



Reading Comprehension in the Elementary Grades

During Reading Practices

1



Anita L. Archer, Ph.D.

archerteach@aol.com
503-295-7749

2



During Reading Practices

- Utilize passage reading procedures that provide adequate reading practice.
- Ask appropriate questions during passage reading.
- Teach strategies that can be applied to passage reading.
- Use graphic organizers to enhance comprehension.


3



Utilize passage reading procedures that provide adequate reading practice.

- Example practices:
 - Choral Reading
 - Cloze Reading
 - Silent Reading
 - Partner Reading

4



Ask appropriate questions during passage reading.

BIG IDEA:

Asking students questions during passage reading has proven effectiveness in improving the comprehension of students.

(Morrow & Gambrell, 2001)

5



Ask appropriate questions during passage reading. Why

- Asking teacher-generated questions is one of the research-validated comprehension procedures outlined by the *National Reading Panel*.

(NRP, 2000)

- **Why??**

6



Ask appropriate questions during passage reading. Two approaches

1. **Traditional Skill-Based Questions**
2. **Questioning the Author**



Ask appropriate questions during passage reading. Traditional Skill-Based Questions

- Utilize the questions provided in the reading program.

OR

- Generate questions on the text.

9



Ask appropriate questions during passage reading. Traditional Skill-Based Questions

Guidelines for formulating questions

- Divide the material into appropriate segments at natural junctures.
- Consider
 - the reading skills of the students,
 - the content of the text, and
 - what the student needs to understand.
- Develop questions that will help students construct meaning, focusing on critical understandings.

10



Ask appropriate questions during passage reading.

Types of questions

Memory Questions (who, what, when, where)

Convergent Thinking Questions (why, how, in what ways)

Divergent Thinking Questions (imagine, suppose, predict, if/then)

Evaluative Thinking Questions (defend, judge, justify, what do you think)

(Ciardiello, 1998)

11



Ask appropriate questions during passage reading.

Types of questions found in K-3 materials

- Fact and Opinion
- Cause and Effect
- Compare and Contrast
- Main Idea and Details
- Draw Conclusions
- Make Inferences
- Summarize

(See Strategy Instruction for instructional steps that can be used to teach these skills.)

12

Ask appropriate questions during passage reading.

Example Traditional Skill-Based Questions on Story

1. Cause and Effect. *Why did Blue Cloud lose interest in her doll?*
2. Cause and effect. *Why was it so important that Lakota children learn silence?*
3. Draw conclusions. *Why did Blue Cloud have to pester her mother to let her hold the baby?*
4. Draw conclusions. *Why did mother finally agree to let Blue Cloud take care of Little Bear?*

13

Ask appropriate questions during passage reading.

Traditional Skill-Based Questions on Story

#	type	question
5		
6		

14

Ask appropriate questions during passage reading. Traditional Questions: Scaffolding the Answer

Was the baby easy for Blue Cloud to hold? Why or why not?

Why did mother keep Little Bear in a cradleboard on her back?

Why did Blue Cloud have to pester her mother to let her hold the baby?

Ask appropriate questions during passage reading. Traditional Questions: Scaffolding the Answer

What questions might you ask students before asking the question below to scaffold/support formulation of their answers?

Why did mother finally agree to let Blue Cloud take care of Little Bear?

Ask appropriate questions during passage reading.

Questioning the Author

- An approach that attempts to focus students' attention on **text content** through directed discussion.
- The teacher and the students work through the text material **together**.
- Students' responses are followed up and used to guide focused **discussion**.

Beck & McKeown, 2004

17

Ask appropriate questions during passage reading.

Questioning the Author

The teacher asks questions such as:

- What is the author trying to tell you?
- Did the author say it clearly?
- What does the author mean by this?
- Why is the author saying this ?
- What is the author getting at?
- What is the author's message?
- What picture is the author giving us?
- What do you think the author wants us to know from all of this?

(Beck, McKeown, Hamilton, & Kucan, 1997)

18

Ask appropriate questions during passage reading.

Questioning the Author

Guidelines for formulating questions.

- Intersperse questions at reasonable places.
- Formulate questions that are open ended.

19

Ask appropriate questions during passage reading.

Questioning the Author - Example

1. What did the author want us to know about Blue Cloud?
2. What is the author telling us about the Lakota tribe?
3. What does the author want us to know about Blue Cloud?
4. What picture is the author giving us?

20


Ask appropriate questions during passage reading.

Questioning the Author

#	type	question
5		
6		

21

22



Teach strategies that can be applied to passage reading.

BIG IDEA:

Instruction in specific cognitive strategies can improve reading comprehension for all students and, most particularly, can assist struggling readers.

(RAND Reading Study Group, 2002)

23



Teach strategies that can be applied to passage reading. Two Approaches

- Competent Reader Strategies
- Text Structure Strategies

24

Teach strategies that can be applied to passage reading. Competent Reader Strategies

Comprehension strategies are used:

- “to relate ideas in a text to what they already know;
- to keep track of how well they are understanding what they read;
- when understanding breaks down, to identify what is causing the problem and how to overcome it.”

(Lehr & Osborne, 2006)

25

Teach strategies that can be applied to passage reading. Competent Reader Strategies

▪ **Comprehension Monitoring**


Monitor how well you understand what you are reading.

- *Does this make sense?*

If it doesn't make sense, use a **fix-up strategy**

- *Reread.*
- *Look back.*
- *Read ahead.*
- *Restate in your own words.*

26



Teach strategies that can be applied to passage reading.

