Comprehension
Handouts

Effective Instruction for Struggling Readers: Research-Based Practices
COMPREHENSION
Strategies Used by Strategic and Metacognitive Readers

Effective comprehension instruction related to the TEKS helps struggling students understand what they read to become strategic and metacognitive readers.

What is a strategic reader?
Strategic readers know how to use comprehension strategies (or plans) when they need them. Strategic readers are aware of and use strategies before, during, and after the process of reading to promote comprehension.

In contrast, struggling readers, for the most part, do not seem to be aware of comprehension strategies that can be used before, during, and after reading.

What does it mean to be a metacognitive reader?
Metacognitive readers are conscious of their understanding of text and use fix-up strategies when they have difficulty comprehending text.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic and metacognitive readers use the following strategies.</th>
<th>Areas to work on (✓)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Draw on their background knowledge to prepare for and interpret text.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Use text features (e.g., headings, illustrations) to make predictions about what they will be reading.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Recognize the organization of narrative and expository text structures to help them read and gain meaning from print.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Monitor their reading by asking questions to clarify meaning and understanding of the text.</td>
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<td>• Recognize comprehension problems and use fix-up strategies to repair their lack of understanding.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Make inferences about content and events that may not be supplied directly by the author.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Summarize important information during and after reading.</td>
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</table>
Narrative and Expository Text

The ability to identify and use narrative and expository text structures helps readers construct meaning from text as they read. Text structure is the way ideas in a text are interrelated so as to convey meaning to readers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Narrative Text</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Tells stories that usually follow a familiar story structure. Story structure,</td>
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<tr>
<td>- involves the elements of a well-developed story,</td>
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<tr>
<td>- improves children's comprehension of stories.</td>
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<td>- focuses children's attention on the sequence of major parts in a story,</td>
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<tr>
<td>- develops a common language for talking about and retelling stories, and</td>
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<tr>
<td>- enhances children's ability to write narratives.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Includes the following story elements (or story grammar):</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Setting</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Characters</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Problem/Goal</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Plot</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Resolution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Theme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Includes a beginning, middle, and end.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beginning ⇒ Setting + Character(s) with a problem to solve or a goal to achieve.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle ⇒ Plot: Series of events in which the character(s) attempt(s) to solve the problem or achieve the goal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End ⇒ Resolution: Solution to the problem; accomplishment of the goal. Theme is sometimes revealed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Includes short stories, myths, folktales, tall tales, fables, legends, autobiographies, biographies, fantasies, historical fiction, mysteries, science fiction, and plays.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Expository Text

- Is also referred to as informational text.
- May be organized by means of text headings and subheadings and may contain extensive graphics, such as tables and charts.
- Explains information or tells about topics in different ways.
  - It contains structures that can differ from one text to another and within a single passage (e.g., problem-solution, compare-contrast, description, persuasion).
- Helps students comprehend content area textbooks they are reading.
- Includes newspapers, content area textbooks, magazines, brochures, and catalogues.
- Has 6 types of expository structures:
  - **Problem-solution**: The text presents a problem, possibly explains why it is a problem, and then offers possible solutions, usually settling on one solution as most appropriate.
  - **Description**: The text provides specific details about a topic, person, event, or idea.
  - **Cause-and-effect relationships**: The text links events (effects) with their causes. Contains indicative words like *because*, *for*, *since*, *therefore*, *so*, *consequently*, *due to*, and *as a result*.
  - **Enumeration or categorizing**: The text lists or collects similar items.
  - **Sequencing**: The text presents, for example, actions leading to a historical event or the steps in a scientific process.
  - **Comparison**: The text points out differences and similarities.

(ITRA, 2000; 2TRA, 2001; Bryant & Lehr, 2001; Dickson, Simmons & Kameenui, 1998; TRI, Comprehension Instruction, 2000; Westby, 1999)
Graphic Organizers

- Graphic organizers are a good tool to help students recognize and draw meaning from narrative and expository text structures.
- Graphic organizers involve organizing material into a visual format.
- Graphic organizers can be used to organize text structures and guide comprehension before, during, and after reading.
- Graphic organizers guide students' thinking and help them to remember important elements in narrative texts and information in expository texts.
- Graphic organizers benefit all learners, particularly English language learners and struggling readers, because they can activate relevant background knowledge and help organize information.

(2TRA, 2001; Mercer & Mercer, 2001)
Instructional Practices that Facilitate Struggling Readers’ Comprehension of Narrative and Expository Texts

### Narrative Instructional Practices

- Provide nurturing discussions on story elements and encourage students to relate story events and characters to their own prior experiences.
- Help students to compare the structure of one story to that of other stories that they have read.
- Prepare visual guides, such as story maps of the structure of a story and other graphic organizers, to help students recall specific story elements.
- Encourage students to retell stories that they have read.

Additional Ideas:

### Expository Instructional Practices

- Group information in a text by placing together related ideas and concepts (semantic).
- Summarize pertinent information in a text by grouping related ideas and concepts.
- Integrate information in a text with existing knowledge.
- Apply information in a text to realistic situations.
- Interpret and create graphic organizers such as tables, charts, and figures.
- Compile information from different texts.
- Develop presentations about and from the text.

Additional Ideas:
Instructional Practice:
Story Retelling for Narrative Text

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ideas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Have students retell major ideas from the story. Write one idea per sentence strip. Mix up the sentence strips. Have students sequence the sentence strips to match the story.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Assign one story element (e.g., setting, character) to each pair of students. Have students retell what they recall about their story element.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Use a flannel board with students to aid retelling. Have figures to represent characters and setting.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>My Ideas</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
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<td>2.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ideas I Learned from My Neighbor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

(TRI, Comprehension Instruction, 2000)

Effective Instruction for Struggling Readers: Research-Based Practices
COMPREHENSION
Instructional Practice: Graphic Organizers

Note: All of the graphic organizers mentioned here can be found in the Comprehension Teacher Resources section with samples and blank copies to be reproduced for your students.

**Narrative**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ideas</th>
<th>Before</th>
<th>During</th>
<th>After</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Prediction Chart</td>
<td>1. DRTA Prediction Organizer</td>
<td>1. Prediction Chart</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. DRTA Prediction Organizer</td>
<td>2. Story Frame Chart</td>
<td>2. DRTA Prediction Organizer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Un mapa del cuento</td>
<td>5. Story Chart</td>
<td>5. Story Chart</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Un mapa del cuento</td>
<td></td>
<td>6. Un mapa del cuento</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**My Ideas**

<table>
<thead>
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**Ideas I Learned from My Neighbor**

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### Instructional Practice: Graphic Organizers

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#### Expository Ideas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Before</th>
<th>During</th>
<th>After</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. KWL Chart (K, W)</td>
<td>1. Questions for Expository Text organizer</td>
<td>1. KWL Chart (L)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. KWSL Chart (K, W)</td>
<td></td>
<td>2. KWSL Chart (L, S)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. KWWL Chart (K, W, W)</td>
<td></td>
<td>3. KWWL Chart (L)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Questions for Expository Text organizer</td>
<td></td>
<td>4. SQA (Q, A)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. SQA (S)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### My Ideas

<table>
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<tr>
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#### Ideas I Learned from My Neighbor

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<td>1.</td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td>2.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Answering/Asking Different Levels of Questions
(a modified version of a strategy known as QAR or question-answer relationships)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Level</th>
<th>Second Level</th>
<th>Third Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Questions can be answered in 1 sentence.</td>
<td>• Questions can be answered by looking in the story.</td>
<td>• Questions cannot be answered by looking in the story.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Answers can be located word-for-word in the story.</td>
<td>• Answers are more complex; answers are 1 sentence or more.</td>
<td>• Students think about what they have read and/or use their own experiences to make connections and draw conclusions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Answers are found in more than 1 place and put together.</td>
<td>• They answer questions by thinking about what has been read, thinking about what they already know.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Students must combine information that is located in different sentences, paragraphs, or pages of the text and think about how it fits together.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Example:

- "What did Margo do when she got to the party?" Answer can be found in one of the sentences of the text.  
- "When Margo got to the party, she spilled punch on her new dress."

