



Reading

Resource Material for the Classroom

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THE COMPONENTS OF READING

What is reading? According to the definition used by the Partnership for Reading, the National Reading Panel, and the federal Reading First law, reading is a “complex system of deriving meaning from print that requires:

- an understanding of how speech sounds are related to print;
- decoding (word identification) skills;
- fluency;
- vocabulary and background knowledge;
- active comprehension strategies; and
- a motivation to read.”

Learning to read is a sequential process. Because you can read effortlessly, it is easy to forget that reading is a skill that is made possible by several sub-skills or components that work together. Each new skill builds on the mastery of previously learned skills. Each step in the process relates to one of the basic components of reading. Reading components are interrelated abilities that make up skilled reading.

There are many ways to divide the different components of reading. The National Institute for Literacy uses the following components:

- Phonemic awareness
- Word analysis - phonics
- Word recognition - sight words
- Reading rate
- Fluency
- Spelling
- Background knowledge
- Word meaning
- Comprehension¹

Other research documents divide reading components as follows:

- Print Skills (Alphabetsics)
 - Word Recognition
 - Rate and Fluency

¹ National Institute for Literacy (NIFL). Retrieved from the World Wide Web at: <http://novel.nifl.gov/>.

- Meaning Skills
 - Word Meaning (Vocabulary)
 - Background Knowledge
 - Silent Reading Comprehension²

Regardless of how the subskills are divided, it is important to understand the basics of each component in order to better serve adult readers.

PRINT SKILLS (ALPHABETICS)

English is an alphabetic language and phonemes are the building blocks of language. A phoneme is simply the smallest unit of sound in a word. Represented by letters of the alphabet, they are the basic sounds of spoken words. For example, in the word "bat", there are three phonemes or sounds that make up the word: /b/a/t/. In the word "boat", most people automatically hear three individual sounds: buh, oh, and tuh. So phonemic awareness is the knowledge that words are made up of a combination of individual sounds and that when those sounds are combined, they make up a word. Therefore, reading requires that a student decodes or recognizes these phonemes as words (phonics). At the early stages of literacy, many adult education students often use so much of their cognitive space decoding words that they have very little left for comprehension.

For some adult students, it will be necessary to begin their reading development at the phonemic awareness stage. These are the students who may not have the skills to understand that individual sounds, when blended together, create words. This is truly the beginning stage of the reading process.

There is not a depth of research to support how to teach phonemes to the adult learner. According to the research by Kruidenier (October 2002)³, no major principles or trends related to phonic awareness instruction for adults can be drawn from the current research. However, he does state that from the current studies, it is suggested that phonemic awareness be taught to adults using direct instruction, such as simple demonstration and corrective feedback. What this means in the classroom is that oral and written phonemic awareness exercises should be used with students. These exercises should include segmenting words into phonemes, blending phonemes, and adding, deleting, substituting, and shifting phonemes.

² The National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy. Retrieved from the World Wide Web at: <http://www.gse.harvard.edu/~ncsall/>.

³ Kruidenier, J. Ed. D. (2002) Research-based principles for adult basic education reading instruction. National Institute for Literacy. Produced by RMC Research Corporation, Portsmouth: NH. Retrieved from the World Wide Web at: http://www.nifl.gov/partnershipforreading/publications/html/adult_ed/index.html.

WORD RECOGNITION: WORD ANALYSIS

Word analysis or phonics is the relationship between a specific letter and its sounds as it relates to the written word. For example, if a student comes across an unfamiliar word, he/she may try to read the word by breaking apart the different letters. For example, the word smart. The student can try to read the word by separating the word into sounds with which he/she is familiar: /s/m/a/r/t/. Phonics is also an important part of the writing process as students learn to spell specific words. Students with good phonological awareness are generally able to use rhyme, beginning and ending sounds, and specific phonemes to read and write words.

Is phonics necessary for good reading comprehension? Research supports that those students who can identify the relationship between the sounds of the English language and the letters, have an easier time in identifying words fluently, thus, leading to better comprehension. However, phonics does have limitations due to the complexity of the English language.

Phonics may be taught systematically through directly teaching consonants, short and long vowels, two-letter graphemes (oi, ea, ou, sh, ch), and the common blends that consist of more than one grapheme (st, sm, bl, pr). Direct teaching would mean that students would practice using their knowledge of sounds when reading word lists and text materials.

According to the National Reading Panel (2000),⁴ there are several different types of systematic phonics programs:

- Synthetic phonics programs that teach students to convert letters into sounds and then blend the sounds into words.
- Analytic phonics programs that teach students to analyze letter-sound relationships once the word is identified.
- Phonics-through-spelling where students are taught to transform sounds into letters to writing words.
- Phonics in context where context clues are used in addition to sounding out words in order to identify the word.
- Analogy phonics programs where students learn to use the parts of words that they already know in order to identify new words (prefixes, suffixes, root words).

