

BOX 6.5

Sample Metacognitive Log Prompts

Early in a course, when students are new to metacognition, prompts such as the following can help them get started keeping a metacognitive log. Many teachers have students write these on a “bookmark” or the inside cover of their log.

While I was reading:	
I felt confused when . . . and so I . . .	A word/some words I did not know:
I was distracted by . . . but then I . . .	I stopped because . . . What I did next was . . .
I started to think about . . . and so I . . .	I lost track of everything except . . .
I got stuck when . . . What I did was . . .	I figured out that . . .
The time went quickly because . . .	I first thought . . . but then realized . . .
I remembered that earlier in the text . . .	I finally understood . . . because . . .

Later, students may be ready for alternative prompts, which they generate or the teacher introduces to focus them on particular reading strategies.

A reading strategy I used:	A question I had*:
An image I had in my head:	A “right there” question I went back to check:
A connection I made:	A “pulling it together” question I figured out:
I summarized . . . for myself in these words . . .	A “text and me” question I thought of:
A prediction I made was . . . because . . .	An “on my own” question I wondered about:

*These types of questions are described in the Chapter Seven discussion of QAR.

Initially, teachers model an SSR+ metacognitive log entry or two about the books they are reading during SSR+ time. They also collect examples from students’ entries that serve as models for the class to talk about. Experienced SSR+ teachers find that if they respond to about five students’ logs per class period, they can keep track of how the reading is going for individual students and make brief comments in the logs that let students know they have an interested audience. Many of the “While I was reading” prompts that students use in the first weeks of SSR+ suggest that it’s not uncommon to be distracted or confused (or to be able to figure out something to do about it). Later, these initial prompts may give way to new ones the class comes up with, new ways the teacher wants to focus students on their reading behaviors, or no prompts at all for students who no longer need them.