### Example:

- "How are volcanoes formed?" Several sentences are needed to describe the steps that are presented on several different pages of the text.
- What caused Jake’s father to cancel their vacation?

### Example:

- Why do you think Todd ran away?  
- What would you have done if you had lost your mother’s watch?
Continuum of Types of Questions

Questions can be asked based on what students know (the types of knowledge in the left-hand column) and how they think (thought processes across the top of the chart) as they actively engage in discussions and other instructional activities. The continuum ranges from simple/literal to complex/analytical and reflects a newly revised version of Bloom’s taxonomy, designed to be used by teachers at all grade levels.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Simple/Literal</th>
<th>Understand</th>
<th>Apply</th>
<th>Analyze</th>
<th>Evaluate</th>
<th>Create</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Factual Knowledge</strong></td>
<td>Remember</td>
<td>Interpret</td>
<td>Use procedures or knowledge</td>
<td>Separate and understand the parts of something</td>
<td>Make decisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic elements students must know</td>
<td>Retrieve knowledge</td>
<td>Identify</td>
<td>Implement</td>
<td>Distinguish based on criteria</td>
<td>Make connections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conceptual Knowledge</strong></td>
<td>Construct meaning</td>
<td>Clarify</td>
<td>Demonstrate</td>
<td>Focus</td>
<td>Synthesize and put elements together</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connections between basic elements within a larger structure</td>
<td></td>
<td>Paraphrase</td>
<td>Discover</td>
<td>Integrate</td>
<td>Generate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Procedural Knowledge</strong></td>
<td>Apply</td>
<td>Give examples</td>
<td>Predict</td>
<td>Compare</td>
<td>Combine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How to do something, knowing subject-specific skills, and criteria for methods</td>
<td></td>
<td>Describe</td>
<td>Relate</td>
<td>Contrast</td>
<td>Compose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Metacognitive Knowledge</strong></td>
<td>Analyze</td>
<td>Classify</td>
<td>Determine</td>
<td>Distinguish cause and effect</td>
<td>Imagine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awareness and knowledge of cognitive tasks, strategic knowledge, and self-knowledge</td>
<td></td>
<td>Review</td>
<td>Infer</td>
<td>Point out</td>
<td>What if...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Draw conclusions</td>
<td>Suppose</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

C Handout 5A
Effective Instruction for Struggling Readers: Research-Based Practices
COMPREHENSION
Formulando y Respondiendo a Diferentes Niveles de Preguntas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primer Nivel</th>
<th>Segundo Nivel</th>
<th>Tercer Nivel</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Las preguntas pueden ser contestadas en una sola oración.</td>
<td>• Las preguntas se pueden contestar con información del texto.</td>
<td>• Las preguntas no se pueden contestar solo con información del texto.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Las respuestas se pueden encontrar palabra por palabra en el texto.</td>
<td>• Las estudiantes deben utilizar información que se encuentra en diferentes oraciones, párrafos o páginas del texto para responder.</td>
<td>• Los estudiantes deben pensar y reflexionar acerca de lo que han leído y/o basarse en sus propias experiencias y sacar conclusiones.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ejemplo:
• ¿Por qué dice el abuelo que en Casas Grandes ya no pueden vivir?" La respuesta se encuentra en una oración: "Ya no llueve como antes y el maíz se seca.
• ¿Qué es lo que los tarahumaras desprecian más? Respuesta: Los tarahumaras desprecian a la gente falsa.

Ejemplo:
• ¿Cómo fue que el joven Matsúa llegó a ser el mejor corredor entre los tarahumaras?
• Se necesitan leer varias páginas para encontrar la respuesta a esta pregunta.

Ejemplo:
• ¿Por qué crees que el joven tarahumara recibió muy bien a la familia del joven Matsúa?
• ¿Por qué crees que los tarahumaras tenían fama de ser altivos y recios?
• ¿Qué hubieras hecho tú para hacerte amigo de los tarahumaras?

(adapted from 2TRA, 2001; Dickinson, DeTemple, Hirschler & Smith, 1992; National Reading Panel, Richard-Amato, 1996; Raphael, 1986)
Questions from the Text

Name of Book: ___________________________________ Pages: ________

Student(s) in Group: ______________________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page #</th>
<th>Type of Questions</th>
<th>Level of Questions</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</table>
Narrative Story Structure
Questions and Considerations

Remember
- Who are the main characters?
- When did the story take place (setting)?
- Where did the story take place (setting)?

My questions:

Understand
- What is the main idea of the story?
- What are the major events in the story?
- Sequence the events of the story.
- Retell the story.
- Describe the setting. Describe the main character.
- What is the mood of this story?
- Give examples of when _____ (a character) felt ______.
- What is the problem in this story?

My questions:

Apply
- Does the story remind you of anything?
- What do you predict will happen next if the story continues?
- How is the problem solved in this story?
- Can you think of other possible solutions to the problem?

My questions:

Effective Instruction for Struggling Readers: Research-Based Practices
COMPREHENSION
Analyze

- Why do you think ____ (a character) did ___ (an action)?
- How did ___ (a character) change/grow during the story?
- What caused ___ (a character) to change/grow?
- Why do you think ____ (a character) felt ___?
- ____ (a character, setting, problem) is like ___ (another character, setting, problem) because ___.
- ____ (a character, setting, problem) is different from ___ (another character, setting, problem) because ___.
- How did ___ (a character) feel when ____ (an event) happened?

My questions:

Evaluate

- A place in the story I’d like to be is _____ because ____.
- A place in the story I would not like to be is ___ because ___.
- My favorite part of the story was ___ because ____.
- I like this story because _____.
- I do not like this story because ____.

My questions:

Create

- What if you were _____ (a character, a place), what would you do?
- How could you change the story to make it more _____.
- Suppose _____, then what would have happened?
- Create a new setting/problem for the story.
- Imagine you are ____ (a character) and plan a day in her/his life.

My questions:
Preguntas sobre la estructura
de un cuento narrativo

Saber
- ¿Quiénes son los personajes principales?
- ¿Cuándo ocurrió el cuento? (el ambiente)
- ¿Dónde ocurrió el cuento? (el ambiente)

Mi preguntas:

Entender
- ¿Cuál es la idea principal del cuento? (haz un resumen)
- ¿Cuáles son los eventos más importantes del cuento?
- Pon en secuencia los eventos del cuento.
- Cuenta el cuento otra vez.
- Describe el ambiente. Describe el personaje principal.
- Da unos ejemplos para ilustrar cuando ___ (un personaje) se sintió ___.
- ¿Qué es el problema del cuento?

Mi preguntas:

Aplicar
- ¿El cuento te recuerda algo?
- ¿Qué predices que va a pasar luego si continúa el cuento?
- ¿Cómo se resolvió el problema en este cuento?
- ¿Cúales otras soluciones puedes imaginar?

Mi preguntas:

Analizar

- ¿Por qué crees que ___(un personaje) ______ (una acción)?
- ¿Cómo ___ (un personaje) cambió/creció durante el cuento?
- ¿Qué le ocurrió a ____ (un personaje) que le hizo cambiar/crecer?
- ¿Por qué se sintió ____ (un personaje) ______ (un sentimiento)?
- ___ (un personaje, el ambiente o el problema) se parece al (otro personaje, ambiente o problema) porque ___.
- ___ (un personaje, el ambiente o el problema) es diferente que (otro personaje, ambiente o problema) porque ___.
- ¿Cómo se sintió ___ (un personaje) cuando pasó (un evento)?

Mi preguntas:
- 
- 

Sintetizar

- ¿Si fueras ___ (un personaje) qué harías?
- ¿Cómo podrías cambiar el cuento para hacerlo más ___?
- Supón _____, luego que ocurriña?
- Crea un ambiente/problema nuevo para el cuento.
- Imagina que eres ____ (un personaje) y planea un día en su vida.

