



Ready Reference Form

Goal: Comprehension	Strategy: Check for Understanding
Definition	A comprehension strategy that teaches children to stop frequently and check, or monitor, whether they understand what they are reading. This typically is a quick summary of what they've read, starting with "who" and "what."
Why Children Need This Strategy	Often as beginning readers, children are so aware of reading accurately that they forget to take time and think about what they are reading, checking to see whether they understand the text. Advanced readers can develop the habit of reading through text without monitoring whether they were unaware of the Check for Understanding strategy as beginning readers.
Secret to Success	Knowing when we read that we must think about the story and realize what the author is trying to tell us or what we are learning from the book. Readers stop frequently to check for understanding or to ask who and what.
How We Teach It	<p>This vital strategy is not only one of the first we introduce, but also one we model each and every day of the school year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Modeling during our read-aloud we stop periodically and say, "Let me see if I remember what I just read. I am going to start by thinking of who the story was about and what happened." ◆ We continue to stop periodically and talk through the "who" and "what," usually about three or four times during each read-aloud. ◆ After two or three times of modeling this for students, we start asking them to answer the "who" and the "what" through "listen and talk," asking one student to do it for the whole class and then expecting children to do it on their own. <p>Language we use:</p> <p>"Stop often to check for understanding before you read any further." "Who did you just read about and what just happened?" "How often did you stop to check for understanding? After each sentence, after each paragraph, at the end of each page?" "Was your brain talking to you while you read?" "Are you finding you are understanding what you are reading?" "What do you do if you don't remember?"</p>
Troubleshooting	<p>We had a parent cut out large check marks, approximately 7 inches long, from balsa wood. Often we provide these check marks to students as a reminder to stop and check for understanding. They work particularly well when partners are reading together and working on Check for Understanding. The person listening to his or her partner read has the job of holding the check mark. When the reader comes to the end of a page or paragraph, the check-mark holder checks for understanding what the reader just read. On one side of the check marks we write, "Check for Understanding" and on the other side, "Who and what."</p> <p>For examples of a whole-group and individual conference using this strategy, see pages 30, 70, and 72.</p>



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Goal: Comprehension		Strategy: Back Up and Reread	
Definition	When meaning breaks down, going back and rereading again to understand the meaning of the selection.		
Why Children Need This Strategy	Back Up and Reread is one of those consistent strategies good readers use because it works. Once readers back up and read the passage again, they usually read it more slowly, with more intention and focus, thus allowing their brain to absorb the meaning of what is read or the lack of meaning.		
Secret to Success	<p>Readers must be aware when text is not making sense, or when they are just reading the words but not thinking about what they are reading. When they are using this strategy, they may have to slow down. They always have to think about what they are reading.</p> <p>Pay attention to what is read, sometimes slowing down to read it more slowly so as to think about the meaning.</p>		
How We Teach It	<p>We are always surprised to realize how often we back up and reread as adult readers. Our favorite way to teach this strategy, like so many others, is through modeling. Each and every time we pick up a book to read to children, inevitably we reread for a variety of reasons. At first we point out to the class each time we reread and what we were thinking when we did it. Soon they are pointing it out for us! Often we have a student in the class who will be the "Back Up and Reread counter." Each time we elicit the strategy, they quietly put up a finger. At the end of the story, they report the number of times we reread.</p> <p>"Did that make sense? What does a reader do when the text doesn't make sense? Even when you use other strategies like Cross Checking, you also need to back up and reread."</p> <p>"When you back up and reread, try rereading a bit more slowly. Often it can help you understand what you are reading if you slow it down."</p>		
Troubleshooting	<p>Some children don't want to take the time to back up and reread. They want to read quickly and move on. The more we model backing up to reread, the more children will use the strategy as well.</p> <p>For an example of this strategy, see page 38.</p>		



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Goal: Comprehension		Strategy: Monitor and Fix Up	
Definition	Readers stop and think if what they are reading makes sense, whether they understand what is happening in the story, or what the selection is about. If meaning breaks down, the reader has strategies to go back and fix it.		
Why Children Need This Strategy	Readers who monitor their own reading know and use specific strategies when meaning breaks down, and fix their reading to enhance their comprehension.		
Secret to Success	Readers must think while they are reading, constantly asking themselves, "Does this make sense?" If they don't know what is happening, they fix up their reading by using specific strategies.		
How We Teach It	<p>We model for students the language we use to monitor our meaning. It may sound like this:</p> <p>"Part of what I just read doesn't make sense. I am going to stop and ask myself some questions to see if I can figure it out. For example, 'Who is this story about? What is happening in this story? What is the author trying to tell me?' Asking these questions causes me to stop and think about what I am reading.</p> <p>"If after I have monitored or thought about what I was reading I am still lost or can't figure it out, I either reread the selection and try a fix-up strategy or I read on and try stopping again later in the passage. If it still doesn't make sense after the second attempt, I will have to ask someone for clarification or choose a book that is more appropriate to my level."</p> <p>Some fix-up strategies readers use:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summarize text. Go back and adjust the rate at which we read. Reread the text while thinking carefully. Read on to see whether the information becomes clear. Skim and scan the selection to gain meaning. Ask for help. 		
Troubleshooting	One way to help students with this strategy is to ask them to create a list of their favorite fix-up strategies they use when meaning breaks down. Once this list is made, it is easy to call students' attention to these strategies during individual conferences to remind them that they have the knowledge to fix up their reading. Through the conference we can check in and coach them to use the strategies until they become a habit.		



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Goal: Comprehension		Strategy: Retell the Story
Definition	An accounting of a story's key points, told in sequence. A retelling usually includes characters, setting, problems, and solution or the main ideas of the text. It involves telling what is important in the story without telling too much.	
Why Children Need This Strategy	Retelling helps readers recall what is happening in the story, develop a sense of story structure, and become more accurate in monitoring their understanding. They can transfer this knowledge of story structure to their own story writing.	
Secret to Success	Think about what you are reading. Stop and reread if you can't remember. One way to teach students how to remember story sequence and character elements in the story is by using words such as <i>first, next, then, last, and finally</i> .	
How We Teach It	<p>Retelling is used on many beginning reading assessments, yet for years we never really taught students explicitly how to retell.</p> <p>We start by modeling this with our students during read-alouds. This technique is used by storytellers, and we borrowed the idea, giving our students a kinesthetic action to help them focus and remember the story.</p> <p>Introducing the Retell Rope, we hold up a small rope knotted eight times. Each knot represents one thought from the story. We also show the class a picture representation of the rope. We tell the class that when we come to each knot, it will remind us to state the next event from the story. We then read a story. After reading the story, we retell it using the rope and knots, stopping at each knot and telling an important fact from the story. Before our next story, we go to our visual of the rope and start labeling each knot to give students a structure for the retelling. Under each knot, we write the following words and explain them as we are writing:</p> <p><i>Characters, Setting, Problem, Event 1, Event 2–Next, Event 3–Then, Event 4–Finally, Ending—Circle Back to Solve Problem</i></p> <p>We then show the rope with both ends connecting to each other to demonstrate that the retelling ends by solving the problem in the beginning.</p> <p>Language we use:</p> <p>"Who were the main characters?" "What problem did the main characters experience?" "How was the problem solved?" "How did the story end?" "What happened first, next, and last?"</p>	
Troubleshooting	<p>Listening to a student retell a story is also an assessment strategy. We listen as students reveal what they think is most important in the story. This gives us a window into the students' thinking about story organization and their oral language development and vocabulary.</p> <p>We typically think of retelling a story as an oral activity. Keeping the retelling oral will support students who may have difficulty with this strategy, allowing them to focus on the story rather than their written response.</p>	