Although each type of program has strengths, most individuals learn best when taught different ways to decode words – from sounding out graphemes to viewing the word in the context in which it is read. A good reading program should provide students with different skills in the phonics area, as well as using sight words and whole language approaches to increase word recognition skills.

⁴ National Reading Panel. (2002). Findings and determinations of the National Reading Panel by topic areas. Retrieved from the World Wide Web at: www.nichd.nih.gov/publications/nrp/findings.htm.

WORD RECOGNITION: SIGHT WORDS

In order to be a fluent reader, you need to be able to instantly recognize and read words. Think about when you read. You don't have to "sound out" each word; you know most of them by sight. Adult students need to acquire this same comfort level with words. They need to have a large "sight word" vocabulary. Sight words are those words that students should be able to read automatically.

When teaching sight words, start with those words that appear most often in reading passages. Two common lists for sight words are the Dolch List and Fry List. If your students have instant recognition of the words on these lists, their reading skills will be greatly enhanced. Other types of sight words include such things as direction or signal words and those words that are part of a specific subject area.

Research supports five ways to read words, including:

- Decoding
- Analogizing to already known words
- Identifying and pronouncing spelling patterns
 - Guessing from context
 - Directly by sight

When teaching sight words, it is important to use as many modalities as possible. Have students make flash cards, say the word aloud while looking, tracing, or visualizing, create their own personal dictionaries, play games – the list is endless.

WORDS STUDENTS SHOULD KNOW

The following are brief descriptions of five word lists that you may use in the classroom. These words represent the more than 3,000 words that adults need to know to be able read and understand automatically. These are the words that are most frequently used in the English language and make up approximately 90% of the text that adults read.

DOLCH WORD LIST

The list of 220 words, prepared by E.W. Dolch, makes up from 50 to 75 percent of all ordinary reading matter excluding proper names. These words may also be referred to as 'common words', or 'common core vocabulary' or, more usually these days, 'high frequency words' and 'medium frequency words. Most beginning reading texts use the Dolch Word list as a basis for the words that are used. You can access this list by doing a search on "Dolch Words" or by accessing one of the following sites:

The Dolch Kit: A free kit of the Dolch words and lots of games that can be used in the classroom. Located on the World Wide Web at:
<http://www.theschoolbell.com/Links/Dolch/Dolch.html>

Dolch Word List: The 220 words in a pdf file from the National Institute for Literacy. Located on the World Wide Web at: http://www.nifl.gov/readingprofiles/Dolch_Basic.pdf

FRY WORD LIST

Edward B. Fry, Professor Emeritus of Rutgers University, compiled a list of the most common words in English called The Instant Words (Fry List). The purpose of the list is to help in the improvement of reading instruction. The first one hundred words make up half of all written material. The first three hundred words comprise 65 percent of all written material. You can access this list by doing a search on "The Instant Word List" or the "Fry List" or by accessing one of the following sites:

The Instant Words (in a pdf file from the National Institute for Literacy). Located on the World Wide Web at: http://www.nifl.gov/readingprofiles/Instant_Words.pdf

Fry List (The first 300 words). Located on the World Wide Web at: <http://www.usu.edu/teachall/text/reading/Frylist.pdf>

GENERAL SERVICE LIST

The General Service List (GSL) (West, 1953) is a set of 2,000 words selected to be of the greatest "general service" to learners of English. They are not the most common 2,000 words, though frequency was one of the factors taken into account in making the selection. As published, the GSL is a medium-sized red book, organized like a dictionary. Each of the 2,000 headwords is listed alphabetically with brief definitions and example sentences. A number is given for each word, representing the number of occurrences per 5 million words. A percentage number is given for each meaning, representing the frequency of that meaning in the occurrences of the word. Headwords are listed in uppercase bold type. Derived forms are listed under the headwords in lowercase bold type and are (usually) given their own frequency numbers.

SIGNAL WORDS

Signal words tell what the writer wants the reader to think about. These words enable the reader to determine what type of strategies to employ in order to better the material that is being read. Understanding signal words is a key to comprehension. Signal words are synonymous with transition words and relationship words. They guide the reader from one thought to another. They also assist the writer in organizing and presenting information clearly.

ACADEMIC WORD LIST

The Academic Word List was created by Dr. Averil Coxhead at the Victoria University of Wellington in New Zealand. Dr. Coxhead created a list of 3.5 million words found in over 400 written academic texts. She used a range of different types of texts, journal articles, and articles from the World Wide Web, covering 28 different subject areas from the basic disciplines. She then counted how frequently and how widely different words were used and selected the core academic vocabulary. Dr. Coxhead included on the list only the words which appeared at least 100 times as a whole and at least ten times in each of the disciplines.

