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Zinc Reading Ignition: Make It Real

Make It Real

What Is Make It Real?

When you read "a tree," it's pretty easy to see it in your mind. When you read, "a siren," you can probably hear it.

But what about a word like "gratitude"? That isn't something you can easily see, hear, smell, taste, or touch.

In order to understand a word like "gratitude," you have to connect it to an example in your mind. You could think of friends who mean so much to you. You might feel thankful for a pet, or maybe you imagine feeling warm and connected.

When we connect examples, we make words and phrases real in our minds. That way, we can follow the writer's idea.

How Do I Do It?

Here's an example from a Taylor Swift song:

"Dream big, aim high"

There's not much here I can easily imagine with my senses. Both of these phrases need an example to make them real.

"Dream big, aim high"

When I read "dream big," I think about big, amazing plans: starting an animal rescue, becoming a successful game designer, or being a first draft pick for the NBA.

When I read "aim high" I imagine training to climb a mountain, trying out for the lead in the play, or setting a goal to practice guitar every day for a year.



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How to Make It Real As You Read

When you read phrases like...	You can connect examples like...
The greatest good	Everyone on the planet having access to food, health care, and love
Service to others	Volunteering to clean up your neighborhood park
Finding your voice	Raising your hand to speak in class
Democratic nation	A country like the U.S., where everyone has the right to vote for government officials.
A technological development	Inventions like phones, the Internet, electric vehicles

One more thing: Once you've connected some examples of your own, check back with the text. Does your example relate to what the author probably wants you to think about and understand? Or do you need to revise your connection a bit? In Make It Real, you'll see questions that ask you to pick the example that best relates to the author's meaning.