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Goal: Comprehension		Strategy: Use Prior Knowledge to Connect with Text	
Definition	Readers bring information from what they already know or what they have read before about a topic and connect it with what they are reading to increase their understanding of the text and to remember what they have read.		
Why Children Need This Strategy	Using prior knowledge can help students connect their own experiences with the text to better understand and make sense of what they are reading. The term <i>prior knowledge</i> is also thought of as making connections.		
Secret to Success	Pause before and during the reading of the text to relate what is being read in the story to what is already known.		
How We Teach It	<p>Using a grade-appropriate text, we model for students how we activate our prior knowledge before we begin reading, using some of the language below. As we provide guided practice, we ask students to “listen and talk” to their elbow buddy about the following:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Activate or think about your prior knowledge or connections you have to the text.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">How did you feel in a similar situation?</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">How did these connections help you to better understand the story?</p> <p>Language we use:</p> <p>“What experiences have you had that might be similar to what this book cover is telling you?”</p> <p>“What do you already know about this content, genre, or author?”</p> <p>“While reading: Does this part of the story remind you of anything you have done before or read before that will help you understand this section of the story better?”</p> <p>“Using what you already knew about the topic, did that information help you understand this selection?”</p>		
Troubleshooting	<p>Students pick up on using prior knowledge quickly, but at times the prior knowledge does not move them forward with deep understanding of the text. If this happens, we remind students that the goal of using prior knowledge is to connect us to the text for better understanding and retention of what we read.</p> <p>We may take out a KWL chart (Know, Want to know, Learned) and fill it out with students, coaching them through the process of drawing on their background knowledge and connecting it to the text.</p>		



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Goal: Comprehension		Strategy: Make a Picture or Mental Image
Definition	When students listen to or read text, they can create pictures in their mind or make a mind movie. When readers visualize what is happening in the story, they remember more of what they read or hear.	
Why Children Need This Strategy	Making a picture or mental image assists readers in understanding what they read by creating images in their mind, based on the details in the text and their prior knowledge.	
Secret to Success	Readers put themselves in the story or text by making a mind movie. They also identify details that help them make pictures in their minds.	
How We Teach It	<p>When teaching students to make pictures in their mind before, during, and after reading, we start by explaining how pictures help students remember what they are reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ by thinking about what they know about the text before they read; ◆ by using sensory details to create mental pictures; ◆ by looking back at the pictures in their brains after the story to remember what has happened. <p>We then model how we make pictures in our mind and ask students to do the same during our read-aloud, with partners and independently.</p> <p>Some language we use:</p> <p>“What do you see in your mind as I read this selection?”</p> <p>“Take the information I am reading and make it into a movie. Pretend you are at the theater and watching the story.”</p> <p>“Can you see yourself in this selection?”</p>	
Troubleshooting	<p>If students have a difficult time making pictures in their minds, we say, “If you could see a picture in your mind, what would it look like?” This simple rewording helps students bridge what they think they should be doing with creating the pictures.</p> <p>Other language we use to guide readers:</p> <p>Which details helped create a picture in your mind?</p> <p>Before you begin the story, make a picture in your mind of what you have seen before that may be in the selection.</p>	



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Goal: Comprehension Strategy: Ask Questions Throughout the Reading Process	
Definition	Readers are actively involved in reading by asking themselves questions before, during, and after reading a selection, thus increasing their comprehension of the material.
Why Children Need This Strategy	Readers who ask questions during reading are actively engaged and thus tend to remember important details and information. While asking questions, readers are monitoring their comprehension.
Secret to Success	Readers must be able to generate their own questions. Not all questions will be answered.
How We Teach It	<p>When introducing this strategy in a whole-group format, we begin by explaining that asking questions during the reading process can help us focus on what we are reading, can give us a purpose for reading, and enables us to monitor our reading or check to see whether we are understanding what we are reading.</p> <p>We model this questioning process by stopping during our reading and stating the question we have in our minds. We model for a few days and then ask students to participate while we are reading aloud by turning and talking. Finally, we have students practice asking questions independently.</p> <p>Questions we may use while reading: "What does this mean?" "Is this important?" "How do I think this story will end?" "What will this selection be about?" "What does this word mean?" "What did I learn?" "Do I need to read this again?"</p>
Troubleshooting	If children have difficulty asking questions, we step back and teach them different kinds of questions readers ask. One resource we have found useful is Taffy Raphael's (2006) work on QAR (Question, Answer, Relationship). She has defined questions under four categories: Right There, Think and Search, Author and Me, On My Own. Using these categories and her definitions under each can make asking questions more concrete and attainable.



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Goal: Comprehension Strategy: Predict What Will Happen; Use Text to Confirm	
Definition	To predict, readers tell what they think will happen in the story; to confirm, readers find out whether their predictions were true, partially true, or way off.
Why Children Need This Strategy	Using this strategy helps readers make connections to the text, think ahead, and become more engaged.
Secret to Success	<p>Readers follow three steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Look at the details in the selection. 2. Decide what they think will happen next based on the details and background knowledge. 3. Look back and check to make sure the prediction was accurate (confirm).
How We Teach It	<p>After defining the strategy for the class, we model its use in the whole group. As we move to guided practice, we give students a piece of text (fiction or nonfiction) and pair them. We ask them to look at the text and predict what will happen, then partner-read the selection and find places in the text that can confirm whether their predictions were true, partially true, or way off. If the predictions were way off, we ask the pairs to go back and change their prediction to be true.</p> <p>Language we use: “What do you think will happen based on your information?” “What clues are you using to state that prediction?” “What kind of clues did you use? Pictures, words, or background knowledge?”</p>
Troubleshooting	Predicting is a strategy most readers do quite well. The difficulty is with making predictions that have something to do with the story or selection. Our youngest readers tend to make unsubstantiated predictions that do not deepen their thinking about what is happening in the text. Asking them to confirm predictions with the text helps students comprehend what is happening further ahead.



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Goal: Comprehension		Strategy: Infer and Support with Evidence
Definition	Readers figure out what the author is saying even though it might not be written down. Using their background knowledge, clues from the text, illustrations, and captions, the reader makes meaning of the selection.	
Why Children Need This Strategy	Not all authors tell the reader everything they want you to know in the selection. Students learn to be detectives by looking for clues or evidence in the text to figure out the meaning of the selection.	
Secret to Success	There may be a bit of guessing involved when inferring. Readers will need to use everything they already know and clues from the text, illustrations, and captions to figure out or guess what is happening.	
How We Teach It	<p>As always, the most effective way we teach any strategy is by modeling our thinking out loud and labeling it for our students. One of our first lessons for inferring is the Inferring Game. For a full description of the lesson, see page 100.</p> <p>As students become more skilled with the game, we use a favorite picture book and start anchoring the practice they have had with inferring in statements as part of the Inferring Game, our read-alouds, and their own books.</p>	
Troubleshooting	<p>At times students make wild inferences and we wonder how to move them to grounding their thinking in meaning by taking them back to articulating the clues they find or the evidence. We slow students down by asking them to write their clues or evidence on a sticky note. During our small-group meetings and individual conferences, we monitor their progress.</p> <p>For an example of a small-group strategy lesson using this strategy, see page 100.</p>	



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Goal: Comprehension		Strategy: Use Text Features (Titles, Headings, Captions, Graphic Features)	
Definition	Nonfiction text contains common features such as titles, headings and subheadings, captions, maps, diagrams, charts and graphs, legends, bold and italicized text, glossaries, indexes, and cutaways. Readers recognize and use these features to help them understand what they are reading.		
Why Children Need This Strategy	When students read nonfiction material, they will encounter text features that are not evident when reading fiction. Students who have had experience and know the components and functions of text features improve their comprehension of the text.		
Secret to Success	Understand that most nonfiction will have text features. Tune in to these features, and use your background knowledge about them and how they aid in comprehension.		
How We Teach It	Our favorite way to teach this strategy involves using clear acetate sheets and markers. Laying the acetate sheet over the text allows for writing, circling, and marking text features with a water-soluble marker, without writing on the text itself. This highly visual approach allows us to point out to children the features and write our thinking rather than just explaining what the features are. Once we show kids how to use these tools, we send them off with partners or by themselves to work with text features in a similar manner. This activity helps train a student's eyes to look at the features of text before, during, and after they read a passage or article.		
Troubleshooting	<p>Many students think they need to delve right into a piece of text. It takes modeling, time, and encouragement to teach children that using text features is an appropriate strategy as well as a perfectly acceptable way to gain more information as they comprehend what they read.</p> <p>For an example of this strategy, see page 119.</p>		