As a result, the 570 words on the Academic Word List are valuable for adult education students regardless of their academic preparation or their career choice. The words are divided into ten sublists according to frequency. Sublist 1 has the most frequently used words.

FLUENCY AND RATE

Think about how you read different types of texts or reading materials. You read differently depending on what you wish to achieve from reading the selected text. How quickly you read is your reading rate. Good fluency and reading rate are important because when a person reads fluently, he/she does not have to worry about the tedious process of decoding each word along the way.

Sometimes, students can accurately pronounce words, but they are laboriously slow readers. Decoding becomes a natural part of the reading process. They expend so much energy trying to identify individual words that they lose the flow of the text and often have problems remembering what they have read in order to make sense of the passage. Fast and accurate decoding are two elements of fluent reading or reading rate. How do you get your students to improve their reading rate?

First, remember that reading rate is how quickly you read with understanding. Reading fluency refers to both the speed and ease with which one reads.

Fluency, the ability to read with accuracy, speed and expression, is important, because it allows the reader to break free from the tedious process of decoding each word along the way. When fluent readers read silently, they recognize words automatically and can group words quickly to help gain meaning from what is being read. When reading aloud, the fluent reader reads effortlessly and with expression. Fluency is important because it provides a bridge between word recognition and comprehension. When students are fluent readers, they don't have to concentrate on decoding words, but can rather focus on comprehending the text. Remember, that reading rate is the ability to read something quickly, whereas fluency is the ability to read not only with speed, but also with accuracy and expression in order to better understand the text.

There are three elements that compose fluent reading:

- Rate (fast decoding)
- Accuracy
- Reading with proper rhythm, intonation, and expression (prosody)⁵

Fluency develops gradually over time and through substantial practice. At the earliest stage of reading development, a student's oral reading is slow and labored because the student is just learning to "break the code" - to attach sounds to letters and to blend letter sounds into recognizable words. Fluency, however, is not a stage of development at which readers can read all words quickly and easily. Fluency changes, depending on what readers are reading, their familiarity with the words, and the amount of their practice with reading text.

⁵ Vaughn Gross Center for Reading and Language Arts College of Education. Essential reading strategies for the struggling reader: Activities for an accelerated reading program. The University of Texas at Austin. Retrieved from the World Wide Web at: http://www.texasreading.org/utclra/materials/essential_reading.asp.

Fluency may be taught using many different types of approaches. Torgesen (2003), in his article *What Science Has Taught Us about the Skills Needed to be a Good Reader*,⁶ discusses that repeated reading, or the simple strategy of reading and reading again short passages several times, each time attempting to read a little faster, is one of the most effective ways of improving fluency. Not surprisingly, some researchers have discovered that silent reading alone will not reveal students' needs. Being asked to read aloud, however, calls on a different set of skills, and may not aid in building comprehension in and of itself, if it is an intimidating task for a student.

Finding a balance of activities every day within a safe and non-threatening environment is most likely to produce more positive results.

DETERMINING READING RATE

A student's reading rate may be calculated by dividing the number of words read correctly by the total amount of reading time. You may count out 100 words in a passage and then time the student as he or she reads the passage. If a student reads 92 words correctly in 1.5 minutes, the student has a reading rate of 61 words per minute (wpm). A standard word is six letter spaces including punctuation and spacing.

Average Rates for Reading with Understanding

Grade Equivalent	Standard Words Per Minute
2.5	121
3.5	135
4.5	149
5.5	163
6.5	177
7.5	191
8.5	205
9.5	219
10.5	233
11.5	247
12.5	261

Source: Carver (1990)

⁶Torgesen, J. K. (2003). *What science has taught us about the skills needed to be a good reader*. Practitioners Points. Vol. 3 (2).

To improve student's reading rate use timed readings. Provide students with reading materials that are one grade level below his/her assessed reading skill level. You may either have students complete timed readings as a group or individually. If you have students complete readings individually, you may wish to invest in some basic kitchen timers so that they can easily time themselves.

How do you get started? Select reading texts with comprehension questions. You may wish to choose your own texts or use a commercial series. You may have students read for a three or five minute timing and figure out their words per minute or you may wish to have them complete the article assigned for the timed reading and figure out how many words per minute they read based on the total number of words divided the total number of minutes needed to read the article. A few select comprehension questions are important to check that students are not merely reading words, but are rather reading for meaning. Have students chart their words per minute on a chart similar to the one on the next page. To be most useful, timed readings should occur on a daily basis. Practice makes perfect!

Sample Reading Passages

Passage 1 – 2.6

It was raining hard. Water covered the road. The truck moved slowly. Its heavy tires cut a path in the water.

Madge was driving. She never took her eyes off the road.

Len watched the road, too. Two pairs of eyes were better than one. It would be easy to go off the road. Finally Len spoke. "Want me to drive?" he asked.

