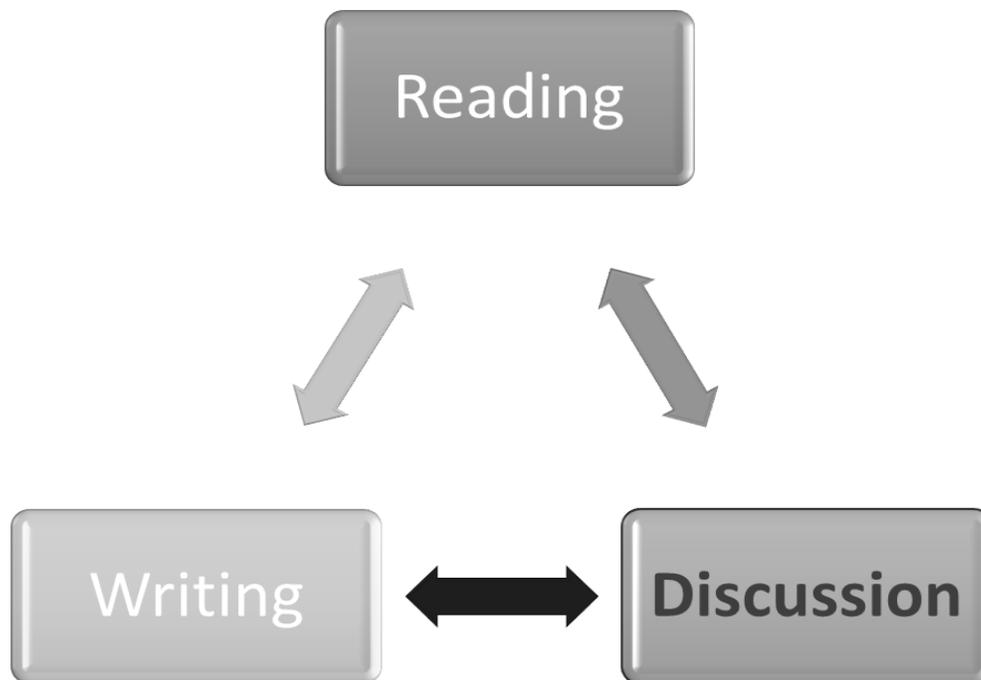


The Magic Literacy Triangle: Reading, Discussing, and Writing

Grades K-12



By: LeAnn Nickelsen, M.Ed.
Author, Educator, Trainer, &
School Improvement Coach
www.maximizelearninginc.com
leann@maximizelearninginc.com
[Twitter - @lnickelsen1](https://twitter.com/lnickelsen1)

LeAnn Nickelsen, M.Ed. brings powerful, evidence-based tools and strategies that boost student achievement with lasting results. In fact, LeAnn is a national expert at:

- ✓ **Closing Learning Gaps in Struggling Students** getting high-poverty students to grade level
- ✓ **Differentiating Instruction & Growing Literacy** to meet every students' needs in all content areas
- ✓ **Follow-up Coaching for Confidence and Collective Efficacy** from relationships to lesson-planning, feedback and better student learning



BACKGROUND: She's a former teacher of the year, a Jensen-certified, brain-research trainer for over 20 years and has authored over 13 practical books including *Deeper Learning: 7 Powerful Strategies for In-Depth and Longer-Lasting Learning* (co-authored with Eric Jensen). Her unique customized options will ensure the new learning gets implemented because of extraordinary follow-up coaching skillsets. She's worked with over 450 schools in 40 states and gets rave reviews from both teachers and leadership alike.

APPROACH: LeAnn Nickelsen gives you the “whole package” as a trainer. She always listens first, then works to *customize and personalize* your event based on exactly what you and your staff/students need. She *role models* every skill for your staff to show HOW it's done. She shares real stories and examples from real schools to drive strong, get to grade-level achievement. This approach means you get a passionate, engaging and *highly practical* training that your staff can implement immediately to raise student learning.

