

Dimensions of Understanding

Behavioral Markers of Deep Understanding

Behaviors associated with understanding (what we might observe in the classroom when children are understanding)

- Readers are deeply **engaged** - we experience a sense that the world around has disappeared and we are subsumed by the world of the text -- we choose to **focus** on particular ideas for longer periods of time, we may need to focus in silence and/or in conversation with others -- we **apply fervent attention** - we can observe others concentrating with a focus that is nearly impenetrable
- Readers **want to take action in the world based on what they have read** - through discussions, writing, drama or art we feel an urge to do something or act in some way to mitigate or resolve related conflicts in the world; we can talk about how a book changed us, caused us to think and act differently in our own lives -- we may want to **leave a written, artistic or dramatic legacy** - we want to make an observable contribution to the world around them based on what we read
- Readers **show willingness to struggle** - we choose to challenge ourselves in order to understand more deeply - we consciously fight any influence of negative self-judgment, seek, with a sense of efficacy to solve complex problems
- Readers can **describe our progress as readers** -- we can describe their own processes, preferences and progress as a reader - we can describe, for example, how we used a comprehension strategy and how such use improved our understanding -- we **define and describe how our thinking has changed** and can ascribe those changes to the use of comprehension strategies or other factors
- Readers **engage in rigorous discourse** - we speak with others in order to develop deeper understanding and/or defend our ideas - we remain open to **multiple** perspectives and consider others' ideas seriously, often integrating them into our own background knowledge -- we **argue/defend** - we may discuss, challenge others' ideas and beliefs and/or defend our own with evidence from the text and from background knowledge (schema)
- Readers are **renaissance learners** - we meander among a wide range of topics, interests, genres, authors, pursue study in areas we find compelling or aesthetically rewarding -- we **pursue a compelling question** - we may decide to tackle a topic of intense interest in order to build a knowledge base, satisfy curiosity

- Readers **experience insight** - we experience and can describe a moment of clarity, of "seeing" for the first time, possibly due to our efforts to recognize patterns and structures in text
- Readers **remember** - we reapply previously learned concepts and ideas in new learning situations