"No," said Madge. "It's my turn. And besides, you are tired."

"Want the radio?" Len asked.

"Not if you don't," Madge answered.

Madge liked country music. She liked Charley Pride best. But the stations around here didn't play country music.

A Hard Night's Run: Follets Basic Reading Series

Passage 2 – 4.8

First Job

At the age of sixteen and after I had just passed grade ten I decided to get a job for the summer. All dressed up in my best wool suit and good shoes, I was set to take the world on. I asked my mom if she would drive me to Whalley but she shook her head: no. We had very lousy bus services, so it was walking or nothing. I walked all the way to Whalley, about six miles to put in a couple of applications. It was a hot day for June and walking was very difficult. I was getting very tired and frustrated from the heat, walking too much, and from the turn-downs from the employers. The last place I went to was Panco Poultry.

I stood outside the office door for a few minutes to get my nerves together, as I had butterflies in my stomach. I walked to the closest desk and said that I was looking for a job for the summer. A short, bald man of 50 looked at me with cold blue eyes. He asked me on question which threw me off guard. The question was, "Are you right-handed?" I said, "Yes."

He then said, "You start Monday morning at 7:30 a.m."

I couldn't believe my ears, I got a job! My heart skipped a beat as I skipped out the door.

From: Voices by Jill Kristofferson, Fall 1988.

Passage 3 – 5.4

A Dead Battery

Last night the temperature was -34 degrees. When Tim tried to start his car this morning, there was nothing but a sick sounding "rr...rr...rr...rr". Tim forgot to plug in the block heater and now the battery was dead.

Tim had to drive his car to work because there were no buses. Tim needed a boost for the battery. Luckily his neighbor, Mary, was just leaving her house for work. Tim waved at Mary and then asked her if she could help him start the car.

Mary went back to her car and drove it over to where Tim was parked. Tim used his jumper cables, connected the two cars, and his car started with no problem.

Northern Curriculum by Audrey Anderson

Passage 4 – 6.2

Oscar's Decision

Oscar needs more employees. He runs an auto parts store. Business is going well for him and he needs to hire another clerk. Oscar's store has a large inventory. Last year, he had a new computer system put into the store. The computer keeps track of what Oscar buys and sells. The system helps Oscar to find what his customers want when they come to his store. Customer service is very important to Oscar's business.

Oscar is interviewing two people for the job opening. Neither Dan nor Bill has ever worked in an auto parts store. Oscar likes both people. Both are very friendly and willing to learn.

Dan has taken a beginning computer class. He knows how to use the computer keyboard and mouse. Dan has also worked at a restaurant. He used a computer to place food orders. He also printed receipts. Dan plans on taking more computer classes.

Bill has worked in a warehouse. He is very organized. He tells Oscar that he can learn anything. Bill really needs a job right away.

Oscar needs someone to start right away. Oscar selects Dan for the job.

Sample Passage – Michigan’s Preparing Workers for Success

Passage 5 – 6.6

To Tattoo or Not to Tattoo!

Alyssa just started working as a receptionist for a law firm. The law firm has many cases each year. It has a good reputation for being very professional. However, the lawyers and their clients are a little old-fashioned.

Alyssa is a smart young woman. She has a great voice on the phone. She makes people feel good. She is very good at setting up appointments. She always makes sure that phone messages are correct.

Alyssa rides motorcycles on the weekends. Her friends have been trying to talk her into getting a tattoo and piercing her eyebrow. Alyssa likes the idea and is thinking about it. She thinks tattoos are really cool.

Alyssa told Nancy that she was thinking about getting a tattoo and piercing her eyebrow. Nancy said that she should think about how it might affect her job. Alyssa loves her job and hopes to stay with the firm. She is going to school at night studying to be a legal assistant.

Sample Passage – Michigan’s Preparing Workers for Success

Passage 6 – 6.7

Continental Drift

The surface of the Earth is not one solid piece. Instead it is made of tectonic plates, huge fragments that fit together like the pieces of a puzzle. These plates are formed from the crust and upper mantle.

The theory of plate tectonics explains how the continents were once joined and have separated and slowly drifted apart for millions of years. The plates float on the moving molten rock of the mantle. The enormous heat deep in the mantle drives rock up toward the surface. There it cools and sinks back down. These convection currents in the mantle cause the plates above them to move. The continents which are embedded in the plates move along with these huge drifting rock slabs. This is the theory of continental drift.

Steck-Vaughn Access Science

Passage 7 – 7.9

Keeping My Language Alive

I was three years old when I first went to boarding school. I went there speaking and understanding only Cree. While I was in boarding school all the “caregivers” spoke English. But all the students spoke a variety of Native Languages. It was always confusing because I never knew what language to speak to anyone. My sisters and brother kept the language alive for me in those early years of my life in boarding school. Punishment was harsh for speaking a Native Language. Often we were ridiculed and were deprived of food, put in solitary confinement, and were constantly harassed by the supervisors.