THE BUZZ: Read what just one of her raving fans said about her recent work:

“LeAnn has been an amazing support for Westlawn Elementary over the last two years. She immediately understood our struggle and instantly began working on ways to transform our campus. LeAnn’s guidance helped us focus on opportunities for student and teacher growth. What LeAnn does is amazing...it is really a talent. She has tremendous resources and loads of energy. She contributed tremendously in changing our campus culture to having a growth mindset, and most importantly, helping us believe we as a campus could be successful. We have many rewards from collaborating with her, and she continues to help motivate and focus our campus. We believe the possibilities are endless! LeAnn’s ability to communicate with teachers and assess the educational and emotional needs of a student is outstanding. LeAnn truly loves working with teachers, giving it her all, listening to their needs and providing guidance.”

Nichole S. & Kiandra W., Texarkana, TX (2018)

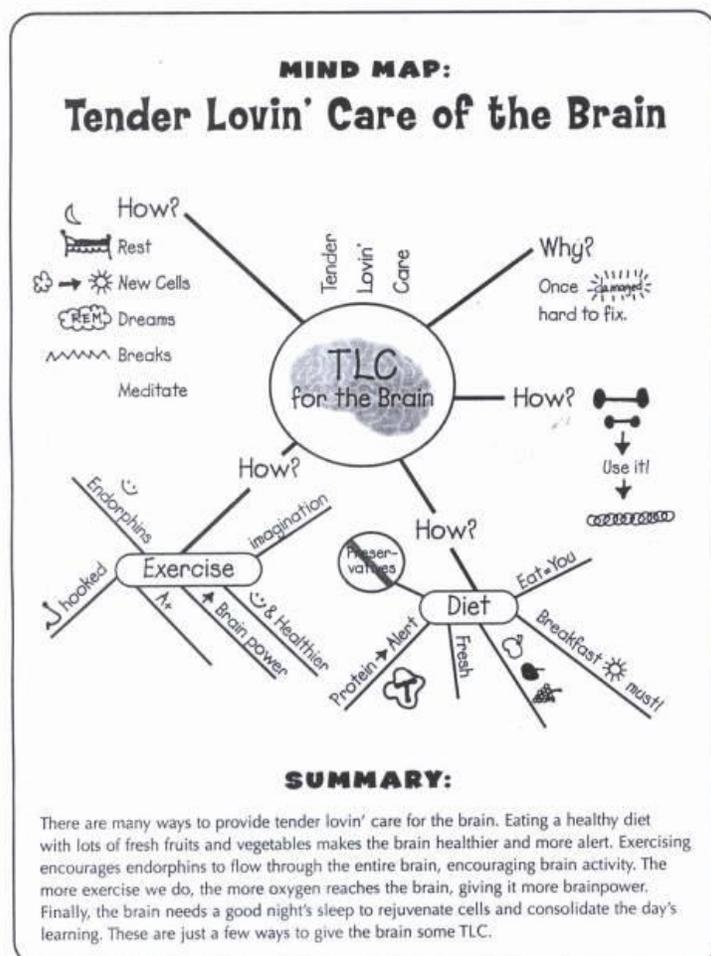
Super Sleuth

Find three different people to answer 3 of the questions. After they answer, have them sign that box.