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Goal: Comprehension Strategy: Summarize Text; Include Sequence of Main Events	
Definition	Summarizing is taking selections of text and reducing them to their bare essentials: the gist, the key ideas, and the main points that are worth noting and remembering.
Why Children Need This Strategy	<p>The reader captures the most important parts of text but expresses them in a shorter version so the text is more easily remembered.</p> <p>As readers we need to absorb the meaning of the passage and then capture in our own words the most important elements from the original so we can remember, organize, and understand the importance of what we have read.</p>
Secret to Success	Readers are able to articulate the main point of a selection. At times finding key words or phrases may be helpful to support their ideas.
How We Teach It	<p>During our chapter book read-aloud, we begin modeling how to summarize. Before we begin the second chapter, we summarize what happened in the previous chapter, stating the main ideas and using story elements to organize the summary. We model discerning important or nonimportant information that we would include in our summary. After we make a few attempts alone, we work together with students to identify the main ideas in the previous chapters.</p> <p>In primary classes, we institute an artist of the day, who draws or paints a picture of the most important information from the chapter just read. We meet with the child to write the main ideas they drew or painted, finally compiling a class book summarizing the read-aloud. This book becomes the anchor we refer to when speaking about summaries.</p> <p>With older students we model writing summaries of the chapters from our class read-aloud, modeling our thinking as we decide what is important and worth noting and what details we will leave out because of their relative insignificance to the story. Once we think students understand how to write a summary, this becomes a weekly expectation and part of their response journal that is graded.</p> <p>Language we use: “What is this selection about?” “What are the main ideas of this selection? What is your evidence?” “What is not important to remember in this selection? Why?”</p>
Troubleshooting	<p>Summarizing is often used but is challenging for many of our students. If it does pose a challenge, many times it is because students are trying to retell the whole story with great detail and don’t know how to cut it down to the most critical elements. This is when we step in with more modeling either with the whole group, in small groups, or one on one, depending on the number of students who need the strategy.</p> <p>For an example of an individual conferring lesson using this strategy, see pages 78 and 101.</p>



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Goal: Comprehension		Strategy: Use Main Idea and Supporting Details to Determine Importance	
Definition	Readers understand the most important idea about what is being read. This idea is often stated in a sentence in the passage, whereas other sentences comprise pieces of information that tell more about the most important idea.		
Why Children Need This Strategy	Identifying and understanding main ideas along with determining importance are prerequisite skills to summarizing text. Readers summarize the most important aspects of the text by determining the details that are significant and discard those that are not while stating the main idea in their own words, thus improving comprehension and understanding what is read.		
Secret to Success	When constructing the main idea of a piece of text, the reader may start with a topic they think the selection is about and then add one detail to support it.		
How We Teach It	<p>Many students shy away from the main idea because they confuse it with theme or topic. To clarify more completely, we start by establishing a common language as we teach and review with our students the following terms: <i>topic</i>, <i>main idea</i>, <i>theme</i>, and <i>supporting details</i>. We find that when students understand these terms, we are on the right path to understanding main idea.</p> <p>We then model this process of determining the main idea, pointing out that one person's view of the author's main idea may be different from another. When we determine the main idea, we always support our claim with evidence from the text.</p> <p>The terms:</p> <p>The topic is the subject, or what the text is about.</p> <p>The main idea is the most important idea about the topic and is expressed as a sentence or two. When we identify the main idea, it is usually in a sentence; if we say just a word, we are probably referring only to the topic.</p> <p>A theme is the big idea from the text. This is often an idea or lesson the author wants the reader to know from reading the text.</p> <p>Supporting details are bits of information that are used to verify and support the main idea.</p> <p>Language we use:</p> <p>"In a few words, what is this selection about?"</p> <p>"What would you say is the most important idea about this topic?"</p> <p>"Did you find the main idea stated in the passage or did you have to infer it?"</p>		
Troubleshooting	<p>If the main idea is not stated in a sentence in the passage, the reader must infer the main idea based on the details and their prior knowledge of the topic and what they learn from the text.</p> <p>We are clear with students that this process of determining the main idea can require considerable thinking and hard work. To support students who need scaffolding for this strategy, we may meet every day for a week, checking in on them and asking them each time to identify the main idea and support their thinking with details from the text.</p>		



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Goal: Comprehension	Strategy: Determine and Analyze Author's Purpose and Support with Text
Definition	Identify why the author wrote a text, by giving specific examples from the text to support the reader's inference; deepens understanding for how to read and comprehend the text.
Why Children Need This Strategy	Readers infer the meaning of text based on the author's purpose for writing it, which may be to persuade, to inform, or to entertain, to name a few.
Secret to Success	<p>Discovering and identifying the clues to determine what the reader thinks the author's purpose is for writing the selection helps the reader infer the meaning and decide how to approach the text.</p> <p>Authors usually don't tell readers why they wrote their selections; the readers have to figure that out and give evidence from the text to support their thinking.</p>
How We Teach It	<p>We model this strategy, asking ourselves before we start reading a selection some of the questions below. For the next week, each time we pick up any reading material, we ask the students to predict what the author's purpose is. We make an anchor chart with these three author's purposes: Persuade, Inform, and Entertain. We know authors may have other purposes, but we start with these three. Under each heading, we construct a list of descriptors or clues we are discovering for each purpose. Once we have a few descriptors under each heading, we begin by asking students to identify the author's purpose for books they are reading. We constantly ask students to support their beliefs by giving specific examples from the text that give evidence to their conclusions.</p> <p>Language we use:</p> <p>"Do I know anything about this author?"</p> <p>"Is this selection going to teach me something, make me laugh, or try to get me to do something?"</p> <p>"What clues can I find in the text that support what I think?"</p> <p>"Infer why you think the author wrote this text."</p> <p>"How might you approach reading this text, knowing the author's purpose?"</p> <p>"After reading the selection, do you still agree with your inference about why the author wrote this text? If not, what do you think is the author's purpose now? What is your evidence?"</p>
Troubleshooting	The students who need extra support in this area usually need practice predicting author's purpose. Often they don't have enough information to discern the different reasons authors write text and then to support their opinion with details from the selection. We put these students on our conferring calendar and check in daily. We bring a different book to each conference and ask them, "What is the author's purpose for writing this text? What makes you think this?" Going through this process individually will support the students and give them daily practice until we believe they have the skills to identify purpose and why it is important to their reading.



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Goal: Comprehension Strategy: Recognize Literary Elements (Genre, Plot, Character, Setting, Problem/Resolution, Theme)	
Definition	Readers identify common elements of a story as they read that include plot, character, setting, and theme. Using these elements helps readers infer what will happen next.
Why Children Need This Strategy	Identifying and understanding the main literary elements of a story such as character, setting, plot, and problem/resolution gives readers a process for storing information to remember and to comprehend what the story is about. This knowledge will also help students as they are writing stories.
Secret to Success	Literary elements work together to form and enhance the story. We learn literary elements separately, and then combine them in our mind for better understanding of the story.
How We Teach It	<p>Teaching literary elements does not happen in one day, or even in one week. We start by teaching our youngest learners about these elements, revisiting these lessons over the years. It is helpful to know the most common elements.</p> <p>Literary Elements Characters: Who or what the story is about, based on the actions or words used. Plot: The important events in the story, which include the <i>conflict</i>, or <i>problem</i>, of the story, and <i>resolution</i>, or how the problem was solved. Setting: Where and when the story occurs. The author may also convey mood through the setting, leading the reader to feel a certain way, such as sad, scared, or happy. Theme: The underlying message, or meaning, of the story. This can be stated or inferred.</p> <p>There are many other literary elements that add to a unified story, such as foreshadowing, flashback, point of view, irony, symbolism, and figurative language (to name a few).</p> <p>We start with the most common elements as stated above, and add others as students become more sophisticated readers.</p> <p>Through our read-alouds and thinking aloud, we identify each of the elements of the story. We begin with basic understanding of the elements, and then move to deeper thinking to not just identify each element, but to start using them together to enhance our comprehension. For example, the questions below are more sophisticated than the beginning questions such as "Who are the characters?" Now we think about how the characters have changed during the story, giving examples and saying why we came to that decision.</p> <p>Language we use: "Does the character change during the story? Give examples." "What is the setting in the story? Is it stated or do you have to infer?" "How is the mood described in the story based on the setting?" "What is the problem of the story? Give text evidence to support this." "How has the problem been resolved? Support your thinking."</p>
Troubleshooting	As readers encounter more sophisticated text, they need to be taught and exposed to other literary elements to understand stories more completely. Ask the students to tell you how they determined the literary elements in the story by giving details from the story to support their thinking. A graphic organizer such as a story map can help students visually organize a story's elements.



