



MEANING MAKER – FOCUS QUESTIONS

Meaning-Maker (Semantics)

What does
this text
mean to
me?

- What does this mean to me?
- How are the ideas in this text sequenced – do they connect with one another?
- Is the text linear or non-linear; interactive or non-interactive? How does this affect the way I make meaning?
- What is the social and cultural context of this text?
- What prior knowledge and experiences might help me make meaning of this text?
- How will my purpose for reading, and the context in which I am reading, influence my meaning making?
- What possible meanings can be constructed from this text?

QUESTIONS TO DEVELOP ORAL AND WRITTEN RESPONSES

Meaning-Maker (Semantics)

What does
this text
mean to
me?

- Does the text remind you of something that has happened to you or to someone else you know?
- What does the title/cover suggest that the text is about?
- What might happen next? What words or phrases give you this idea?
- What are the characters thinking and feeling? How do you know?
- What message is the author presenting?
- What are the main ideas presented?
- What do the pictures (graphs, diagrams, tables, captions, illustrations) tell us?
- Do they fit in with the text and do they provide more information?
- What did you feel as you read this part?
- Describe or draw a picture of a character, event or scene from the text.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS FOR TEACHERS

Meaning-Maker (Semantics)

What does
this text
mean to
me?

- Is the task linked to a real life problem or issue?
- If I have exposed the students to similar text types in the past, how can I make explicit reference to those texts so students can make connections with prior learnings?
- What are the common understandings and misunderstandings that might occur? How can I check for the misunderstandings?
- How will I explicitly teach the drafting process?

**Meaning -
Maker
(Semantics)**

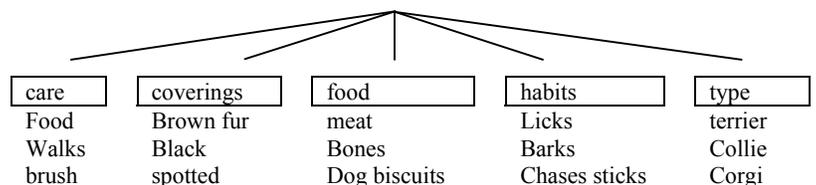
**KNOWLEDGE:
(understanding of)**

- The text's topic
- Text's genre
- Text type, (content, graphics, symbols and icons, technology – navigation, current affairs, advertising)
- Relevant knowledge from other texts i.e. Intertextual knowledge
- Knowledge about how information technology texts are organised
- Readers/viewers bring their own knowledge, values and practices to their interpretation of texts
- Prior knowledge can help to construct meaning
- Purpose for reading and the context in which reading takes place, influences meaning making
- Diagrams, tables, maps and graphs contribute to the meaning of a text
- Facial expressions, movements and gestures, voice resources of pace, volume and pronunciation, sound effects and music can be used to enhance meaning
- Ideas and information are organised and linked to guide an audience
- Texts can convey meanings that are not directly stated

ACTIVITIES:

- Use immersion, modelling, demonstrating, guided reading and writing activities
- Journal writing and group discussions which provide students with opportunities to think through their reading and make connections
- Guided reading with small groups of students who are reading the same fiction or non-fiction texts
- When using guided reading have students focus on:
 - ☞ Making, confirming, revising and substantiating predictions
 - ☞ Comparing problems in the text to problems in their life
 - ☞ Comparing characters in stories to people they know (by linking their experiences to the text, the students construct meaning as they read)
- Before reading non-fiction texts – oral, print or multimedia:
 - ☞ Brainstorm and categorise current knowledge about a topic
 - ☞ Use Think Sheets, Three Level Guides, Before and After Charts, Retrieval Charts
- Ask children to identify all the know about a topic, then generate a list of what they want to know before reading a non-fiction text – KWL
- Explicitly teach students through Think Aloud Strategy, the thinking real readers do as they read
- Sequence texts – have students arrange story in correct sequence and justify their arrangements
- Interpret literal and inferential meanings in gestures, movements, images, sounds and words
- Encourage children to relate visual text to their own experiences eg. story about the beach – ‘You built a sandcastle just like that one’
- Encourage children to bring favourite books from home to share.
- Select texts that children can relate to, asking them to predict words and phrases.
- Encourage children to explain the meanings of their drawings and writing
- Read part of a story to children then ask them to draw a picture of what they think will happen next –Sketch to stretch
- Encourage children to relate texts to personal experiences – ‘That reminds me....’
- Have children make predictions from the title, illustrations, captions, sub-headings etc
- Encourage children to bring photographs of themselves along and dictate a caption.
- Make up new stories from textless picture books/ comic strips etc
- Select texts that describe familiar experiences, concepts and objects
- Encourage children to discriminate between texts that interest them and those that don't
- Provide children with opportunities to select their own materials for individual reading
- Establish a process for conferencing children about their individualised reading
- Show children how to develop personal reading logs
- Encourage children to share experiences relating to their reading. – Find other texts related to the topic. Promote discussions before, during and after reading
- Involve children in activities that focus on the use of prior knowledge in reading. Children:
 - ☞ Focus on story title and illustrations to make predictions. Small group or whole class
 - ☞ Work in small groups – listing predictions and discussing focus questions such as ‘what do you think this story will be about? What kind of book do you think it will be?’
 - ☞ Examine the table of contents and make predictions
 - ☞ Relate the theme of the book to own experiences
 - ☞ Use their knowledge of story structure eg. ‘it's a fairy tale so I know everyone will live happily ever after’
 - ☞ Use knowledge of author's style to make predictions about characters or plot
- Work with teacher to develop a semantic map related to the topic or theme of the book before reading eg.

DOGS



- Work with teacher to prepare ‘What we Know’ and ‘What we want to know’ charts

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ACTIVITIES cont...

- Discuss effective reading strategies
- Allow time for children to talk about favourite texts and read out parts of stories, poems and riddles they have enjoyed. This may be suggested to children as an alternative to 'news'
- Involve children in activities during reading. Children:
 - ☞ Confirm or reject initial predictions
 - ☞ Discuss initial predictions then read aloud the section of text that substantiates or contradicts their predictions
 - ☞ Make further predictions – how the story will end
 - ☞ Read a paragraph and then plan questions to ask others in the group. Teacher asks a further question that will require children to make a prediction.
 - ☞ Read to find the main idea of a paragraph
 - ☞ Listen to or read a story from the stance of one of the characters and then talk about what this meant to them
- Involve the children in activities after reading. Children:
 - ☞ Confirm or discuss predictions made
 - ☞ Retell the text in small groups or with partners complete a semantic grid. Children are required to substantiate their responses from the text.

PROCEDURE:

1. Children generate a list of character traits as a group
2. Children make up the grid showing characters and their traits
3. Children discuss their choices. Eg.

Character	kind	evil	happy	sad	helpful	lazy
Red Riding Hood						
Grandmother						
Wolf						

- Take part in a co-operative cloze. Children interact on a cloze activity to suggest appropriate words to fill the gaps. Discussion is a very important part of this activity
- Use individual cloze practice. Children complete cloze activity individually and then get together to discuss choices.
- Take part in text sequencing. Cut the story into sections. The children are asked to arrange the story in its correct sequence and then justify their arrangements
- Expand sentences – children add adjectives and adverbs to sentences to make them more interesting
- Sequence words, phrases and sentences after reading a text
- Construct a story map. Children develop a map that shows the sequence of events and identifies particular excerpts from the story. Children should have the opportunity to explain their map. The story map can also be used by a child when he/she is retelling a story
- Take on a character in a story and write a letter to another character
- Follow instructions from a procedural text eg. cooking from a recipe, constructing a paper plane, scientific experiments, using maps, refidex etc to plan a journey
- Use 3 level guides to encourage comprehension at a literal, inferential and evaluative level.
- Have children interpret inferential meanings of language features and visual codes in eg. Pamphlet, advertisement, website, poster etc
- Determine literal meaning of text/visual images
- Construct figurative meanings in text
- Ensure children are reading in all subject areas.
- Comprehend text organisation of headings, main ideas and supporting details to gather information
- Innovate on text – predict how a text might unfold and the content that might be included. Discuss the social, cultural and reading knowledge and experiences students drew upon to make their predictions. Were some of these predictions culture-specific?



Meaning Maker – Viewer

MOVIES

What does this mean to me?

- What was the film about?
- Did you enjoy the film

How do the ideas represented in the text string together?

