

Reading and Reading Comprehension

Oh my word!



The KWL of Reading Comprehension

What do I KNOW ?

What do I WANT to *know* ?

What did I LEARN ?



By the end of this workshop you will have developed **your** own working definition of Reading Comprehension!

(handout 1)

4 Teachable Components of Reading

❖ Word Recognition

sight vocabulary
alphabetsics/phonics

❖ Vocabulary

listening
speaking

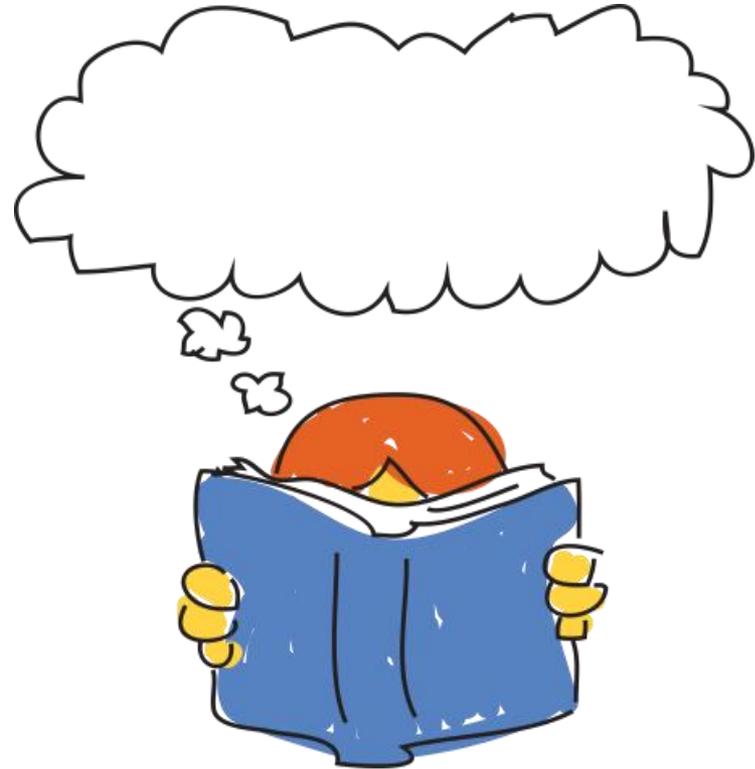
❖ Fluency

oral
silent

❖ Comprehension

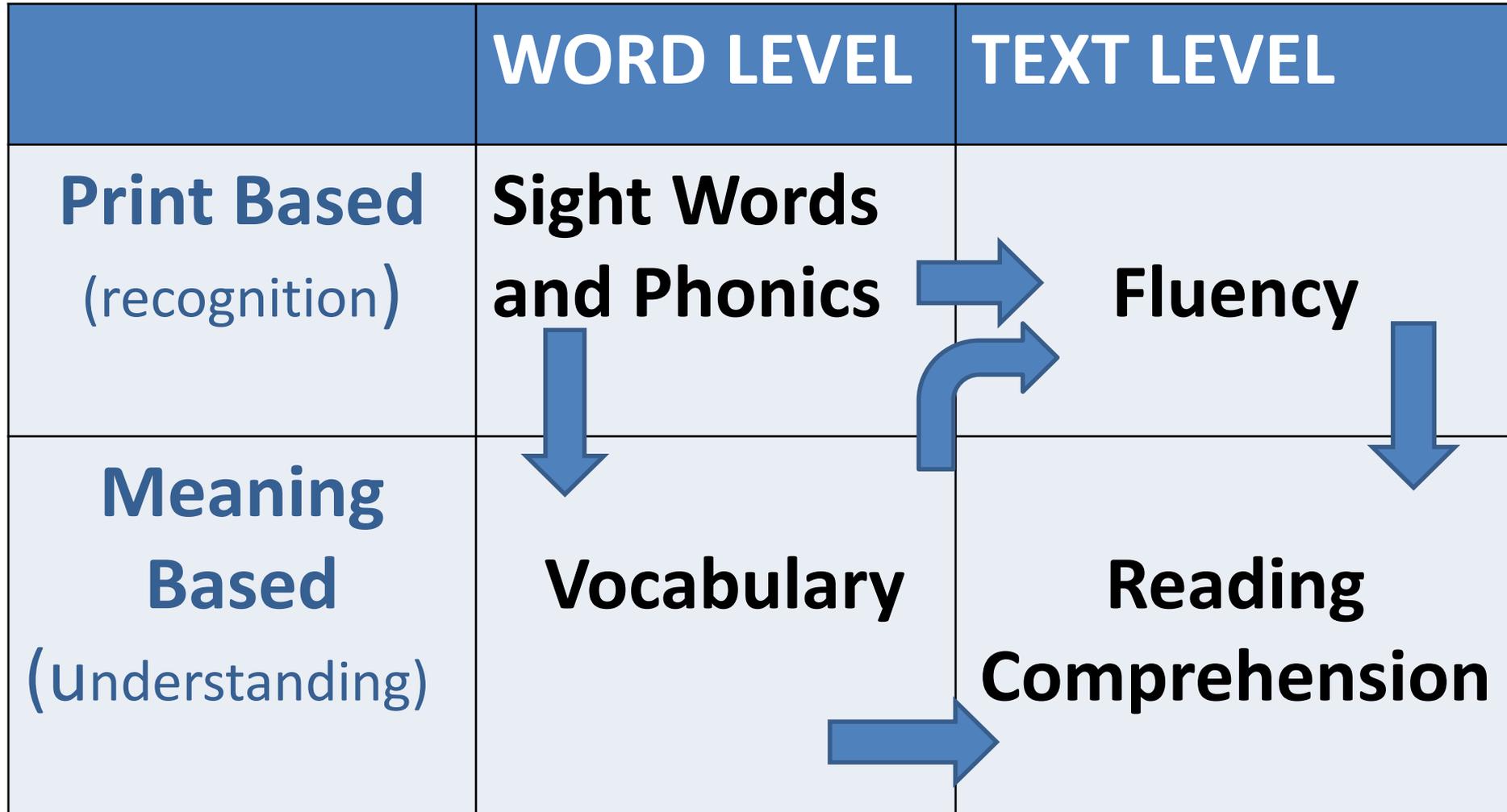
word, sentence, paragraph, full text

(handout 2)