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Goal: Comprehension	Strategy: Recognize and Explain Cause-and-Effect Relationships
Definition	Readers understand that in-text events happen (effects), along with the reason why they happen (causes). When students recognize this relationship, comprehension is increased.
Why Children Need This Strategy	The cause-and-effect relationship is a basic thinking skill and text structure for all types of reading and subject areas. Students use the understanding of this relationship in social studies, science, all school subjects, and day-to-day living, whether watching TV, playing games, or in friendships.
Secret to Success	Look for clue words that will signal what happened and why it happened.
How We Teach It	<p>Some clue words may include <i>because, if, then, since, so, therefore, as a result of.</i></p> <p>Explain the importance of cause and effect and how an author may structure and organize a section of the text using the cause-and-effect pattern. Show examples of this in the reading of a text. Through guided practice we ask students to identify the cause-and-effect relationship in different selections we read.</p> <p>At times we must infer the cause, since it is not always stated. If this is the case, we ask ourselves, “Why do I think this happened?” or “Why might this have happened?”</p> <p>Language we use: “What happened and why did it happen?” “What were the clue words?” “Why would this have happened?” “Give examples of cause-and-effect relationships throughout your life—in your family, in sports, and in your friendships.”</p>
Troubleshooting	Sometimes the causes are not stated, which makes it difficult for our more literal learners to figure out a cause-and-effect relationship. Therefore, we meet with students individually and generate a possible list of effects together. We then embed this in reading by asking the students to keep track of any cause-and-effect relationships they find in their reading or conversations at home. The more we practice this with students, the more easily they can identify stated causes or inferred causes.



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Goal: Comprehension Strategy: Compare and Contrast Within and Between Text	
Definition	Readers understand new ideas in text by thinking about how things are alike or different, thus deepening their comprehension.
Why Children Need This Strategy	Comparing and contrasting text assists the reader by engaging them in thinking critically. Readers go beyond descriptions, summaries, or retells and gain a deeper understanding of what they are comparing or contrasting.
Secret to Success	Remember that comparing involves articulating likenesses and differences, whereas contrasting focuses only on differences.
How We Teach It	<p>We begin by defining and giving examples of how to compare, by telling likenesses and differences of what we might be comparing. We may use two students and point out their similarities and differences. Then we compare characters in a story or settings.</p> <p>We always use a Venn diagram when teaching our students the idea of comparing and contrasting information. It is a great visual device that clearly shows this abstract concept.</p> <p>Teaching points to remember: Compare—tell how two or more things are alike and different clue words: <i>like, as</i> Simile—<i>than, as</i> Metaphor—no clue words Analogies—point out words with same relationship</p> <p>Contrast—tell how two or more things are different clue words: <i>but, unlike</i></p> <p>Language we use: “How are these stories the same? How are they different?” “Compare the characters in each story.” “How might you compare these stories?”</p>
Troubleshooting	Help students understand the skill by relating it to classifying. When we are grouping things together, we classify them by likes and/or differences.



Ready Reference Form

Goal: Accuracy	Strategy: Cross Checking . . . Do the Pictures and/or Words Look Right? Do They Sound Right? Do They Make Sense?
Definition	Cross Checking is a strategy for ensuring the words (and sometimes pictures) make sense and match the letters on the page.
Why Children Need This Strategy	When what is read doesn't sound right or make sense. When students come to a word they don't know.
Secret to Success	Must be able to monitor for meaning and know when it is necessary to pause and fix up the meaning instead of just continuing to read. Constantly grounding reading in meaning is vital to the success of this strategy.
How We Teach It	<p>We have found that the best way to teach this strategy is by guiding children to stop at the end of a sentence when what they read didn't make sense. We ask them to go back and find the word that was confusing. We give them highlighter tape or a special pointer to mark the word. We may also supply a sticky or even a clear acetate sheet and marking pen to lay over the text and circle the word. Once the word has been identified, we spend time teaching children the movements to go with Cross Checking: "Does the word I am reading match the letters written or the picture?" (Here they cross their right arm over their body so the right hand touches the left shoulder.) "Does it sound right?" (Left arm crosses over the body so the left hand touches their right shoulder.) Finally, "Does it make sense?" (Both arms come down with hands pointing to the ground.)</p> <p>By giving a kinesthetic motion to the strategy, children are more apt to remember the questions that go with it.</p> <p>Teaching and modeling this strategy over and over all year long so children get into the habit of using it will help them learn to become readers who self-monitor their reading by stopping when it doesn't make sense and cross checking.</p> <p>Language we use: "While reading, ask yourself, 'Do the picture and/or letters in the word match what I am saying? Does it sound right and does it make sense?'"</p>
Troubleshooting	<p>For this strategy to be viable for beginning readers, they must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ read pictures, ◆ know some letters and some sounds, ◆ know the location of the beginning of a word. <p>For advanced readers to be successful with Cross Checking, they must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ understand decoding of word parts. <p>If a child has difficulty with this strategy, break down the process: Stop when meaning breaks down. Look and say the letters, and the word chunks in words. Use picture support.</p> <p>Cross Checking is an accuracy strategy on the CAFE Menu but is also a comprehension strategy that supports children when meaning breaks down.</p> <p>This strategy is one of the first we teach once children have a command over the accuracy strategy Use the Picture. From the first few moments with text, students are asked to cross-check what they are reading, which requires them to constantly think and monitor meaning.</p>



Ready Reference Form

Goal: Accuracy		Strategy: Use the Picture . . . Do the Words and Pictures Match?	
Definition	Using illustrations, photos, graphs, maps, and charts to help gain meaning from text and confirm that the words being read make sense.		
Why Children Need This Strategy	This is one of the first stages of prereading. Illustrations can provide hints to help students decode a word. Using the pictures also prepares students for the accuracy strategy of Cross Checking, as well as for using charts, graphs, photos, and captions when reading nonfiction texts in later years.		
Secret to Success	Knowing that using the pictures within text is a viable and appropriate strategy for decoding words and gaining meaning, not “cheating.”		
How We Teach It	<p>Starting the first day of school we teach the lesson Three Ways to Read a Book to our youngest readers, or ELL students who are not yet reading or are just beginning to read. We want to ground students with the knowledge that oftentimes photos or illustrations are a vital part of the reading experience and can help us figure out a word or words or gain meaning from the text. We model reading the pictures.</p> <p>Beginning reading books often have just a few words on a page, and the illustrations can give clear support for figuring out the words.</p> <p>Reading pictures, which includes graphs, maps, charts, and their captions, is a very powerful nonfiction reading strategy. Using pictures is also a strategy for more advanced students that will support those reading different curricular texts. Each time we read a book, we spend time modeling how we look at pictures, maps, and graphs. We talk about our thinking so students can hear our processing. We also model stopping while we read to look at the pictures to help us gain information.</p>		
Troubleshooting	<p>Use the Picture is an accuracy strategy on the CAFE Menu, but it also is a beginning comprehension strategy, sending a clear message for our beginning readers and English language learners that we are always thinking about meaning when we look at any text.</p> <p>Use the Picture is required before we can ask students to try the powerful strategy Cross Checking.</p>		



