



What Can A Parent Do To Promote Thinking?

"Children grow into the intellectual life around them."

Lev Vygotsky

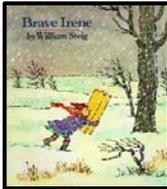
The skill of **Analyzing** means: Breaking into parts to determine meaning.

Ideas and tips for parents for the skill of analyzing:

It is possible to analyze almost anything in a book: characters, setting, plot, point-of-view, theme, imagery and symbolism are common elements to analyze. In elementary school, teachers typically focus on analyzing characters in fiction books to help students understand what characters represent and to help them infer personality traits. When you are reading with your child, talk about the characters through the lens of these three components: **1. Physical characteristics of characters** **2. What the characters do and say.** **3. What other characters say about each other.** All of this should lead you to a thoughtful analysis of characters and their motives.

Books that support the application of this skill:

You can use practically any book to practice the skill of analysis. Here are some that are particularly good for character analysis.



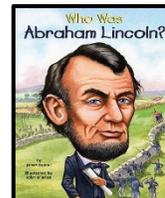
Brave Irene
by William Steig (K-5)



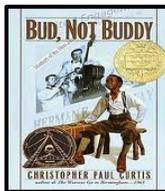
Olivia
by Ian Falconer (K-2)



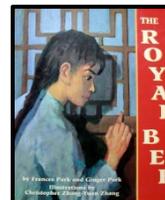
Maniac Magee
by Jerry Spinelli (4-5)



Any biography! Try the
Who Was? series (K-5)



Bud, Not Buddy
by Christopher Paul Curtis
(4-5)



The Royal Bee
by Francis and Ginger Park
(2-5)

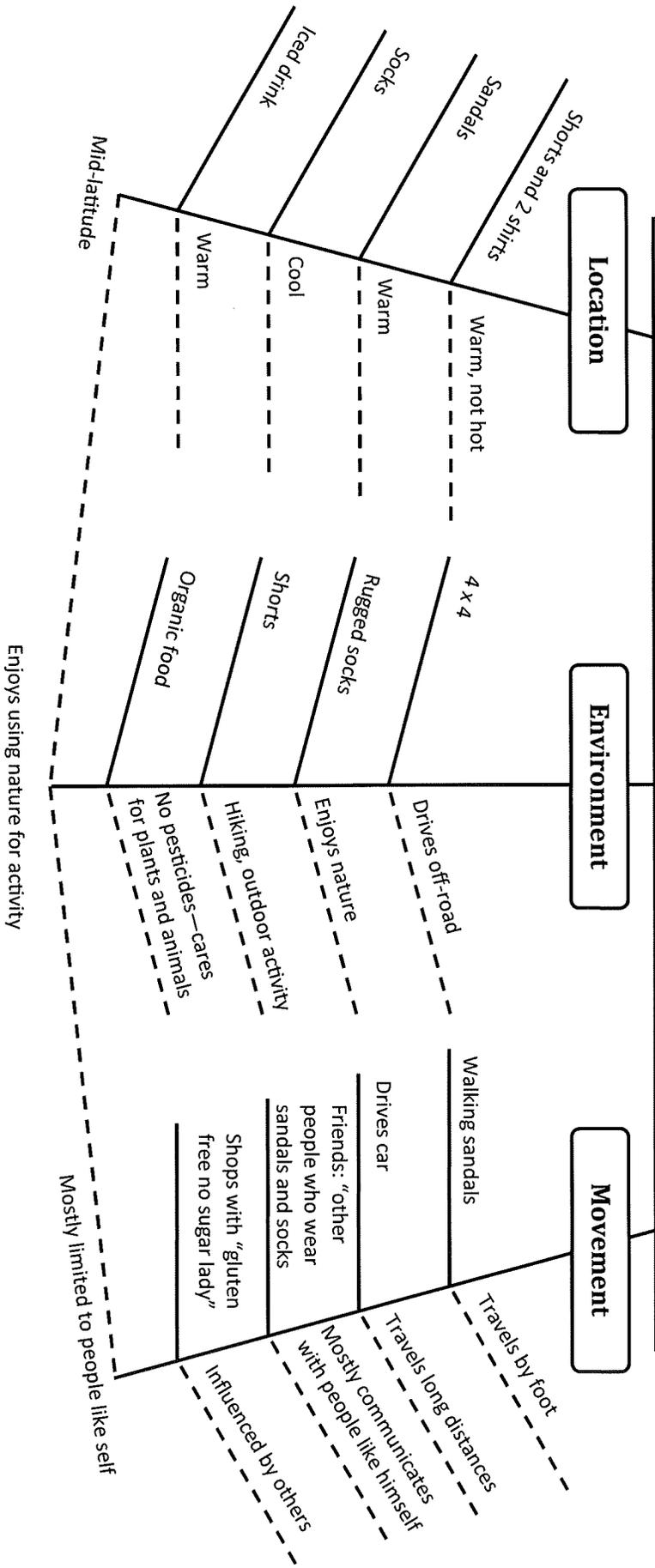
Questions that a parent can ask his/her child to reinforce this skill:

- What do you notice about the main character's appearance? How does this help you understand her/him on a deeper level?
- Let's find examples of what the character says that help us understand him/her more.
- What actions does the character take to help us understand her on a deeper level?
- Why did the character (take that action)? What inference can you make about why s/he did this?
- What are some things *other* characters said about the main character? How does this help us infer what the main character is like?
- How do you compare with the main character?
- How does this character remind you of someone you know?
- Do you know any other characters in books similar to this one?
- *How* do characters say things (shouted, whispered, muttered, seethed, chortled)? What does this make you think about the character?
- What personality trait(s) does the character exemplify and what is your evidence?
- What personality trait(s) does the character lack and why?

Personality Traits

kind	persistent	honest	brave
wise	greedy	generous	friendly
loyal	original	risk-taking	sensitive
hard-working	humble	creative	careless

What do geographic factors show about the Northwest's sense of place or culture?



People in the Northwest live in a mild climate where they can be active in nature. They might limit friendships to similar people, but are influenced by contact with others.