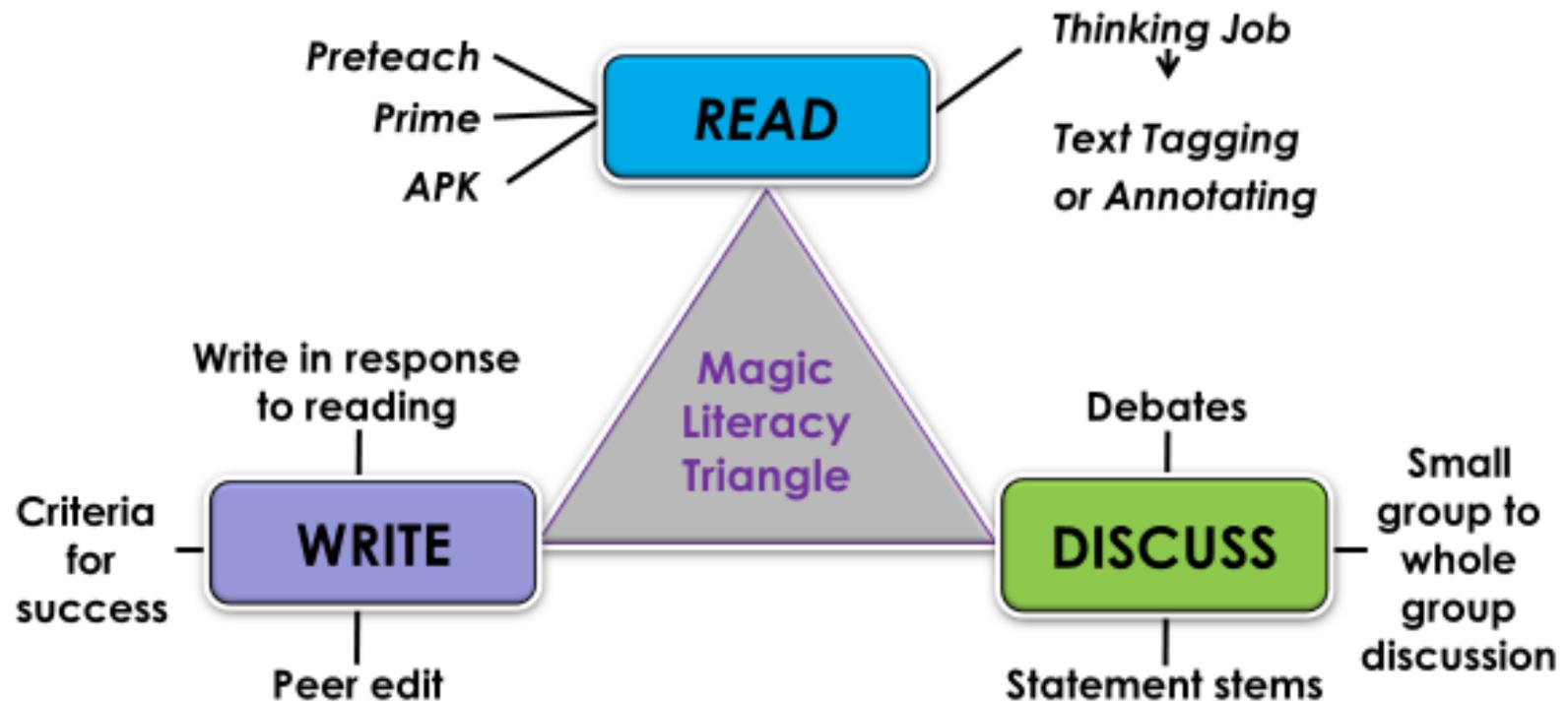
1. What are your students' biggest reading struggles?	2. How do you currently integrate reading, writing, and discussions?	3. What texts do you provide for reading? What texts do you struggle to provide?
4. How might student discussions help them better comprehend texts?	5. Create your own Q.	6. What tools have you used to support students with their conversations about what they learned?
7. What are your students' biggest writing struggles?	8. Which writing strategies have proven to be the most powerful for your students?	9. How might student to student discussions help improve writing? Student to teacher?

Mind Mapping

1. Represent the main topic (pictorially or symbolically) at the center of the paper.
2. Represent related topics in spokes around the main topic.
3. Use COLOR. The more colorful or unique the representation, the more likely your brain will remember it.
4. Use only key words or phrases and PRINT them. The brain recognizes and remembers the printed word more rapidly than words written in cursive.
5. Represent ideas with symbols. This personalizes the concept at the same time you translate it into a concrete representation.
6. Use arrows or underlines to highlight important ideas.
7. Cluster or group similar facts related to the main topic.



