

*The following strategies have been shared by **Kate Christensen** from **William Colenso College**. Kate offers detailed explanations for how each strategy support learners to develop comprehension skills, how teachers can support students' learning, and how to implement the strategy. She also provides references and ideas for further reading.*

Comprehension Strategies

2013



Comprehension Strategy:

Making Connections

Learning Need	Understandings (What is it I need to understand?)	Teachers can support learners by...	Learning Intention	Steps
<p>Students cannot relate to the text or ideas, words in the text.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I can draw on my prior knowledge and experiences to make meaning - I can focus on a particular aspect of the text and relate it to prior knowledge - Connecting the text to my prior knowledge helps me understand. <p>Prior knowledge is experiences, knowledge and text that have been read before.</p>	<p>Teachers can support learning by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · giving Topic clues · modeling how to use what is familiar · Building connections from previous learning. · Questioning to expand what they already know. · Find links with the story and explain them. · Asking questions to make clear explicit connections that you want developed. · -Re-reading · Getting students to explain · Using vocabulary that relates to the topic. 	<p><i>We are learning to</i> <i>Make connections with the text and between texts.</i></p> <p><i>We will know we have achieved this when we</i> <i>Can make connections between us and the story.</i> <i>When we can make connections between texts and with in the text.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Look at the pictures to find clues · Look at the title to find clues · Look at the headings to find clues · Make links between what we already know and what we can see in the story · Use the text and make links between all aspects of the text. · Between different texts · To the wider world · Connections need to be meaningful · Need to enhance our understanding of the text

- Social and cultural concepts each reader interprets each text by drawing on their own unique life experiences and perceives it through their own cultural lens.
- Thinking aloud so that students see and hear you modeling the strategy.
- Making connections help students to improve their comprehension by making links.
- Gets made explicit and specifically taught as making connections for a need and to fill a gap.
- Making connections gets students to think about and clarify what they already know
- Making connections to connect new info with what they know to help us comprehend what we read

- Good questions for teachers to ask on p142 Effective Literacy Practice Y5-8
- Teaching Reading Comprehension - Alison Davis-142-148 lots of material for learning intentions.
- Teaching Reading Comprehension strategies, a practical classroom guide - Sheena Cameron p79 - 85
- Building Comprehension Strategies for Primary Years - Alison Davis p37 - 50

Comprehension Strategy: Forming and testing hypotheses about texts

Learning Need	Understandings (What is it I need to understand?)	Teachers can support learners by...	Learning Intention	Steps
<p>Students cannot revise their predictions. Students cannot give evidence to support their prediction.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The purpose is to read for meaning. - They need to be actively seeking meaning. - Predicting should not be a wild guess but thought about carefully. - Anticipate what will happen next - Help with engagement and understanding of text 	<p>Teacher modeling how to form a hypothesis. Encourage students to think critically about their hypothesis. Questioning - what is going to happen next? - why do you think that might be? Creating authors intention Text form Expectations from the title.</p>	<p><i>We are learning to</i> <i>Make accurate predications using evidence from the text..</i> <i>We will know we have achieved this when we</i> <i>Make accurate predictions that are true to the text.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Read part of the story and predict 'what next' · Making logical predictions · Explain why we are predicting that something will happen · Keep our original prediction in mind and ask whether it continues to make sense in light of new information · Use new information to make new predictions · Use clues in the text. · Make links to prior knowledge · Form hypothesis or expectation · Read and check · Reflect on thoughts and evidence and adjust hypothesis.

- Can relate to any aspect e.g. structure, theme, characterization, content how it engages the reader.
- Word choice and what they could imply.
- Use a table that has columns hypothesis, evidence then outcome.
- Helps to think carefully about what they are reading and whether it makes sense

- Teaching Reading Comprehension strategies, a practical classroom guide - Sheena Cameron p53
- Building Comprehension Strategies for Primary Years - Alison Davis Chapter 4 p51 - 60



Comprehension Strategy:

