

Pausing to Connect: Questions and Methods

“Pausing to Connect” is a reading strategy that helps readers gain deeper understandings of the texts they read. Skilled readers will often pause to make connections within a text. They will ask questions such as:

- What do I understand so far? What don’t I understand?
- What information does the author need to clarify?
- Why has the author repeated this word?
- How does this term or phrase connect to what the author is arguing?
- How does what I just read connect to the above paragraph or section?
- What is the author trying to get me to think about here, and here?
- What is the author doing in this paragraph?
- What is the author’s purpose?
- How has this section or paragraph helped my understanding of the text as a whole?

Readers pause to connect ideas within different types of texts for different reasons. The following section describes some of the reasons why readers pause to connect ideas within textbooks, nonfiction, and fiction.

Textbooks

Readers pause to connect ideas within textbooks to:

- clarify information.
- connect the visual aids to the words on the page.
- summarize ideas that have been presented.
- investigate how titles and subtitles relate to the surrounding text.
- make various other connections while reading.

Non-fiction

Readers pause to connect ideas within non-fiction to:

- clarify information.
- explore how words or terms are being used.
- investigate relationships between language and meaning.
- analyze how one paragraph is related to another.
- read images, charts, graphs, and other visual aids being offered.
- synthesize an author’s claims.
- investigate the types of evidence being used to advance the argument.
- make various other connections while reading.

Fiction

Readers pause to connect ideas within fiction to:

- clarify plot points, character motivation, relationships, and/or setting.
- explore literary devices and features.
- trace the actions of one character or review the actions of many characters.
- analyze author’s use of diction and its effect on tone and mood.
- identify repetitions, metrical feet, or rhyme schemes in poetry.
- make various other connections while reading.