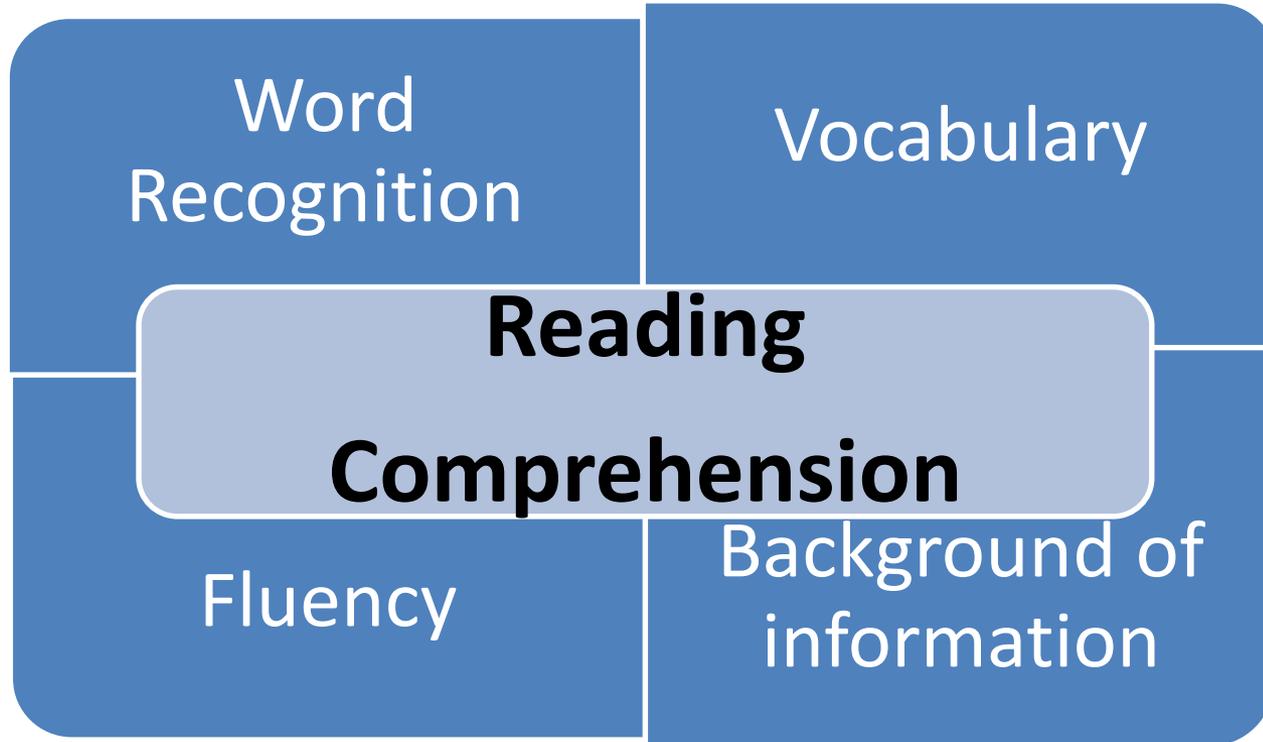


Interrelationship of the Reading Components:

Reading Comprehension happens
when it all comes together



The Four Legs Of Reading Comprehension



Roadblocks to Reading Comprehension Success

- Obstacle 1

Word recognition problems or the Inability to read a word due to not knowing the sounds of letters in English and having a minimal sight word vocabulary.

- Obstacle 2

Difficulty knowing what the word means once they can read it.

- Obstacle 3

A hesitant, slow, word-by-word reading rate contributes to inability to remember what was read.

- Obstacle 4

Background of experience differences means students often can not connect what they read to their life experiences.

Adult Readers Differ In Reading Needs*



* STAR (Student Achievement in Reading) @ 2007 by Dill Associates

Is it a **Word Recognition** Problem?

Lacking sight words or an inability to sound out a word

Word Recognition problems occur when your student can not read /recognize the word in the text and lacks the techniques to figure it out.

Words must either be memorized or “sounded out” using teachable strategies.

Reading Comprehension begins at the *word* reading level. Learning *which* words must be memorized and which words can be sounded-out using phonics develops word recognition.

Memorization

Sight Words

Sight words are often called *high frequency words*.
Sight words are “service words “ generally devoid of any inherent meaning (e.g. What is a “*the*”?).

Learning sight words requires **memorization** to automatically recognize these words by *sight*.

Believe it or not, 50% of all reading texts are made up of the same 100 words!
And the 25 most common sight words make up about 1/3 of our written material.

(handout 3- Sitton High Frequency Word List)

***Before beginning to learn to read English words, the letter names of the alphabet must be mastered.**



Multisensory Strategies to teach a Sight Word

Tutor *writes* the word on an index card



Tutor *says* the word



Student *looks* and *hears* the word



Student *looks* and *says* the word



Student *looks, says, traces, spells* and *says* the word