When I was about six, my parents kept me at home because I was losing the Cree language. I went to the reserve school and during the winter and spring trapping seasons I went to the trap line with my grandparents. Life was wonderful again because I was loved and respected for who I was. I quickly learned Cree again but I was still able to speak English.

I became a translator for my mom and older people whenever they had to do business in town: shopping, visiting the doctor or the Indian agent. I felt useful and worthwhile doing this.

MEANING SKILLS

WORD MEANING (VOCABULARY)

A person's vocabulary consists of the individual words that he/she understands or knows the meaning. Students need to have a diverse vocabulary because vocabulary is crucial for getting meaning from text. Without a good knowledge of the key vocabulary in a text, a reader will likely struggle to understand the written word.

So, what words should you teach? You won't be able to directly teach your students all the words in the text that they might not already know. In fact, there are several reasons why you shouldn't directly teach all unknown words:

- The text may have too many unknown words for direct instruction to be used
- Direct instruction can take a lot of classroom time that may be better spent on having students read
- Students can understand most texts without knowing the meaning of every word in the text
- Students need opportunities to use their own word-learning strategies to learn on their own the meaning of unknown words.

So, what types of vocabulary words should be taught?

- Important words. Look at the text and directly teach those words that are important for a student's understanding of a concept or the text. Although you will probably not teach all of the words that they do not know, make sure that you teach word-learning strategies as part of your classroom activities.
- Useful words. Teach words that students are likely to see again and again, both in their academic world and in real life.
- Difficult words. Teach students words that are particularly difficult for them. Words with multiple meanings often meet this criterion. Students may have difficulty understanding that words with the same spelling and/or pronunciation may have different definitions depending on their context. Students also may have difficulty with idiomatic expressions such as "I get the picture."

In order to successfully use words, students need to "own" the word. There are three levels of word knowledge:

- Unknown – the word is completely unfamiliar and its meaning is unknown
- Acquainted – the word is somewhat familiar and the student has some idea of the word's basic meaning
- Established – the word is very familiar and the student can recognize it immediately and use it correctly

The research literature also identifies four different types of word learning. They are:

- Learning a new meaning for a known word
- Learning the meaning for a new word representing a known concept
- Learning the meaning of a new word representing an unknown concept
- Clarifying and enriching the meaning of a new word

Adults have many real life experiences that provide them with the opportunity to continually learn new words. The trick to teaching vocabulary is to have as many ways as possible to teach word meaning so that students “own the word.” Words are like telephone, credit card, and PIN numbers, the more we repeat them, and use them, the more we’re likely to remember them. If you recycle vocabulary in interesting and imaginative ways for students, some of it will eventually stick!

SELECTING VOCABULARY WORDS

Keep in mind the following principles when selecting vocabulary words for your lessons.

- Whenever possible, use authentic texts (i.e. material that is learner-centered, meaningful and relevant to student needs and interests)
- Vocabulary words don’t have to actually appear in the texts you’re reading. Many words will be inspired by the text, and they will surface orally in discussions about the text.
- “Less is more.” Depending on how many hours students attend class, and how long their reading selections are, choose anywhere from 2-10 words per week.
- Select words that hold the possibility of multiple meaningful encounters, i.e. words that are likely to appear in many subjects or contexts (avoid very rare words)
- Select words that, if not understood, would disrupt comprehension. This can include “concept” words and terms, such as *equinox*, *global warming*, *parallel*, *Riviera* etc.
- Select words that have multiple meanings in different contexts or as different parts of speech, e.g. *novel* (*noun, meaning something you read, or adjective, meaning new or fresh*).
- Select words that can be the subject or source of lessons on word analysis or word building, i.e. words to which affixes (prefixes and suffixes) are commonly added

BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE

Students bring to your classroom a rich array of life experiences that can be used to acquire new knowledge. Adult students exhibit better reading skills when reading familiar texts. However, even with unfamiliar texts, students often have real life experiences or background knowledge regarding the topic. To assist students in attaining better comprehension skills, have them review “what they really know” about a topic before reading a passage. You may also wish to use reading materials that connect students’ prior knowledge, experiences, and interests with what is being taught.

In order to activate background knowledge:

- Put students in interactive discussion formats so that their ideas and experiences come into direct contact with others
- Bridge the gap between personal and text knowledge during activities, and between home and school experiences, languages, and cultures
- Understand and respect diversity
- Instruct students on a moment-to-moment basis, responding to confusion and providing support on a continuing and evolving basis predicated on what students know and don't know; using the discussion to make instructional decisions

Help students:

- Make simple inferences
- Establish causal connections
- Recognize stereotyped situations
- Predict and generate plans
- Track their goals
- Recognize thematic relationships between individuals and society
- Employ beliefs about work
- Access and utilize raw facts

SILENT READING COMPREHENSION

There is more research on reading comprehension instruction than any of the other major topics of reading. According to the National Reading Panel, research strongly supports eight different kinds of instructional strategies for teaching effective comprehension skills.