The Magic Literacy Triangle



1. Learning Targets (content to be learned from the reading and lesson) (standards):

Text:

2. Before Reading Activity/Questions/Pre-Teach Vocabulary:
Tier 2 and 3 Words:

Explain how you will teach each word (Marzano):

Reading

3. Thinking Job:
During Reading Text Tagging or Annotating:

Writing

Discussion

5. Writing Prompt and Criteria for Success for Writing:

4. After Reading Discussions: (stems)

Copyright: LeAnn Nickelsen, M.Ed.

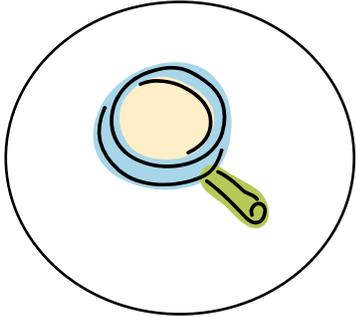
How to Make Reading Visible and How to Get Evidence of Purpose

Have a Thinking Job and measure it by:

1. Tabs in the text.
2. Sticky notes with the thought in the text (with Close Reading Marks).
3. Annotations in the text—write on the article or in the book.

Ways to Guide Annotation

- Highlight repeated words in order to predict main idea better.
- Generate questions while reading and writing them near the section.
- Draw a picture or symbol of a word that you need to understand better.
- Write the definition of an unknown word (look it up first).
- Asterisk the most important facts.
- Numbers to sequence events.
- Circle new words or unique words.
- Mark slang words, innuendoes, puns, figurative language, and/or irony that create the tone or mood of the text.
- Determine how the passage is organized.