Ready Reference Form

Goal: Accuracy		Strategy: Use Beginning and Ending Sounds
Definition	When reading a word, using the sounds at the beginning of the word as well as at the end of the word.	
Why Children Need This Strategy	Often children will look at the beginning letter or letters and guess a word that may fit in the sentence without looking at the rest of the word. They may not even know there is an end to a word.	
Secret to Success	<p>Children must slow down enough to look at and pay attention to the end of the word. For beginning readers, they must know there is an end of the word.</p> <p>Cross checking the word they just read.</p> <p>Students must know letter sounds as well as the concept of beginning and end. It is helpful if they are also exposed to the Cross Checking strategy so they will be certain the word they are reading matches the letters.</p>	
How We Teach It	<p>When we teach this strategy to beginning readers, we often use a shared text that might be a nursery rhyme, poem, or Big Book. We look at words within text and focus children’s attention on the beginning and ending sounds. To focus their attention, we may use colored highlighter tape or pieces of colored acetate sheets and have students lay the colors over the beginning and ending letter of the words they are decoding. Repeating this process with kids over and over will raise their level of awareness, and slow them down so they pay careful attention to the beginning and ending sounds.</p> <p>Once children slow down to focus in on beginning and ending sounds, we help them read the word correctly by coaching them to end their decoding with “Did that make sense?”</p> <p>Language prompts we might use: “Did you look at the whole word?” “Did what you just read make sense?” “Remember to cross-check the word and be certain it matches what you are saying.”</p>	
Troubleshooting	<p>If children struggle with this strategy, continuing to look at the beginning and middle of a word and then guessing, we have them mark the page with a sticky note and write the word out, or have them write the word on a whiteboard. Slowing down to write the word can help focus their attention on the end sound.</p> <p>See page 116 for an extended lesson.</p>	



Ready Reference Form

Goal: Accuracy		Strategy: Blend Sounds; Stretch and Reread
Definition	Taking the individual sounds of letters or phonemes and blending them together to read a word accurately.	
Why Children Need This Strategy	Beginning readers often learn their sounds in isolation. The leap from knowing letter sounds to reading words can be daunting. Taking the isolated sounds and blending them together can be a first step to becoming a reader for many children.	
Secret to Success	<p>As you are blending the sounds together, listen for a word you might have heard before.</p> <p>Students know letter sounds and possess phonemic awareness, phoneme blending, and segment onset and rime.</p>	
How We Teach It	<p>One of our favorite ways to teach this strategy is to give students a large rubber band or any stretchy band at all. We write a simple consonant-vowel-consonant (CVC) word on the whiteboard or chart, then have them take their bands between two hands. They pull the band apart a bit with each sound in the word, stretching out both the band and the word. When they have said each sound and the band is taut, they move their hands and the band quickly back together, with the band springing back to its original state. They say the word quickly at the same time, thus blending the sounds together.</p> <p>Another activity for teaching how to blend sounds together is called Stretch and Read. Students take one button for each letter in a word, laying them in a row and pushing each button forward as they say the individual sound. After saying each sound, they use both hands to push the buttons together, saying the word quickly.</p> <p>One of the verbal prompts we use is this one: "Say each letter as you stretch them out, then put them together and say it fast."</p>	
Troubleshooting	This strategy works best for simple, easy-to-decode words such as CVC words. The ability to have phonological awareness and be able to pull words apart and push them together auditorially is a very important prerequisite to the success of this strategy.	



Ready Reference Form

Goal: Accuracy	Strategy: Flip the Sound
Definition	Teach children to use their knowledge of letter sounds to decode words by trying out, or “flipping,” the different sounds a letter can make until they hear a word they recognize and that makes sense.
Why Children Need This Strategy	Many words in the English language don’t follow conventional phonics rules. Drawing upon knowledge of the variety of sounds a letter makes can sometimes help children decode a word that has a letter that varies from the traditional sound associated with it.
Secret to Success	<p>Being aware when a word doesn’t sound right or make sense.</p> <p>Knowing the multiple sounds a letter or letter combination can make.</p> <p>Being able to flip the sounds around and then rely on comprehension to see whether the new word sounds right and makes sense.</p> <p>This strategy works particularly well with vowel sounds.</p>
How We Teach It	<p>Our favorite way to teach this strategy is by using a kinesthetic motion to remind students to flip the sound when they come to a word they don’t know. Whether teaching the whole class, a small group, or an individual, we follow the same pattern:</p> <p>We model the strategy by showing them a word that we read incorrectly. If we are working with an individual, we wait until they read a word incorrectly and get to the end of the sentence. Then we stop them to model the strategy of Flip the Sound on their missed word. When we model the strategy, we put our hand palm-down and flip it over and say, “I think I’ll try flipping the sound.”</p> <p>We find it very important to articulate for the students that while we are flipping the sounds in a word, we must listen to see whether we recognize the word.</p> <p>Common language we use in lessons with Flip the Sound: “Did the word you just read sound right?” “When you flip the sound, listen for a word that you recognize.” “What other sound could that letter make?”</p>
Troubleshooting	<p>If a student is struggling with this strategy, having a partner give them a prompt that is the kinesthetic motion of flipping over their hand can be a quiet reminder to try the strategy.</p> <p>See pages 74, 77, and 91 for an extended lesson.</p>



Ready Reference Form

Goal: Accuracy	Strategy: Chunk Letters and Sounds Together
Definition	Chunking letters and sounds together within a word to make decoding more efficient, rapid, and accurate.
Why Children Need This Strategy	For children to be able to understand what they read, they must be able to read the words rapidly as well as accurately. This frees children to focus their attention on the meaning of what they have read.
Secret to Success	Watch for familiar word patterns such as blends, digraphs, prefixes, suffixes, compound words, and small words within a word.
How We Teach It	<p>This strategy is typically for students reading beyond the basic CVC level.</p> <p>Once they know the different sounds made by digraphs, blends, etc., we use different tools to help kids identify them in their reading. When working with a large chart or Big Book, we will use “frames” that outline the smaller word parts. These frames are everything from cardboard cut into a handheld magnifying-glass shape (sometimes complete with colored acetate glued in place of where the lens would be) to a large fly swatter with part of the middle cut out to form a frame that can be laid over a word, isolating the smaller chunk.</p> <p>When we are using a book as we confer with students, we teach them to use their fingers to mask off the chunks found in words, decoding those chunks first, then moving on to tackle the whole word.</p> <p>Slowing the process of looking for smaller parts in words helps train students’ eyes to look rapidly for those chunks.</p>
Troubleshooting	<p>The prerequisite to this strategy is knowing and having experience with the variety of digraphs, blends, prefixes, and suffixes found in words.</p> <p>Beginning with our youngest students, we spend time partaking in word studies that focus on these parts of words so as to build their background knowledge and experiences. Then as the words they encounter in text become more sophisticated, they have applicable knowledge and are ready to apply this strategy.</p>



Ready Reference Form

Goal: Accuracy		Strategy: Skip the Word, Then Come Back	
Definition	When students come to words they don't know, they skip over the word until they come to the end of the sentence or passage. Then readers back up and read the sentence again, using the first letter or letters of the skipped word and their context clues to decode the unknown word.		
Why Children Need This Strategy	If we don't teach students how to skip a word and come back, some children will stall on the unknown word and be unable to move on. Using this strategy also allows readers to comprehend using context clues.		
Secret to Success	Skip the unknown word, but be certain to come back. This strategy is a lead-in to Trade a Word.		
How We Teach It	When introducing and practicing this strategy, our favorite way to teach begins with the use of shared text (Big Book, chart, or copy of text projected electronically on the wall or screen). Before displaying the text, we take sticky notes and cover up a word or two in a passage. We ask students to pretend the covered word is one they don't know. We model skipping over the unknown word, reading the rest of the sentence, and then backing up to reread the sentence. When we reread the sentence, we uncover the first letter of the sticky note-covered word and demonstrate how we use the first letter and the context clues within the passage to try to figure it out.		
Troubleshooting	Help children realize it is okay to skip over a word and then come back to it.		



