

Mini-Lesson 3: Answering Open-ended Questions

Some of the questions asked on formal tests are “open-ended.” These questions let you demonstrate how well you understand what you are reading. To score your best on open-ended questions:

- **Demonstrate an understanding of the task** – Make sure you clearly understand what the question is asking you and be sure to answer the questions that you are asked.
- **Complete all parts of the question** – Make sure you understand and answer all the parts of the question. If you do not complete all parts of the question, you will not score your best.
- **Relate your answer to the text** – Refer to specific actions, words, characters, etc., in the story.
- **Provide a thoughtful explanation or opinion** – Try to express your own thoughts about the text. Connect the text to something you may have read, seen, or experienced.

It is important to understand how to respond to the following eight words that are used in these types of questions.

- **Describe:** to draw a picture with words
- **Identify:** to point out details that are specific
- **Explain:** to define, to give an account of
- **Predict:** to tell what will happen
- **How:** in what way
- **Why:** the reason for
- **Which:** the one that
- **What:** which thing