Mi preguntas:
- 
- 

Evaluar

- Un lugar del cuento en que me gustaría estar es ___ porque ___.
- Un lugar del cuento en que no me gustaría estar es ___ porque ___.
- La parte que me gustó más es ______ porque _____.
- Me gusta este cuento porque _____.
- No me gusta este cuento porque _____.

Mi preguntas:
- 
- 

(adapted from 2TRA, 2001)
# Questions for Expository Text

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Before Reading</th>
<th>During Reading</th>
<th>After Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• What does the title tell me?</td>
<td>• Does this make sense?</td>
<td>• What new words did I learn?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• What do I already know about the topic?</td>
<td>- Periodically, stop and ask if the text is making sense.</td>
<td>- Identify and state a brief definition of unfamiliar words.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• What do the pictures tell me?</td>
<td>- If the text is not making sense, reread.</td>
<td>• What was this mainly about?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• What do I want to learn about?</td>
<td>- Initially, stop reading after each page.</td>
<td>- State the main idea of the passage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• What do I think this will be about?</td>
<td>- Eventually, increase the amount read before stopping.</td>
<td>• What did I learn?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**My questions:**

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- 
- 

**My questions:**

- 
- 
- 

(Adapted from 2TRA, 2001; Blachowicz & Ogle, 2001)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Título</th>
<th>Autor</th>
<th>¿Qué aprendí?</th>
<th>¿Qué más quiero saber?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

(adapted from ITRA, 2000; Roger, 1992)
Ways to Build Vocabulary

Some ways to build vocabulary include the following:

- **Use questioning techniques to build vocabulary.**
  - Use the language of story structure and new vocabulary specific to the text when questioning.
  - Ask more complex questions to get students to extend their thinking and elaborate their language.

- **Use books in the classroom that present rich language and vocabulary and engage children's imagination.**
  - Provide exposure to new vocabulary and more difficult vocabulary than students can read.

- **Provide explicit instruction on key words.**
  - Use 10 to 15 minutes of reading instruction to teach 3 to 5 vocabulary words per lesson.
  - Select words to teach that are unknown, critical to text understanding, and useful to the future.

- **Use a variety of instructional practices.**
  - Use graphic organizers, word mapping, and word walls to facilitate vocabulary instruction.
  - Provide multiple exposures to vocabulary words through explicit instruction, games, and discussions.

- **Link the new topic with topics that have been discussed previously, so that students can make connections between new and acquired vocabulary and experiences.**

Planning for Vocabulary Instruction:
Selecting Vocabulary Words to Preteach Using Explicit Instruction Before Reading

- Before instruction, preview the passage, even if vocabulary words have already been selected by the publisher.
- Read the passage and identify vocabulary your students will find unfamiliar. Ask yourself: “How difficult is this passage to understand?”
- Select words that are related to the main ideas and crucial to understanding the text.
- List words you find challenging for your students. These words may or may not be related to one another. You may not be able to teach all the words you find challenging for your students. Research supports teaching only a few words before reading to help students comprehend what they read.
- Determine which words are adequately defined in the text. Some may be defined by direct definition and others through context. Expand on these words after reading, rather than directly pre-teaching them.
- Identify words students may know based on their prefixes, suffixes, and base or root words. If structural elements help students determine words’ meanings, don’t teach them directly.
- Consider student needs. If words are likely to be in students’ prior knowledge, they may not require direct teaching. These words can be discussed as you activate and build prior knowledge before reading or expanded after reading.
- Determine the importance of the word. Ask yourself: “Is the word going to appear again and again? Will knowledge of the word help in other content areas? Is the word important to comprehending the passage?”

Vocabulary Words to Preteach
- words that students will find challenging,
- words crucial to understanding the main ideas,
- words that are not a part of students’ prior knowledge,
- words unlikely to be learned independently through the use of context and/or structural analysis, and
- words that will be frequently encountered in other texts and content areas.

(adapted from 2TRA, 2001; Cooper, 1997)

Effective Instruction for Struggling Readers: Research-Based Practices
COMPREHENSION
Planning for Vocabulary Instruction:
Selecting Vocabulary Words to Preteach Using Explicit Instruction Before Reading

Book: ____________________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vocabulary Words</th>
<th>Page #</th>
<th>Why Select the Word</th>
<th>Way to Teach</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
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<td>2.</td>
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<td>3.</td>
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<td>4.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5.</td>
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</table>
Vocabulary Instruction
Before, During, and After Reading

Vocabulary instruction involves teaching vocabulary before reading (preteaching vocabulary), during reading (using strategies to determine word meanings), and after reading (reviewing and checking for understanding).

Before Reading
- Preteach, using explicit instruction, unfamiliar words from the text students are going to read.
- Have students use Word Maps or Concept of Definition maps.
- Have students use Semantic Maps.
- Use the Vocabulary Definitions lesson.

During Reading
- Use students' Word Maps to reinforce key vocabulary while reading by discussing the power of words as enhancers of or deterrents to reading comprehension.
- Have students add new information to their Semantic Maps.
- Refer to content area word walls and remind students that they are posted as a resource.
- Teach students to use word parts, such as prefixes and suffixes when they encounter unfamiliar words while reading.
- Encourage students to use their newly learned words while reading, writing, and speaking.

After Reading
- Have students revise their Semantic Maps to include new vocabulary words.
- Review students' graphic organizers, such as the Word Map and Semantic Map, for completion and understanding, using a checklist to gauge the students' understanding of specific vocabulary words.
- Ask students to use new words in their writing and speaking.
- Determine if there are unfamiliar words remaining that were not covered before or during reading.

(2TRI, 2001; Blachowicz & Ogle, 2001; Gunning, 1998; Stahl, 1999; TCRLA, Enhancing Vocabulary Instruction for Secondary Students; TRI, Promoting Vocabulary Development, 2000)
Scaffolding Reading Comprehension Instruction for English Language Learners

English language learners go through different stages of language development while they are learning English. Understanding these different stages helps teachers select materials and provide instruction that matches the students' level of English proficiency. The level of literacy in students' native language impacts their literacy development in English. Students who can already read and write in their native language can apply that knowledge to learning to read in English as a second language.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage of Language Development</th>
<th>Suggested Instructional Practices</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-production</td>
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</table>

The student may:

- Use her/his native language to communicate even with people who do not speak the student’s native language.
- Remain silent.

- Involve the student in classroom activities. Even though the student may be silent, s/he is observing and learning.
- Support language development by ensuring understanding and clarifying requests, teaching routine classroom vocabulary, simplifying sentence structure, and using gestures.
- Play interactive games that build vocabulary in small groups, like picture bingo and lotto.
- Use photos and artifacts.
- Use stories on tape and books with a close match between the text and the illustrations.
- Pair the student with a native English speaker if possible.
- Accept non-verbal responses such as drawings, gestures, and hand signals.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage of Language Development</th>
<th>Suggested Instructional Practices</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Early Production</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The student may:
- Use simple words or phrases related to everyday events.
- Use telegraphic speech to communicate. For example, “ball” may mean, “Please give me the ball.”
- Understand more English than s/he is able to produce orally.

- Involve the student in classroom activities.
- Support language development by rephrasing the student’s statements to ensure understanding and clarify requests, teaching routine classroom vocabulary, simplifying sentence structure, and using gestures.
- Plan structured oral language activities.
- Allow plenty of wait time for the student to respond.
- Post printed labels and word lists around the classroom.
- Ask yes/no and either/or questions. Also, ask questions in which the student can list the answer.
- Use books on tape and stories with a close match between the text and the illustrations.
- Use books with patterned and predictable language.
- Use brainstorming and webbing activities to activate background knowledge.
- Focus on the meaning of the student’s message, not the pronunciation.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage of Language Development</th>
<th>Suggested Instructional Practices</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Speech Emergence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The student may:
- Use new vocabulary.
- Communicate using sentences.
- Ask simple questions related to classroom activities. For example, “Can I go to the restroom?”
- Understand spoken English with the support of pictures, actions, and objects.
- Understand more English than s/he is able to produce orally.