"The eight kinds of instruction that appear to be effective and most promising for classroom instruction are:

- Comprehension monitoring in which the reader learns how to be aware or conscious of his or her understanding during reading and learns procedures to deal with problems in understanding as they arise.
- Cooperative learning in which readers work together to learn strategies in the context of reading.
- Graphic and semantic organizers that allow the reader to represent graphically (write or draw) the meanings and relationships of the ideas that underlie the words in the text.
- Story structure from which the reader learns to ask and answer who, what, where, when, and why questions about the plot and, in some cases, maps out the time line, characters, and events in stories.

- Question answering in which the reader answers questions posed by the teacher and is given feedback on the correctness of his/her answers.
- Question generation in which the reader asks himself or herself what, when, where, why, what will happen, how, and who questions.
- Summarization in which the reader attempts to identify and write the main or most important ideas that integrate or unite the other ideas or meanings of the text into a coherent whole.
- Multiple-strategy teaching in which the reader uses several of the procedures in interaction with the teacher over the text. Multiple-strategy teaching is effective when the procedures are used flexibly and appropriately by the reader or the teacher in naturalistic contexts.”⁷

The research not only identifies the types of comprehension strategies that are effective, but also how to teach the comprehension strategies. Effective instruction is explicit and direct. It can be accomplished through cooperative or collaborative learning and effective instruction helps learners to use comprehension strategies flexibly and in combination.

So, in order to ensure effective learning of reading strategies, the teacher should:

- Provide a direct explanation of the strategy, explaining why the strategy helps comprehension and how to apply the strategy
- Model or demonstrate how to apply the strategy, usually by “thinking aloud” while reading the text that the students are using
- Provide guided practice as students learn how and when to apply the strategy
- Help students practice the application of a strategy until they can implement the strategy independently
- Use cooperative learning by having students work together as partners while they apply the strategy.
- Help students to coordinate and adjust several strategies to assist comprehension, e.g. asking questions about the text while they are reading, summarizing parts of the text, clarifying words and sentences that are not understood, and predicting what might occur next in the text.

- Occasionally lower the volume of your voice to allow the learner to lead the reading.

⁷ Krudeneier, J. Ed. D. Research-based principles for adult basic education reading instruction. (2002). National Institute for Literacy. Produced by RMC Research Corporation. Portsmouth: NH. Retrieved from the World Wide Web at: http://www.nifl.gov/partnershipforreading/publications/html/adult_ed/index.html.

STRATEGY - CLOZE PROCEDURE

A cloze activity is a useful means of assessing students' reading strategies and abilities to make sense of texts. A cloze procedure involves deleting words from a passage of text and replacing them with blank lines. The student must provide the author's original word (or a suitable synonym) for each space. Such use of a modified cloze technique gives teachers an indication of a student's ability to construct meaning.

The cloze technique is used to:

- Identify students' knowledge and understanding of the reading process
- Determine which cueing systems readers effectively employ to construct meaning from print
- Assess the extent of students' vocabularies and knowledge of a subject
- Encourage students to monitor for meaning while reading
- Encourage students to think critically about text and content

To prepare materials for cloze exercises, any of the following techniques may be used:

1. Select a self-contained passage of a length appropriate for the academic level of the students being assessed. Use materials easily read by the students.
 2. Leave the first and last sentences and all punctuation intact.
 3. Carefully select the words for omission using a word-count formula, such as every fifth word or other teacher-defined criteria. To assess students' knowledge of the topic or their abilities to use semantic cues, delete content words which carry meaning, such as nouns, main verbs, adjectives and adverbs. To assess students' use of syntactic cues, delete some conjunctions, prepositions, and auxiliary words.
 4. When preparing the final draft of the passage, make all blanks of equal length to avoid including visual clues about the lengths of omitted words.
 5. Have the students read the entire passage before they fill in the blanks.
 6. Encourage the students to fill in each blank if possible.
 7. Suggest that students reread the completed passage.
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SCANNING

Scanning is a fast reading technique that is used to look for specific information in a text. Scanning can be used to look up a phone number, read through the small ads in a newspaper, or for browsing TV schedules, timetables, lists, catalogues or web pages for information. Scanning is also useful when studying or looking to find specific information from a book or article quickly as there is not always time to read every word.

