

RESEARCH-BASED
COMPREHENSION STRATEGIES

The expectation for reading at all grade levels is that the students will read widely. Proficient readers read and comprehend text using similar strategies.

Effective strategies used by successful readers at all grade levels include:

- **Activating prior knowledge** to make meaning from text
- **Creating mental and sensory images** in one's mind to enhance understanding
- **Generating questions** before, during and after reading to identify key points in text and remembering them
- **Drawing inferences** to build coherent understanding
- **Determining importance** during and after reading to identify key ideas
- **Summarizing** during and after reading to understand how different parts of text are related
- **Analyzing various text structures**
- **Self monitoring** one's own reading, checking for understanding and applying fix-up strategies
- **Synthesizing** new information with existing understanding about a topic
- **Evaluating** and forming opinions about ideas presented

What is Key for Kids

Connecting

What's Key for Kids

- Readers activate their prior knowledge before, during and after reading
- Readers use schema to make connections between the text and their lives, between one text and another, and between the text and the world.
- Readers distinguish between connections that are meaningful and relevant and those that aren't.
- Readers build, change, and revise their schema when they encounter new information in the text, engage in conversations with others, and gain personal experience
- Readers use their schema to enhance understanding

Visualizing

What's Key for Kids

- Proficient readers create mental images during and after reading. These images come from all five senses and the emotions and are anchored in the reader's prior knowledge.
- Proficient readers understand how creating images enhances comprehension.
- Proficient readers use images to draw conclusions, create unique interpretations of the text, recall details significant to the text, and recall a text after it has been sent.
- Images from reading frequently become part of the reader's writing.
- Readers use images to immerse themselves in rich detail as they read. The detail gives depth and dimension to the reading, engaging the reader more deeply and making the text more memorable.
- Readers adapt their images as they continue to read. Images are revised to incorporate new information in the text and new interpretations as developed by the reader.

Questioning

What's Key for Kids

- Readers spontaneously and purposefully ask questions before, during, and after reading.
- Readers ask questions to

Clarify meaning

Speculate about text yet to be read

Determine an author's style, intent, content, or format

Focus on attention on specific components of the text

Locate a specific answer in the text or consider rhetorical questions inspired by the text

- Readers determine whether the answers to their questions can be found in the text or whether they will need to infer the answer from the text, their background knowledge, and/or an outside source.
- Readers understand that many of the most intriguing questions are not answered explicitly in the text, but are left to the reader's interpretation.
- Readers understand that hearing others' questions inspires new ones of their own; likewise, listening to others' answers can also inspire new thinking.
- Readers understand that the process of questioning is used in other areas of their lives, both personal and academic.
- Readers understand that asking questions deepens their comprehension.

Inferring

What's Key for Kids

- Readers determine meanings of unknown words by using tier schema, paying attention to textual and picture clues, rereading, and engaging in conversations with others.
- Readers make predictions about text and confirm or contradict their predictions as they read on.
- Readers use their prior knowledge and textual clues to draw conclusions and form unique interpretations of text.
- Readers know to infer when the answers to their questions are not explicitly stated in the text
- Readers create interpretations to enrich and deepen their experience in a text.

Determining Importance

What's Key for Kids

- Readers distinguish the differences between fiction and nonfiction.
- Readers distinguish important from unimportant information in order to identify key ideas or themes as they read.
- Readers use their knowledge of narrative and expository text features to make predictions about text organization and content.
- Readers utilize text features to help them distinguish important from unimportant information.
- Readers use their knowledge of important and relevant parts of text to answer questions and synthesize text for themselves and others.

Synthesizing

What's Key for Kids

- Readers monitor overall meaning, important concepts, and themes in text as they read, understanding that their thinking evolves in the process.
- Readers retell what they have read as a way of synthesizing.

- Readers capitalize on opportunities to share, recommend, and criticize books they have read.
- Readers extend their synthesis of the literal meaning of a text to the inferential level.
- Readers synthesize to understand more clearly what they have read.

Adapted from Reading with Meaning by Debbie Miller, 2002

Aims or focus for questioning lessons

Students will:

1. use questioning to think along the way..while we read
2. ask questions before during and after reading to ensure thinking along the way
3. code questions in an effort to dig for meaning in text
4. generate thick questions to engage with text and make text more meaningful (compare/contrast the thinking that thick vs thin questions yields)
5. ask questions and link the questions to the text ex: my question is and the words that make me think this are...
6. ask questions and link the questions to the text that is missing ex: my question is and the the words that are missing make me think this...
7. ask questions which can help them visualize the setting or the problem or any circumstance in the book so that they can have a deeper understanding of it?

Aims or focus for connecting lessons

Students will:

1. find something within a text to connect to
2. search for a text-self connection
3. search for a text-world connection
4. search for a text-text connection
5. revisit existing connections to make them more complex or sophisticated
6. synthesize information in an even more complicated text

Aims or focus for visualizing lessons

Students will:

1. Listen to a few pages of text and describe what they are visualizing
2. Listen to a few pages of text and hook onto the one scene to describe with detail what they are visualizing
3. Listen to a few pages of text and pencil sketch what they are visualizing
4. Listen to a few pages of text, pencil sketch and write what they are visualizing using descriptive words

Aims or focus for inferring lessons

Students will:

1. look beyond the words to create deep meaning from text
2. look beyond the words for an alternative to the obvious
3. will consider what they know for sure and draw conclusions about it
4. will think about what they know for sure and make a decision about possibilities within text
5. uncover the layers of text to search for deeper meaning

Aims or focus for predicting lessons

Students will:

1. make predictions about text (using text features)
2. use key words to develop predictions
3. number two could take up to two weeks
4. make predictions about a specific event
5. make predictions about a specific character
6. make predictions about a problem and possible solution