- How do the producers make scene changes?
- What is the plot sequence of the film?

What is the social and cultural context of this text?

- What is the setting of the movie?
- Who are the characters? What are they like?
- What visual effects reflect a change in time and atmosphere?

What possible meanings can be constructed from this text?

- How did the producer's use of camera angle help to portray a character?
- How did the producer's use of lighting create atmosphere/mood

How is this different to my experiences?

- What other movie did this remind you of?
- Would this happen in real life?

TELEVISION COMMERCIALS

What does this mean to me?

- What is the direct message? What sort of people are they? What does their clothing tell you about the person? Who are the actors? Why do you think these actors were selected?
- What kind of action is used to advertise the product?

How do the ideas represented in the text string together?

- How many frames or shots were there? What effect did that have on the viewer?
- How is the verbal text delivered?
- What emotions are shown on commercials? How is this portrayed by body language?

What different approaches are used to sell the product?

- (problem solving, domestic dramas, scientific evidence, before and after testimonials etc)

What is the social and cultural context of this text?

- What sort of people were chosen to advertise this product? How does the setting help to tell you more about the product? Why were young/old people chosen for this commercial?

What possible meanings can be constructed from this text?

- Which part is the viewer likely to take away with them to think about? Would all viewers feel the same about the product as you do/ Why or why not?

PHOTOGRAPHS

What does this mean to me?

- What is this photo portraying? Have you seen these images before? Where? What do the visual images mean? What part of the photo catches your attention first? Why?
- Do you like it? Why/why not?

What is the social and cultural context of this text?

- What is the setting of the photo? What relationship is there between the prominent image and the other images around it? What visual effects are used to reflect time and atmosphere?

What possible meanings can be constructed from this text?

- How did the photographer's use of camera angle help to portray a character? How did the photographer's use of lighting create atmosphere and mood?

How is this different to my experience?

- What does this photo remind you of? How close does it perpetrate real life?

PICTURE BOOKS

What does this mean to me?

- What was the story about? What visual features helped you to understand the story?
- How do the ideas represented in the text string together?
- What did the illustrator do to help explain the story line?

What is the social and cultural context of this text?

- What visual elements indicated the setting of the story? What kind of people are in the story? Where do they come from? How does the clothing indicate the time, place and a characters' personality?

What possible meanings can be constructed from this text? How is this different to my experiences?

- Compare the use of visual language features in a text to past experiences or to other texts.
- Would you like to be the main character? If so, why?
- Would you behave in this way? Have you ever met somebody like..... before?
- Are the clothes you wear the same or different to the ones worn by in the story?
- Did the colour used by the illustrator create a 'real' setting?



Meaning Maker – Viewer

ADVERTISEMENTS

What does this mean to me?

- What is being advertised? What is said to be good (beneficial) about this product?
- How do the ideas represented in the text string together?
- Do the visual images add to/complement the written text?
- Do the visual images make the product appealing? How?

What is the social and cultural context of this text?

- What is the setting of the advertisement? Is this a suitable product for me to buy? Do I need this product?

What possible meanings can be constructed from this text?

- What other information or pictures might have been helpful to include?

MULTIMEDIA

What does this mean to me?

- Have you seen these images before? Where?
- By looking at the images, predict what you think this... will be about?
- What do the images mean? (procedural and content icons as well as visual images)
- What part of the screen catches your attention first? Why?

How do the ideas represented in the text string together?

- What relationship is there between the prominent image and the other images around it?
- How do the words and images create a message?

What is the social and cultural context of this text?

- What kind of images appear on the screen?

What possible meanings can be constructed from this text?

- What information might I access at this site? What is the program asking me to do?

INFORMATION TEXTS

What is being represented in this text?

- What is this text about?

How do the ideas represented in the text string together?

- Explore how visual language features can be used to predict meaning in factual texts (i.e. Layout and composition, objects, framing, background)

What is the social and cultural context of this text?

- Discover how the features and structure of the images provide social and cultural indicators.

What does this mean to me?

- Explore how visual language features are used to create meaning. Why was a particular feature used? Establish how the viewer might interpret what is created visually

What other possible meanings can be constructed from this text?

- Discover how visual language features can add to or change the meaning of a text

How is this different from my experiences?

- Compare the use of visual language features in a text to past experiences or other texts.