

SMART™ Lesson

Reading and Understanding: Making Connections

When we read, we don't just read words on a page. We try to make sense of the text and connect it to our own experiences, prior knowledge, or things that we read before. We make connections in order to better understand and remember what we read.

Types of Connections

There are three types of connections we can make when we read:

- **Text-to-Self Connection:** We connect what we read to our own experiences, thoughts, feelings, or memories.
- **Text-to-Text Connection:** We connect what we read to other books, articles, or stories we read before.
- **Text-to-World Connection:** We connect what we read to real-life events, situations, or issues in the world around us.

Examples of Connections

Let's look at some examples of connections:

- **Text-to-Self Connection:** When you read a story about a character who is afraid of the dark, you might remember a time when you were also afraid of the dark, and how you overcame your fear.
- **Text-to-Text Connection:** When you read a book about a boy who discovers a magic key, you might compare it to another book you read about a girl who discovers a magic mirror.
- **Text-to-World Connection:** When you read an article about climate change, you might think about how it affects the environment, animals, and people all over the world.

Questions

Now it's your turn to practice making connections. Read the following short story and answer the questions that follow:

Tommy woke up early on Saturday morning with a big smile on his face. It was his birthday, and he couldn't wait to open his presents and have cake with his family and friends. He ran downstairs to the living room where his mom and dad were waiting with a big box wrapped in shiny paper.

"Happy birthday, Tommy!" they exclaimed.

Tommy tore open the box and found a shiny red bike with a silver bell and a matching helmet. He jumped with joy and hugged his parents tightly.

After breakfast, Tommy went outside to ride his new bike. He felt the wind in his hair and the sun on his face as he pedaled around the block with a big grin on his face. He saw his best friend Jack playing in the park and rode over to say hello.

"Happy birthday, Tommy! Nice bike!" Jack said.

"Thanks, Jack! Want to ride with me?" Tommy asked.

They rode together to the ice cream shop and got some delicious cones. Tommy felt like it was the best birthday ever.

1. What is the story about?
2. Which type of connection can you make to the story?
3. What is your favorite birthday memory and how does it connect to the story?

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