Student *looks, says, writes, spells* and *says* the word



Practice the **look-say-write-spell-say** using the white board, scrap paper, magic markers, etc.

Analyze the word- *What are consonants and vowels?*

Talk about why it's a heart ♥ word, which is a word that must be memorized

Example: s a i d Pick a word and let's practice this technique.



Word Analysis Terms

Alphabetics- this term is often used in adult literacy to refer to the names of the alphabet and sounds the letters make.

Phonics- is the word analysis system that teaches a student to read a written word by saying the sounds in a word. Phonics is the term we will use to refer to teaching your student to sound out words.

Quick points regarding the English language...

- English has **40** individual *sounds* yet only **26** *letters*.
- *Short vowel sounds* make up more than 60% of the words and the *schwa ə* sound is the most frequent vowel sound.

No wonder spelling is so hard!

Phonics

Word analysis instruction that systematically and directly teaches students how the letters and sounds of the English alphabet system form the words we read and spell.

Some general principles:

- A student must first learn the **names** of the letters and the **sounds** of the letters. *This is taught to mastery.*
- Students must also learn how to **hear** and manipulate sounds. This is called **Phonemic Awareness**.

For example, knowing that CAT
is made up of 3 separate sounds: /k/ /a/ /t/
helps with word analysis, decoding and spelling.

More about PHONICS

(handout 4- decoding strategies pg. 1-2)

Strategies to put in your “tool kit” of phonics!

- **Vowel vs. consonants-** sort out vowels and consonants. Teach the vowel names and then everything else is a consonant.
- **Short vowels-** multi sensory with pictures and gestures
- **Phonemic awareness activity-** sound position using colored discs. You will be given some to add to your “tool box of tricks”.
- **Tapping out sounds-** use fingers to tap each sound in a word.
- **Clapping syllables-** the first step in dividing words into syllables is to hear syllables. Clapping out syllable is very helpful and offers physical input.