Ready Reference Form

Goal: Accuracy		Strategy: Trade a Word/Guess a Word That Makes Sense	
Definition	When readers encounter words they don't know, but they understand the gist of the text, they insert a word that makes sense in place of the unknown word.		
Why Children Need This Strategy	This strategy provides the reader with the option to continue reading by using a similar word for an unknown word. Reading continues and meaning stays intact.		
Secret to Success	<p>Prerequisite strategy of Skip the Word, Then Come Back builds readers' confidence that even if they don't know every word, they have strategies to draw on.</p> <p>Readers must understand what they are reading so they can substitute a word that makes sense.</p>		
How We Teach It	<p>Our favorite way to teach this strategy is very similar to Skip the Word, Then Come Back. We use shared text and a sticky note to cover a word or two within the text, except for the first letter, before showing the class. We model that when readers come to words they don't know, they can use the context clues and look at the first letter of the word, substituting a word that would make sense in the story. Then the reader continues reading the sentence and clarifies that the substituted word holds the meaning of the passage.</p> <p>Language we use: "Look at the first letter or letters: what word would make sense in this sentence that begins with that letter's sounds?"</p>		
Troubleshooting	<p>If students are having a difficult time with this strategy, reteach Skip the Word, Then Come Back.</p> <p>Double-check that readers know the sounds letters make.</p>		



Ready Reference Form

Goal: Fluency	Strategy: Voracious Reading
Definition	Readers become more fluent by increasing their volume of reading.
Why Children Need This Strategy	Most students develop fluent reading normally with little instructional guidance. Allington believes that children who come to school having heard hours and hours of reading become fluent readers naturally unless “something in the classroom instruction interferes.” His research leads him to conclude that the “volume of reading matters critically in the development of fluent, proficient readers” (2009a, 100).
Secret to Success	<p>Readers whose goal is to improve their fluency will spend hours each day reading “good-fit books” at school and, if possible, at home.</p> <p>When increasing students’ fluency, the key to success is increasing the amount of time they read.</p>
How We Teach It	<p>Voracious Reading is also found under Expand Vocabulary strategies on the CAFE Menu. Many of the same principles of how to teach this strategy hold true. The difference between voracious reading for fluency work and voracious reading for vocabulary work is based on what the child needs. Our language for introducing it changes slightly, depending on the strategy, as we point out why voracious reading would help fluency or vocabulary.</p> <p>For fluency development, we might use the following language: “We are going to give you time each day to read. I have noticed that you are choosing books that are too hard for you to read. You are not able to practice your fluency, because you are spending so much time sounding words out and trying to figure out what the words mean. We are going to work together today to find a book that is a ‘good fit’ for you. When the book you choose is on your reading level and you are interested in it, you will be able to practice reading smoothly and with expression. You will understand what you are reading and ultimately improve your fluency.”</p> <p>Creating a whole class of children who want to and do read requires the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Reading to the students every day from a wide variety of materials, modeling a love of reading ◆ Providing time each day for the children to read material of their choice that is of high interest for the reader ◆ Providing ongoing support—matching children to texts based on interest and readability
Troubleshooting	Finding and carving out time during the day for all students to read, especially our students who need the voracious reading as a strategy, can be a challenge. With these students, we might add them to our conferring calendar every day for a week or two, to help them get in the habit of reading and being accountable. We will also be able to check in to make sure they are reading a good-fit book, which is a key for this strategy to succeed.



Ready Reference Form

Goal: Fluency	Strategy: Read Appropriate-Level Texts That Are a Good Fit
Definition	To foster fluency and comprehension, students are engaged in high accuracy or high success reading, so most of each student's independent reading time is spent with material they can read with 99–100 percent accuracy.
Why Children Need This Strategy	"In order to read fluently, all readers need texts that they can read with a high degree of accuracy and automaticity. When readers are provided with texts that are too difficult, fluent reading is impossible" (Allington 2009a, 26).
Secret to Success	Students have time to find a good fit, are given time to read the book during the school day, and have someone supporting them and holding them accountable.
How We Teach It	<p>We teach this lesson the first day of school and review it often throughout the year. Many students will start picking "good-fit books" right away, whereas others may have difficulty choosing an appropriate-level book and need this reminder lesson the whole year through. We hold students accountable for reading good-fit books through our one-on-one conferring. It is here that we listen to children's reading to see whether they can follow the "I-Pick" method for choosing books. If not, we help them find the book that will engage them right then and there during our conference. While the I-Pick Method emphasizes K—Know most of the words, we also address the other four behaviors for choosing books, because it is these behaviors that will help students find a book they will stick with.</p> <p>We teach this good-fit lesson to our whole class by introducing the "I Pick" method from our book <i>The Daily Five: Fostering Literacy Independence in the Elementary Classroom</i> (2006).</p> <p>I—I pick a book P—Purpose—What is my purpose for choosing this book? I—Interest—Am I interested in this book? C—Comprehend—Do I understand what I just read? K—Know—Do I know most of the words?</p> <p>We might use language or prompts like the following: "Is that a good-fit book for you? Show me how you know that." "Let's go through your book box and you can show me your good-fit books."</p>
Troubleshooting	We teach this lesson to the whole group on the first day of school, and on subsequent days and for weeks afterward to our transitional and fluent readers. For our beginning readers, we also introduce good-fit books, but we don't emphasize reading material with 99–100 percent accuracy. Children at this stage of reading are in text that may have one to eight words on a page. They may know only two of the words and are reading the pictures to support their meaning. They may also be retelling the story without even reading the words. These are all appropriate reading practices for our beginning readers. It isn't until students read more accurately that we expect them to choose and read books with 99–100 percent accuracy.



Ready Reference Form

Goal: Fluency	Strategy: Reread Text
Definition	Students reread a selection of text several times until they can read it smoothly, accurately, and with expression.
Why Children Need This Strategy	Children benefit from this rereading strategy because of the ease with which it can be implemented in the classroom. Students can reread by themselves or with a partner and with any “good-fit books” they are reading.
Secret to Success	For this strategy to improve fluency, students must read from a good-fit book. If students are choosing books that are too difficult, their cognitive demand and energy will be spent on decoding words, with little left for fluent reading.
How We Teach It	<p>During our conferences, we set the purpose for the task of rereading to make reading smooth, accurate, and with expression, which will give the students a chance to practice their fluency. Students will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ choose a different paragraph from the story they are reading each day; ◆ reread that paragraph until they can read it smoothly, read it with expression, and read all the words correctly; ◆ eventually practice reading the same passage at a quicker pace. <p>We tell students this practice doesn’t take long—only about five to eight minutes of reading time each day, and with only one paragraph a day.</p> <p>They can practice this rereading strategy during Read to Self or Partner Read and also at home.</p> <p>We might use language or prompts like the following: “Which passage did you practice yesterday to increase your fluency?” “When did you practice this passage? Was it during Read to Someone or Read to Self?” “Let’s try this together: show me the passage you are practicing today, and let me hear you read it.” “Do you think you are becoming more fluent? How do you know?”</p>
Troubleshooting	<p>Rereading is a strategy used by even our youngest readers as they read the same text over and over to gain control of the words and meaning of the text. This very common strategy of rereading with our early readers changes from rereading to make sense of what is read to rereading paragraphs to practice fluency.</p> <p>We have never had a whole class of students who needed to work on their fluency. Consequently, we have never taught this particular lesson in a whole group. This is a specialized strategy we use with only a few of our students. For an example of this lesson, see pages 82–83.</p>



Ready Reference Form

Goal: Fluency	Strategy: Practice Common Sight Words and High-Frequency Words
Definition	Children recognize at first sight the most commonly used English words found in reading. Many of these words are irregular words that do not follow a decoding rule or pattern. Once readers remember these words, they can read them quickly and understand what they read.
Why Children Need This Strategy	A very early stage of fluent reading is being able to read words by “sight.” Knowing these words and reading them quickly will allow readers to understand what is being read.
Secret to Success	Readers will need to see and experience these words over and over again in isolation and embedded in text to remember them.
How We Teach It	<p>We typically focus on sight-word learning in the following two ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ We introduce about five words each week to our whole class and spend the rest of the week making connections to these words, anchoring them to text, and finding them in our reading and around the room. ◆ Students practice these words during the word work rotation of Daily Five. Here they have many opportunities and modes in which to work with these words. <p>Language we may use: “Look at that sentence. Do you see any sight words you recognize?” “Look on this page. Let’s go through and identify all the sight words you know so far.”</p>
Troubleshooting	<p>For kids who just can’t seem to remember sight words, we do the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Cut back the number until they are successful. ◆ Add more kinesthetic repetition and practice. ◆ Cycle back through the words to keep them fresh in their brain.



