

Teach your middle schooler to ask four questions when reading

Your child may whiz through reading assignments, but does he understand what he's read?

To encourage him to "read for meaning," have him ask himself these questions each time he finishes a passage:

1. What is the author's purpose? Is this piece meant to convey information? Is it trying to convince the reader of something?
2. What is the main idea? Does the piece have a theme? Does the author keep returning to one central idea?
3. Where is the evidence? What facts does the author include to support his theme? Are these facts convincing? Are there enough of them?
4. What could make it stronger? If your child were the author, what additional information would he have included? How would that information have changed or improved the piece?

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