More strategies with Phonics

- Underline and blend syllables-
Sub trac tion hap pen fur ni ture
- Open and Close the door- to physically teach open and closed syllables.
- Syllable types- such as “bossy r’s” and the old saying- “When 2 vowels go walking the first one does the talking”- are systematically added once short and long vowel sounds are learned.
- Syllable division rules piggy-back on to distinguishing open vs. closed syllables.
- Prefixes, suffixes and eventually roots are gradually introduced and build vocabulary knowledge.

Vocabulary Instruction

When a word can be read *but its meaning is unknown*, reading comprehension can suffer.

Vocabulary knowledge is the best single predictor of comprehension success.

Two Aspects of Vocabulary to consider with adults:

- 1) **Breadth** - number and kinds of word meanings known.
- 2) **Depth** - flexibility and precision of word understanding

Framework for thinking of learner's vocabulary:

- **Tier 1-** *basic concrete words* usually in speaking and understanding vocabulary like house, store, car, etc.
- **Tier 2-** more *abstract words* such as consequence, assume, disrupt, function, etc. which may not be in a student's listening vocabulary but may have been heard and vaguely understood.
- **Tier 3-** *domain specific words* appear infrequently like hypotenuse, photosynthesis, psychology, etc.

Beginning adult readers are reading Tier 1 words and generally know their meanings.

Tier 2 words begin to appear in the intermediate level materials and are often the word meanings that need to be taught. Tier 2 words play an important role in comprehension. Those using *Endeavor* will find that Tier 2 words are introduced at the beginning of a lesson and Tier 3 words are introduced in the margins of the text.

Most intermediate learners are learning Tier 2 or 3 words.

Vocabulary Meaning proceeds in 4 stages:

(*Endeavor* has this rating chart in their teacher's manual)

Stage 1- Never heard it before

Stage 2- Heard it, but don't know what it means

Stage 3- Heard it...it has something to do with...

Stage 4- Know it well



Key Points for Effective Vocabulary instruction

- Select word meanings appropriate to student's needs.
- Give clear definitions/explanation that are meaningful.
- Connect to own lives with associations.
- Teach in context of the material a student is reading.
- Provide lots of opportunities to use word in a variety of contexts.
- Encourage student to use new words outside of tutoring.

Monitor student's progress

* Organize words you are teaching into a format that allows you to monitor your student. Some examples- Tutor records words in student's personal dictionary; a binder of word practice sheets or flash cards with definitions.

* During each session always **review at least 3 previous words** before introducing new words.

Don't overload the student's capacity to retain new learning.

Strategies to build vocabulary with your student

(handouts 5 and 6 for vocabulary helpers)

- **Definitions** (meaning) Teach your student how to use a dictionary.
- **Other word forms** can help student determine if the word is a
noun (-tion, -ness, -er) helper
adjective (-ous, -ful, -less) helpless, helpful, unhelpful
verb (-ed, -ing) helping
- **Synonyms** (same) can initially help student make a familiar connection with an unknown word. Help = aide/support
- **Antonyms** (opposite) broaden breadth of the word. Help vs. hinder
- **Identify Base Word** (helpful; rewrite)
- **Associations** are the connections a student might have to how the word used. For example, if the word is *help* perhaps your student has heard *a teacher's helper* or *cry for help*.

Let's use the hand outs to practice.

Handout 5- use the 4x4 grid and work with "fire" or "work"

Handout 6- use the longer vocabulary sheet and work with the word "exhaust" or with "create"

More Vocabulary Strategies & Suggestions

With handout 7 we will practice some of these strategies:

- How to use Context Clues
- What to do with an M&M word?
- Play with “Clines”- gradations of meanings:
grumpy, mad, furious
- Prefix + root- show how word meaning changes
- Root + suffix- show how word use changes

As a student’s personal dictionary of words increases look for ways to organize words into categories that you’ve been teaching, for example same sounds, meanings, word families, etc.

Always compose sentences using review words and new words.

Use the white board in your daily review

Remember...to review, review, review is KEY !

Fluency and its importance to Reading Comprehension

- *Reading with efficiency and ease* frees the brain to think about the meaning of what is read.
- *Oral Fluency* is measured by word reading accuracy and reading rate.
- *Too many word errors* and fixing-up of errors causes comprehension to suffer
- As well, *word by word reading* again focuses on word reading not meaning

Heading-off Fluency issues

Choose the right material to practice fluency

Use the 5 finger rule to figure out when the passage is just right.

