Focus Reading Connection: #5 Transforming

Readers are transformed by what they read when they make a shift in their own thinking. When talking to students about transforming (synthesis) it is important to emphasize that:

1. Transforming means that they change the way they think about themselves and the world around them.
2. Transforming may not take place right away. The ideas, facts, questions and inferences that surface while reading the story may be stored away in their memories for a long time.

This lesson uses structured partner talk as a learning strategy. To learn more about partner talk please refer to the Educator’s page on our website.

MATERIALS REQUIRED

- 1 copy of The First Strawberries
- 1 copy of the Transforming Worksheet per student
BEFORE

• Chunk the book into 3 sections by placing a sticky note in the following places:
  - Page 4 (illustration of the man and woman inside their home).
  - Page 18 (text: in front of her)
  - Explain to the class what transforming means (changing your mind or way of thinking about something).
  - Explain that sometimes good readers have information or an idea about a topic but reading can give them new ideas to think about.

DURING

• Read the title and show the cover of the book to the class.
• Have each student turn to a partner and talk. Have them ask each other questions that occur to them when they look at the cover.
• Have some of the students report their questions out to the whole class.
• Read the first page to the students and let them look at the details of the illustrations on the next two pages.
• Ask each student to turn to their same partner. Have them discuss their first impressions of the couple in the story. Have them justify their ideas (I think..because).
• Distribute a copy of the Transforming worksheet to each student.
• Have each student fill in the first section of the worksheet.
• Read the second chunk of the story.
• Ask each student to talk to the same partner. Have their thoughts about the couple stayed the same or have they changed? Why?
• Have each student fill out the second section of the worksheet.
• Read to the end of the story.
• Ask each student to share a “transformed thought” with their partner (a thought that they may not have had at the beginning of the story). Have some of the students share their thoughts with the larger group.
• Have each student fill in the third section of the worksheet.

AFTER

• Explain to the class that thoughts about this story might get stored away in their memories and that they might pull the memory out to look at again if another story or event, makes a connection to it.
• Ask each student to talk to their partner about a thought they now have that seems important enough to remember.

Suggested Supplemental Resources:

Click on the Kids tab of our website to find similar stories such as:
- Cedar Readers Series: Berries by Pam Holloway (leveled for Guided Reading)
- Picking Blackberries by Lyn Bruvold (level 9 for Guided Reading)
- Picking Berries-Kit by Janice Parmelee
- Picking Berries: Connections Between Data Collection, Graphing, Measuring by Janice Parmelee
The First Strawberries: Transforming

1. At first I thought the man and woman ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________
because ______________________________________________________.

2. Then I thought ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________
because ______________________________________________________.

3. Now I think ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________
because ______________________________________________________.