



# Digging Deeper & Reading Comprehension

## Book Clubs and Discussion

August 2003 Adapted from Debbie Miller's *Reading With Meaning*

### January

Students are ready to listen actively and respond thoughtfully to others in order to understand another's point of view and/or inform one's own.

*A perfect way to get started is to ask the children to choose a burning question from a chart the class has created together, or pose an open-ended question yourself and work with them to infer meaning.*



*The strategies of questioning and inferring are particularly helpful in teaching children how to take conversation deeper.*

Children need to observe adults in a book club discussion and observe the following:

- 1) Working together to figure out answers to questions
- 2) Taking turns talking
- 3) Asking questions
- 4) Laughing
- 5) Rereading parts of the book
- 6) Making connections from the book to our lives and other books
- 7) Inferring
- 8) Working together to understand

*Debbie Miller's students sit in a bigger circle around the adult circle, and pass around a snack as they watch the adults discuss a book.*

### Am I Ready for Real Book Conversation?

- Does what I have to say connect to the question or topic?
- Can I connect what I have to say to what someone else has said?
- Can I support what I have to say? What evidence or personal experiences do I have to make my point?
- Has someone else already said what I am about to say?
- If I am speaking to disagree, can I state what I heard the other person say and explain how and why my thinking is different in a nice way?
- Does what I want to say enrich the conversation?

*And also think about this:*

- Am I ready to act like the adults who modeled book discussions for the class?

First book club for children:

Children choose books from those they have already read aloud and discussed previously.

Knowing how to read the book is not a requirement.

The book must be sophisticated enough to warrant thoughtful conversation.

A question serves to focus the dialogue; showing children how to collaborate to infer answers, solve problems and construct meaning comes next.