Choosing a Just-Right Book

Too Hard



- 5+ words you don't know
- reading sounds bumpy
- you don't understand
- hard to stay focused

Just Right



- 2-3 words you don't know
- you understand most parts
- enjoyable!
- mostly smooth - a few bumps

Too Easy



- 0-1 words you don't know
- perfectly smooth - no bumps
- no reading muscles working

Modess' Busy Bees
katemodessbusybees.org



What a fluent reader looks like

- Reads with expression (prosody).
- Pays attention to punctuation cues.
- Sounds natural as if they were speaking.
- You can tell if they understand what they read if their reading shows expression and you are interested.
- Eventually comprehends better when reading silently.
- Rereads to gain greater clarification.
- Reads with a pencil in hand to mark points needing clarification, words not known, etc.
- Can read a poem aloud with rhythm and rhyme.

Let's practice oral fluency techniques with handout 8 using single sentences.

Note: spend time reading at the sentence level

- Phrasing/scooping
- Emphasis/stress
- Underline & loop ending punctuation
- Expression/punctuation
- Don't ignore little words
- Repeated readings of short text eventually is the most effective way to build good fluency habits
- When building good fluency habits, teach a new technique using an easier passages

Background of Experience

- Respect cultural differences/learn from your student.
- Relate all new learning to student's personal knowledge base.
- Know your student's interests and use to stimulate interest.
- Make new learning Real Life, here and now.
- The lessons in your texts set the stage for what to focus upon.
- Use community and neighborhood resources such as: the Sandburg House; grocery store; aquarium; mineral museum; libraries; secure a library card; post office, buy stamps; Heritage Museum if interested in history; visitors center for maps, brochures.
- Discover something new together.
- Don't shy from playful activities that make learning fun, despite differences in age or in background of experiences. We all like to have fun!
- Use real objects for nouns (fruits, vegetables) whenever possible
- Use pictures
- Read aloud to your student about something new or interesting
- Use the newspaper and magazine pictures, articles, etc.

On to Reading Comprehension!

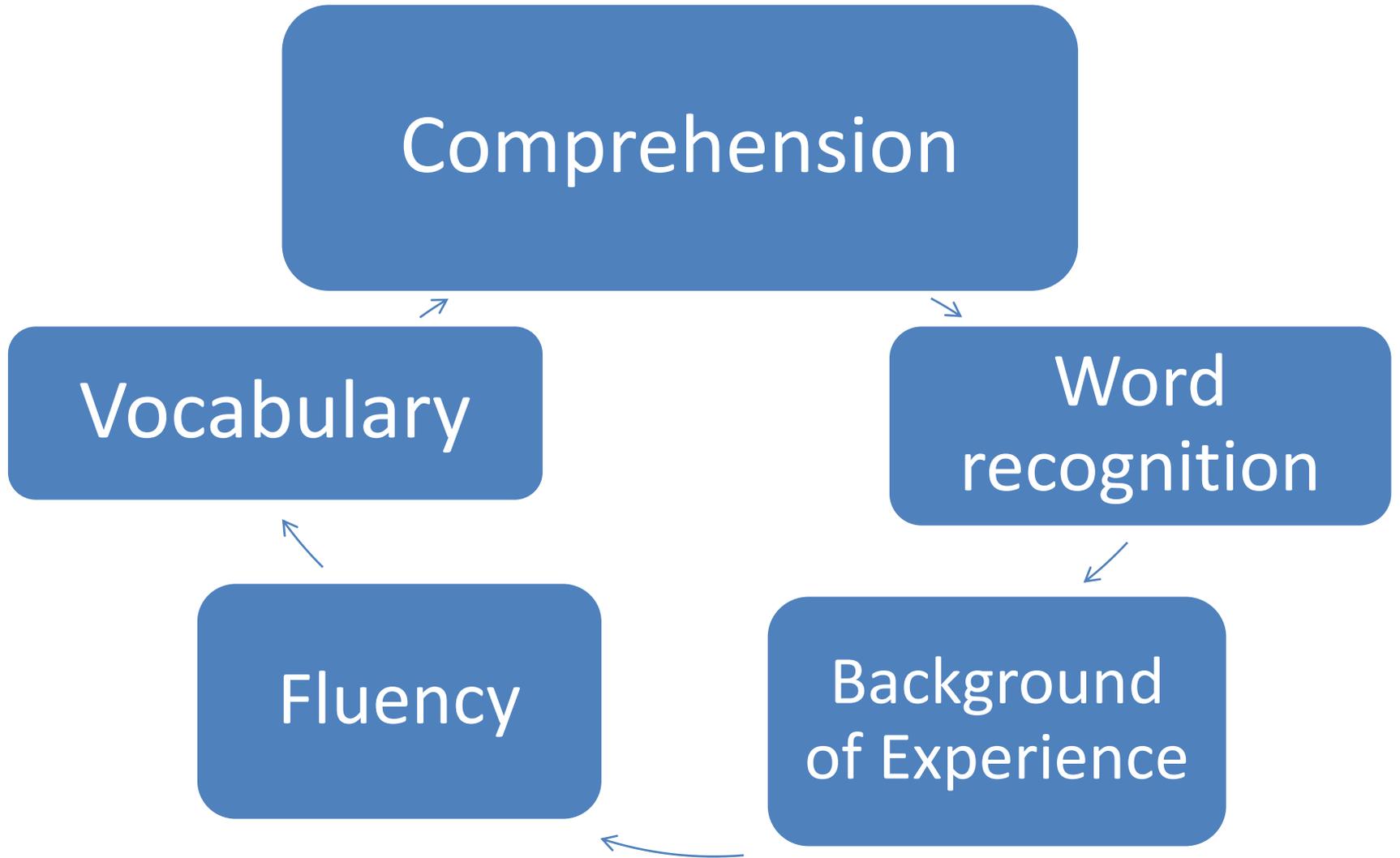
....and strategies to improve
reading for meaning.