Scanning Activities with Lower-Level Readers

Provide students with authentic or real-life materials. Have them find their favorite recipe in a cookbook or the phone number of a plumber in the local Yellow Pages. Scanning strategies can also be used to locate words from a student's reading word list in print media, such as newspapers or magazines. Provide students with a newspaper or magazine article and have them "Find the Words" that they have on their reading list. Beginning reading lists to use include the Dolch and Frye Reading Lists.

Scavenger Hunts: A Scanning Activity for Higher-Level Readers

The newspaper scavenger hunt is a good reading exercise which familiarizes students with the format of local English newspapers. It is also a fun way to practice both scanning and skimming reading skills. Additionally, students will become aware of important news events.

When making a scavenger hunt, decide on the level of difficulty that you want your students to encounter and choose appropriately. You might also take into consideration which news events or sections of the newspaper are of interest to your students, as well as any possible follow-up activities to the scavenger hunt. Scavenger hunts can be created with novels, short stories, phone books, and many other texts. The following is an example of the types of questions that can be used at different levels. Notice the different levels of critical thinking skills required.

Sample Types of Questions for Newspaper Scavenger Hunt

Easy Level

1. How much is the newspaper?
2. What are the names of the comic strips?
3. What is the weather forecast for today in Buffalo?
4. What sports are shown in photographs?
6. What is the name of the world's longest suspension bridge?

A Little More Difficult Level

7. Who will marry in Barcelona?
8. How much are llama vests selling for in Vermont?
9. What is causing forests to lose public support?
10. What TV program is on at 8:54 on channel 5 in Buffalo?
11. Why is drought a concern for people in certain areas of the country?

More Difficult

12. How much beef did Texas export to South Korea last year?
13. What percent of schools in Buffalo have access to the Internet?
14. What is your opinion of a speech made by an Australian at the United Nations?
15. Paraphrase the main idea of the explanation given by the Department of Education to explain why test scores are not increasing?

STRATEGY – TIPP?

TIPP? is a strategy that can be used to skim text. When using TIPP?, you focus on the titles, introduction, first sentence of each paragraph, photographs, and other graphic material (graphs, charts, tables) and then determine what questions you have that may be answered by the text. You can use the following graphic organizer to TIPP? an article or any text.

TIPP?	
Title	What do the titles/subheadings and layout tell me?
Introduction	Skim this to get the main idea.
Paragraph	Read the first line of paragraphs/text boxes.
Pictures	What do the diagrams, photos, and graphs show me?
?	Can you come up with any questions?

TIPP?

Elements	Notes
T - Title What do the title, subheadings, and layout tell me about this text?	
I - Introduction What is included in the introduction?	
P - Paragraphs What information is included in the first sentence of each paragraph?	
P - Photographs What do the photographs, maps, charts, tables, illustrations tell me?	
?? - Questions What questions do I have about this text?	

Strategy – KWLH

Another technique is KWLH. The first column is completed prior to the lesson being taught. A student is asked to list what he/she knows about a topic. Next, the student writes in what he/she would like to know about the topic from the lesson, and finally, after the lesson is completed, the student writes down what he/she has learned and how he/she could learn more.

KWLH

Strategy Sheet			
What We Know	What We Want to Find Out	What We have Learned	How Can I Learn More

STRATEGY – GIST: 5Ws AND AN H

The GIST Procedure is a strategy that can be used to improve students' abilities to comprehend the gist or main ideas of paragraphs by providing a prescription for answering the 5 Ws and H questions and then summarizing the passage or by reading and summarizing from sentences to paragraphs to the entire passage. This strategy incorporates reading and writing. At a higher level of comprehension, students may even wish to try to get the "gist" of an entire chapter or unit in a summary sentence.

Getting the GIST– 5 Ws and H

Name of Text _____

Who?	
What?	
When?	
Where?	
Why?	
How?	

Write a GIST statement of 20 words or less that summarizes the text.

3 – 2 – 1 SUMMARIZE

3 – 2 – 1 is a way for students to summarize key ideas, rethink them in order to focus on those in which they are most intrigued, and then pose a question that shows where they still are not clear in their understanding. This strategy was developed by Penny Juggins of Fairfax County, Virginia.

Students complete a 3 – 2 – 1 chart with:

- 3 things they found out
- 2 things that interest them
- 1 question they still have

3 – 2 – 1 can be modified depending on what area the students are working. For example, if they are studying the American political system and specifically working on the differences between democrats and republicans they could write down:

- 3 differences between democrats and republicans
- 2 similarities
- 1 question they still have

STRATEGY - ENGAGING STUDENTS IN READING

Pre-reading:

- Discuss the title, author, and student knowledge/experience with the topic, captions, format of newspapers, articles, etc.
- Predict the content from the title, key words from the piece, excerpts, first sentence
- Write your own story from key words
- Chart: What we know/What we want to know
- Formulate your own questions/ purpose for reading
- Read comprehension questions first
- Discuss the reading process and strategies
- Look at the graphic information. What story does it tell?
- Read aloud to students first
- Create a mind map with students about what they already know about the subject

