

Comprehension Instruction within the Literacy Block

Skill Building	Shared & Modeled Reading	Writing
Guided Reading	Teacher Read Aloud	

Comprehension instruction takes place primarily during the Modeled and Shared Reading block. During Guided Reading, students are supported as they use the strategies while reading texts at their instructional level. It is during independent reading that students have the opportunity to practice these strategies on their own while reading texts at their independent level.

Comprehension Strategies that Support Understanding:

- Activating Prior Knowledge/
Making Connections
- Create Mental Images/Visualizing
- Asking Questions
- Making Inferences/
Making Predictions
- Determining Importance
- Synthesizing Information
- Use "Fix-Up" Strategies
[Monitor/Clarify]

Resources for Parents

<http://www.readingrockets.org/books>
(Find books that will capture your child's imagination! Note the themed book lists and award winners.)

http://www.adlit.org/books_authors/
(Book list for grades 4-12)

<http://www.readingrockets.org/article/3479>
(More information for you about comprehension strategies)

<http://www.rif.org/parents/tips/tip.aspx?View=11>
(Tips for Reading Aloud)

References:

- <http://forpd.ucf.edu/strategies/stratText.html>
(Florida Online Reading Professional Development)
- <http://reading.ecg.org> (Into the Book, Wisconsin Educational Communications Board)
- Miller, D. (2002). *Reading with Meaning*. Portland, ME: Stenhouse Publishers.
- Zimmermann, S., C. Hutchins. (2003). *7 Keys to Comprehension*. New York, NY: Three Rivers Press.

Reading Comprehension Instruction Grades 3-5

Focus Strategies: Activating Prior Knowledge and Making Connections



What is Activating Prior Knowledge?

Readers activate what they know or don't know about a topic and use this knowledge before, during, and after reading to understand and clarify misunderstandings about the text.



STUDENT DEFINITION:

I use what I already know to help me understand what I am reading.

What is Making Connections?

Readers relate what they read to personal experience (text to self), to information from other texts (text to text), or to information about the world (text to world) in order to enhance understanding of themselves and the text.



STUDENT DEFINITION:

I think about experiences I've had, other texts I've read, and the world around me to help me understand what I am reading.

Activities that Support these Strategies

- Look at the title of the book and the picture on the cover. Ask your child what he/she knows about the subject. While reading, continue to talk about prior knowledge and connections. Discuss any new learning after reading the text.
- Support your child with sentence starters. You may need to model for your child first:

This part reminds me of....

I felt like...(character) when I....

If that happened to me I would....

This book reminds me of...(another text) because....

I can relate to...(part of text) because one time....

Something similar happened to me when....

When I think about ...(the topic) I think about...(list known facts or ideas)

- Use post-it notes to identify places in the text, where students have made connections to the text.
- As you read with your child, you can model the different types of connections that you made while reading. As an example you could read a page or paragraph and then say "Oh that reminds me of..."

Books that Encourage Activating Prior Knowledge and Making Connections

Non-fiction picture books are perfect choices as you encourage your child to activate prior knowledge. Select books about topics that are of interest to your child or books that you're sure will peak their interest! Choose books that contain lots of colorful illustrations to support your child's learning.

Realistic Fiction provides many opportunities for students to make text to self, text to text, and even text to world connections. Think about those books that make you feel happy, sad, angry, or nostalgic. Think about books that describe common childhood experiences to which your child could relate.

Note: As students are learning to use comprehension strategies, reading aloud or sharing the reading is more appropriate than having your child read the entire text aloud or independently.

