

What Effective Readers Do: An Inquiry Approach to Literature

The following lists were generated by students in Barry Hoonan's class.

Choosing Books

- Get recommendations from friends and others who enjoy the sort of stuff you like to read.
- Chat with the teacher.
- Try reading a new kind of book that you know will stretch you.
- Look at the cover.
- Read the back of the book.
- Read the first few pages and think about if you can make sense of the book or how long it took you.
- Read a few pages from the middle of the book and see what pictures come to mind.
- Choose books based on things you enjoy learning about.
- Read authors you like or have heard good things about.
- Find a skinny book that looks great (it's okay to read thin books!)
- Find a fat book that you've heard is great.

While we read we...

- Mark great passages that sound interesting and we want to share.
- Reread certain sections or sentences to make the image more clear in our head.
- Make guesses about what's going to happen.
- Write down or think up questions we're wondering about.
- Sometimes skip over difficult words and think about what they mean as we read on.
- Go back to maps and pictures and even the cover to help make sense of what's going on in the book or what the characters look like or where the story is taking us.
- Stop and talk to others to sort things out.
- Write down insights or wonders.
- Mark pages we want to talk about.
- Concentrate hard and believe we can work through the difficult writing.
- Spend lots of time thinking about what the author is doing in the book to make the book interesting.
- Make predictions that keep us glued to the story.
- Wonder about the characters.
- Think about the story and our own lives.

- Questions what the author does in the writing.
- Sometimes get upset with the writer.
- Laugh or cry or let the book make us feel deeply.
- Wonder about the words.
- Sometimes look up tough words that we realize are important.
- Think about how true the book is.
- Relate the story to what we already know.
- Question the authority of the writer and wonder if he or she is trying to convince us of something.
- Know that tough reading takes more time and that we may need to read slower in some sections.
- Look at pictures when it is possible.
- Disagree with illustrators when we think the images in our own heads are better.
- Reread the end or favorite parts.

After we are through reading we...

- Jot down feelings and insights about the book or how we read the book.
- Scribble or sketch images and pictures.
- Research topics that came up while we read.
- Find information about the author.
- Talk to others about the story or how we were making sense of the book.
- Go back and mark certain parts of the book that we want to talk about or sort out.