

Think Alouds

Purpose: To model for students the thought processes that take place when difficult material is read. When using think alouds, teachers verbalize their thoughts while they are reading orally. Students will understand comprehension strategies better because they can see how the mind can respond to thinking through trouble spots and constructing meaning from text.

Procedure:

1. Use passages that contain unknown words, unclear sections, or contradictions.
2. The teacher reads aloud, stopping to verbalize the thinking that takes place when difficult or confusing material is encountered. The students follow along silently and listen as the teacher thinks through the trouble spots.
3. Students can work with partners to practice think-alouds by taking turns reading short, carefully prepared passages and sharing thoughts.
4. Students can practice independently using the checklist below to verify use of the procedures.
5. Integrate practice with other lessons and provide demonstrations of how, why, and when to use think-alouds.

Checklist

While I was reading, how did I do? (Put an X in the appropriate column.)

	Not very much	A little bit	Much of the time	All of the time
Made predictions				
Formed pictures				
Used "like-a"				
Found problems				
Used fix-ups				

Think-aloud Procedures:

Making predictions - students make predictions by using the chapter title or subheadings found within the chapter.

Developing images - students get mental pictures of information found in the text.

Share analogies - students use analogies to link new information to prior knowledge.

Monitor comprehension - students think about their confusion over difficult information.

Regulate comprehension - students read beyond a confusing section to see if the information that comes next will clear up their confusion.

Adapted from Content Area Reading: Literacy and Learning Across the Curriculum by Richard T. and Joanne L. Vacca