Competent Reader Strategies

- **Retelling** - Telling the events in a story.
- **Predicting** - Making informed predictions.
- **Questioning** - Asking yourself questions as you read.
- **Visualizing** - Making mental pictures.
- **Summarizing** - Pulling together the most important information.

(The number of strategies should be limited so that students will be more successful in remembering and applying the strategies.)

27



28



Teach strategies that can be applied to passage reading. Strategies based on Text Structure

The Big Idea:

The ability to identify and take advantage of text organization can contribute to students' comprehension.

(Dickson, Simmons, & Kameenui, 1998)

29



Teach strategies that can be applied to passage reading. Strategies based on Text Structure

- **Narrative** Structure (Story Grammar)
- **Expository** (Informational) Structure

30



Teach strategies that can be applied to passage reading.

Strategies based on Text Structure

Narrative Structure - Story Grammar

- Students are taught the structural elements of a story including: (List story elements such as title, setting, etc.)

31



Teach strategies that can be applied to passage reading.

Strategies based on Text Structure

When students were explicitly taught how to identify **story grammar** elements, it

- Improved students ability to retell and summarize stories.
- Transferred to other stories.

(Morrow, 1985)

32

Teach strategies that can be applied to passage reading.

Strategies based on Text Structure

(Story Grammar Questions)

What is the **title** of the story?

1. Who is the **main character** of the story?
2. What **other characters** are introduced?
3. What is Blue Cloud's **problem** at this point of the story?
4. Blue Cloud really wanted to take care of her little brother. How was that **problem resolved**?

33

Teach strategies that can be applied to passage reading.

Strategies based on Text Structure Story Grammar Questions

#	type	question
5		
6		

34

Teach strategies that can be applied to passage reading.

Strategies based on Text Structure

Story Grammar- Retell

Retell the story.

- What is the **setting** of the story?
- Who is the **main character** of the story?
- What is the **character's problem**?
- What did the **character** do to try to resolve the problem?
- What happened in the **end**?

35

Teach strategies that can be applied to passage reading.

Strategies based on Text Structure

Expository Strategies

- Teach students strategies that focus on the pattern of **expository materials**.
 - Each paragraph represents a “body of knowledge”.
 - Determine the topic of the paragraph.
 - Determine the critical details that support the topic.

36

Teach strategies that can be applied to passage reading. Expository Strategies - Paragraph Shrinking

Paragraph Shrinking

1. **Name the who or what.**
(The main person, animal, or thing.)
2. **Tell the most important thing about the who or what.**
3. **Say the main idea in 10 words or less.**

(From the PALS program by Fuchs, Mathes, and Fuchs)

37

Teach strategies that can be applied to passage reading. Expository Strategies - Mapping

When mapping, students create a visual representation of material.

1. Write down headings and subheadings. Draw a shape around each heading and subheading.
2. Read a paragraph.
3. Write down the topic of the paragraph and put a shape around it.
4. Below the shape, write the most important details.

See example.

38

Teach strategies that can be applied to passage reading. Strategy Instruction

- Model I do it.
- Prompt We do it.
- Check You do it.

39

Teach strategies that can be applied to passage reading. Strategy Instruction

- **Introduce the strategy.**

WHAT

- Tell students what is being taught.

WHY

- Tell the rationale for the strategy.

WHEN

- Tell when the strategy might be used.

HOW

- Explain the steps in the strategy. (This can also be done as the strategy is modeled.)

40

Teach strategies that can be applied to passage reading. Modeling


- **Model (I do it.) “My turn.”**
 - **Show**
 - Proceed step-by-step.
 - Exaggerate the steps.
 - **Tell**
 - Tell students what you are doing.
 - Tell students what you are thinking.
 - **Gain Responses**
 - Ask for responses.

41

Teach strategies that can be applied to passage reading. Guided practice

- We do it. (“Let’s _____ together.)
- Prompt **verbally**.
 - Guide or lead students through the strategy.
 - Step - do - Step - do - Step - do - Step - do
 - Gradually fade your prompt.

42



Teach strategies that can be applied to passage reading. Check understanding.

- You do it. (“Your turn.”)
- **Check for understanding.**
- Verify students’ understanding before independent work is given.
- Carefully monitor students’ responses.


43



Video - Modeling Retell (Segment 7: Modeling Retell - 1st)

- List any good practices that you observed.

44



Teach strategies that can be applied to passage reading. Strategy Instruction

- **Gradually shift the responsibility for strategy use from the teacher to the student.**

45



46



Teach strategies that can be applied to passage reading. Potential problems

■ **Potential problems:**

- Students attending more to strategy steps than content.
- The strategy is more complex than the content.
- Students less motivated by the strategy than the content of the passage.

47



Teach strategies that can be applied to passage reading. Another view of strategy instruction

Help students understand the text in front of them and the comprehension strategies will take care of themselves.

(Carter, 1987)

48



Use graphic organizers to enhance comprehension.

Big Idea:

The main effect of graphic organizers appears to be on the improvement of the reader's memory for the content that has been read.

(Harris & Hodges, 1995)

49



Use graphic organizers to enhance comprehension. Why

Graphic organizers:

- Help students represent content graphically.
- Organize ideas to show the relationship between ideas.
- Support students' memory of the content that they have read.

50



Use graphic organizers to enhance comprehension.

Example Graphic Organizers

Graphic organizers for:

- **Narrative Text** (referred to as **Story Maps**)
- **Expository Text**

(See examples)