

**Strategy: Make Connections (also a great book for Predictions)**

**Book: The Sweetest Fig**

**Author: Chris Van Allsburg**

**Setting: Whole Group Read Aloud**

Strategy Definition: (post in classroom)	Make Connections activates the student's personal knowledge and experiences to connect them to the text. They think about something that has happened in their own life that they can relate to in the text. It might be a real life connection, a book they read, a movie they saw or a TV show.
Standard:	The International Reading Association and the National Council of Teachers of English published <i>Standards for the English Language Arts</i> . 3. Students apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts. They draw on their prior experience, their interactions with other readers and writers, their knowledge of word meaning and of other texts, their word identification strategies, and their understanding of textual features (e.g., sound-letter correspondence, sentence structure, context, graphics).
Objective:	Students will make real life connections with the text and record the connections on the blue sticky notes provided in the Reader's Toolkit.
Materials:	Teacher: Teacher's Guide, T Chart Activity 1(see page 7 in Activity Book), <i>The Sweetest Fig</i> . Student: Reader's Toolkit, Blue Sticky Notes, Pencil, Copy of Activity Page 8 if needed.
Connect:  Before Reading  Establish a Purpose	The purpose of this lesson is to make connections to the characters, setting and events in <i>The Sweetest Fig</i> . Discuss with students the title of the story and the picture on the cover. Make a connection with the picture such as eating a bite of a sweet peach. Ask the students if they have tasted a fig. Share experiences. Open the book and show the students the pictures. Begin reading the first page about Monsieur Bibot and Marcel. Students will already begin making connections so encourage them to write and share their thoughts. <b>(suggested 1<sup>st</sup> stopping point)</b> Model a personal connection you have to the story. (example: My dog climbs on the furniture.)
Model:	Continue reading the story to the students. <b>(suggested 2<sup>nd</sup> stopping point)</b> Read the page with the Eiffel Tower, pause and ask the students to make a connection to the setting. Ask guide questions

<p><b>During Reading</b></p>	<p>such as “What does this picture remind you of?” or “Do you have a connections to Paris or the Eiffel Tower?” Invite students to share their connections. Model appropriate connections such as “I went to Paris last summer and visited the Eiffel Tower. In real life, the Tower is straight (not bent).”</p> <p>Continue reading to the page where Marcel is on the table eating the fig. <b>(suggested 3<sup>rd</sup> stopping point)</b> Again, ask the students to make a connection. Encourage them to share a connection with the class or a shoulder partner. Model a connection such as “Sometimes my dog tries to take food of our table at dinner”.</p>
<p><b>Check for Understanding:</b></p> <p><b>After Reading</b></p>	<p>Continue reading the rest of the story. Post all students blue sticky note connections on a T chart posted in the classroom. Post sticky note responses under the correct heading: Text-to-Text, Text-to-Self, or Text-to-World. Compare students’ connections with each other. Look for similar connections. Think aloud and share how the make connections strategy helped you to comprehend the text. Discuss how to file new information in “<b>mental filing cabinets</b>” in your mind. Encourage students to connect new information to existing information (in their mind) and create new files (in their mind) for new information.</p>
<p><b>Reminder:</b></p>	<p><b><i>Strategy instruction takes time, be consistent and supportive.</i></b></p>