

Active Reading – **RICE+?**

Active reading is just a fancy term for the thinking process that a reader undergoes when he or she reads. Good readers, as they read, react to the text in a number of ways. First, they **READ** the words. I mean, really read the words – no skimming here – and comprehend the ideas on the page. Good readers then **INTERPRET** what is happening. They analyze what words, events, or passages mean. They also **CONNECT** to the text by taking characters, events, or ideas and comparing them to what they already know (be it their own experiences, another book they have read, current events, etc). Finally, good readers **EVALUATE** what they have read. They make judgments about characters, events, ideas, or the text as a whole. Lastly, good readers are able to **generate questions** about the text and the ideas the author presents that furthers their understanding. Each of you can do this and most of you already do this without even knowing it.

1. **READ** the text. Make sure that you *understand* what you have read. You may need to read a sentence, paragraph, page, or chapter multiple times in order to be clear about characters, plot, literary devices, etc. If there is a word you do not know, *look it up*. In this digital age, where technology is at your fingertips, there is no excuse for not knowing the definition of a word.
2. Then, **INTERPRET** or analyze the text: Do you notice an underlying message or subtext? Can you get a feel for the character's attitude towards others, the setting, the events? Why are literary devices (symbols, metaphors, personification) being employed? What mood or tone does the author establish and why? What is *really* happening in this passage?
3. **CONNECT** to the text. Briefly describe what that scene, character, plot, mood, etc reminds you of and why.
4. **EVALUATE** the passage you have selected. What do you honestly think about the characters, the events, and the ideas presented? Make a value judgment here. You are welcome to have whatever opinion you want (you can even say you hate it) as long as you explain yourself and can offer details from the text as proof for your evaluation.
5. **QUESTION**. Good readers are constantly asking and answering questions as they read and after they read. A reader who is actively engaged in a text will contemplate significance, purpose, outcome, and message. A great reader will be able to generate questions that have no set answer. These questions serve as great discussion generators in class.

You can place your active reading notes and questions on sticky notes in your book or on a piece of notebook paper. Be sure to include the page number that your notes correspond to so that you can refer to the text easily in class discussions or when writing a formal paper.

The goal of active reading is to teach you how to express *your* thoughts and *your* opinions. Many of you are very good at restating the thoughts and opinions of your teachers. The world already has one of me in it and would be a very strange and scary place if there were suddenly hordes of

people reciting my views. The world longs to hear what you have to say so communicate your interpretations, connections, evaluations, and questions clearly.