Ready Reference Form

Goal: Fluency	Strategy: Adjust and Apply Different Reading Rates to Match Text
Definition	Readers use a constant rate for most materials they read but learn to use different speeds based on the types of tasks and their purpose for reading.
Why Children Need This Strategy	Some readers have yet to learn how to adjust their reading rate or are unaware that other readers adjust their rate to match their purpose for reading. Because these readers read everything at the same rate, they struggle to complete and comprehend lengthy reading.
Secret to Success	Shift reading gears based on your purpose for reading and what you are reading.
How We Teach It	<p>We typically begin teaching students about rate by using Carver's (1990) analogy of reading. He compares reading rate to shifting the gears on a car.</p> <p>We explain that the low gears are slow and powerful, whereas higher gears are speedy but are the least powerful. Just like moving fast or slow in a car, our reading rate changes depending on the purpose for our reading and what we are reading.</p> <p>When reading, we use</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ our first gear, or slowest, most powerful gear, to memorize material; ◆ second gear to learn material; ◆ third gear for most of our reading; and ◆ fourth gear, our quickest speed, for skimming and scanning. <p>Once students are aware of rate and Carver's analogy, we establish this common class vocabulary to talk about the rate at which we read.</p> <p>Teaching may sound like this:</p> <p>"What might be the rate you use to read this social studies text?"</p> <p>"Will you change your rate during this reading?"</p> <p>"What is your typical speed for reading your favorite chapter book?"</p>
Troubleshooting	Teach students to be aware of their own reading rate. Students can learn to self-monitor, when to speed up and when to slow down, when they are audiotaped for reflection. We typically think of our slow readers and teaching them how to speed up. But it's just as difficult to help speedsters—we want them to shift into a slower gear.



Ready Reference Form

Goal: Fluency	Strategy: Use Punctuation to Enhance Phrasing and Prosody (End Marks, Commas, etc.)
Definition	Clustering words together by using our knowledge of the spoken patterns in the English language and using punctuation enhances our understanding of what we read.
Why Children Need This Strategy	Learning to read in phrases is important. The meaning of what is read is embedded in the chunk of words we read, not just in the isolated words themselves. The order and the way words are put together to make a sentence and then a paragraph create the meaning.
Secret to Success	Students must rely on their knowledge of phrasing from speaking English and transfer that knowledge to reading in phrases. Since most phrasing is learned early from the spoken language, we use the intonation and prosody we hear every day during our conversations with others. We then use similar voice patterns in reading, which enhances comprehension.
How We Teach It	<p>With all of our fluency instruction, we begin with our read-alouds. We model and explain explicitly to students what fluency is, how it sounds, and why it is important. Before we even introduce phrasing, we start by cueing students into the intonation of our voice, showing them how we control our voice to go up and down. We then talk about how that affects what we are saying. This is usually anchored to Daily Five partner-reading, where we model the language we expect students to use when asking for a partner. We teach them that their voice rises at the end of the sentence “Do you want to be my partner?” We use our finger and draw a line showing how our voice follows a straight line, drops, and ends at a higher tone than when we started. We talk about how it feels if people end the statement with a lilt in their voice or if they drop it at the end. If a student doesn’t naturally start using phrasing while reading, which most of them do, we often draw the phrase in a sentence, right under the words, using a scooping motion with our pencils to show all the words that are said together without a pause. We also point out any punctuation that helped us decide where the phrase was.</p> <p>Language we may use: “Did punctuation help you read that phrase of words?” “Show me by drawing in the phrases you will say here.” “I am going to draw in this phrase; now I want you to say those four words together quickly. Let me show you what that sounds like.” “Try saying those words together quickly—not word by word.”</p>
Troubleshooting	Most children learn and use phrasing if they have been reading “good-fit books.” If there is an occasion where students are not phrasing, scooping the words together is a great first step.



Ready Reference Form

Goal: Expand Vocabulary		Strategy: Voracious Reading	
Definition	Readers increase their vocabulary by reading and reading and reading.		
Why Children Need This Strategy	<p>“Reading is one of the major ways new words are learned” (Cunningham 2009, 16).</p> <p>Cunningham also says, “The number of words in your meaning vocabulary store is directly related to how much you read. Children who read the most have the biggest vocabularies. Children who read only when they are assigned something to read have smaller vocabularies” (2009, 15).</p>		
Secret to Success	Choosing a “good-fit book” and being motivated to stick with reading.		
How We Teach It	<p>Creating a whole class of children who want to read and do read requires the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Reading to the students each and every day from a wide variety of materials, modeling a love of reading; ◆ Providing time each day for the children to read material of their choice and that have high interest for the reader; and ◆ Providing ongoing support, matching children to texts based on interest and readability. 		
Troubleshooting	<p>Offering and maintaining a wide range and variety of material for students to choose to read can be the biggest challenge. Our most at-risk students typically have a narrow range of materials they are interested in, and making sure those materials are on a reading level students can access is difficult.</p> <p>In our schools, we are looking for resources, so each year all classroom teachers are given a small amount of money to buy books for our challenged readers, adding titles to classroom libraries that are specific to the students in their class that year.</p>		



Ready Reference Form

Goal: Expand Vocabulary Strategy: Tune In to Interesting Words and Use New Vocabulary in Speaking and Writing	
Definition	Students build word awareness and the understanding of words so they have “thinking power” left in their brain to comprehend and make meaning of what is read.
Why Children Need This Strategy	<p>When students have at least six multiple exposures to a word in a variety of contexts, they develop significantly higher levels of comprehension (Block, Hasni, and Mangieri, 2005; National Reading Panel, 2000).</p> <p>Students who tune in to interesting words will encounter and remember new words, thus expanding their vocabulary.</p>
Secret to Success	<p>When students read independently, they must read and practice this strategy with a “good-fit book.”</p> <p>Use a word collector for both whole-group lessons and individual conferences to record and remember the new words. For more on word collectors, see pages 84 and 152.</p>
How We Teach It	<p>This is one of the first strategies we teach to the whole class on the first day of school.</p> <p>We choose two or three words from our read-aloud that we think the children will encounter in their own reading or writing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ While we are reading, we stop and make a big deal over one of the words, saying how much we love the sound of it. ◆ We write the word on the word collector under the first letter of the word (e.g., <i>deluge</i>, <i>d</i>). ◆ We continue reading until we come across two or three words each day. ◆ At the beginning of each literacy block, we review each of the words on the collector and discuss who has used it in their conversations or writing. <p>Another tool we use to facilitate tuning in to interesting words is a table-talk notebook (see page 83).</p>
Troubleshooting	<p>We meet with the children in a one-on-one conference and discuss the words they are learning and using. This conversation helps deepen the understanding of words and comprehension of what they are reading.</p> <p>For examples of a one-on-one conference using this strategy, see pages 37, 84, and 102.</p>



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Goal: Expand Vocabulary Strategy: Use Pictures, Illustrations, and Diagrams	
Definition	Readers increase their vocabulary by paying attention to pictures, illustrations, and diagrams. They use the context of the story, their background knowledge of what is being read, and at times infer to gain meaning of the word and text.
Why Children Need This Strategy	Illustrations give clues about the meaning of words and text. Paying attention to the pictures may confirm the meaning of words. Picture books are not the only texts where pictures convey meaning. Readers are exposed to pictures in much of their nonfiction reading. Knowing how to figure out words by using background knowledge, looking at the picture, and inferring its meaning enhances vocabulary.
Secret to Success	Cross checking: do the pictures match what I think the word means, and does it make sense?
How We Teach It	<p>This strategy is used most often when working on the goal of accuracy. We teach students to “Use the picture . . . Do the words and pictures match?” by cross checking. During vocabulary work, we teach this strategy similarly, but now we focus on the word, writing it either on our whole-class word collector or in individual word collectors so we can learn it for later use.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Read a picture book or nonfiction book. ◆ When you come to a word you don’t know, stop. ◆ State the strategy you will use by telling students, “I am going to look at this picture to see if I can figure out what this word means.” ◆ Infer meaning based on background knowledge of text and what is represented in the picture. ◆ Write the word on a word collector, or celebrate figuring out the word, which elevated your understanding of the text.
Troubleshooting	This is a pretty straightforward strategy. Teachers find when they are modeling their reading that it is natural to stop and review what they are thinking when they come to a word they don’t know, looking at the pictures and then confirming meaning.