- Involve the student in classroom activities.
- Focus on the meaning of the student’s message, not the pronunciation.
- Continue to build the student’s oral English vocabulary by using synonyms, webbing, and semantic mapping.
- Provide multiple opportunities for the student to communicate in a variety of meaningful ways.
- Begin reading instruction in English using texts with many illustrations and connections to background knowledge.
- Use content word walls, personal word walls, brainstorming, and graphic organizers to support the student’s writing.
- Plan structured opportunities to discuss content with native English speakers.
- Use sentence building activities.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage of Language Development</th>
<th>Suggested Instructional Practices</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate and Advanced Fluency</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The student may:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Express thoughts and feelings more effectively in English.</td>
<td>• Involve the student in classroom activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ask and respond to higher level questions.</td>
<td>• Continue oral language development through structured interactions with native English Speakers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Incorporate new vocabulary into her/his speech.</td>
<td>• Explain idiomatic and slang expressions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Speak using grammar and vocabulary comparable to a native speaker of the same age.</td>
<td>• Provide many opportunities for the student to write in a variety of forms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Teach the student to transfer knowledge of reading in her/his native language to reading in English.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Summarize frequently during the lesson using strategies like &quot;Get the Gist.&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(adapted from 2TRA, 2001; Gunderson, 1991; Peregoy & Boyle, 2001; Hurley & Tinajero, 2001)
Guidelines for Teaching Reading Comprehension

Comprehension Instructional Framework

Before Reading

- Activate background knowledge.
  - Teach students that background knowledge is composed of their experiences with the world, including what has been read.
  - Activate background knowledge by having students brainstorm and use graphic organizers to record their responses.
- Teach vocabulary.
  - Discuss new words, their meanings, and related ideas and concepts necessary for understanding the text.
  - Use vocabulary instructional techniques.
- Establish a purpose for reading.
  - Provide students with opportunities to discuss what they know about the topic.
  - Focus students' attention on important concepts or ideas to establish the purpose for reading a specific text.
  - Emphasize that there are different purposes for reading, such as reading for enjoyment or reading to learn more about something.
- Have students preview the text.
  - Preview the text and help students make predictions about its content by surveying the cover, title, text structure, and/or pictures.

During Reading

- Use questioning techniques.
  - Use various types and levels of questions (see C Handouts 5A and 5B).
- Have students use graphic organizers.
- Use a variety of graphic organizers (see Comprehension Teacher Resources section).

- Have students self-monitor.
  - Help students self-monitor their comprehension through questioning. (See C handout 8A and the C Teacher Resources section).
  - Have students use self-questioning techniques (see C Handout 5B, 5D, and 5E and the Comprehension Teacher Resources section).

- Have students use fix-up strategies.
  - Have students figure out the meaning of unknown words (see Comprehension Teacher Resources section).

After Reading

- Use questioning techniques.
  - Use various types and levels of questions (see C Handouts 5A and 5B).

- Review vocabulary.
  - Use vocabulary instruction techniques (see C Handouts 6A-6E).

- Have students summarize.
  - Use a Summarization Log (see Wrap-Up lesson plan and C Handout 11B).
  - Use retelling activities (see C Handout 4C).

- Have students complete and revise graphic organizers.
  - Use a variety of graphic organizers (see Comprehension Teacher Resources section).

(2TRA, 2001; Burns, Griffin, & Snow, 1999; Cunningham & Allington, 1999; Dickinson, Cote, & Smith, 1993; Moats, 1999; Morrow, 1997; Smith, 1999; TCRLA, Enhancing Reading Comprehension for Secondary Students: Part II, 2000; Vaughn & Klingner, 2000)
Monitoring Comprehension Progress: Story Retelling

Retelling is a technique to promote comprehension. Retelling can also be used to assess students’ understanding of text. Retelling is a good technique to use as a means of monitoring student progress during and after the reading process.

**Story Retelling Record Sheet**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
<th>Story:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of Times Read: _________________________ Pages:___________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Story</th>
<th>Student’s Retelling</th>
<th>Prompts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beginning</td>
<td></td>
<td>• What happened in the beginning?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Where did the story happen?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Who were the main characters?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• What was the problem?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td></td>
<td>• What happened next?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• What did ------ do?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Why?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End</td>
<td></td>
<td>• How was the problem solved?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• How did the story end?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(adapted from 2TRA, 2001; Tompkins, G. E., 1998)
Example of Explicit Instruction

Making Predictions

The teacher first models how to make predictions, then leads the students through guided practice. Finally, the teacher checks for understanding by having students make predictions independently.

- First, the teacher models. "Today, we are going to learn a strategy called Making Predictions to use before reading. This strategy will help you become better readers. It will help you to better understand what you are going to read. My turn. Listen while I model the Making Predictions strategy for you.

  - "First, I look at some clues, such as the pictures, title, subtitles, headings, subheadings, and captions, of the passage that we are about to read."
  - *Read the title, subtitles, headings, subheadings, and captions aloud.* "Now I make two predictions about what I am going to learn by reading his passage. I predict that I will learn about ____________________ and about _____________________."
  - Model a second passage. Model making wrong predictions. Read the passage and demonstrate where the passage does not agree with the predictions. Model how to use clues (e.g., pictures, title, headings) to make predictions. Read the story and then demonstrate how the predictions were incorrect.

- Next, the teacher leads the students through guided practice.

  - "Now it’s our turn. Look at the title, headings, and subheadings (whatever applies to the passage)."
  - *Show students a passage that has clues that can be used to make predictions.*
  - "Try to make two predictions. Tell me two things that you think you are going to learn from reading this passage."
  - *As a group, come up with two predictions and record them on chart paper.*
• After several examples where the teacher and students work together, the teacher checks for understanding.

- "Now it is your turn."
- **Call on one student to state his or her prediction.**
- **Call on a second student to see if there is agreement or a different prediction.**
- **Have all students who agree with the student’s prediction to put their thumbs up; ask all students who disagree with the prediction to put their thumbs down.**
- **Have the students take turns reading the passage in pairs.**
- **Show students their recorded predictions on chart paper.** "If those were good predictions based on what you know now, put your thumbs up. If those predictions cannot be made by using the clues, put your thumbs down."
- **Repeat with a new passage. This time you can accept a wrong prediction and see if students know that the clues do not lead to this prediction. See if students can come up with a different prediction and recheck or model this stage to them."
Scaffolding Reading Comprehension Instruction for Struggling Readers

You can scaffold instruction to help struggling readers better understand and clearly express their ideas and feelings about texts they read.

- Incorporate small group discussions as often as possible to actively involve students.
  - When you scaffold discussions, teachers and students ask more questions and give more elaborated responses; students achieve greater understanding.
  - This is especially true for struggling readers and English language learners.

- Model different ways to respond to questions.
  - If students have difficulty answering questions, change the question to an answer. For example, change “How did Aunt Josie feel when she saved enough money to attend the family reunion?” to “Aunt Josie was very happy when she saved enough money to go to the family reunion. She danced around the room with her son and daughter.”
  - Follow up with another question, and if necessary, help students with a response.

- Use questions and prompts.
  - Different types and levels of questions help students express their ideas.
  - Questions should elicit more than a simple “yes” or “no” response.
  - Prompt students who are having difficulty responding. For example, “Aunt Josie was dancing around the room. How do you think she felt?”

- Paraphrase and expand what students say during discussions.
  - Repeat the main idea using new vocabulary.
  - Take students’ responses and paraphrase them by including additional vocabulary and ideas.
_request clarification.

- Ask "why" and "how" questions to help students make inferences and explain what they are feeling and thinking.

_promote questions and conversation among students.

- Allow students to converse with each other about what they read.
- Encourage students to ask each other questions during discussions using the various types of questions.
- Provide questions to think about using the levels of questions and time to answer the questions.

_provide appropriate feedback.

- Encourage ALL students to join in.
- Give positive feedback for all types of responses.
- Spotlight what someone has contributed to a discussion, such as "Mary noticed that the policeman was angry." If students understand that their ideas and responses are valued, they are more likely to participate.
- Pose questions that turn the thinking back to the students for further consideration, such as "John thinks the girl is unhappy. Does anyone know why she is unhappy?"