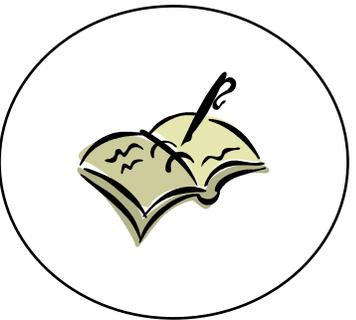
Clarify



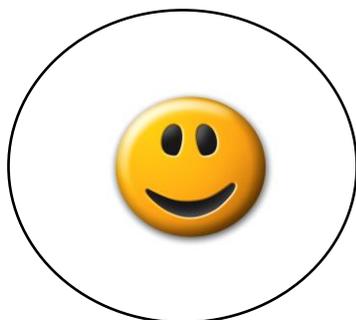
Predict



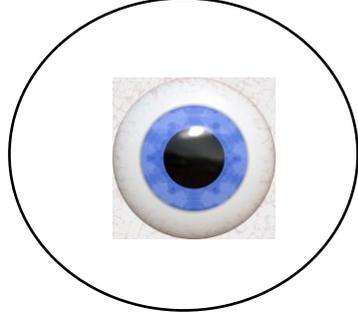
Piggyback



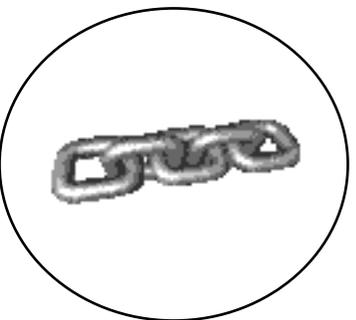
Summarize



Feeling



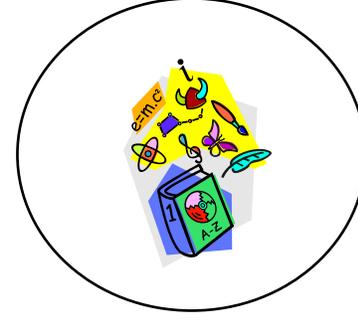
Visualize



Connect



Question



Vocabulary

	<p>Predict – predict what the selection will be about prior to reading or predict how someone else you group will respond to the selection after the reading</p>
	<p>Summarize - summarize part or all of the selection or summarize someone else’s thinking about the selection</p>
	<p>Clarify – state something that was clarified for you after the reading or clarify something for someone else in your group</p>
	<p>Connect – make a text-to-self, text-to-text, or text-to-world connection</p>
	<p>Feeling – share your feelings about the selection or other people’s viewpoints about the reading</p>
	<p>Visualize – share something that the article was able to help you to visualize</p>
	<p>Vocabulary – share some vocabulary that drew your attention to the selection or that was new or unusual to you</p>
	<p>Question – share a question that you have after reading the selection or ask a question of one of your group members about the selection</p>
	<p>Piggyback – piggyback onto someone else’s thinking by sharing your own</p>

Text-Dependent Questions (TDQ) Examples

Type of TDQ	Informational Text	Literary Text
General Understanding of Text	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the gist of this text based on title, headings, pictures, captions, etc.? • What is the main idea? • • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What might this story be about based on cover pages, pictures, title, etc. •
Key Details	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What was an interesting fact that you read about? • What details do you think should be part of this text and are not? • What did you learn from paragraph _____? • What supporting details did the author include to help you learn _____? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who, did what, where, when, why and how? • Who is telling this story and why? • Who is the story being written to?
Vocabulary & Text Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What does the author mean when he/she said: _____? • How does this sentence, passage or section connect with the rest of the whole text? • What words are confusing or stand out? • How do the transition words that the author uses help your brain transition from paragraphs or ideas? • How do the text features help you understand the text better? Would you change any of them? • How does the author organize this writing? Which text structures did he/she use? Good choice? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which words were rich in meaning or created a particular emotion within you? • Which words are confusing? • If _____ word was changed to _____ how might the meaning change? • What figurative language or symbols made the visualization process better? • How does the sequence of the story develop the plot, characters, climax, etc.? • What major events affected the behaviors of the characters? • What words resonate with you? Which phrases do you love?
Author's Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the author telling us about this topic (point of view)? Does he/she have any biases? Purpose? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What does the author want me to believe and/or understand? • What are some themes within this story?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the author trying to persuade the reader to believe/do something? • What resources is he/she using to support topic? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What tone or mood is the author portraying? • What assumptions is the author making during _____.
Inferences Or conclusions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What facts do you believe are missing from this text? • What caused _____? • How can you determine if this author is credible to write about this topic? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What two events could have prevented the problem? • Why did the character do _____ or say _____? • Does the story describe a particular culture? Belief system?
Self-Expression with opinions, arguments and comparisons to other texts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is your opinion about this topic? How would you create an argument for or against it? • Compare this topic to what we read yesterday about _____. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does this story connect with other stories you read? • How is this author's style like his/her other book called _____? • How would you rate this book? Which audience would appreciate this book the most? • How does the internet site _____ help us understand this book better?

Every TDQ should force the student **BACK** to the text to retrieve the answer. Always include follow-up phrases such as:

- Where did you find that?
- Why did you say that?
- Support your answer. Show me where **you found that.**
- What is the evidence to prove what you just said?
- Explain your thinking?
- How do you know that?

Close Reading Marks	
Nonfiction Reading	Questions
★ I know this already	?A Question to Author (Why did you...)
N New fact or idea to me!	?T Question to Teacher (Confused about text)
? I don't understand and here is why...	?S Question to Self (Content to research)
— Very important phrase or word to discuss	?F Question to a Friend (To review later)
😊 😞 I agree or disagree	WIT What I think the answer to my question is...
S Summary Time	
! Inference I made	
Fiction Reading	Vocabulary Emphasis
P I want to predict	W Wow Word – I like this word the author used...why?
? I don't understand	FL Figurative Language. How it improved the meaning...
○ What is this word?	CC Context clue that told me the meaning of a word
✓ I get it! Problem solved	△ Could change this word to... why?
C Prediction confirmed	?A Why did author use this word? Predict.
! Inference I made	? I don't understand this word...look up.
V Visualized this	