But remember...



The Cycle of Reading

The Cycle of Reading



Reading Comprehension is *THE* Goal Of Reading

*In understanding what is read
3 factors are important:*

- *Monitoring your comprehension*
- *Relating the sentences to one another*
- *Relating the sentences to things
you already know*

Points to know

- **Reading Comprehension instruction must be explicit:**
Teach a skill directly.
- **Teach a small set of strategies well:** Learning comprehension skills builds competency and confidence to handle different types of questioning formats such as those found on tests, for example.
- **Match materials to the specific comprehension skill** you want to teach such as locating details, locating information, finding the main idea, determining causes and effects, etc.
- **Begin with the sentence** because the sentence provides an understanding of the question words of comprehension. The subject of a sentence is **who/what** it is about and the rest of the sentence tells **what** happens, **why** or **how**. Then start with short paragraphs and build to several connected paragraphs.
Remember, the sentence is the starting block when you are teaching a new skill.
- **Provide a variety of practice opportunities** with different examples of printed material. Use newspapers, brochures, comic books, etc. Different materials spark your student's interest and also show how the skills you are teaching can transfer to other materials.

Comprehension strategies and tricks to put in your “tool bag”

Question Words

- Students must know the meaning of question words.
- Question words are the backbone of reading comprehension.
- Teach their meaning and the clues to find the answers well.
- Answers to these questions are the facts/details of what one reads.
- These question words can then stimulate the beginning of inferential questioning.

Who- talks about people. Clues are proper nouns, people words & pronouns

What- talks about things/animals Clues are also nouns

Where- talks about places, directions. Clues are often prepositions.

When- talks about time. Clues are words such as soon, later, before, after

Why- talks about reasons. Clues are words such as because, therefore, so.

How- talks about in what way something might happen. Clues might be adverbs ending in -ly.

Play the Question Dice Game

A wooden die is in your “tool bag”

- ❖ It's a fun diversion to use after reading a short paragraph:
- ❖ Use the dice with question words on each side.
- ❖ Roll a question and ask that question using the material that was just read.
- ❖ Tutor/student tries to answer.
- ❖ Take turns.
- ❖ Model good question answering.
- ❖ Get in the habit of using part of the question in the answer.
- ❖ This will reinforce careful comprehension and improve clarity in written expression.

When you are ready for **inferential and opinion questioning** that is open ended Another die could have verbs such as:

must might would will can could should

Identifying the Main Idea:

The main idea of a passage is what it is mostly about.

It is the BIG PICTURE.

NOTE: Identifying the Main Idea is a complex process and takes time to learn. Main Idea is a critical skill to teach well because it is a step towards learning how to summarize and to take notes.

