READING CHARACTERS 2017

The following set of questions are linked to the new Reading Characters and will help with whole class questioning as well as guided reading sessions. They are also linked to the seven headings of the West Sussex Key Performance Indicators grid.

Spotter (Retrieval skills)
Can you find specific information in the text?

Aim: *To understand, describe, select or retrieve information, events or ideas from texts and use quotation and reference to text. (Literal understanding and locating evidence.)*

Spotter is good at…
- *scanning: to locate key words and specific information*
- *skimming: to appraise a text quickly*
- *sequencing events and information*
- *using quotes from the text to explain views and support answers*
- *summarising*
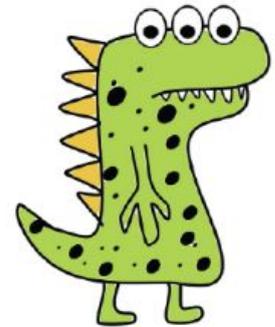
Questions to ask
- Where does the story take place?
- When did the story take place?
- What did he / she look like?
- Where did he / she live?
- Who are the key characters in the book?
- What kinds of people are in the story?
- What happened in the story? At the beginning? At the middle? At the end?
- What is happening at this point in the story?
- Read the part that tells me…
- Which character…
- Where did you find the information about…?
- Give me an example of when…
- True / false based on the text
- Fill in gaps in a table

Clue Finder (Inferential skills)
What clues does the writer give in the text that makes you think something?

Aim: *To deduce, infer or interpret information, events or ideas from texts*
(Inference and deduction.)

Clue Finder is good at…
- using clues from the text to explain characters actions and feelings
- making sensible predictions about what will happen next
- supporting opinions by using parts of the text

Deduction: the ability to draw a logical conclusion from the information given.
● Distinguish between implicit and explicit points of view
● Make links between cause and effect
● Gather information from different parts of a text
● Re-order parts of a text to work out sequences
● Recast a text from one form to another
● Make predictions based on evidence in the text

Inference: the ability to go beyond the information given in the text, based on the reader's personal experience, knowledge of opinion.
● Make generalisations
● Recognise and explain writer's viewpoint / narrative voice
● Understand and explain connotations of words
● Explain the use of figurative language
● Make empathetic responses
● Organise and collect information from across a piece of text or a range of texts

Questions to ask
● What makes you think that?
● What words give you that impression? Why?
● How do you feel about…? Why?
● Can you explain why?
● If you were interviewing this character / author what questions would you ask them?
● What sort of person do you think would use this book? When would they use it?
● Which parts of the book could help you find the information you need?
● Do you think this is true / untrue? Why do you think this?
● Do you agree with this opinion? Explain your own opinion, using the text to help you.
● What is your opinion? Can you support your view with evidence?
● What does this quotation suggest about…?
● Explain the use of the word…
● Which is your favourite part? Why? Which part of text shows this?
● Predict what you think will happen next. Why do you think this?
● Who was the storyteller? How do you know?
● Through whose eyes is the story told?
● Who would you like to meet most in this story? Why?
● What impression did you get of the feelings of this character from the text?
● What might this character have been thinking? (Fill in the thought bubble.)
● How did one of the characters / their feelings change in the story. Draw a timeline showing the changes.
● How did the chatacter feel before and after…?
● How did the character's feelings change?
● What is this character's attitude towards…?
● How are the experiences of these two characters similar?
● At the end of the story the main character is feeling… Does this surprise you? Explain as fully as you can, using parts of the story to help you.
● What does this tell you about what… was thinking?
● What do you think the … is thinking? If it were you, what would you be thinking?

Analyser (Style and impact)
Why does the writer use specific language features?

Aim: *To explain and comment on writers' use of language, including grammatical and literary features at word and sentence level*

The Analyser is good at…
- picking out and explaining particular words
- understanding and explaining the writer's use of words
(including figurative language, technical, specialised or genre specific vocab.)
- looking at sentence lengths and how these create an effect
- explaining the author's use of connectives to bring about a change of tone, voice or opinion
- looking at rhyme and repetition
- spotting figurative language
- understanding why an author has chosen to use a range of punctuation
(colon, semi-colon, dashes, brackets, commas, ellipses)

Questions to ask
- Why did the author choose this title?
- What do these words mean and why did the writer chose them?
- I wonder what the writer intended by using these words…
- Why does the writer use the word…?
- What does the word … tell you about …?
- What words help the reader to imagine…?
- Which phrase best describes…
- What is the effect of…?
- Which parts of the text tell you…?
- Explain how the use of language in this sentence shows…
- How does the choice of language create the impression that…?
- Why is a formal / informal style of language used in the text?
- Which author's style did you enjoy the most? Why?
- Why is the word … in inverted commas?
- Do you want to read the rest of the text? How does the writer encourage you to read on?
- Which word encourages you to read the..?
- Why do you think the author has used the word … a lot?
- What is the effect of writing in the past / present tense?
- Look at the verbs / adjectives / adverbs. What do these words tell us about…?
- Underline the noun / verb / phrase which show that…
- Why is the description of … a good metaphor to use?
- Why do you think the author has written this sentence in this way?
- Explain two ways in which this sentence makes the reader…
- By writing the line in this way, what effect has the author created?
- How has the author used adjectives to make this character funny?
- What do the physical descriptions of the characters tell us about how they are feeling?
- Explain what you think this phrase adds to the story?
- How do these phrases help to make the description effective?
- How does the author make the … appear frightening?
- Which part of the story best describes the setting?
- Which words / phrases do this?

Explorer (Behaving and reflecting as a reader)
How does the text fit into the wider world?

Aim: *To relate texts to their social, cultural and historical contexts and literary traditions; explaining and discussing their understanding of books.*

Explorer is good at…
- asking questions about writers
- understanding who the writer is and where they're from
- understanding when and where the text is set
- talking about different types of texts e.g. comic strips/biographies etc
- comment on the similarities and differences between the text read and the knowledge and understanding of the world around them.
- make links from the text to personal experiences
- recognise an author's style and text themes and relate these to other authors and texts

Questions to ask
● Do you know another story which deals with the same issues?
● What would this character think about…?
● Do you know anymore stories like this?
● Have you ever read a book with a similar theme to this one?
● What does this remind you of?
● What does it make you think of?
● Does this story remind you of a personal experience / something that has happened to you? Describe it.
● Have you ever been in that situation? What happened?
● Howe would you have felt in that situation?
● What might you have done instead?
● Can you compare … to a person that has frightened you?
● How would you feel if you were treated like …? What would you do?
● What do you think would happen if…
● Are there any familiar patterns you notice? (Familiar story structure? Imagery?)
● What type of text is this? How do you know? What will it be like? What can I expect in a book of this type?
● Many traditional tales have messages. What do you think this story is trying to tell us?
● Which stories have openings like this?
● Do you know of any other texts with similar issues of themes?
● Do you know another story with these characters in?
● Can you think of another story where the main character has problems with their family?