back to the text and record any textual evidence that might help you answer your question.

3. Combine the clues in the text with your background knowledge and try to answer the question you asked in number 1.

Text Connections

Name:

Hour:

1. When I read _____

I make the connection _____

2. When I read _____

I make the connection _____

3. When I read _____

I make the connection _____

Silent Reading Record

Name:

Read for 30 minutes and then stop and complete the following:

1. What did you read? (Include title and page numbers.)

2. In four or more sentences summarize what you read.

3. As you were reading, what were you thinking? Write at least four sentences. Did you make any connections? What were you wondering? What opinions do you have about what you read?

Coding Sheets

Text coding is strategy used to help students keep track of thinking while they are reading. Here's how it works:

1. Assign codes to the types of thinking in which you would like students to engage.
2. As students read, they are to mark these codes next to the passages in the text that trigger the kind of thinking and explain the connection.
3. Model the coding process for your students by thinking it through out loud.
4. Give students accessible pieces to mark on their own.
5. Use highlighters to mark confusing passages.

Coding Sheet

Name:

- Mark at least five places in the text with the code BK. In the margin next to the words that remind you of something in your background knowledge, describe the connection.
- Mark at least five places in the text with a question mark. In the margin next to the words that cause you to wonder, write the question you have. You may begin your question with the words "I wonder."
- Highlight any parts in the text that cause you confusion. Next to the highlighted areas, describe the fix-up strategy you used to get unstuck. You may use more than one strategy.
- Summarize this piece.
- On the back, write a response to this piece.

Coding for Visualizing

Name:

Hour:

- Highlight five words or phrases that help you get a picture in your head.
- Write three questions you have about the piece. Begin each question with the words "I wonder."
- On the back of this sheet, write what you think happened in the piece.