



Use bookmarks to build comprehension

To fully understand a book, good readers confirm and adjust predictions, pose questions, create mental pictures, and reread confusing passages. The following activities give kids the opportunity to practice those strategies by using the good, old-fashioned bookmark in creative new ways.



Prove Predictions

Jamie

PURPOSE

To encourage students to predict as they read, and support and adjust their predictions with story examples.

MATERIALS

chapter books at students' independent reading levels, stiff paper for making bookmarks

TIME NEEDED

30 minutes

PART 1: PREDICT AND SUPPORT

Give each student three bookmarks and have them follow these steps.

- 1 Write your name and the book's title and author at the top of the bookmarks, and "Prediction" and "Supporting Evidence" in the center (see example).
- 2 Insert one at the end of the first chapter, one in the middle of the book, and one just before the last chapter.
- 3 Read to the first bookmark.
- 4 Write a prediction, along with supporting evidence based on chapter titles, illustrations, and examples from the story.

- 5 Repeat step four when you reach the next two bookmarks.

PART 2: CONFIRM AND ADJUST

After they've finished reading their books, have students do the following.

- 1 Review your predictions and supporting evidence on the three bookmarks.
- 2 Check off predictions that were on target.
- 3 On the back of the bookmarks, write "Adjustment" and "Supporting Evidence" for predictions that need fine-tuning.
- 4 Revise incorrect predictions, including examples from the story that confirm your adjustments (see example).
- 5 Read and discuss your bookmarks with a partner. Ask questions.

"Baby"

by Patricia MacLachlan

PREDICTION:

Sophie won't ever see her mom again.

SUPPORTING EVIDENCE:

The letter from Sophie's mom saying she might lose Sophie forever.

ADJUSTMENT:

Sophie stayed less than a year.

SUPPORTING EVIDENCE:

Sophie's mom came and got her.

Laura Robb, a classroom teacher for 34 years, currently teaches eighth grade at Powhatan School in Boyce, Virginia, and coaches teachers in grades K-8. She is the author of *Reading*



Strategies that Work (Scholastic Professional Books, 1996) and *Whole Language, Whole Learners* (Morrow, 1994).

MOTIVATING READERS ●

ACTIVITY GRADES 4-8

Question the Story

PURPOSE

To encourage students to pose questions about a story's characters, setting, and structure, during and after reading.

MATERIALS
chapter books at students' independent reading levels, stiff paper for making bookmarks

TIME NEEDED
10 minutes to pose questions and 30 minutes to discuss

In a mini-lesson, using an actual book, show students how you pose questions as you read. On the chalkboard or an overhead, write your questions with page numbers of the passages that inspired them. Note answers, also, as you find them. Be sure to point out that good readers question many things as they read—the meanings of words, confusing passages, what's to come, ideas related to the text, and so on. Then give each student three bookmarks and have them do the following.

- 1 Pair up to read the same book.
- 2 Write your name and the book's title and author at the top of your bookmarks.
- 3 Place a bookmark just inside the front cover,

at the beginning of the fourth chapter, and after the final chapter.

- 4 Note any questions about the book's title and cover illustration on the first bookmark, then talk about those questions together.
- 5 Read to the fourth chapter and jot down on the second bookmark questions about the characters, structure, and techniques the author uses.
- 6 Share and discuss questions together.
- 7 Complete the book. On the third bookmark, record questions based on the entire story and discuss them.

Tina

*Sadako and the
Thousand Paper
Cranes*
by Eleanor Coerr

Title and Cover

- Why 1,000 paper cranes?
- Do the cranes have a special meaning?
- Why is the girl holding the paper crane?
- Is the dragon evil?

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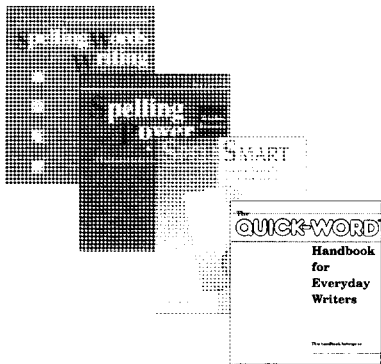
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● MOTIVATING READERS

ACTIVITY

GRADES
4–8

Picture a Moment

PURPOSE
To help kids visualize
characters and
places while reading.

MATERIALS
chapter books at
students' independ-
ent reading levels,
stiff paper, drawing
supplies

TIME NEEDED
30 minutes

- 1 In groups of four, show and talk about your drawing and read passages from the book that influenced it.

When they've finished their books, students should meet again in groups to discuss changes in their impressions of the story. How have their opinions and concerns shifted since they made their drawings?

After reading to the halfway point in their books, have students do the following.

1 Picture in your mind a character or place from the story.

2 Draw on a bookmark that character or place in a memorable scene.

Write the page numbers of the scene at the bottom of the bookmark.



pages 75–78

ACTIVITY

GRADES
5–8

Skim for Answers

PURPOSE
To foster interac-
tions with nonfic-
tion sources and
textbooks, and to
develop skimming,
questioning, and
note-taking skills.

MATERIALS
nonfiction sources
or textbooks at the
students' independ-
ent reading levels,
stiff paper for mak-
ing bookmarks

TIME NEEDED
20 minutes

Introduce this activity with a mini-lesson similar to the one for the Questioning Books activity, but stress *skimming* for answers. In pairs or groups of four, have students do the following.

1 Read the same four to six pages in the book, writing a few key questions, along with page numbers of passages that prompted them, on the front of your bookmarks.

2 Review the same pages, skimming for answers to your questions. Briefly note answers on the back of the bookmark.

3 Use bookmarks as a basis for discussion and review.

4 Place the filled-out bookmark after the last page you read. Repeat the activity two or three times on the following pages to reinforce skimming, questioning, and note-taking skills.