

Are students understanding deeply (retaining and reapplying) and are they completely engaged in what they read and learn?

Markers of understanding and engagement in narrative texts
<p>1. Learners experience empathy - we sense that we are somehow <i>in the book</i>. Empathy can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Character empathy in which we feel we know the characters, experience the same emotions, stand by them in their trials • Setting empathy in which we feel a part of the setting, • Conflict empathy in which we experience the internal and external conflict as if first-hand
<p>2. Learners experience a memorable emotional response - the sense that what the reader feels may be part of his/her emotional life for a long time, he/she may feel moved to act to mitigate a conflict in the world</p>
<p>3. Learners experience the aesthetic - we find aspects of a book very compelling; we feel a desire to linger with or reread portions of the text we find beautiful, well-written, surprising, humorous or moving</p>
<p>4. Learners ponder - we feel a desire to pause and dwell in new facets and twists in the text - we may want to reread to think more about certain ideas</p>
<p>5. Learners find ourselves thinking about the book when we're not reading - we generate new ideas and imagine new possibilities in characters' lives; our ideas are original, but related to the text</p>
<p>6. Learners advocate and evaluate - we may follow one character or plot element more intensively and may have the sense of being "behind" the character(s) or narrator - we want events to evolve in a particular way</p>
<p>7. Learners recognize patterns and symbols - we may experience a moment of insight or begin to use our knowledge of literary tools to recognize themes, motifs as well as symbols and metaphors in stories</p>
<p>8. Learners extrapolate from details in the text - we arrive at global conclusions from focal points in the text - these conclusions may reach beyond the scope of the text to other people, events, settings -- we may feel an urge to act to solve a problem or act on an issue in our community</p>
<p>9. Learners evaluate the author's intentions, values and claims - we actively study the author's style and may choose to replicate it in our writing; we are aware of how he/she manipulates our thinking with tools such as diction, foreshadowing and metaphor; we sometimes argue with the author; we discern and evaluate the author's success in making the book credible and we are attuned to ways in which he/she affirms or changes our beliefs, values and opinions.</p>
<p>10. Learners remember - we develop a sense of permanence that comes with deeply understanding something - we know that we'll be able to use a concept we understand in a new situation</p>

Markers of understanding and engagement in world learning and informational texts

1. Learners **imagine themselves in real world situations, immersed in ideas**. We have compelling questions. We take on the role of scientist, social scientist, mathematician.

We:

- begin to **understand thought leadership** - we explore and seek to understand the lives of those who have made significant contributions to a field and begin to imagine how we might make contributions
- **understand the problems that led to discoveries and new solutions** in the scientific, technological or social scientific world - we have a sense of the elements that make a situation problematic and some sense of the steps to be taken to solve the problem

2. Learners **experience a memorable emotional response** - we feel a passion to learn more, compassion for others that may be affected by a problem and may be moved to act to mitigate a conflict in the world

3. Learners **experience the aesthetic** - we feel a sense of wonder about the complexities and nuances related to a concept we are learning - we may feel compelled to reread portions and dig more deeply into the topic

4. Learners **revisit and rethink** - we choose to re-read or explore other text to learn more about a concept - we feel that we want to review and rethink a concept - we adopt a **stance** - belief or opinion, carefully considered and made public in some way

5. Learners **generate our own hypotheses and theories** about why and how things happen in the natural and social world; we check those hypotheses against those that have been tested

6. Learners **direct our energy to comprehending to a few ideas of great import** - we develop a sense of what matters most, what is worth remembering, and have the confidence to focus on important ideas rather than details that are unimportant to the larger text - we **evaluate the information** and make decisions about credibility or bias in what we read

7. Learners **recognize patterns and text structures including**

- **cause/effect** - we use our background knowledge to discern how events affect each other
 - **comparisons and contrasts** - we develop a sense of how concepts are similar and different
 - **chronology** - we sense the general order of development or the progression of a series of ideas
- problem/solution** - when a problem is introduced, we begin to consider solutions and/or to anticipate solutions that may be presented in the text; we anticipate new problems and solutions related to earlier ones

8. Learners **create schema** -- we realize how newly learned concepts "fit" into existing background knowledge, that we can make sense in relation to what is already known - that our existing knowledge is accurate or inaccurate (and needs to be revised) - we look to a variety of sources to complete schema when we recognize that it is missing

9. Learners **recognize the influence of beliefs/values/opinions** - we may experience a sense of affirmation of existing beliefs/values/opinions and/or sense newly developing beliefs/values/opinions related to the text - we can give evidence to support them

10. Learners **remember** - we develop a sense of permanence that comes with deeply understanding something - we know that we'll be able to use a concept they understand in a new situation

Dimensions of Understanding

Behavioral Markers of Deep Understanding and Engagement

Behaviors associated with understanding (what we might observe in the classroom when children are understanding)

- Learners are deeply **engaged** - we experience a sense that the world around has disappeared and we are subsumed by the world of the text -- we choose to **focus** on particular ideas for longer periods of time, we may need to focus in silence and/or in conversation with others -- we **apply fervent attention** - we can observe others concentrating with a focus that is nearly impenetrable
- Learners **want to act in the world based on what they have read or learned**- through discussions, writing, drama or art we feel an urge to do something or act in some way to mitigate or resolve related conflicts in the world; we can talk about how a book changed us, caused us to think and act differently in our own lives -- we may want to **leave a written, artistic or dramatic legacy** - we want to make an observable contribution to the world around them based on what we read
- Learners **show willingness to struggle** - we choose to challenge ourselves to understand more deeply - we consciously fight any influence of negative self-judgment, seek, with a sense of efficacy to solve complex problems
- Learners can **describe their own progress** -- we can describe their own processes, preferences and progress as a reader - we can describe, for example, how we used a comprehension strategy and how such use improved our understanding -- we **define and describe how our thinking has changed** and can ascribe those changes to the use of comprehension strategies or other factors
- Learners **engage in rigorous discourse** - we speak with others to develop deeper understanding and/or defend our ideas - we remain open to **multiple** perspectives and consider others' ideas seriously, often integrating them into our own background knowledge -- we **argue/defend** - we may discuss, challenge others' ideas and beliefs and/or defend our own with evidence from the text and from background knowledge (schema)
- Learners are **renaissance learners** - we meander among a wide range of topics, interests, genres, authors, pursue study in areas we find compelling or aesthetically rewarding -- we **pursue a compelling question** - we may decide to tackle a topic of intense interest to build a knowledge base, satisfy curiosity
- Learners **experience insight** - we experience and can describe a moment of clarity, of "seeing" for the first time, possibly due to our efforts to recognize patterns and structures in text