

Making Predictions

Cross-Curricular Focus: Language Arts



You can improve your reading comprehension skills if you prepare your brain for reading before you begin. Read the title and help your mind make connections to things you already know.

Highlight important words in the title. If you are reading from a source that you can't write on, such as a textbook or library book, use a piece of paper. If you are reading on a worksheet or printed page on which you are permitted to take notes, use it. Consider each of the words one at a time. Write down what you think of when you read or hear that word. Then consider them collectively. They have been placed together to form the title. Make a prediction about what you will read. Remember that a prediction in language arts is what a hypothesis is in a science experiment. You are not making a wild guess. You are using all the available information to make a knowledgeable guess. What can you reasonably predict at this point? Write your prediction down so you can watch for it to be resolved one way or another as you read.

Look at any photos, illustrations, graphs or other visual aids that have been included with the story. Read any captions or informational notes to make sure you understand what has been included. Note any important statistics, dates or people. Pay attention to the colors used in the pictures and the mood that the pictures create. Write down any additional observations or predictions that come to mind. Remember that good predictions are based on evidence. Think about why you think as you do.

Read over your notes and predictions as you prepare to begin reading the passage. Keep your notes out in front of you while you read. As your predictions are either confirmed or proven to be incorrect, jot down little notes about what happened. If you do not understand something that you read, go back a few sentences and read again. If a specific word is giving you trouble, see if the words around that word can help you determine its meaning. If not, use a dictionary if one is available. Do not be content to read on without understanding. When you have finished reading, see if you can mentally summarize what you have read.

Whenever possible, discuss the reading with someone else who has also read it. This will allow you to share your predictions and thoughts about what you have read. Exchanging ideas sharpens your understanding. Then you will both be on your way to improving your reading comprehension.

Name: _____

Answer the following questions based on the reading passage. Don't forget to go back to the passage whenever necessary to find or confirm your answers.

1) Name at least two techniques you can use to prepare your brain before you begin reading.

2) Why should you keep your notes nearby as you read?

3) How is a prediction like a hypothesis in science?

4) What can you do if you don't understand a specific word?

5) What is a benefit of discussing the reading with someone else?

The Apprentice System

Cross-Curricular Focus: History/Social Sciences



European colonists left behind all the comforts of home to come to North America. There was no longer a corner store where they could shop for groceries or get a newspaper. If their tools or equipment broke, there was no place to buy new ones. This was a harsh reality in a world where they had to fight for their own survival.

More settlers came to the English colonies than to the French or Spanish colonies. When the settlers arrived, they were ready to work hard for themselves and their community members. They had to help each other, or they would surely die. Families up to that point were mostly self-sufficient. All of the family members helped each other get what they needed. In the colonies, they had to reinvent some of that family-style teamwork and join together for the good of the entire group.

It was not long before people began to take on new work responsibilities. Those who knew how to make things by hand were called **artisans**. Their work on things such as nails, horseshoes, barrels and even homes was critical to the success of their colony. Because their skilled work was so necessary, they began to train younger workers. They needed others who could take over their duties if death, disease or old age made them unable to continue. Artisans often had several such helpers of different ages. These helpers were called **apprentices**.

Apprentices were commonly sent to live with the artisan. The young apprentices provided their labor in exchange for food, shelter, clothing and training in the craft. Experienced apprentices became artisans and took apprentices of their own to train. In this way, the colony would have skilled workers long into the future.

Name: _____

Answer the following questions based on the reading passage. Don't forget to go back to the passage whenever necessary to find or confirm your answers.

1) Most apprentices were between eight and 10 years old when they went to live with an artisan. How would you feel about becoming an apprentice now? Why?

2) What is an artisan?

3) What did an apprentice receive in exchange for his labor?

4) What was the goal for an apprentice?

5) How did the apprentice system help the community?