Asking Questions

Learning Need	Understandings (What is it I need to understand?)	Teachers can support learners by...	Learning Intention	Steps
<p>Students are unable to pose questions for themselves or answer questions posed. Students cannot interact with the text.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Comprehension is an active, probing process. - We MUST ask ourselves questions if we are unsure or confused about the text. - Predicting is only the FIRST step. - Predictions change as we read. 	<p>Teacher modeling how/what is happening in my head as I read through the text = THINK ALOUD Have posing questions posted for students to think about. Budding up students to share questions and answers.</p> <p>Verbalizing own questions i.e. think aloud. Providing different formats of forming questions.</p>	<p><i>We are learning to</i> <i>Talk to ourselves while reading the text.</i> <i>OR</i> <i>Interact with the text by asking questions when reading.</i> <i>We will know we have achieved this when we</i> <i>Are able to question ourselves, make predictions and re-predict.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Make up questions that establish a purpose for reading · Ask ourselves what we want to find out next · Ask ourselves where we are likely to find what we want to know · Use the information we have found to ask more questions · Ask reflective questions <p>Focus on interests and confusion about the text. Form questions that relate to the content or text features. Record questions Recognise and connect relevant information from the text to question Reflect and change thinking Ask new questions.</p>

- Use question dice or question chart
- Should be spontaneously and continuously asking questions
- Ask questions about content, impact, deeper features, author's voice, structure, vocabulary usage, imagery and language features.
- Questioning helps to reinforce the habit of reading for a purpose.

- Effective literacy Practices Y9-13 page 96-97
- Teaching Reading Comprehension strategies, a practical classroom guide - Sheena Cameron p65 - 79
- Building Comprehension Strategies for Primary Years - Alison Davis Chapter 6 p75 - 87
- Explaining Reading - Duffy Example 5 p87 - 95

Comprehension Strategy:

Creating Mental Images or Visualising

Learning Need	Understandings (What is it I need to understand?)	Teachers can support learners by...	Learning Intention	Steps
<p>Students cannot create mental pictures from reading or listening to text(s). Students do not appear to be emotionally involved in what is being read Students' descriptions of what they feel, hear and see in their minds is sparse</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - That the vocabulary used within the text enables us to create pictures in our heads. - That imagery when reading is a fundamental comprehension strategy that makes the connection (or meaning). - That I use my senses as I read - taste, smell, touch, sight, hearing - That authors want readers to see, hear, feel certain things in the text they write -Makes the text come alive -Aids my memory of the text. -Creates imagination -That identifying key words and phrases will students visualize and create mental pictures. -That comprehension requires proactive effort 	<p>Questioning - how, who, why, where, what. Highlight vocabulary - descriptive words. Teacher use 'Think Aloud' strategy. Break text into parts allowing child to put images together. Teachers provide feedback that relates to the learning strategy. Make links between text and prior knowledge.</p> <p>Identify use of verbs and adjectives In my mind I'm seeing.... Talk with partners. Use vivid descriptions such as :the picture I get is because.. :When I read this, I saw....because Sketching to capture an image Charting Images- using tables with headings such as what do I see hear or feel as I read, and Why Is this (looking for words phrases, structure) Using visual organizers such as brainstorm, flow charts and mind maps to help students visualize a sequence of events or explanation of a process.</p>	<p>We are learning to <i>Make mental pictures in our heads when we are reading.</i></p> <p>We will know we have achieved this when we <i>Can visualise, in our minds, what the author is telling us and describe our picture to somebody else.</i></p> <p>We are learning to <i>Make connections between what we know and the author's message as we read.</i></p> <p>We will know we have achieved this when we <i>Can discuss the pictures in our minds, with phrases like 'the picture I see is ... because...'</i></p> <p>We are learning to <i>Identify the key words, and phrases that help us create pictures in our minds.</i></p> <p>We will know we have achieved this when we <i>Can use sketch's, charts and visual organizers to list and identify the key words and phrases.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · To tell what you see, hear, feel ... as you read · To tell what clues you used to figure out what you see, hear, feel ... · Identify descriptive words · Use prior knowledge about those words and about our senses to create an image in the mind · Draw on a mental image and use it to gain deeper understanding or appreciation of the text <p>-identify descriptive words or ones that indicate the content of text.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Relates to making connections of senses and prior knowledge. · Aids appreciation of text. · Select words of imagery. · Mind maps or graphic representations of text <p>· Teaching Reading Comprehension strategies, a practical classroom guide - Sheena Cameron p99 - 110</p> <p>· Building Comprehension Strategies for Primary Years - Alison Davis p61 - 74 (imagining)</p> <p>· Explaining Reading - Duffy p95-101</p>				

Comprehension Strategy:

Inferring

Learning Need	Understandings (What is it I need to understand?)	Teachers can support learners by...	Learning Intention	Steps
<p>Students cannot answer questions about character traits or mood or other information the author implies.</p> <p>Students cannot use the clues to decide what is happening in sentences, they need explanations on how to infer.</p> <p>Students do not realize that reading involves more than just literal meaning.</p> <p>Students after reading, cannot reach a conclusion that makes sense.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - That sometimes authors have messages that are 'hidden between the lines' - That authors write based on their experiences. - That authors often leave information unstated expecting readers to infer it - Comprehension is an active process! - That meanings are sometimes not explicit and question the messages of the text as they read. - Keep in mind their hunches about deeper meaning and their search for clues and evidence. - Make links between knowledge of the text, author's style in relation to the clues. - Form hypothesis on the links they have made. - Reflect on the validity of their inferences by taking account of new evidence or clues that arise as they continue reading. 	<p>Modeling "how" to infer. Reading to, with, by. Linking prior knowledge to texts. Searching for clues, forward and back. Demand EVIDENCE to support inferences. Providing examples and modeling. Think about how images in this explanation help us to form ideas about the immense distances described. Making assumptions about characters and then finding proof in the text, evidence. Find the words that suggest that... What do you think is really happening here? What did you have to do to make those inferences? Even though the writer doesn't state her opinion explicitly, you've inferred that she doesn't approve of... You've noted the examples she has used an linked them to your own knowledge to help reach a conclusion.</p>	<p><i>We are learning to make inferences when reading.</i> <i>We will know we have achieved this when we can get inside the author's head and state what is being inferred "between the lines."</i></p> <p><i>We are learning to understand the differences between something stated explicitly and implicitly.</i></p> <p><i>We are learning to form predictions based on implied unstated meaning in the text.</i></p> <p><i>We are learning to make inferences and then change them as needed.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · To state information that has not been directly written · To find clues that lead us to the hidden information · Make predictions about implied meaning · Searching for clues, forward and back. · Access their own experience using clues · Identify themselves with a writer who is writing for a purpose. · Thinks about the intended audience, and think how this might influence what the writer leaves in or out. · Search for writers personal thinking, examples of writers content or vocab. · Reflect on this information as they interpret the text.

- [Effective Literacy Practice Y1-4 p. 132](#)
- [Effective Literacy Practice Y5-8 p. 146](#)
- [Duffy Explaining Reading p. 102-108](#)
- [Harvey and Goudvis p. 105-116](#)
- [Miller p. 105-121](#)
- Teaching Reading Comprehension - Alison Davis p 158-162 (Rich questioning p 160)
- Building Comprehension Strategies for Primary Years - Alison Davis Chapter 7

Comprehension Strategy: Identifying the writer's purpose and point of view

Learning Need	Understandings (What is it I need to understand?)	Teachers can support learners by...	Learning Intention	Steps
<p>* Students cannot answer questions about what the author wants readers to think is most important</p> <p>* Misunderstandings about authors point of view.</p> <p>* Misunderstanding about the relationship between text form and audience.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Writers write for purpose - Writers write for a particular audience - writers give indications / clues in the text to show their point of view - provide or obtain information - share the excitement of an event - persuade or influence the reader or provoke debate - create or enter a personal world - stimulate imagination - convey important cultural stories or myths - entertain or delight the reader 	<p>Questioning</p> <p>"How can you tell ..."</p> <p>"Who do you think is the audience? What evidence..."</p> <p>"If this was written by ____ instead of ____ how would it be different</p> <p>"How is the author trying to manipulate us?"</p> <p>* Teachers need to model questions about the authors purpose before, during and after reading.</p> <p>"What is the author trying to convince me of?"</p> <p>"Why is the author doing this?"</p> <p>"How does the author convey a point of view?"</p> <p>* Discuss with students ideas and interpretations of the text.</p> <p>* Offer many opportunities for focused conversations.</p> <p>* Use consistent language when prompting and questioning.</p> <p>* Identify text features that writers use to achieve the desired impact.</p>	<p>We are learning to State the most important thing an author is telling us.</p> <p>We will know we have achieved this...</p> <p>When we can identify and provide evidence for the ideas we think are important</p>	<p>The secret to doing this is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will put ourselves in the author's place. • Examine the words and phrases for clues • Ask questions about what we have been reading. <p>We will look for evidence in the text to support what we think is the main idea</p>

· Encourage students to dialogue with the author to build and strengthen comprehension, develops inferencing skills.

