



PREVIEWING TEXTS WITH STUDENTS



Previewing texts is an essential skill for readers to use in order to decide if they would like to read a book. Here are the steps I model with students to help them practice previewing texts.



THE COVER!

Check out the cover! Students are sometimes surprised when I tell them the cover is a big reason I decide to read a book. But the covers of books can help us decide if we want to preview other parts of the text.

THE BLURB!

Read the blurb, which is the short synopsis on the back of paperbacks or inside cover of hardcovers. The blurb introduces the genre, characters, setting, and possible conflicts. They provide readers with great information about a text to help students decide if they want to read a book.



THE FIRST LINE!



As a writer myself, I love a good first line. I tell my students all the time that hooks are important in their writing. For me as a reader, if I don't like the first line of a story, often don't keep reading.

ASK STUDENTS!

To help students learn how to independently preview texts, ask the students what they look at when they preview a book. They can collaborate with their peers and adopt other readers' practices.



MAKE A PLAN!

Decide how and when you want students to practice this skill. You can practice it initially with your classroom library, but it helps to have students practice it in a larger setting. Visiting the school library on a regular basis allows students to continually practice this integral skill.