

Reading Centre

making a difference

Checking in on reading with your child
in Years 7 to 10



What is a text?

A text is a means of communication that can be:

- written
- spoken
- multi-modal (uses more than one way of communicating such as pictures, words and sound)
- in print
- digital/online.

Texts change depending on for whom they are created and the purpose they serve. They can be read, viewed and/or listened to.

Understanding text

There are **three** ways of making meaning from reading or viewing a text.

1. Literal meaning is made from information that is directly written, pictured or spoken in a text. For example, 'What does the text actually say?'
2. Inferential meaning is what the reader assumes based on what the text suggests and what the reader already knows. For example, 'What did the author mean by...?'
3. Evaluative meaning includes the opinions and judgments that the reader makes about the text, the author and the text topic. For example, 'What is the author's opinion of...?'

Checking-in on reading with your child

When checking-in about your child's reading and viewing, it may be useful to begin with literal questions and progress to inferential and evaluative ones.

It may also be helpful to ask, 'What information in the text did you use to arrive at your answer?'

There are many ways that children can share, with you, what they have been reading and viewing including:

- a conversation about the text or part of the text
- a summary of the text in words, images, print or in digital format
- what they have learnt and what they would still like to know.

Literal questions

Literal questions, that you could ask your child about a text, focus on:

- key ideas
- general understandings.

Literal questions often begin with:

- where (Where is the text set?)
- who (Who is the text about? Or Who wrote the text?)
- when (When did an event take place?)
- what (What is the topic of the text?)

Literal questions can be answered from information which is directly written, pictured or spoken in one or more places in the text.

Inferential questions

Inferential questions:

- focus on what is suggested by an author in a text
- are not answered by what is directly written, pictured or stated in the text
- invite the reader to use what is suggested by the author in the text plus what the reader already knows, to develop an answer.



Inferential questions

Inferential questions that you could ask your child about their reading and viewing include:

- What does the author feel and think about...?
- What does the author mean by...?
- If the author wrote a sequel to the text, what do you think it would be about and why?
- If it is not directly stated, what is the main idea in the text?

Evaluative questions

Evaluative questions focus on the opinions of the author and reader.

Some evaluative questions that you might ask your child about what they have read or viewed include:

- What does the author want you to feel, think or do about...?
- Do you agree with the author's point of view on...?
- Do you believe that the author is biased?
- What is the author not telling you in the text and why?

Inspiring further reading and viewing

Some questions that you might ask your child to inspire further reading and viewing could include:

‘By the time we check-in again...

- can you find me five more interesting facts about...?’
- are you able to find a text which has a different point of view on...and tell me about it?’
- can you tell me about something else that the author has written?’