SYNTHESIZING
Thank You, Mr. Falker
By Patricia Polacco

SUMMARY
Thank You, Mr. Falker is a story of Trisha, a little girl who could hardly wait for school to start. Trisha could paint and draw beautiful pictures but when she looked at the words and letters on a page, all she could see was a jumbled mess. Because Trisha could not read, she quickly fell behind in school. Her classmates began to bully her and call her dumb. Before long, Trisha began to believe the mean things her classmates said. Then her family moved to California where she met Mr. Falker. Mr. Falker was Trisha’s fifth grade teacher. He was different from every teacher Trisha had before. He wore striped coats and butterfly ties and he thought that Trisha was brilliant. Mr. Falker realized that Trisha was a smart and talented girl with a very unique problem. Mr. Falker did not call Trisha dumb. Instead her solved her problem and taught her to read.

LINK TO WHAT YOU KNOW

- Think of a time when you felt dumb. Why did you feel dumb?
- Think of a time when you tried to do something but found it difficult. How did you feel?
- What does the word “bully” mean?

Read Thank You, Mr. Falker once from beginning to end

WHY DO READERS SYNTHESIZE?

When readers become confident using all of the thinking through reading strategies, they begin to synthesize. When readers synthesize, they use all of the strategies to understand texts. For example, on one page, a reader may use visualizing to understand the author's meaning and on the next page, the reader may make a text to text connection. When readers synthesize they are able to use the strategies automatically, almost without thinking about them, to understand text better. Have fun thinking through reading!

Words to Know and Understand

Twilight
The light in the sky at the end of the day when night is just beginning

Cunning
Getting what you want in a clever and often dishonest way
Tips for Synthesizing

When you use all of the reading strategies to understand a book, it is easy to become a lazy reader and practice only your favorite strategy. A lot of readers like to visualize when they read. Remember that your brain needs to use all of the reading strategies so that you can understand what you read. Challenge yourself and try using as many strategies as you can when you read.
Think about the book. Which strategies did you use to understand the book while you were reading? Where in the book did you use the strategy? How did using each strategy help you to understand more?

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<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Where in the Book I Used the Strategy</th>
<th>How the Strategy Helped Me</th>
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