**Reading Strategy**

**Highlighting**

**Purpose**

* To enhance reading comprehension by providing a purpose for reading.
* To reduce frustration by helping students locate information more easily.
* To enhance meaning by letting the reader know what is important before they read.
* To provide a specific focus that allows students to distinguish main ideas from interesting details.

**Directions**

1. Give students a copy of “The House”.
2. Ask students to circle with a pencil everything they think is important.
3. Ask students to read the piece again and this time use a pink highlighter to mark places in the text a robber would find important.
4. Have students read the piece a third time and ask them to mark with a yellow highlighter any places in the story that a prospective home buyer might think are important.
5. Ask students what they notice about the three times they highlighted. Lead a discussion on the importance of having a purpose for reading.

**Extenders:**

* Ask students to read an excerpt from Thomas Paine’s Common Sense and highlight ideas that a loyalist would agree with in pink and ideas that a revolutionist would agree with in blue.
* Have students read the article, *Reinventing the Zoo* in E Magazine and highlight the old expectations for zoos in blue and the new expectations for zoos in yellow.
* Before reading To Build a Fire by Jack London discuss the concept of setting and ask students to highlight passages that relate to the setting of the story.
* After introducing the topic of engine performance ask students to read that section in the Technical Manual and highlight what they understand in orange and what they don’t understand in green.

“The House” excerpted from I Read It But I Don’t Get It by Cris Tovani

The House

The two boys ran until they came to the driveway. “See, I told you today was good for skipping school,” said Mark. “Mom is never home on Thursday,” he added. Tall hedges hid the house from the road so the pair strolled across the finely landscaped yard. “I never knew your place was so big,” said Pete. “Yeah, but it’s nicer now than it used to be since Dad had the new stone siding put on and added the fireplace.”

There were front and back doors and a side door which led to the garage which was empty except for three parked 10-speed bikes. They went in the side door, Mark explaining that it was always open in case his younger sisters got home earlier than their mother.

Pete wanted to see the house so Mark started with the living room. It, like the rest of the downstairs, was newly painted. Mark turned on the stereo, the noise of which worried Pete. “Don’t worry, the nearest house is a quarter mile away,” Mark shouted. Pete felt more comfortable observing that no houses could be seen in any direction beyond the huge yard.

The dining room, with all the china, silver, and cut glass, was no place to play so the boys moved into the kitchen where they made sandwiches. Mark said they wouldn’t go to the basement because it had been damp and musty ever since the new plumbing had been installed.

“This is where my Dad keeps his famous painting and his coin collection,” Mark said as they peered into the den. Mark bragged that he could get spending money whenever he needed it since he’d discovered that his Dad kept a lot in the desk drawer.

There were three upstairs bedrooms. Mark showed Pete his mother’s closet which was filled with furs and the locked box which held her jewels. His sister’s room was uninteresting except for the color TV which Mark carried to his room. Mark bragged that the bathroom in the hall was his since one had been added to his sisters’ room for their use. The big highlight in his room, though, was a leak in the ceiling where the old roof finally rotted.