_give sufficient wait time for students to think and respond.

- Be patient. Struggling readers often need more time.
- Ask questions in different ways to provide more time to respond.
Suggested Reading Comprehension Guidelines for English Language Learners

• Review any unfamiliar vocabulary. English language learners may be able to decode words correctly and still not know their meaning.

• Refrain from asking students to read a text aloud without discussing and previewing the material beforehand. The more a student knows about the context of the material and new vocabulary words, the more successful he or she will be at reading new texts.

• Have students “echo” the reading of a text in short pieces after the teacher reads each short piece.

• Stop at various intervals throughout a reading passage to review what has happened up to that point. This reinforces comprehension.

• Use story mapping. Stop at various intervals to review story elements and to improve comprehension. Add new information to story maps as it appears in the story.

• Discuss the content of the book and students’ background experiences with the topic.

• Preview unfamiliar words, particularly those with vowel diphthongs, long vowel sounds, and r-controlled vowels. Such words may be difficult for English language learners.

• Correct differences of speech sounds carefully. Speech sounds in English may be different from those of the students’ first language and do not need to be corrected continuously.

• Speak clearly and precisely. Discuss reading material and information unfamiliar to the students.

• Enhance language development and vocabulary by engaging in instructional conversations with students. For example, “Tell me more about...” and, “What do you mean by...” Instructional conversations also include restating what the student has said, “In other words...”

(Echevarria, 1995; Gersten & Jimenez, 1994; Goldenberg, 1992, TCRLA, 2000b; TCRLA, 2000c)
Strategies for Self-Monitoring
Strategies to help me understand what I read

- **Stop and ask myself questions:**
  - Does this make sense?
  - Do I know what all the words mean?
  - Can I picture in my mind what is happening?
  - What do I think will happen next?
  - Was my prediction correct? Why or why not?

- **If I am having trouble understanding, I will use a fix-up strategy:**
  - **Reread the sentence or paragraph** to help me figure out what a word means or what the author is saying.
  - **Read ahead the next sentence or two** to see if it helps me understand.
  - **Retell in my own words what I just read.**
  - **Think and connect what I read to what I already know and my own experiences.**
  - This reminds me of ________
  - Based on ____ I know ____

- **If I am still having trouble understanding, I ask someone for help.**

(adapted from 2TRA, 2001; Blachowicz & Ogle, 2001)
## Example of Thinking Aloud to Teach Self-Monitoring

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Reading</strong></th>
<th><strong>Thinking</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It was spring. Mom, Dawn, and Chris went for a walk in the park. Dawn wanted to pick flowers. They saw some thistle in an open field.</td>
<td>Is this making sense? <em>(Asking myself questions)</em> That last part is confusing. I wonder what “thistle” means. What can I do? <em>(Asking myself questions)</em> I had better reread that part. <em>(Reread if I’m confused)</em> Did the strategy help? <em>(Asking myself questions)</em> It says that they were found in a field. The sentence before it talks about flowers. I think “thistle” must be a type of flower. That makes sense. <em>(Using fix-up strategies)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They saw some thistle in an open field.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Let’s pick some of these for our table,” said Dawn. They began picking the flowers. Chris called, “Stop! I hear buzzing.” “Help, it’s after me!” cried Dawn. She started to run.</td>
<td>Is this making sense? <em>(Asking myself questions)</em> Chris hears buzzing and something is chasing Dawn. I’m not sure what is happening. What can I do? <em>(Asking myself questions)</em> I better read on to find out what is making that buzzing sound and chasing Dawn. <em>(Read ahead to the next sentence or two)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reading</strong></td>
<td><strong>Thinking</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| A bee was chasing Dawn. "Be still, Dawn," Mom told her. "Try not to run." Mom waved the bee away from Dawn's head.  
A bee was chasing Dawn. "Be still, Dawn," Mom told her. "Try not to run." Mom waved the bee away from Dawn's head.  
The bee flew off. Dawn was glad that she did not get stung. "Let's leave these flowers here," said Chris. "Yes," Dawn agreed, "these flowers belong to the bees." | Did the strategy help? **(Asking myself questions)** So, now I understand what was buzzing and chasing Dawn - bees. But I'm confused. Why would Mom wave at a bee? That doesn't make sense. What can I do? **(Asking myself questions)** I better read it again. **(Reread if I am confused)**  
Did the strategy help? **(Asking myself questions)** Oh, now I understand. Mom used her hand to get the bee away from Dawn. That's what waved means here. **(Using fix-up strategies)**  
Is this making sense? **(Asking myself questions)** Yes, they decided not to pick flowers after all, because they were afraid of getting stung by a bee. **(Retell)** |

(adapted from 2TRA, 2001; Blachowicz & Ogle, 2001; Cunningham & Allington, 1999)
C Handout 8B

(2TRA, 2001)

Effective Instruction for Struggling Readers: Research-Based Practices
COMPREHENSION
# Reading Comprehension Viewing Guide

**Categories of Adaptations:** After watching the video, note adaptations seen in the video and record each in the appropriate adaptation category.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructional Content</th>
<th>Instructional Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Material/AT</th>
<th>Delivery of Instruction</th>
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</table>

**Critical Features of Effective Instruction:** Note how the teacher conducted reading comprehension instruction.

_________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________

What changes, if any, need to be made to the instructional activities to better meet the needs of English language learners?

_________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________

**Additional Comments and Questions:**

_________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________
A seabird is any bird that spends most of its time at sea and depends on the sea and its islands for all its basic needs. The sea provides food, and its remote islands and rocky outcroppings provide safe nesting and resting places. For 60 million years, these highly specialized and diverse birds have adapted to life on the world’s vast oceans.

Most of the 8,600 species of birds worldwide spend their lives in the air and on land. Only 260 or so of those species live in the air and on the sea. The differing habitats of deserts, mountains, and tropics are obvious for birds that are at home on land. But the sea is subtle. It may look like endless, unchanging ocean, but it offers a variety of habitats. Seabirds live in polar waters, equatorial waters, areas of cold water currents, upwellings, and other places where the water is turbulent and they find the most food. Fish feed in these areas because the turbulence, or motion of water, stirs the nutritive brew that promotes a rich growth of plankton. Fish feed on plankton, and seabirds eat a lot of fish.

Seabirds share a life at sea, but they have adapted to it in widely different ways. Some fly for months at a time, others can’t fly at all. Some come ashore only to nest, others come ashore each night to roost. Most have waterproof plumage, some do not. None walk well because they are not adapted to life on land.

One particularly skilled seabird can’t even swim! The frigatebird can only fly and perch, but its acrobatics in the air win it all the food it wants. It is an aerial pirate, chasing, attacking, and stealing food from other birds. It gets its name from the frigates or man-o’-war ships sailed by pirates.

Life at sea seems healthy for the specially adapted seabirds. They have far longer lifespans than most birds. Depending on the species, seabirds can live to be 30, 40, or 50 years old. Only since people began to invade their remote islands and introduce predators, have some seabirds become endangered.

9820 Willow Creek Road, Suite 300, San Diego, Ca. 92131.
## Preview Log

**Student Name:** ______________________

**Date:** ______________________________

### Topic:

How does this topic relate to previous lessons?

### Key vocabulary:

### Unfamiliar proper nouns:

### What do I already know about this topic?

### Predictions:

I think that I am going to learn about...

I think that I am going to learn about...
Preview Log

Student Name: Johnny B.
Date: April 23, 2001

**Topic:** The Brain
**How does this topic relate to previous lessons?**
We have been studying body systems in my Science class.

