The FAST Reading Test

Can I connect to anything I already know?
Are there any clues in the text that I can connect to?
Can I connect to anything I learned in ELA?

IF IT'S A STORY...

WHAT'S THE SETTING?

It is ALL parts of where or when a story happens
Includes: time, weather, environment, history, places

The SETTING impacts....

Character Development
WHERE a character is or **WHEN** they live has an impact on how they **BEHAVE** and what they **BELIEVE**.

and

Plot
WHERE and **WHEN** the story is impacts what can happen. There are things that can't happen in space or in a story based 200 years ago.

Ask yourself: *How does the SETTING (time and place) impact the characters or the plot? What would change if the setting was changed?*

WHAT'S THE THEME?

The main message, lesson, or big idea – it's a complete idea, not just one word. There will be at least TWO.

Authors **SHOW** the theme through characters' ACTIONS, WORDS, and THOUGHTS.

Themes **DEVELOP**, or get stronger, as the story happens. Pay attention to when characters **think**, when they shout, when problems are solved, or when they feel emotions.

Authors will REPEAT words or actions that show theme.

Ask yourself: *What are the two themes? How did I know? How are they the same or different?*

WHO'S THE NARRATOR?

The NARRATOR is the one telling the story. Do you trust them? If not, they are UNRELIABLE.

They tell the story in THREE ways called POINT OF VIEW.

1st Person – The narrator IS a character in the story. Look for words like "I, me, my, we, us."
POSITIVE: It's personal, interesting, and readers feel connected.
NEGATIVE: We don't know what other characters think or feel.

2nd Person – The narrator speaks directly to the reader. "Hey you! Listen carefully and come along for our journey."
POSITIVE: Makes the story personal and convincing.
NEGATIVE: May be uncomfortable, distracting, or confusing for reader.

3rd Person – The narrator is telling the story, but not a character in it. Look for "he, she, they, them."
    LIMITED – We only see inside one character's thoughts.
    OMNISCIENT – We see inside ALL characters' thoughts.

POSITIVE: More knowledge about characters
NEGATIVE: Difficult to connect with characters, confusing, complicated

The **NARRATOR** and HOW THEY TELL THE STORY (**Point of View**) give us clues about **CHARACTERS' PERSPECTIVES.**
This is the characters' beliefs, attitude, opinions – HOW they think.

Ask yourself: How do the characters approach drama? Solve problems? Create problems?

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IF IT'S INFORMATIONAL...

WHAT'S THE CENTRAL IDEA?

The MOST important BIG ideas of an informational text. There are at least TWO in each text.

> Find the central ideas in the...
> **FACTS**
> **QUOTATIONS**
> **SPECIFIC DETAILS / DESCRIPTIONS**
> **DEFINITIONS**

Ask yourself: *What are the TWO sides to this topic? Who supports which side? What facts support each side?*

HOW DO TYPES OF WORDS AND SENTENCES ADD MEANING?

Authors choose specific words and types of sentences to add meaning.

> **DICTION** is the words the author chooses to write.
>
> *Example: Using the word "child" instead of "kid" to create a formal tone.*
>
> Think about how we use different words when we're in different places or with different people. These impact meaning.
>
> **SYNTAX** is how the author arranges the words.
>
> *Example: An author uses short sentences to create action. An author uses long sentences with lots of description to make you feel sleepy.*

Ask yourself: Why did the author choose this word? Why are the sentences so long or short? How does the author use these to create meaning or purpose?

WHAT'S THE ARGUMENT?

HOW does the author make an argument? How do they convince?

AUTHORS USE...

> **Rhetorical Appeals**
> **ETHOS** – uses experts or authority. Look for quotes from people.
> **PATHOS** – uses emotions to convince.
> **LOGOS** – uses logic. Look for facts or statistics.

> **Reasoning**
> **INDUCTIVE** – Starts specific and moves to a very big, general conclusion
> *Example: Rusty is a shelter dog. He is happy. All shelter dogs are happy.*
>
> **DEDUCTIVE** – Starts with a big, general statement and moves to a very specific conclusion.
> *Example – All students eat pizza. John is a student. Therefore, John eats pizza.*

Ask yourself: *What's the argument? How does the author support it? Is the support solid? Is there something distracting me from one side?*

WHAT ELSE ADDS MEANING?

Look for things beyond the written word.

> **TEXT FEATURES:** Things in an article that are not writing that help us organize and understand.
> *EXAMPLES: Heading, charts captions, graphs, titles, glossary, appendix, table of contents*
>
> **TEXT STRUCTURE:** How an information text is organized.
> *EXAMPLES: Chronological, cause & effect, problem / solution, sequence, description*
>
> **BOTH** help show the reader the **PURPOSE** of the text – also called "**to convey the purpose.**"

Ask yourself: What extra things are there besides just the writing? How do they add clues or meaning? How are the ideas organized? How can this help me find answers?

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IF IT'S A POEM...

HOW DOES THE AUTHOR CHOOSE WORDS TO CREATE MEANING (DICTION)?

TO CREATE SOUND

CONSONANCE – repeating consonant sounds anywhere in the word
Example: Dogs and frogs living in bogs.

ASSONANCE – repeating vowel sounds anywhere in the word
Example: No pain, no gain when you train.

ALLITERATION – repeating any sound in the beginning of the word
Example: She sells seashells by the seashore.

Ask yourself: *How do the sounds add meaning? Why would the poet want me to hear this sound?*

TO CREATE RHYTHM

Syllables: a single vowel sound
Example: Banana (Ba-na-na) – three syllables
Elephant (El-e-phant) – three syllables
School – one syllable

Meter: a pattern of syllables
Example: a SONNET has ten syllables in every line.

And he will be the one to stammer, "Yes."
Oh mother, mother, where is happiness?

Ask yourself: What does the rhythm add to the poem? How would it be different without it? Does it make me read faster or slower?

TO CREATE MEANING
Look for FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE that describes important ideas.

Simile: comparison that uses "like" or "as"
Example: He is as strong as a bull.

Metaphor: comparison that does NOT use "like" or "as"
Example: She's a fish in the water when she swims.

Hyperbole: an extreme exaggeration
Example: I'd move mountains for her.

Personification: giving a non-human thing human quality
Example: The wind whispered, and the moon smiled on the forest.

Idiom: a phrase with a different meaning from the dictionary definitions
Examples: a piece of cake, fit as a fiddle, worked my tail off

Allusion: making a reference to something well-known (famous characters, movies, music, history events, etc)

Ask yourself: How did these help me see ideas? Why were these ideas so important?

HOW DOES THE STRUCTURE CREATE MEANING?

ORGANIZATION:

Look for **line breaks.** Poets put words at the beginning and ends of lined to emphasize them.

Look for **stanza breaks.** Poets put spaces between stanzas to separate ideas or events.

Look for **punctuation.** Poets use exclamation points, commas, dashes, periods, or capital letters to emphasize ideas.

Look for **repetition.** Poets repeat words or phrases that help create the theme or the action.

Look for the **FORM.** Patterns in syllables and rhyme will emphasize ideas.
Examples: a VILLANELLE - five tercets *(three-line stanzas)* followed by a quatrain *(four-line stanza)*
a SONNET - fourteen line poem that rhymes and has ten syllables per line