Annotating Text While Reading

Students start to annotate the text with pencil. Teachers, give students ideas of what to annotate based on what you know about the text, the target, and what strategies you have modeled. Here are some potential “annotations” to respond in writing next to the words, sentences, paragraphs or passages:

- Highlight repeated words in order to predict main idea better
- Generate questions while reading and then write them near the section
- Draw a picture or symbol of a word that you need to understand better
- Write the definition of an unknown word based on context clues or dictionary definition
- Asterisk the most important facts
- Number to sequence events
- Circle new words or unique words
- Mark slang words, innuendoes, puns, figurative language, and/or irony that create the tone or mood of the text
- Determine how the passage is organized
- Note special meter, rhythm, rhymes, onomatopoeias, etc.
- Agree or disagree with the author – what is his/her attitude toward the subject and readers? What does this passage tell us about the author?
- Create an analogy or connection to a particular section
- Document new information to you and write Ah Ha! Moments
- Explain why you might have laughed
- Mark contradictions within the text
- Mark sections that you reread
- Write down themes that the details are pointing toward
- Mark patterns from passage to passage. Did you notice any repetitions and similarities from one section of the text to another one?

Obviously, you don't give them this whole list. There are three types of annotations that students can engage in depending on comprehension levels and strategy use:

- 1.) Open Annotation – Allow these students to annotate any thoughts that come to their mind while reading. These students have shown you that they are strategic readers and know when and how to choose reading strategies.
- 2.) Guided Annotation – Invite these students to use 2-3 specific annotation marks that you know they need to grow in and yet, allow them to choose other annotation marks that they feel comfortable with. These students have shown you that they are strategic readers with certain skills but have some growth opportunities as well.
- 3.) Closed Annotation – Give these students about 2-4 ways to annotate while reading. Be specific such as: circle unknown words, underline confusing sections and place question mark next to this section of text, and guess the meanings of words next the circled words. These students struggle with reading strategies and need explicit guidance and instruction during the annotation process.

Function	Vocabulary	Sample Sentence Frames
Compare	both same also like analogous to similar similar alike whereas each likewise just as in the same way akin to as well as on a similar note,	<p>___ and ___ both have ___.</p> <p>Both ___ and ___ are ___.</p> <p>___ and ___ are the same because ___.</p> <p>___ also has ___.</p> <p>___ is like ___ because ___.</p> <p>Similarly, ___ is ___.</p> <p>___ is similar to ___ in many ways because ___ and ___.</p> <p>Whereas ___ is ___, ___ is ___ and ___.</p> <p>___ and ___ are alike because ___.</p> <p>___ is just as difficult as ___ because ___.</p>
Contrast	different but although different from however one difference on the other hand in comparison by comparison instead of in contrast to conversely even though unlike on the contrary yet despite differ variation otherwise	<p>___ is ___ different than ___ because ___.</p> <p>___ is ___, but ___ is ___.</p> <p>Although ___ has ___, ___ has ___.</p> <p>___ is ___. However, ___ is ___.</p> <p>___ is ___. On the other hand, ___ is ___.</p> <p>Even though ___ has ___, ___ has ___.</p> <p>___ and ___ differ because ___.</p> <p>___ is unlike ___ because ___.</p> <p>___ has ___, yet ___ has ___.</p> <p>___ is ___. On the contrary, ___ is ___.</p> <p>Despite having ___, ___ is different because ___.</p> <p>One variation between ___ and ___ is that ___ has ___.</p>

Question Stems to Help You Generate Better Questions

- What questions do you have about...
- How would you summarize...
- If you could include one more chunk of information, what would it be...
- What did you rediscover about...
- Do you have any personal connections with...
- How would you explain _____ to _____?
- How could you implement the information about...
- How will your life be different now that you have learned...
- What analogy or simile can you create after learning about...
- What are your gaps in thinking on...
- What are you beginning to wonder now that you have learned...
- What was the main idea of...
- What are some cause-effect relationships that you saw in the section about...
- What was the most important information that you learned...
- How would you organize...
- What would happen if... What would happen next?
- How can you design, invent, compose, or arrange...
- Can you propose alternative solutions and arrangements for...
- How would you modify...