**Key vocabulary:**
Signals - an action, gesture, or sign for communication

**Unfamiliar proper nouns:**
N/A

**What do I already know about this topic?**
I know the brain is in charge of the body.

**Predictions:**
I think that I am going to learn about...
the brain getting messages from the body.

I think that I am going to learn about...
how much the brain weighs.
**Application of Adaptations Framework**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Setting-Specific Demands</th>
<th>Student-Specific Characteristics</th>
<th>Adaptations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Task</strong></td>
<td><strong>Requisite Abilities</strong></td>
<td><strong>Strengths</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| The student will improve reading comprehension by previewing text using the preview Log. | 1. Listen to the teacher and watch her or him model the strategy.  
2. Call upon background knowledge about seabirds.  
3. Know how to monitor reading for understanding.  
4. Work in a small group without much teacher direction.  
5. Read text in English.  
6. Recognize important information. | | | Instructional Activity: |
| | | | | Material/AT: |
| | | | | Delivery of Instruction: |

Consuela is a 10-year-old 5th grader. She has passed all hearing and vision tests given at school and appears to be in good physical health. According to assessment information, Consuela is reading at a beginning second grade level. She has difficulty decoding words with vowel combinations and multisyllabic words. She also has difficulty recognizing important information and knowing how to monitor comprehension when she is reading. Consuela started literacy instruction in her native language, Spanish, in kindergarten. She was transitioned to English literacy instruction in the second grade. She has a limited reading vocabulary in English, and many of the concepts in Science and Social Studies are unfamiliar to her.
### Gist Log

**Student Name:**

**Date:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Who or what was this section about?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>What was the most important information about the who or what? (Use this information to create the gist statement)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
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<td>5.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Write a gist statement/main idea (use 10 words or less):</th>
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</table>
### Gist Log

**Student Name:** Holly Wood  
**Date:** May 11, 2001

**Who or what was this section about?**  
Wilma Rudolph

**What was the most important information about the who or what? (Use this information to create the gist statement).**

1. She was sick.  
2. She was a great runner.  
3. She ran in the Olympics.  
4. She never gave up.  
5. Wilma Rudolph won a lot of races.

**Write a gist statement (use 10 words or less):**  
Wilma Rudolph overcame an illness to become a great runner.
## Application of Adaptations Framework

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Setting-Specific Demands</th>
<th>Student-Specific Characteristics</th>
<th>Adaptations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Task</td>
<td>Requisite Abilities</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Know how to read a passage.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Instructional Content:</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Understand the concept of main idea.</td>
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<td>Instructional Activity:</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Self-monitor reading for understanding.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Material/AT:</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Listen to the teacher and watch her or him model the strategy.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Delivery of Instruction:</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Retell what he or she has read and remember important details from the text.</td>
<td>Strengths</td>
<td>Struggles</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Michael is an 8-year-old 3rd grader. He has passed all hearing and vision tests given at the school and appears to be in good physical health. According to assessment information, he has average intelligence and can identify words at grade level but has difficulty with new vocabulary. He learns from concrete representations of abstract concepts and works cooperatively with his peers. He often has difficulty comprehending the important ideas from content material, particularly in Science, and he seldom remembers the details that he has read.
Example of Explicit Instruction

Get the Gist

**Modeling**
- *The teacher says,*
  
  *My turn.*

**Guided Practice**
- *Say, Now it’s our turn.*

**Check for Understanding**
- *Your turn.*
Summarization Log

Student Name: ____________________________________________
Date: ____________________________________________________
Title of Passage: __________________________________________

Identify three or four important ideas from the entire passage (or use your gist statements):
1. ______________________________________________________
2. ______________________________________________________
3. ______________________________________________________
4. ______________________________________________________

Write a summary statement for the entire passage (10 words or less):
________________________________________________________________________

Generate three questions about your important ideas: (Use who, what, when, where, why, and how):
1. ______________________________________________________
2. ______________________________________________________
3. ______________________________________________________

Create one question that might be on a test about this passage:
________________________________________________________________________
## Summarization Log

**Student Name:** Young-Il Kim  
**Date:** November 27, 2001  
**Title of Passage:** Dreams

### Identify three or four important ideas in the passage (or use your gist statements):

1. Doctors say that dreams help us deal with our lives.  
2. We have a new dream about every 90 minutes while we sleep.  
3. Dogs dream just like humans.

### Write a summary statement for the entire passage (10 words or less):

Dreams are helpful to humans, occur often in sleep, and happen to dogs.

### Generate three questions about your important ideas: (Use who, what, when, where, why, and how)

1. How do doctors say that dreams help us?  
2. How often do we dream?  
3. Besides humans, what other animals dream?

### Create one question that may be on a test about this passage:

How do we know that dogs dream?
## Skills and Instruction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skills are...</th>
<th>Instructional focus could be...</th>
<th>Possible lessons/activities/practices are...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Phonological Awareness**  
**Word Study and Spelling** | • Improve spelling skills  
• Review and build letter-sound knowledge  
• Work on blending and segmenting sounds to read and spell words  
• Increase knowledge of spelling and syllable patterns | • Word sorts  
• Making words  
• Reading decodable texts  
• Say It and Move It  
• Blending practice  
• Multisyllabic word puzzles |
| **Reading Accuracy** | • Develop sight vocabulary  
• Improve decoding skills | • Word Wall practice  
• Reading in decodable and instructional-level texts  
• Word banks  
• Blending practice |
| **Fluency** | • Develop sight vocabulary  
• Build fluent reading of text  
• Improve decoding skills | • Repeated reading (e.g., partner reading)  
• Graphing progress |
| **Reading Comprehension** | • Increase knowledge of different types of questions (e.g., explicit and implicit)  
• Develop comprehension strategies (e.g., self-monitoring, summarizing)  
• Build vocabulary  
• Activate and build prior knowledge | • Discussions before, during, and after reading  
• Question-Answer cards  
• Graphic organizers (e.g., K-W-L, story maps)  
• Self-monitoring comprehension strategies  
• Get the Gist  
• Summarizing |

(2TRA, 2001)
Reflections

- What was the most valuable information that you obtained from this Institute and how do you plan to use it in your instruction?

- What are your thoughts about the materials?
  - Participant’s notes

  - Handouts

  - Teacher Resources

  - Articles

- How could this Institute be improved?

- What topics would you like more information on?
OBJECTIVE: The student will improve reading comprehension by previewing text.

INSTRUCTIONAL CONTENT:
- Reading Comprehension: Brainstorming and making predictions to preview text

INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITY:
- Previewing
  Purpose: This activity teaches students how to preview text through brainstorming and making predictions.

MATERIAL/AT:
- Independent or instructional level reading material: Expository text
- Pencils
- Preview Logs

DELIVERY OF INSTRUCTION:

Grouping: Whole class divided into small groups of three to four students

1. Introduce the topic of the reading passage by telling students the topic and connecting the topic to previous lessons. Ask the students to record the topic and how this topic relates to previous lessons in the first box on their Preview Logs.

2. Teach the key vocabulary words and identify unfamiliar proper nouns from the passage to be read. Ask the students to record the key vocabulary words and unfamiliar proper nouns along with their definitions in the second and third box on their Preview Logs, respectively.

3. Ask each group to brainstorm what they already know about the topic from other lessons, friends, movies, and/or family members to activate background knowledge. Then ask the students to record their ideas in the fourth box on their Preview Logs.

4. Pass out the reading passages or direct students to the passage to be read in their textbooks.

5. Instruct students to quickly scan the passage looking for any clues, such as the title, subheadings, and/or pictures, to make predictions about the reading passage.
6. Tell each group to make two predictions regarding what they think will happen in the passage. Ask students to record their predictions on their Preview Logs.

PROGRESS MONITORING:

After the lesson, check the students' completed Preview Logs to ensure that they previewed the passage by brainstorming and predicting.

Periodically, provide students with a grade-level reading passage and give them 3-5 minutes to brainstorm what they already know about the topic and scan the passage to come up with two predictions. Have students record their ideas on the Preview Log. Monitor students' completed Preview Logs to ensure that they previewed the passage by brainstorming and predicting.
OBJECTIVE: The student will improve reading comprehension by previewing text.

INSTRUCTIONAL CONTENT:
• Reading Comprehension: Brainstorming and making predictions to preview text

INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITY:
• Previewing (adapted)
  Purpose: This activity teaches students how to preview text through brainstorming and making predictions.

