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I also ask that if you see any editing or content errors that you let me know by emailing me at khaag@liketowrite.com

Sincerely,
Karen Haag

I hope I can help you in some small way.
Please feel free to email with questions ☺

What assignments require THINKING?

1. Stop and collect thoughts during reading before moving on. Draw a picture or write in notebooks every 8 minutes. Share with a partner before continuing. *By stopping every 8 minutes, students summarize the main ideas. By sharing with a partner, they combine their ideas and clear up misconceptions before moving on. Because of the talking, the learners are more likely to store the information in long-term memory.*
2. Write a double entry journal to sort big ideas from less important details. *By examining a text in this way, students closely consider the importance of each detail.*
3. After reading, summarize the main points. Compare ideas to a partner's. Determine a combined list partners agree on. *In this assignment, students are forced to critique each idea before it can go on the combined list.*
4. After reading, write a generalization that states an opinion, a change in perspective or new questions. Come to a reading group to share*. Writing a generalization is much more difficult than retelling the reading and will cause the child to think more deeply. Evaluating her opinion and whether it's been changed requires that she have an opinion which means she will have to read in detail. Writing questions will require the learner to pay attention to determine exactly what it is she does not know.*
5. Defend a pattern, explain new information the child didn't know before, or create and explain a new idea. *Each assignment requires that the student pay close attention to detail and then rearrange the information in such a way that she sees patterns, explains new learning, or create a new idea.*
6. Debate. Afterwards, write persuasively backed up with facts. *Debating forces students to confront the holes in their arguments. They get immediate feedback. Knowing that after the debate they will write a persuasive essay gives them a purpose for understanding the content.*
7. Code the text; students mark places where they thought of new ideas, where confusion was clarified, or what made the child think differently. *By coding or annotating, the student pays attention to inner thought as well as the details in the text. Going public with the inner thinking gives the student a purpose. His thinking will be different than his neighbor's and so the assignment is interesting.*
8. Students form an opinion before reading a text that addresses a question the teacher asks. After reading the student revisits the opinion to see if she changed her thinking or not. *This assignment requires that the student evaluate whether he will change his mind when confronted with new information and whether the new information is valid.*
9. Rate your vocabulary words on a scale from 1-5. Determine what the scale stands for. The only rule is that the scale must rate the meaning of the word, not how many letters it has, for example. *Now, the student has to look at each word to determine how it fits on her scale. It requires an understanding of what the words mean in order to complete.*
10. Complete one math problem. Explain how you solved it in terms a little brother or sister could understand. Determine what writing structure you will use to complete the task. *Dr. Robert Marzano said when he spoke in Charlotte, NC that students need words and a visual for understanding a concept. Asking the learner to pay attention to his thinking and put it into words will require that the student understand the problem. Or, it will reveal that he does not. Either way, if he can solve 20 problems, he shouldn't have to. If he doesn't know how to solve 20 problems, he shouldn't be asked to do them all wrong, reinforcing the incorrect procedure.*