How can you help a student find the main idea?

Before Reading-

- Read the title
- Look at the picture, illustrations
- Predict what it will be about

During Reading- have students look for repeating words, picture, charts, other information as you read.

After Reading- Discuss what was the most important idea.

What did the characters do? What were the problems? Were they solved?

Let's Practice Identifying the Main Idea of a short passage

The purpose of this exercise is to distinguish between main ideas and details

(Main Idea handout 9)

Example 1

- Begin instruction at the **Topic Sentence level** because the topic sentence gives the **MAIN IDEA of a paragraph**. Find paragraphs where the topic sentence is at the beginning to start. Then underline it. Discuss how the remaining sentences provide the **DETAILS**. Then verbalize what the paragraph is about. *More materials for topic sentences and main ideas can be found in the Reasoning and Reading books.*

Example 2

- **Read a paragraph and then choose among 4 main idea sentences.** Note the focus on the question word in this example (Exercises in *Achieving TABE Success* work with multiple choices as does *Six-Way Paragraphs*. **Graphic organizer example**
- **Also included in the main idea handout packet is a Main Idea Graphic organizer** that can be used to provide written reinforcement after the topic sentence is located. The remaining sentences become the details. Visualizing a paragraph diagrammed in this way can help a student see how facts produce a general understanding of the big picture.
- **Newspaper articles with headlines are wonderful teachers of main idea.** The headline captures the main idea and the first paragraph contains the details. Working with newspapers is reinforcing and is Real Life!

Comprehension Skills ..continued

Cause and Effect: Tells WHY something happens.

Signal Words are helpful to alert the reader to cause and effect.

if...then when...then because... so... as a result of therefore...
the reason why... it may be due to... (*handout 10*)

Cause is what made it happen

It rained hard,

The sun shone before the rain had ended.

Effect is what happened

so I had to wear my raincoat

Consequently there was a rainbow.

Activity: Set up similar cause and effect scenarios for your student.

Write a few of them at the board or on paper. Then practice writing them as sentences in 2 different ways. The first example could be written like this:

*I had to wear my raincoat **because** it rained so hard.*

*It rained hard **so** I had to wear my raincoat.*

Sometimes cause and effect is not so obvious but a careful reader will pick it up:

Bill came to my house yesterday. He dropped a cup of coffee. My rug was a mess.

Check out the graphic organizer for cause and effect (*handout 10*).

We will do *an inference activity* using the short vignette above.

Comprehension Skills... continued

- ***Inference*** means reading “between the lines” and figuring out what is implied and unstated. Students will give opinions and Draw Conclusions.
- Words to use when inferring might be:

I think...

Maybe...

My guess is...

I predict...

Perhaps...

This could mean that...

I conclude that...

Let's use this short paragraph and do both cause and effect and infer and Draw Conclusions:

*Bill came to my house yesterday.
He dropped a cup of coffee.
My rug is a mess!*

Fill in the C/E graphic organizer with the above information and do some questioning using inference words to go beyond the facts to DRAW CONCLUSIONS.



Let's try this type of inference sample:

Daniel Inouye became a lawyer. He also helped lead the drive to make Hawaii the 50th state. In 1959, at the age of 34, Inouye was voted Hawaii's first U.S. senator. He also became the first Japanese American to serve Congress. He would serve as a senator for more than 35 years.

You can infer that:

yes

no

1. Hawaii became a state in 1959.

2. Daniel was born in Hawaii.

3. Daniel Inouye was re-elected senator.

4. Daniel was a senator because he became a lawyer.

Discuss how you could or could not infer.

Comprehension Skills...continued

Compare and Contrast

This comprehension skill focuses on how things are alike and how they are different.

Signal words help identify when a comparison or contrast is used by the writer.

(see handout 11)

Signal words for comparisons: alike both similar to in the same way

Signal words for contrasts: different but in contrast to however while although

Let's practice.....

First teach **comparison-**

Underline the signal words:

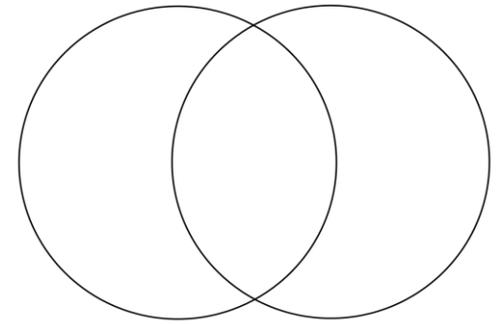
Insects produce sound without vocal cords. Beetles use their wings to make a whirring sound. Likewise a bee's hum is due to the rapid vibration of their wings. Similarly a grasshopper sings by rubbing a hind leg against a vein in his front wing.

