



## Reading comprehension tips for fictional literature

### Part One: Pre-reading

1. What important information do we learn from the title or the introduction to the passage? (The introduction is often italicized at the top of the page.) Skim the story quickly to get an idea of what it's going to be all about.

### Part Two: Seeing and feeling the story

1. Read the story once without stopping to answer any questions.

2. Read the story again. *This time, see the story as a movie in your mind. See the scene: make a movie. Envision the passage. Become a director. How would you portray this scene?*

3. *Where does the story take place? If there are different settings, make a note of that too. Notice when the scene shifts to another setting.*

4. *Who is telling the story? (From whose point of view is the story being told?)*

5. Put yourself into the story by becoming one of the characters. What do you see? What do you feel?

6. Now read the story again, and use the questions below to guide you into a deeper understanding of the passage **before** you try to answer any of the reading comprehension questions that are based on the passage.

### **Part Three: Outlining the sequence of events**

1. What is the sequence of events?
2. How does the story develop from section to section?
3. What changes? For example: Is there a new development? Or, is there a change in a character's actions or thoughts? Or does a new event occur?
4. When does the change take place?
5. Why does the change take place?
6. What happens because of the change in the story?

### **Part Four: Focusing on the main characters**

1. Who are the main characters?
2. What is the relationship like between them? Are they related in any way?

### **Part Five: "Getting into" the main character**

1. What's going on inside the main character's mind?
2. How does the writer help you to "see inside the character's mind?" What words does the writer use to express the character's deepest desire or character traits?
3. What is the character like? What qualities or characteristics best describe him or her?
4. Do you like this character?
5. Why is the character so important to the story?

6. What makes the character happy or sad?
7. How does the character change or grow?
8. If the character is an animal, what human traits does it have? How does the author personify or make the character seem like a real person?
9. What problem does the character face? Or, what's upsetting or challenging him or her?
10. How does the problem get solved?
11. What new realization or new understanding does the character gain during the story?
12. Are there any lessons that can be learned by reading this story?