· Effective Literacy Practice Y5-8 p 34, 40 & 147. Chapter 5

· Teaching Reading Comprehension - Alison Davis p 234, Questioning the Author.

· Effective Literacy Practice Y9-13 Chapter 6

Comprehension Strategy:

Identifying the main idea

Learning Need	Understandings (What is it I need to understand?)	Teachers can support learners by...	Learning Intention	Steps
<p>Students cannot correctly answer questions about what the author wants readers to think is most important.</p> <p>Students cannot state the main idea or important ideas in listening or reading situations</p>	<p>Writers have an idea they wish to convey or emphasize .</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -In transactional writing the main idea is explicit at the beginning, and in fictional the main idea is implied in various ways throughout the text. - The reader needs to question the evidence about the main idea they have predicted as they read. <p>(They need experience of questioning as they read)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A text may contain more than one idea and the most important idea needs to be identified. -Not everything in a text is equally important. - The main idea often has a hidden meaning (inferring) - Interpretation skills are required to make connections by using prior knowledge, hypothesizing, inferring, and synthesizing. 	<p>Questioning / Reflecting</p> <p>"How did you work out..."</p> <p>"I think because ... What do you think?"</p> <p>"We have come up with two main ideas..."</p> <p>"What do you think the theme of the text is? What are you left wondering about? How did you come to this conclusion?"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Use sub headings as a tool to identify what the writer thinks is most important. -Re read when two ideas evolve and find evidence to support these conclusions. <p>Provide experiences in questioning as they read and inferring..</p>	<p>We are learning to</p> <p><i>Determine the main idea and describe the thinking we did to identify what was important</i></p> <p>We will know we have achieved this when we</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Can put themselves in the authors place. -Examine words and phrase for clues to what is important. -Ask questions about the messages conveyed. -Decide what the main idea is saying. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Distinguish between the main idea and supporting ideas, that are less important. · Determine the main idea. · To question as you read. · prior knowledge, hypothesizing, inferring, and synthesizing are required to identify the main idea successfully. · Justify why we think a statement reflects the main idea

- Effective Literacy Practice Y9-13 p88-89
- Effective Literacy Practice Y5-8 p 148
- Duffy - Explaining Reading p117-124
- Teaching Reading Comprehension strategies, a practical classroom guide - Sheena Cameron PM 30 Main Ideas Summary Frame
- Building Comprehension Strategies for Primary Years - Alison Davis p107 - 121




Comprehension Strategy:

Summarising

Learning Need	Understandings (What is it I need to understand?)	Teachers can support learners by...	Learning Intention	Steps
<p>When you ask students to "tell you about" the story they give you every detail, or give unimportant information</p> <p>They don't understand the ideas of beginning, middle and end.</p> <p>They cannot decipher what is 'important' in the text.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Text is organised so that important points are ordered into a beginning, middle and end. - Putting important points in your own words helps understanding. - Understanding the concept of 'importance'. Some information is more important than other information. That information needs to be linked in an organized logical way. Summarising is not retelling. Retelling is the beginning stage of summarising 	<p>Pointing out visual features i.e. use of bold print, diagrams.</p> <p>"What is the key sentence? How do you know?"</p> <p>Mapping the story - Beginning, Middle, End</p> <p>Use visual features such as bold print</p> <p>Find key the sentence in each paragraph</p> <p>Use diagrams in some texts</p> <p>Story map for identify main events</p> <p>Summaries should be brief and easy to read</p> <p>Should be concise</p> <p>Highlighting-looking for key words and phrases then justifying their decisions.</p> <p>Using charts to list key sentences and reasons for their selection.</p> <p>Using flow charts to help sequence main ideas or events.</p> <p>Using summarising as an informal assessment tool</p>	<p>We are learning to Provide a summary of what we have read and describe how we used our knowledge of story structure to create it</p> <p>We will know we have achieved this when we Can give a brief summary of the entire story we have read (using important points) in the order it was told</p> <p>We are learning to Identify structural features and important ideas of and in the text.</p> <p>We will know we have achieved this when we Can identify the beginning middle and end of a story, we can justify our choices when selecting key events.</p> <p>We are learning to Order key ideas to develop a succinct statement or series of statements that capture the essence of the text.</p> <p>We will know we have achieved this when we Can use flow charts and organizers that graphically show the important ideas and evidence</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Know the parts of a story · Understand the concepts of beginning, middle and end · Understand the concept of 'importance' · Make clear statements which summarise the paragraph / text · Review a story · Put a story into our own words · Summarise using the main idea · Brief retelling of an entire text / part of the text (paragraph, chapter) · Order and link main points · Include information that gives the essence of the text · Recognize key words, facts, phrases · Take notes · Paraphrasing