Second teach **contrast-**

Underline signal words:

Many people live in apartments . Some are small and compact, while others are large and spacious. Although an apartment is small an it can be bright and airy while a large apartment could be dark and drab.

Venn diagram graphic organizer



These diagrams help students to visualize both contrasts.

They also help illustrate likenesses and differences characters, places, ideas, objects..

Read this simple paragraph.

Draw a Venn diagram and fill it in, then underline the signal words.

Oranges and grapefruits are both citrus fruits.

Grapefruits are large and yellowish while oranges are orange like their name.

Both are juiced and both can be peeled and eaten.

Oranges usually taste sweet; however, grapefruit can taste sour.

Citrus fruits like oranges and grapefruit are similarly good for you because they contain Vitamin C.

Practice using familiar information when initially teaching this skill or when you find your student gets stuck during a workbook lesson and needs to better understand compare and contrast.

Other ways reading material can be structured

- **Descriptions** – *(see graphic organizer handout).*

Descriptions are usually straightforward providing details of the main idea under discussion.

- **Sequentially** -- *(see graphic organizer handout).*

Sequential material usually involves steps to complete something like a recipe, refinishing furniture, etc. It also involves direction following. Words such as first, second, then, and finally signal a procedure to follow. *Teach* students how to read directions on tests!

Exercise: Count the sentences, circle each direction word and then restate each direction in order.

- **Story/plot** – *(see graphic organizer handout).*

A story usually is like a mountain. Climbing up is the rising action identifying characters, setting and describing the situation. The peak of the mountain is the climax and the other side of the mountain is the falling action leading to resolution. The theme or lesson learned is the mountain's base.

Exercise: The 3 Little Pigs- with a twist:

(handout 12)

The hungry wolf blew down 2 houses- no pigs.

The 3rd house made of bricks and all 3 pigs are sitting down to dinner.

The wolf is frustrated; comes down chimney; surprise ending.....

Characters

Setting,

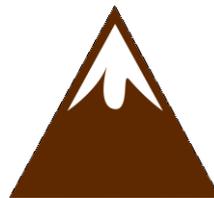
Problem

Rising action

Climax

Falling action/resolution

Moral



Lesson Plan Breakdown

What we know about reading and reading comprehension can be incorporated into your lesson planning using a rule of thumb from STAR (Student Achievement in Reading).

10 MINUTES PHONICS/SIGHT

10 MINUTES FLUENCY (Incorporated when your student reads directions and other material, practices phonics, etc.)

20 MINUTES VOCABULARY WORK

20 MINUTES COMPREHENSION

10 MINUTES WRITING

So many of these discrete components are embedded within your lesson.

When you do a sight word lesson, writing is involved.

In vocabulary work, writing is involved.

In word reading and sentence reading fluency is involved.

And when you actually read a passage everything comes together!

Let's Wrap It Up

Finally, teach your student how to **self-monitor** while they read and to how be an **active reader**. Model active reading for your student. Research indicates that learning how to be an active reader is the way for the adult learner to improve reading comprehension

10 Questions to ask your Student About Understanding What They Read

1. Do you look at the title and pictures?
2. Do you try to figure what it will be about before you read?
3. Do you stop and think about what you are reading while you read?
4. Do you try to guess what happens next?
5. Do you picture what is happening as you read?
6. Do you underline or write down words you don't know?
7. Do you slow down and write a ? mark if the part that doesn't make sense?
8. Do you go over parts that don't make sense?
9. Do you ask yourself questions as you read?
10. And if so, do you see if you can answer those questions?

Borrowed from STAR, 2007, DTI Assoc.

You can ask a student to rate themselves on a scale from 1 to 5 on each question.

1 never 2 rarely 3 sometimes 4 often 5 always

Your student's answers provide you with an understanding of their approach to reading & comprehension.

You can revisit this check list as you progress in your tutoring to see if self-monitoring improves and to figure out which active reading strategies to strengthen.

Asking your student how they learn teaches you! Our students are our best teachers.

Enjoy the journey!

