The Importance of Questions

Questions help your child focus on the important elements of reading and their probable causes or effects. There are many opportunities during the day when you and your child can share questions, but asking questions should not be limited to only reading time. It can be a normal and natural part of your child's reading development.

1. Ask your child lots of questions that begin with “Why.” These questions encourage active thinking and help your child explore the reasons for certain events or occurrences both in books and everyday life. For example: “Why do we need traffic signals?” “Why do some animals live underground?” “Why do we have to wear shoes?”

2. Provide your child with opportunities to ask questions too. For example when you and your child select a book to read, ask your child to pose one or two questions about the title on the cover of the book. Before your child begins reading the book, encourage him or her to develop additional questions about the story, take some time to talk over and discuss the questions your child posed.

3. Some of the most important kinds of questions you can share are those that relate to your child's personal experiences. For example, how would a certain story have been different if your child were the main character? What things did the characters in a favorite book do that your child has done? Has your child seen or visited places similar to those that were mention in a recently story?
GOOD Questions to Ask Your Child about His or Her Reading

When your child is reading a book by himself or herself, you should talk with your child about the book to make sure that he or she understands it and to learn what kind of books or writing style your child likes.

Here is a list of questions you can ask your child on almost any book he or she reads. These questions will give you a way to interact with your child during reading. It helps to foster comprehension skills as well.

Questions To Ask BEFORE Reading

1. By looking at the title, can you predict what the book will be about?
2. By looking at the illustrations, can you predict what the book will be about?
3. Have you ever read anything else written by this author? What was it about? Do you think that this book will be similar?

Questions to Ask WHILE Reading: Fiction Texts

1. Where and when does the story take place? What clues tell you where and when the story takes place?
2. What are some words that the author uses to describe the main character? What other words could be used to describe him or her?
3. What are some words that the author uses to describe other characters?
4. What words could describe two different characters in the story?
5. What does the main character look like? What do the minor characters look like? How do you know?
6. What effect does the main character's behavior have on the other characters?
7. How does the main character feel in this situation?
8. Why does the main character behave this way toward another character?
9. What does the main character think about one of the other characters?
10. How are two of the characters in the story different from one another? How are they the same?
11. How do you think the main character feels at the beginning of the story? How do you think the main character feels at the end of the story?
12. Does the main character change during the story?
13. What would the main character probably do in this situation?
14. Describe the effect of this character's actions on the story events.
15. What is the major problem faced by the main character? How do you think that he or she will solve this problem?
16. What advice would you give the main character about his or her problem?
17. What do you think will happen next?
18. What do the illustrations tell you about the characters? The setting? The plot?
19. Make a simple time line for this story, adding events as we get to them in the story.
20. What are the things in the story that are real and what are the things in the story that are make-believe?
21. How does the setting affect the story? Could this story have happened in your neighborhood?
22. How would you feel if you were in the same situation as one of the characters in the story?
23. What do you think this word means? How did you figure out the meaning?
24. Summarize the plot up to this point in the story.
25. How much time has passed in the story? How do you know?

Questions to Ask WHILE Reading: Non Fiction Texts

1. What is the cause of this event? What is the effect of that event?
2. What are some examples of facts in this nonfiction selection?
3. What are some examples of opinions in this nonfiction selection?
4. On what does the author base his or her factual statements (e.g., personal experience, research in the field)?
5. What is the main idea of this nonfiction selection?
6. Why does the author compare these two things?
7. Does this illustration/picture/chart/graph help you better understand what the author is trying to say? Why or why not?
8. Why did the author write this selection? How do you know?
9. What point is the author trying to make in this selection?
10. What information does the author include in this selection to try to persuade you to his or her point of view?
Questions To Ask AFTER Reading Fiction Selections:

1. What did you enjoy most about the story?
2. Which character did you like most? Which character did you like least? Why?
3. What lesson was learned by the main character in the story? By the minor characters?
4. Can you think of a real-life situation that teaches this same lesson?
5. What are some other ways that the story could have ended?
6. What would happen if the story continued? What else could happen to these characters?
7. Retell the story in your own words.
8. Write one sentence that summarizes what the story was about.
9. Think of a different title for the story.
10. Would you want to read another book by this author?

Questions To Ask AFTER Nonfiction Selections:

1. What did you enjoy most about the selection?
2. Retell the main points of the selection in your own words.
3. Write one sentence that summarizes what the selection was about.
4. Think of a different title for the selection.
5. Would you want to read another selection by this author?

Courtesy of:

http://www.testingny.com/fourth_grade_ny.html