MATERIAL/AT:
• Independent or instructional level reading material: Expository text with numerous and obvious physical features that facilitate making predictions
• Preview Log
• Pencils

DELIVERY OF INSTRUCTION:

Grouping: Small teacher-led group of three to four students

1. Introduce the topic of the reading passage by telling students the topic and connecting the topic to previous lessons. Ask the students to record the topic and how this topic relates to previous lessons in the first box on their Preview Logs.

2. Teach the key vocabulary words and identify unfamiliar proper nouns from the passage to be read. Ask the students to record the key vocabulary words and unfamiliar proper nouns along with their definitions in the second and third box on their Preview Logs, respectively.

3. Ask the group to brainstorm what they already know about the topic from other lessons, friends, movies, and/or family members to activate background knowledge. Then ask students to record their ideas in the fourth box on their Preview Logs.
4. Pass out the reading passages or direct students to the passage to be read in their textbooks. Ensure that the reading passage contains clues, such as headings, subheadings, highlighted key vocabulary, and illustrations, that will facilitate students' making predictions.

5. Instruct students to quickly scan the passage looking for clues to make predictions about the reading passage.

6. Guide students to make two predictions about what they think will happen in the passage. Ask students to record their predictions on their Preview Logs.

**PROGRESS MONITORING:**

After the lesson, check the students' completed Preview Logs to ensure that they previewed the passage by brainstorming and predicting.

Periodically, provide students with a grade-level reading passage and give them 3-5 minutes to brainstorm what they already know about the topic and scan the passage to come up with two predictions. Have students record their ideas on the Preview Log. Monitor students' completed Preview Logs to ensure that they previewed the passage by brainstorming and predicting.
OBJECTIVE: The student will improve reading comprehension by previewing text.

INSTRUCTIONAL CONTENT:
- Reading comprehension: Brainstorming, developing vocabulary and background knowledge, and making predictions to preview text

INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITY:
- Building Background Knowledge
  Purpose: This activity teaches students how to preview text through brainstorming, developing vocabulary and background knowledge, and making predictions.

MATERIAL/AT:
- Independent or instructional level reading material: Expository text
- Short passage about the sea or birds
- Pencils
- Teacher- or student-created vocabulary logs
- Graphic organizers
- Preview Log

DELIVERY OF INSTRUCTION:

Grouping: Small teacher-led group of three to four students

1. Introduce the topic of the reading passage to the group by telling students the topic and connecting the topic to previous lessons.

2. Ask students "What comes to mind when you hear the words sea and bird?" (Change this question for different topics.) Have them brainstorm what they know about these topics and create a semantic map to show their understanding. (A semantic map is a graphic organizer that can help students organize and understand concepts. The Comprehension Teacher Resources section has a Semantic Map lesson along with a Semantic Map.)

3. Read a short passage that provides information about the sea or birds to build vocabulary and background knowledge. Have students add any other vocabulary words from this passage to their semantic maps.
4. Build vocabulary through discussion by providing students with definitions of important terms. Have students enter new words in their teacher- or student-created vocabulary logs, define each word in their own words, and draw a picture to illustrate the words, if possible.

5. Have students rainstorm what they know about seabirds, using their semantic maps to help them organize ideas. Have students record their ideas on the Preview Logs.

6. Ask students to point to the physical features of the text. Ask students to describe what they see in the pictures, headings, and subheadings (physical features) of the text. Model making a prediction and have students make predictions.

PROGRESS MONITORING:

After the lesson, check the students’ responses on the Preview Log to ensure that they are previewing the passage correctly.

Periodically, provide students with a grade-level reading passage and give them 2-3 minutes to scan the text and come up with two predictions.
OBJECTIVE: The student will improve reading comprehension by determining the main idea of a passage.

INSTRUCTIONAL CONTENT:
- Reading Comprehension: Determining the main idea of a paragraph or passage

INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITY:
- Get the Gist
  
  Purpose: This activity teaches students how to find the main idea of a paragraph or passage.

MATERIAL/AT:
- Independent or instructional level reading material
- Overhead projector
- Transparency
- Gist Log

DELIVERY OF INSTRUCTION:

Grouping: Student pairs

1. Ask student pairs to take turns reading aloud a one- to two-paragraph passage of text. Tell students to think about what they are reading, to identify who or what the paragraph is about, and to write this information in the first box on their Gist Log. Then have students identify the most important information about the who or what (supporting details) and to write this information in the second box on their Gist Log. Then have students create a gist statement using 10 words or less and record it on their Gist Log in the third box.

2. Select a student pair to identify the who or what for the text read. Ask another student pair to identify the most important information about the who or what.

3. Then have students write the students’ responses on a transparency.

4. Choose another student pair to create a sentence with 10 words or less to represent a gist or main idea of the most important information.

5. Explain to students that they have just created a gist statement. Tell them that a gist statement is the main idea of the text read.

6. Explain to students that gist statements can be evaluated using the following questions:

Effective Instruction for Struggling Readers: Research-Based Practices
COMPREHENSION
“Does the gist statement tell the who or what?”
“Does the gist statement contain only the most important information?”
“Is the gist statement in my own words?”
“Is the gist statement 10 words or less?”

7. Give students a paragraph to read and then a gist statement of the paragraph. Explain and model how to evaluate the gist statement using the questions in Step 6.

8. Describe how to improve a gist statement. Have student pairs compare and contrast several gist statements for the same paragraph using the evaluation questions.

PROGRESS MONITORING:

After the lesson, ask all students to write the gist statement in the appropriate spot on their Gist Logs and let them know that they will be using their gist statements after reading the entire passage to create a summary of the entire passage.

Periodically, provide students with paragraphs, which are written at their instructional or independent reading level, and ask them to identify who or what the paragraphs are about and the most important information about the who or what. Have students write a gist statement in a sentence of 10 words or less.
OBJECTIVE: The student will improve reading comprehension by determining the main idea of a passage.

INSTRUCTIONAL CONTENT:
- Reading comprehension: Determining the main idea of a paragraph or passage

INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITY:
- Get the Gist (adapted)

Purpose: This activity teaches students how to find the main idea of a paragraph or passage.

MATERIAL/AT:
- Independent or instructional level reading material: Expository text
- Gist Logs
- Pencils
- Colander
- Rocks
- Sand
- Container

DELIVERY OF INSTRUCTION:

Grouping: Teacher-led group of three to four students

1. Explain to students that they will be learning a strategy to determine the main idea of a passage.

2. Provide students with the following concrete demonstration to help them understand how to get the gist. Before the lesson, prepare materials by labeling two rocks with the questions,
   - "Who or what is it about?"
   - "What is the most important information about the who or what?"

Label several smaller rocks with "supporting detail." Get a bag of sand and label "other details."

3. Show students the "gist" rocks, explaining that to find the gist, you need to answer the questions on the rocks. Put the rocks in the bag of sand.

4. Show students the "supporting detail" rocks and explain that this is the information used to answer the questions. Put the rocks in the bag.
5. Pour the contents of the bag into a colander and allow the sand ("other details") to run out the bottom of the colander. Show that the "gist" rocks remain in the colander along with the "supporting details" and are used to "get the gist." (Note: The number of large rocks remaining in the colander may vary.)

6. Read a paragraph to students and then model "getting the gist" using think-aloud. Think aloud while you determine who or what the paragraph is about and the most important information (supporting details) about the who or what.

7. Have students read aloud as a group or with a partner. Tell students to think about what they are reading and to identify who or what the paragraph was about. Then ask students to identify the most important information about the who or what. Remind students that they are identifying the rocks, not the sand. The process of identifying important details will have to be modeled using a think-aloud process.

8. Select a student to tell you the who or what. Tell students to record this on their Gist Log in the first box. Ask the same student to tell you the most important information about the who or what. Tell students to record that on their Gist Log in the second box.