- What could be done to minimize/maximize...
- Can you formulate a theory for...
- Do you agree or disagree with...
- How do you feel about _____ and why?
- Which is better and which is worse...
- Which solution is best and why...
- How would you sort and label these groups of words...
- How does _____ compare/contrast with _____?
- What are the pros/cons for...
- What might the next section be about and why did you say that?
- What was the purpose of this section/paragraph/sentence? Give evidence from text
- How could you compare and contrast _____ with _____?
- Why is/did...? Give evidence from text
- Can you explain _____ in more depth?
- Where else was that said? Where else could...? Why?
- What is the effect of _____ on _____? Give evidence from text
- Why did the author believe/say/write _____?
- What was the MVPI – Most Valuable Piece of Information and why? Give evidence from text.
- If you could change _____, what or how? Why?

QUADS

<p>Question Author: Question:</p> <p>Answer Author: Answer:</p>	<p>Question Author: Question:</p> <p>Answer Author: Answer:</p>
<p>Question Author: Question:</p> <p>Answer Author: Answer:</p>	<p>Question Author: Question:</p> <p>Answer Author: Answer:</p>

MATH TALK: Building mathematical ideas

Student

Presenting our ideas

I have an idea...

I have an example...

I have another way...

I can prove my thinking by...

I can show you what I am thinking using...

(drawings, manipulatives, numbers, words)

Adding to other ideas

I agree/disagree with _____'s idea...

I'd like to add to _____'s idea...

I have a question about _____'s idea...

I am not sure if I understand _____'s idea...

Making connections

I can make a connection to what we learned before...

I use this math in the real world when I...

This is related to ...

Reflecting on what we learned

I learned that ...

I know how to...

I can answer the "E" essential question of the day...

MATH TALK: Building mathematical ideas

Teacher

Presenting our ideas

Who can give me an example?

What is another way to solve this problem?

How can you convince your classmates (partner)?

Can you compare your thinking with your partner's thinking?

How can you show your thinking using drawings, manipulatives, numbers, and words?

Adding to other ideas

Do you agree/disagree with _____'s idea? Why?

What would you like to add to _____'s idea?

Do you have a question about _____'s idea?

How can we restate it (question or statement) in our own words?

Making connections

What connection can you make to what we have learned before?

How would you use this math in the real world?

How is this related to _____? What if _____?

Reflecting on what we learned

What concepts or ideas have you learned?

How do we use _____?

How can we answer the "E" essential question of the day?

Possible Feedback from Teacher to Students

When Student Answers/Work Need Redirecting:

The learning target is _____. I noticed that you accomplished _____ with this learning target. What would it take to master this learning target – what else do you need to do, learn, or include?

Rephrase the question so the students understand better.

Ask student to explain his/her reasoning. Keep asking questions to get to the root of the error in thinking

Use symbols, visuals, words, letters to help students recall the information (starts with.. sounds like...)

Pose the same question to a different student if the student wants to pass (but check back and hold that student accountable)

Ask student: Do you want to phone a friend?

Do you want to ask a question to clarify your thinking?

Invite the class to ask this student a question.

Paraphrase what you heard the student saying.

When You Want Students to Dig Deeper:

Can you give some examples?

Tell me more.

Can you explain the steps you took to solve that problem?

What would you compare that with? How does that connect with...?

What if _____ happened, how would that change...?

What are the characteristics of...? What details could you add to...?

How could you prove...? What evidence would need to be present?

How might this be viewed from the perspective of...?