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Goal: Expand Vocabulary Strategy: Use Word Parts to Determine the Meaning of Words (Compound Words, Prefixes, Suffixes, Origins, Abbreviations, etc.)	
Definition	Use word parts to determine meaning of words (prefixes, suffixes, origins, abbreviations, etc.).
Why Children Need This Strategy	<p>Looking at parts of words helps readers break the word's meaning apart and supplies them with a strategy to understand new words they encounter.</p> <p>While looking at the distinguishable parts of a word, readers use their background knowledge of the word parts along with their knowledge of the text to infer the meaning of the word.</p>
Secret to Success	Each year children will learn many new words through direct, explicit instruction in their classrooms, but there is no way we can teach all the words students will encounter. This strategy gives readers a tool to figure out words they meet in their own reading.
How We Teach It	<p>We usually introduce this strategy as a whole-class lesson, during word work, as we are talking about parts of words and their meaning. This is a great time to point out to students that we use our thinking about word parts to help us spell words and to enhance our understanding of words. We anchor this lesson to the CAFE Menu by putting up the strategy Use Word Parts to Determine the Meaning of Words.</p> <p>We spend a little time each day looking at word parts and patterns. We choose a word part and do the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Introduce the word part (e.g., <i>un</i> or <i>tion</i>). ◆ Define the word part and how it affects the meaning of the word. ◆ Write examples of the word part in real words on an anchor chart. When introducing the prefix <i>un</i>, we would write <i>un</i> at the top of the anchor chart and add two words, <i>uninvited</i>, <i>unbelievable</i>. ◆ Discuss the meaning of each word and the effect <i>un</i> had on it. ◆ Infer what the meaning of the word is. ◆ Invite students to add their own words to the anchor chart that they encounter during this reading. ◆ Students read the sentence that contains the word they added to the anchor chart. ◆ Discuss the words students add and infer the meaning of the word and the sentence. <p>The prompt we often use during our lessons is "Ask myself . . . Do I know any part of this word?"</p>
Troubleshooting	<p>As quickly as possible we anchor the words into text so students learn how to infer the meaning of words based on their parts.</p> <p>For examples of a small-group lesson using this strategy, see page 122.</p>



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Goal: Expand Vocabulary		Strategy: Use Prior Knowledge and Context to Predict and Confirm Meaning	
Definition	Context clues are the words, phrases, and sentences surrounding an unfamiliar word that give clues or hints to its meaning.		
Why Children Need This Strategy	Students learn to use context clues to determine the meanings of words, but not all words can be figured out in this way. At times readers must piece together the meaning with the hints that are given, use the information they already have, and infer the meaning of the word.		
Secret to Success	Knowing some of the clue words that are used as context words, such as <i>but, however, unlike, means, in other words, also known as</i> , etc., helps the reader figure out the meaning of the word. Punctuation may also provide clues to the meaning of a word.		
How We Teach It	<p>Learning specific types of context clues helps students use the information around the unknown word to infer its meaning. We teach students five types of context clues:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">synonym, definition, example, contrast, inference</p> <p>We introduce this strategy as a whole-group lesson. We explain the steps in figuring out the meaning of an unfamiliar word or phrase through the use of context clues. We teach the class these different context clues, what they mean, and how to use them with the steps below.</p> <p>When readers come to a word they don't know, they use this plan to check for context clues and to understand the text:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Check for a context clue that is right there in the sentence. ◆ If readers find a context clue, they will reread the sentence with the new term or clue in mind. ◆ The students think to themselves what the sentence says using this context clue. ◆ If readers don't find a clue or understand the main point the author is making, they will have to try a different strategy to figure out the word, such as asking someone the meaning or using a dictionary. 		
Troubleshooting	<p>If a student has a difficult time figuring out context clues, we step back and teach different "clue words" for each of the context clues.</p> <p>Students may also have difficulty self-monitoring. We layer on the accuracy strategy of Cross Checking, because many times they stumble on checking themselves to see whether what they are inferring looks right, sounds right, and makes sense. Cross Checking integrates comprehension and is a self-monitoring strategy.</p>		



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Goal: Expand Vocabulary Strategy: Ask Someone to Define the Word for You	
Definition	When readers have a question about the meaning of a word, they ask someone to tell them what the word means.
Why Children Need This Strategy	An easy way to get information about a word is to ask someone the meaning. This may be enough for many readers to get a sense of the general idea of the word. Knowing the gist of the word allows readers to get right back into the text for meaning to be preserved.
Secret to Success	Readers need someone close by to ask. The person needs to know the word and be able to define it for the reader. Most important, readers must then go back into the text and use all their knowledge to confirm the definition given.
How We Teach It	<p>As with all of our instruction, we want students to have lots of strategies they can choose from for optimal learning, and this is a viable strategy. Many readers come to us knowing this strategy because it is easy. We broaden their knowledge of it by giving them a way to ask for help, and teach them that they must also work.</p> <p>We invite our students to ask one or all of these questions when they are asking for a definition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ What is the word? ◆ What is the word like? ◆ What are some examples of this word being used in a sentence? <p>This level of questioning will elicit a more complete definition, making it easier for them to self-assess:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Go back to the text and substitute the definition that was given for the word. ◆ Read the selection again, using the definition. ◆ Does the definition of the word make sense in the sentence?
Troubleshooting	We used to think students needed to try to figure it out first. What we didn't see was that readers usually do try to figure it out first, quickly going through the variety of strategies they already know and then asking someone. As adults, if we have someone else in the room we trust, this is usually the second strategy we use. First we guess the meaning in our head, and then we ask someone to confirm or refute the meaning we inferred. Teaching children the added step of confirming the meaning helps them see this as a trustworthy strategy, but it also shows them they are involved in making meaning from the text.



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Goal: Expand Vocabulary		Strategy: Use Dictionaries, Thesauruses, and Glossaries as Tools	
Definition	Readers use many word-learning tools to increase their understanding of words and texts they are reading.		
Why Children Need This Strategy	Readers access word-learning tools when they need the precise definition of a word or definitions of other words that mean the same thing.		
Secret to Success	Students need to know how word-learning tools work to use them successfully.		
How We Teach It	<p>We model and use the word-learning tools often during our whole-class read-alouds, or in content teaching.</p> <p>In a whole-class lesson, we regularly say, "Let's see what the dictionary says about this word; let's look it up on the computer today" or "What other word could the author have written? Let's check the thesaurus. I am going to put the thesaurus under the document camera and we'll figure out how we can find this word."</p> <p>Most of our work with word-learning tools is done in a light and positive way to promote their use.</p>		
Troubleshooting	<p>When many of us think about vocabulary work with dictionaries, we think of the stereotypical example of students looking up words in the dictionary and copying down their meaning (and of course using them in sentences). We avoid this practice.</p> <p>Cunningham sums up current findings: "Copying and memorizing definitions has been and remains the most common vocabulary activity in schools. It is done at all levels and in all subjects. This definition copying and memorizing continues in spite of research that shows definitional approaches to vocabulary instruction increase children's ability to define words but have no effect on reading comprehension" (2009, 176).</p>		