

# Good Reader Strategies

Successful readers have developed good reading strategies that help them read for meaning. What are these good reader strategies and why are they important? Here are some good reading behaviors that will help your students read better.



**Good Readers** choose books that are “just right” for them. These books are books that children can read and are not too hard or too easy.

**What Is It?** Have children choose a book by looking at the cover, author, and illustrations. Tell them read the blurb on the back cover. Have children read a page and put up a finger for each word they don’t know. Then use the following guide to help them decide if the book is right for them.

**0-1 Fingers—Too Easy**  
**2-3 Fingers—Just Right**  
**4-5 Fingers—Too Hard**

**Why Is It Important?** Choosing books that are “just right” means the text used for learning will build on children’s reading skills and strategies and help them expand their skills.



**Good Readers** read independently for sustained periods of time.

**What Is It?** Provide uninterrupted reading time in which you note a child’s ability to read the text with minimal support.

**Why Is It Important?** As children apply their reading strategies to more and more texts, they become more fluent readers.



**Good Readers** set purposes when they read.

**What Is It?** Have children preview the cover and title of the book and make predictions about what the text will be about. Then help children set a purpose for reading by asking questions about the story that begin with *who, what, when, why, where* and *how*.

**Why Is It Important?** Setting a purpose helps children think about what to look for when they read. It helps them focus on the text and understand the story better.



**Good Readers** use ideas to make and confirm predictions.

**What Is It?** Children make predictions, or guesses, about what will happen in the story and then confirm their predictions as they read.

**Why Is It Important?** When children make predictions, they figure out what will happen next by thinking about the characters and what they may do. Help children by periodically asking them what will happen next in the story.



**Good Readers** attend to characters and form opinions about them.

**What Is It?** While reading, children pay attention to characters and learn about their nature. Help children identify what the main character wants at the beginning of the story. Then ask them how the main character goes about to achieve this.

**Why Is It Important?** Interpreting characters is important to helping children understand the plot of the story. Understanding the main character and their actions will help children gain a deeper understanding of the story.



**Good Readers** monitor their own comprehension.

**What Is It?** When meaning breaks down, good readers use the strategies of rereading, reading ahead, asking questions, paraphrasing, seeking help and visualizing to help them understand what they are reading.

**Why Is It Important?** These monitor and clarify skills help readers problem-solve as they read so they maintain meaning. It also helps them strengthen their reading process skills and build confidence in themselves as readers.



**Good Readers** use text features as they read.

**What Is It?** Children identify and use text features, such as captions, headings, boldface type, and graphs as they read.

**Why Is It Important?** Being able to identify text features will enable children to broaden their understanding of the text. Children will learn that many text features supply additional information to readers that is not found in the text.



**Good Readers** notice that a word is unfamiliar and use effective strategies to determine the meaning of the word.

**What Is It?** Using strategies, such as sounding it out, using context clues, analyzing word parts, or using a dictionary or other resource will help children figure out unknown words.

**Why Is It Important?** Readers who have a variety of strategies to use while encountering an unknown word can problem solve quickly and maintain meaning while reading.



**Good Readers** identify important ideas.

**What Is It?** Children think critically and identify the most important idea or information in a text as they read.

**Why Is It Important?** This skill helps readers determine which information in a story is important to remember and which is not. This will help them understand the bigger message of the text.



**Good Readers** make connections as they read.

**What Is It?** Making connections happens when you ask children to make connections from a text to other texts, to themselves or the world. You might ask: *Is this story similar to any other book you have read? Has this ever happened to you or someone you know?*

**Why Is It Important?** Making connections helps children develop a deeper understanding of the text.



**Good Readers** read aloud fluently.

**What Is It?** Children read with fluency to convey the meaning of the text. Help children attend to the proper phrasing, punctuation and intonation as they read. Children should be able to put words together to sound like natural language as they read.

**Why Is It Important?** Reading with fluency helps support comprehension and the ability to comprehend longer and more complex texts.



**Good Readers** make inferences as they read.

**What Is It?** Making inferences occurs when good readers use their own experiences as well as the text to construct meaning. Help children make inferences by having them tell about something that was not stated explicitly in the text. *Why did Goldilocks never return to The Three Bears house?*

**Why Is It Important?** Good readers are able to identify when and why the meaning of the text is unclear to them. They can make inferences to solve this problem and deepen their understanding of the text.



**Good Readers** return to the text to locate information.

**What Is It?** Locating information is the ability to go back to the text to find information that is explicitly stated. Have children locate information by asking them literal questions such as “*Where did The Three Bears go when they left the house? Find the answer in the text.*”

**Why Is It Important?** This skill enables readers to confirm information they may not be sure about as they read. Going back to the text is essential to helping the reader maintain understanding as they read. It also helps readers make judgments and opinions about a text after they read it.



**Good Readers** create visual images in their mind.

**What Is It?** Visualizing is when a reader reads a text and uses the text and what they know about a topic to picture the characters, events, and images from the text in their mind. After children read a descriptive passage, ask them to create a picture in their minds of the text. Then have them describe what they see.

**Why Is It Important?** Visualizing helps readers understand what is happening in the text by making a mental picture in their mind. It can also help readers when they don't understand something in the text.