When You Want Students To Justify Their Thinking:	When You Want Students to Show Evidence:
So I think I heard you say...Is that what you meant?	Where did you find that information? What page?
What did you mean when you said...?	What article?
I'm confused by... Can you explain?	How do you know that is a credible resource?
Why do you think that? Have you thought about...?	What paragraph did you read that in?
	What website had that information? What other websites could you use?
	How do you know that?

Universal Prompts to Promote Thinking (student or teacher):

(Bambrick-Santoyo, Settles, Worrell, 2013)

Prompt	When to Use
"Tell me more."	Student gives a limited response
"What in the story/text makes you think that?"	Teacher wants a student to go back into the text to a place that shows the thinking Student uses too much personal experience in response
"Why do you think that?"	Student gives factual response; teacher wants to understand why student has made that conclusion
"Why is that important?"	Student gives a fact but doesn't make an inference.
Repeat original question (different words if needed)	Student does not know how to get started on answer

Habits of Discussion: Learning to Build (Bambrick-Santoyo, Settles, Worrell, 2013)

Learning to Build	Ideal Student Actions
Elaborate on your Answer	When prompted, add relevant details to answer
Build off Others' Answers	Build off what the previous student said; comments are not in isolation.
Evaluate Others' Responses	Use thumbs up, to the side, or down; agree/disagree because; I somewhat agree/disagree because
Praise your Peers	Praise each other's work or thinking
Prompt Peers with Universal Prompts	<i>See above table</i>
Hint, Don't Tell	Give a hint to another student to find the answer without telling him/her
No Hands	Understand wait time, and know when to prompt a peer in the conversation
Lead	Stay focused on the core question. Identify when the sharing strays and redirect conversation
Come Prepared in Writing	Use written responses to guide discussion

Writing for Learning vs. Learning to Write

Writing to Learn

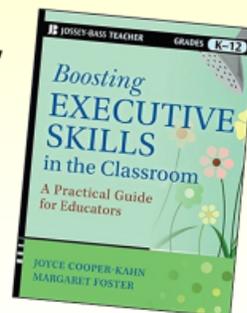
- Promotes Metacognition
- Improves Memory and Retention of content
- Integrated into all content areas
- Serves as a formative – for feedback and growth
- Very valuable (increases motivation)

Learning to Write

- Handwriting
- Sentence structure
- Writing process
- CUPS for Editing

Good writing is not easy (even for good writers).

“If reading is an input challenge, then writing needs to be considered an input and output challenge. In fact, writing may be **one of the most complex executive function tasks students face in school**. It requires coming up with a thought, organizing it, putting it into words, writing or typing those words while holding the thoughts in mind over time, and tracking the whole process and all its parts. It’s no wonder that students tend to freeze up at the mere thought of it!”



Possible Prompts to Get Started

1. Go through your annotations and choose one idea that you highlighted. Why is this idea critical to understand _____?
2. What did you note while reading that was confusing? Why? Explain how you can understand this section better. Then write about it.
3. What are the 3 ...
4. On a scale of 1-5, label your current understanding of what you learned today and provide a rationale.

For Scaffolding, Provide Sentence Starters

"There are two examples from the text that prove..."

"In my opinion, the most important element is..."

"The best example of _____ is..."

"I think _____ could be improved by..."

"Two words to describe the concept of _____, are... because..."

"Another way to look at..."

Potential Writing Prompt Criteria for Success

My writing includes:	Student	Peer	Teacher
1. A thorough, accurate answer.			
2. An organization that is logical and sequential (introduction, middle, and conclusion).			
3. At least three text-based or note-based references to support it (sourced accurately, truly support answer, page numbers from notes or text).			
4. Several Tier 2 words used accurately that we have learned so far (underline them in purple). Number:___			
5. At least _____ Tier 3 words that we learned during the preteach and during the reading (underline in green).			
6. Conventions (spelling, grammar, usage, punctuation, capitalization, etc.)			