

### Questions you've asked me:

- ❑ "How do I not fall asleep when I'm reading silently?"
- ❑ "How can I avoid reading a whole chapter and having no clue what I just read?"
- ❑ "How can I pay attention to boring reading material?"

### Answer: Active Reading Strategies! (Sometimes called "metacognition," or, "thinking about thinking")

#### What are they?

Ways to keep your BRAIN active and to keep you involved while you're reading! (Caution: These strategies have been scientifically proven, through study after study, with thousands and thousands of students, for hundreds of years, to work. Be careful! You may actually learn something!)

- ❑ **Set up your environment:**
  - Read sitting up.
  - Read standing.
  - Read leaning against a wall or a tree.
  - Do not read in a dimly-lit room, lying down! (Duh!)
- ❑ **Hands-on:**
  - Keep in your hand (the one not holding the book) a pencil, a pen, a stress ball, a glass of water, a cat, a dog . . . anything that will give your brain some other kinesthetic stimulation besides the book.
- ❑ **Visualize:**
  - Force your brain to picture the characters as they talk, the scenes, or the objects in the room that may or may not have been described in the book. It doesn't matter if your "vision" is perfect.
  - Draw what you read when you're done reading it.
- ❑ **Summarize:**
  - At the end of a paragraph or a page, stop reading. Ask yourself, "What did I just read?" If you can summarize it, keep reading. If not, review it! (Don't wait till the end of an entire chapter! What a waste!)
  - Then, do it again at the end of the chapter. ☺
- ❑ **Pay attention to your emotions:**
  - Keep a reading journal. When you react to something emotionally (funny, sad, pity, anger, disgust, annoyance at a character, etc.), write it down, journal-format.
  - Just mentally be aware of your emotions as you read. Think, "Wow, that was [insert emotion-filled adjective here]!"
- ❑ **Pay attention to your confusion:**
  - KNOW when something is confusing to you. Your mind knows it. You just need to recognize it. Stop and try to answer your own questions as you read—or at least ASK questions / be aware of your questions as you read.
  - Keep a reading journal. Jot down your questions / answer them, if possible.
- ❑ **Predict:**
  - After reading a twist in a plot, predict what you think will happen next.
- ❑ **Get yourself involved:**
  - Ask yourself, "Would I say that?" "Would I do that?" "Have I said or done something like that?" "Have I been somewhere like that?" "Would I like to say / do / be like that?"
- ❑ **Take a break:**
  - Read, using the above strategies, for 20 minutes. Stop, get up, get a drink of water, walk around, and stretch—for a total of 3 – 5 minutes. (Do nothing involved with reading during this break!) Go back to the book. **Summarize.** Repeat as necessary.
  - *It's important that you break for no longer than 5 minutes! Set a timer, if necessary!*
  - *It's important that you are physically active during your break!*

So, try them.

You have nothing to lose . . . but everything to gain!