

## **Activate the Brain**

"The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you'll go." - Dr. Seuss

## What does it mean to activate the brain?

Activating the brain means thinking and making connections – reading for meaning (comprehending what is read). It means thoughtfully interacting with the text. Reading words without activating the brain is like taking a drive without enjoying the view, or eating a sundae without the toppings – something is missing!

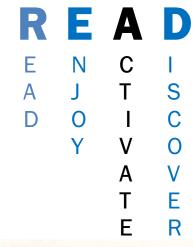


## Why is it important to activate the brain while reading?

- Our brain changes and grows with new experiences. We can strengthen our brain connections by practicing remembering, visualizing or using new information.
- **Employers are looking for** individuals who can think critically, solve complex problems, contribute to innovation in the workplace, apply knowledge and show the capacity for continued new learning. <sup>2</sup> These skills can all be developed through activating the brain while reading!
- Kids able to activate the brain using mental imagery are **better able to remember** what they've read. This can affect performance **in all areas of school not just reading**.

## Tips: How can I help my child activate the brain?

- **Predict** what might happen or what might happen next. Look at the pictures.
- Think Aloud and Question: Ask questions that don't have a single correct answer or any answer at all like: "I wonder..." "What do you think about.....?"
- Visualize: Encourage your child to make a picture in his/her mind. Imagine what it might look like. Make a "mental movie."
- Make Connections to other books, to your own life or what you
  already know about the world. "This book reminds me of..." Read
  many books on the same topic and compare them.
- Check for Understanding by thinking aloud and questioning while reading. "Does that make sense?" "I don't get it – I better read that again."
- Summarize and Retell the story by using language like, <u>First, Next, Then, Last</u>. Act out a story for a fun twist on retelling.
- Apply and enjoy! Do something with what you've read. If you read about climbing trees, go outside and give it a try! Making it fun means creating memories and growing the brain!



- 1. Oliver Keene, E (2007). *Mosaic of Thought*. Portsmouth, NH Heinemann
- 2. Association of American Colleges and Universities press release 2013 LEAP compact and employer survey
- 3. Gambrell, L.B., & Bales, R.J. (1986). Mental imagery and the comprehension-monitoring performance of four un- and mun-grade poor readers. Reading Research Quarterly, 21, 454-464.

- Oliver Keene, E (2007). *Mosaic of Thought*. Portsmouth, NH Heinemann
- 2. 3.
- Association of American Colleges and Universities press release 2013 LEAP compact and employer survey Gambrell, L.B., & Bales, R.J. (1986). Mental imagery and the comprehension-monitoring performance of fourth- and fifth-grade poor readers. Reading Research Quarterly, 21, 454-464.