Reading:

- Were the 5W and 1 H questions answered?
- Were the student's questions answered?
- What new ones do they have? What did they learn?
- Continue to predict along the way
- "Write back" to the text along the way
- Write own ending

- Scan for information using vocabulary and format clues
- Make a statement and ask students to find facts to support or dispute it

After reading:

- Discuss inferential/referential questions before detail/informational questions
- Retell (paraphrase) what you have read
- Retell from various perspectives
- Do a timeline of events
- Check text against your predictions (and discuss why you're correct or not)
- Discuss characters, role play, write to a character or as a character
- Write comprehension questions; write math problems
- Discuss reactions - How did the article confirm or contradict what you believed?
- Discuss themes, issues, facts v. opinions - support your points with the text
- Where else can we get information on this topic?
- Have students pick words they want to remember and make sentences with them
- How can we share what we've learned with others?
- Do a dictation
- Create a scavenger hunt with cue cards related to one or more articles

READING WEBSITES

An Online Library of Literature

Reading books on the internet.

<http://www.literature.org/>

Authentic Assessment Toolbox

Extensive site developed by Jonathan Mueller that provide materials on how to use authentic tasks and/or assessments in the

classroom. <http://jonathan.mueller.faculty.noctrl.edu/toolbook/howdoyoudoit.htm>

Dave's ESL Café

This site offers idea pages for teachers, reading materials, and links to other ESL

websites. <http://www.eslcafe.com/>

Detroit Newspapers in Education (NIE Online)

Sponsored by The Detroit News, NIE Online provides links to daily lesson plans for use in teaching current events. The site also includes an index of weekly plans. <http://nieonline.com/detroit/index.cfm>

EdHelper.Com

Downloadable graphic organizers.

http://www.edhelper.com/teachers/graphic_organizers.htm

Education with Student News from CNN

This site provides teachers with instructional materials for integrating current events across the curriculum. A student section keeps students in grades 6-12 aware of the latest news of interest to them. Lesson plans, background material, profiles, links to useful Internet sites, and forums for interaction with other teachers are also included.

<http://www.cnn.com/EDUCATION/>

Graphic.Org

Wide variety of graphic organizers with information about their

use. <http://www.graphic.org/goindex.html>

Heteronym Home Page

Find out everything you wanted to know about heteronyms.

<http://www-personal.umich.edu/~cellis/heteronym.html>

Interactive Word Games

Games to strengthen vocabulary skills.

<http://www.wordplays.com/p/index>

National Adult Literacy Database (NALD)

Story of the Week (Canada)

<http://www.nald.ca/STORY/Story.htm>

RHL School

Free downloadable reading comprehension worksheets.

<http://www.rhlschool.com>

Teaching Adults to Read

Free online course for adult educators developed by ProLiteracy America

<http://adultliteracytutor3.blogspot.com/index.html>

Techniques for Teaching Beginning Level Reading to Adults (phonemic awareness)

Resource from the National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy (NCSALL)

<http://www.ncsall.net/?id=280>

The English Zone

Printable worksheets for reading comprehension and vocabulary.

<http://www.english-zone.com/>

The Internet Public Library

References, books, and exhibits.

<http://www.ipl.org/>

The Key

An online newspaper for adult learners. Local programs can download and print for their students.

<http://www.keynews.org/>

Archive of past issues

<http://www.keynews.org/archive2/bydate.htm>

The Wacky World of Words

Use different games and activities from this site for vocabulary

enrichment. <http://www.gecdsb.on.ca/d&g/jan00/web4.htm>

Thinkfinity Literacy Resources

Online courses and other resources (free)

<http://literacynetwork.verizon.org/Free-Online-Courses.21.0.html>

Vocabulary University

Lots of fun activities and interactive games that assist students in learning such vocabulary fundamentals as root words.

<http://www.vocabulary.com/>

Wisconsin Literacy Education and Reading Network Source

An excellent resource for teachers to add strategies and techniques to the adult education program.

<http://wilearns.state.wi.us/apps/default.asp>

Word Games

This site includes eight word games that students can play alone or as a

group. <http://www.eastoftheweb.com/games/index.html>

Word Play

Extensive site that lists links to sites for acronyms, homonyms, language translation, mnemonics, American slang, anagrams, American Sign Language, lyric meanings, Shakespearean insults, Mad Libs, Klingon language, limericks, oxymorons, palindromes, puns, rhyming dictionary, rap dictionary, idioms, and so much more.

<http://www.wolinskyweb.net/word.htm>

Crossword Puzzle Makers (free)

<http://www.puzzle-maker.com/CW/>

<http://www.armoredpenguin.com/crossword/>

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