- Effective Literacy Practice Y5-8 p149
- Teaching Reading Comprehension -Alison Davis p168-171
- Explaining Reading - Duffy p125-132
- Teaching Reading Comprehension strategies, a practical classroom guide - Sheena Cameron p111
- Building Comprehension Strategies for Primary Years - Alison Davis p123 - 137

Comprehension Strategy: Analysing and synthesizing (Drawing Conclusions)

Learning Need	Understandings (What is it I need to understand?)	Teachers can support learners by...	Learning Intention	Steps
<p>Students unable to draw conclusions about what the author expects from the text.</p> <p>Students find it difficult to draw out relevant information and link it into a text of their own</p> <p>Students cannot compose a statement combining information from two different sources</p> 	<p>Authors often want readers to draw conclusions even when they are not explicit.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Identify & reflect on ideas, features or structures of a text & relate to other parts of the text or prior knowledge. -There are common elements to look for within a text or several texts. -Uses conclusions to inform thinking -That different information can come from different sources -That being a good reader requires using information from several sources at once -That reading is not so much <i>receiving</i> understandings as it is <i>creating</i> understandings. -Be confident in justifying their decisions to meet their learning goals or reading purpose. 	<p>Discuss what you think the author wants readers to think. "I think... What do you think?" "How can you account for this?"</p> <p>Use experience about clue words. (Prior knowledge)</p> <p>Using venn diagrams</p> <p>Working in pairs to identify changes</p> <p>Getting students to track changes and then asking them to justify why they have come to this conclusion.</p> <p>Use different textual structures of the same content to form new conclusions.</p>	<p><i>We are learning to</i> <i>Figure out what conclusion an author wants us to draw and describe the thinking used to find this</i></p> <p><i>We will know we have achieved this when we</i> <i>Are able to draw conclusions about what the author expects form the text</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Think about the story and ask what the author wants us to think · Use our inferring skills · Identify common elements · Decide how stories are alike and different · Use experience about the common elements to create a synthesis · Identify and reflect on ideas, features, or structures of a text(s) · Use the conclusion to inform their thinking and generate new ideas to help them meet their learning goal or reading purpose.

- Used when brining a more critical perspective to a text.
- Effective Literacy Practice Y1-4 p. 133
- Effective Literacy Practice Y5-8 p. 150
- Explaining Reading - Duffy p(Drawing conclusions, 133 - 139), (Synthesising, 149-155)
- Building Comprehension Strategies - Alison Davis p123 - 137

Comprehension Strategy:

Evaluating ideas and information

Learning Need	Understandings (What is it I need to understand?)	Teachers can support learners by...	Learning Intention	Steps
<p>Students accept all that they are reading "cause the book says so"</p>	<p>Going beyond the authors message & evaluating what has been read. Discerning when the author is trying to influence. Consider selected ideas / information in relation to my own world view & my purpose for reading. You can disagree. Make thoughtful evidence-based judgments about selected ideas & information</p>	<p>"Not everything is factual. Do you agree?" "Are you convinced by..." "The write has supported his/her point of view in a logical way. Does this support what you know?" "Would you read another book by this author? Why / Why not?"</p>	<p>We are learning to <i>Take a position (agree or disagree) on what the author is saying and describe the thinking we used to make the judgment</i> We will know we have achieved this when we <i>Are able to make judgments about what we are reading and use these to form our own opinions</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Not everything we read is factual or true · We are able to disagree with something we have read · We can use prior knowledge to answer the questions - 'What do we think about this? Do we have a different point of view?' · Focus on selected ideas and information in the text consider these in relation to their own world and purpose for reading · Make thoughtful evidence based judgments · Consider how these affect their response to the text · Decide if they need to seek further information · Check how others have responded.

- Effective Literacy Practice Y1-4 p134.
- Effective Literacy Practice Y5-8 p36, 38, 40 151 & 158.
- Effective Literacy Practice Y 9-13 Chapter 5.
- Teaching Reading and Comprehension - Alison Davis p179-181.
- Building Comprehension Strategies - Alison Davis Chapter 9 Summerisation

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