9. Guide the group in creating a gist statement with 10 words or less to represent a summary of the most important information in the paragraph using the student’s responses. Have the students write the gist statement on their Gist Log in the third box.

10. Explain to students that they have just created a gist statement. Tell them that a gist statement is the main idea of the paragraph.

11. Explain to students that gist statements can be evaluated using the following questions:
   "Does the gist statement tell the who or what?"
   "Does the gist statement contain only the most important information?"
   "Is the gist statement in my own words?"
   "Is the gist statement 10 words or less?"

12. Give students a paragraph to read and then a gist statement of the paragraph. Explain and model how to evaluate the gist statement using the questions in Step 11.
13. Describe how to improve a gist statement. Have student pairs compare and contrast several gist statements for the same paragraph using the evaluation questions.

PROGRESS MONITORING:
After the lesson, ask all students to write the gist statement in the appropriate spot on their Gist Logs and let them know that they will be using their gist statements after reading the entire passage to create a summary of the entire passage.
Periodically, provide students with paragraphs and ask them to provide several gist statements.
OBJECTIVE: The student will improve reading comprehension by determining the main idea of a passage.

INSTRUCTIONAL CONTENT:

Reading Comprehension

- Reading Comprehension: Determining the main idea of a paragraph

INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITY:

- Check the Main Idea

Purpose: This activity teaches students how to find the main idea of a paragraph or passage.

MATERIAL/AT:

- High interest, controlled vocabulary reading material: Expository text
- Pencils

DELIVERY OF INSTRUCTION:

Grouping: Teacher-led group of three to four students

1. Explain to students that they will be learning a method to determine the main idea of a paragraph and that this strategy will help them to become better readers and understand what they read.

2. Explain that the main idea is made up of who or what the paragraph is about and the most important information about the who or what. Give students an example that they can use to remind them how to figure out the main idea of a paragraph: For example you can ask students, “If I asked you, what is Joe going to do tonight? Would you tell me that ‘Joe is going to eat meat and potatoes,’ or ‘Joe is going to eat dinner?’ In other words, is eating dinner or the whole meal or eating meat and potatoes the main idea?” The main idea is the entire dinner and the meat and potatoes are supporting details.

3. Model the strategy for students by reading the paragraph all the way through and then predicting what the main idea is by first asking, “who or what is this paragraph about?” Most of the sentences in the paragraph must be about the who or what. Then read the first sentence aloud and ask if this sentence is about (name the who or what)? Read the next sentence and ask if the sentence is about the main idea. Continue until the end of the paragraph.
4. **Model a second paragraph.** Model predicting the wrong main idea. Read the sentences like above until a sentence does not agree with the main idea. Model changing the main idea to the correct main idea and going back to the first sentence and checking again.

5. **Show students a paragraph and say to students,** “Let’s read aloud together. Try to predict the main idea.”

6. **Call on one student to predict the main idea.** Call on a second student to see if that student agrees or has a different prediction. Have all students who agree with the first prediction put thumbs up; have all students who disagree put thumbs down.

7. **Read the first sentence to the class.** Say, “If this sentence is about the **who** or **what,** put your thumbs up. If this sentence is not, put your thumbs down.” Continue to the end of the paragraph.

---

**PROGRESS MONITORING:**

After the lesson, ask students to write the main idea statement from a paragraph.

Periodically, have students read paragraphs and find the main idea independently.
OBJECTIVE: The student will improve reading comprehension by summarizing an entire passage.

INSTRUCTIONAL CONTENT:
- Reading comprehension: Summarizing and reviewing an entire passage

INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITY:
- Wrap Up
  Purpose: This activity teaches students how to summarize previously read text and to ask questions about the passage.

MATERIAL/AT:
- Independent or instructional level reading material: Expository text
- Summarization Logs
- Pencils

DELIVERY OF INSTRUCTION:

Grouping: Whole class divided into small groups of three to four students

1. After students have read aloud a passage in their small groups, ask students to think of three or four important ideas that they learned from reading the text. Tell students to focus on the passage as a whole and record the three or four most important ideas on their Summarization Log in the first box. If students created gist statements, have them review these statements on their Gist Log.

2. Ask students to write a summary statement about the passage using the information from step 1 and record the statement on their Summarization Logs in the second box.

3. Next, have students generate questions about the important information in the passage. Tell students that their questions should focus on the entire passage. Have them use who, what, when, where, why, and how as question starters. Students should record their questions on their Summarization Log in the third box.

4. Ask students to make up one question about the passage that might be on a test and to record that question on their Summarization Log in the fourth box.
5. Ask students to share their summary statements and some of their groups' questions. Students can answer other groups' questions.

PROGRESS MONITORING:
After the lesson, ask students to write a whole-passage summarization statement in the appropriate spot on their Summarization Logs.
Periodically, provide students with a passage to read and write a summary statement.
OBJECTIVE: The student will improve reading comprehension by summarizing an entire passage.

INSTRUCTIONAL CONTENT:
- Reading Comprehension: Summarizing and reviewing an entire passage

INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITY:
- Wrap-Up (adapted)
  Purpose: This activity teaches students how to summarize previously read text and to ask questions about the passage.

MATERIAL/AT:
- Independent or instructional level reading material: Expository text
- Summarization Logs
- Pencils
- Question stem posters or cards

DELIVERY OF INSTRUCTION:

Grouping: Teacher-led group of three to six students

1. Read a passage for students and model how to write a summary statement and to generate questions that relate to the important information in the passage.

2. Ask students to think of and write something important that they learned after hearing the passage. Tell students to focus on the passage as a whole and record the three or four most important ideas on their Summarization Logs in the first box. If students created gist statements, have them review these statements on their Gist Log.

3. Lead students in writing a summary statement about the passage using the information from step 2 and record the statement on their Summarization Log in the second box.

4. Next, have students generate questions about the important information in the passage. Tell students that their questions should focus on the entire passage. Have them use who, what, when, where, why, and how as starter questions. Provide students with question stems on a poster or
cards to stimulate higher level questions and thinking (e.g., "What is the difference between...?, Why do you think..., How do you think __________ relates to..., How could you compare and contrast..."). Students should record their questions on their Summarization Log in the third box.

5. Ask students to make up questions about the passage that might be on a text using the other students' responses and to record the questions on their Summarization Log in the fourth box.

6. Ask students to share their summary statements and some of their groups' questions. Students can answer other groups' questions.

PROGRESS MONITORING:

After the lesson, ask all students to write a whole-passage summarization statement in the appropriate spot on their Summarization Log.

Periodically, provide students with a passage to read and write a summary statement.
OBJECTIVE: The student will improve reading comprehension by summarizing an entire passage.

INSTRUCTIONAL CONTENT:
- Reading Comprehension: Summarizing and reviewing of text sections.

INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITY:
- Questioning and Summarizing

**Purpose:** This activity teaches students how to reflect on what the author is trying to say. The teacher and student work together to understand the meaning of the text.

MATERIAL/AT:
- Independent or instructional level reading material: Expository text

DELIVERY OF INSTRUCTION:

**Grouping:** Teacher and individual student

1. **Identify a section of the passage that may cause confusion and hinder the student’s understanding.**
2. **Have the student read the section.**
3. **Work with the student to write a summary statement.**
4. **Discuss the use of questions and self-explanations while reading to improve comprehension. Teach the student to interact with the text using the following questions:**
   - What is the author trying to say?
   - What does the author mean by this?
   - Why is the author saying this?
   - What is the author getting at?
5. **Model asking and answering these questions, eliciting student confirmations or answers.**
6. Complete the reading passage using the questioning procedure, providing less support as appropriate.

PROGRESS MONITORING:
After the lesson, ask the student to write his or her answers to a set of questions discussed in one section of the lesson.
Periodically, provide the student with a passage to read and write a summary statement.
Use this chart to plan how you will implement reading comprehension instruction in your classroom for a particular student or group of students.

Student Name(s): ____________________________ Objective: ____________________________

Comprehension Activity

Requisite Abilities

Students’ Strengths and Struggles

Adaptations

Grouping

Progress Monitoring