



Workshop Activities

ABE Academy I – Focus on Reading

Developed for the Far West GREAT Center by
Bonnie Goonen
Susan Pittman-Shetler

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What's the Main Idea?

Comic Strip 1

Comic Strip 2

Comic Strip 3

Comic Strip 4

Comic Strip 5

Decoding

Try reading the following passage.

Wovihg Ahead

Johu mas so excitep.

He mas to pe iu the cowqauy's uem cownteh thaiuiug bhoghaw.

The cowdauy monlp qe traiuiug six ewdloyees.

He mas unwqeh thnee ou the list.

Johu wape snhe trat re monlp de snccessfnl.

He sdeut his Inucr honh eacr qay, stnpyiug a loug list of cowdauy wohps.

Johu becibeb that thehe mas uo may he mas goiug to fail.

He hap wohkep rarq to get this chauce.

Try reading the passage again, but first substitute the following letters which may be reversed or upside down.

r=h u=n n=u m=w d=p=q=b

Now, can you answer the following questions?

1. What kind of training was John going to take?
2. How many employees was the company going to train?
3. Where was John on the list?
4. What was John doing to make sure he would be a success in the training program?

5. Vocabulary – An Essential Component

Please read the story and answer the comprehension questions.

A marlup was poving his kump. Parmily a narg horped some whev in his kump. "Why did vump horp whev in my frinkle kump?" the marlup ufd the narg.

"Er'm muvvily trungy," the narg grupped. "Er heshed vump horpled whev in your kump. Do vump pove your kump finkle?"

1. What was the marlup poving?
2. What did the narg horp in the marlup's kump?
3. How trungy is the narg?
4. Who or what did the marlup uf?

Interaction between Vocabulary and Reading Comprehension

POINT #1: Not understanding the meaning of a key word in a sentence can totally disrupt comprehension by preventing the reader from getting the gist (i.e. lack of general vocabulary can seriously impair comprehension).

Example:

Wheeler News Service, on 3/27/07:

Dairy farmers now face penalties for not registering

About 6 percent of Wisconsin's dairy producers have not registered their farms with the state. Now, they face penalties, much to the chagrin of the lawmaker who proposed the registration law.

POINT #2: Sometimes, a reader encounters a new and previously unknown word whose meaning is explicitly given in the text (i.e. the act of reading can teach new vocabulary).

Example:

Label of a package of Trader Joe's almonds:

Trader Joe's almonds are grown in the Central Valley of California. The weather conditions are ideal for the cultivation of some of the world's finest quality almonds.

These almonds are of the "nonpareil" variety, which translates from the French terms for "no equal." No almonds are of the same consistently high quality, which is why the nonpareil variety commands top dollar.

POINT # 3: Sometimes, a reader encounters new and previously unknown words whose meanings are revealed by the text, though not explicitly. (i.e. the reader must have some idea of the gist of the passage and be able to use clues from within the text (the context) to figure out a word's meaning. Again, the act of reading can teach new vocabulary.

Example:

Excerpt from the San Diego Log, (a boating newspaper), on 3/23/07:

Sea Lions Swarm Newport

Schools of fish caused the population explosion

NEWPORT BEACH - A popular food source lured unusually large numbers of sea lions to the waters off Newport Beach beginning March 20, leading to a veritable feeding frenzy. The pinnipeds were attracted by massive schools of shad. Pods of sea lions were visible from the Santa Ana River to 45th Street.

POINT # 4: Sometimes, vocabulary is very specific to a certain domain or subject. Vocabulary terms must be learned and understood in the context of learning that specific subject and its concepts, or else comprehension is impaired.

Example:

Excerpt from the Coast Guard Right of Way Rules governing sailboats:

When sailboats are on opposite tacks, a port tack boat shall keep clear of a starboard tack boat. When boats are on the same tack, a windward boat shall keep clear of a leeward boat.

POINT # 5: Sometimes, knowing the meanings of every individual word in a passage is not enough to ensure comprehension. More often than not, some (or in certain cases, a LOT OF) background knowledge is essential.

Example:

Excerpt from Motorcycle Tuning, by John Robinson, Heinemann Newnes, 1986, p.52:

On racing engines the top ring is very close to the piston crown and gives precise control over the port opening and closing periods. Roadsters have a taller top ring land and this, while improving piston life, makes the exact opening position a little vague. Some tuners file the piston crown away forming channels aligned with the ports in order to increase the time-area and to give more precise timing. This will reduce piston life and the edges of the channels may become hot enough to cause pre-ignition, however it could be a useful way of determining the effect of more time-area without spoiling a cylinder barrel.

Pause, Point, and Span

Simply read, following the fixation pauses that are indicated.

Declaration of Independence

We hold these truths to be
self-evident, that all men are
created equal, that they are endowed,
by their Creator with certain unalienable
rights that among these are life,
liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

Rewrite the passage including the fixation pauses that you would normally use when you are reading. Place a slanting line / wherever you pause. Compare your passage with the rest of your group.

Pause, Point, and Span

Read the following passage. Mark off the meaning clusters of words as you read along. Place a slanting line / after each pause / as you read/the paragraph. Compare your results with your group.

Answer the following question after your read and mark the passage.

Did each pause represent a meaningful idea or unit?

Why Is Fluency Important?

Comprehension is the goal of reading, and *fluency is required for comprehension* (NICHD, 2000, p.3-1). At a minimum, accurate and efficient word reading is necessary. Comprehension suffers when poor readers must focus on "getting the words off the page" and therefore aren't able to give much attention to the meaning of what they are reading. In contrast, fluent readers are able to focus on meaning because for them, decoding is automatic and effortless.

In addition, *some level of comprehension is required for fluency*. Once again, the components work together and reinforce each other. Fluency is part of the process of comprehension because fluent reading involves interpretation: grouping words into phrases and using word knowledge and punctuation to determine pacing, pauses, intonation, and expression. Even when words are read accurately, a flat word-by-word reading doesn't sound like speech and therefore doesn't convey the writer's entire message. In speech we group words into phrases, pause and slow down to make an important point, and emphasize key words.

Most texts provide clues to phrasing, emphasis, and tone: punctuation, bold print, descriptive words, and signal words or phrases (such as *finally*, *however*, *therefore*, *consequently*, and *on the other hand*.) Fluent readers notice and use those clues as well as their knowledge of how words form phrases, and are therefore able to read in a manner that preserves the meaning the writer intended to convey.

Vocabulary Selection

- Read "Midnight Anger"
- As a group identify 10 words that you believe are essential for students to know to understand the story
- Remember to add any derivatives of the word (i.e., content, contentment)
- Be prepared to share your list and justify your selections

Midnight Anger

Homecoming

Paco hates to go home. Every day he feels the same. He is tired, and his job is hard. But he still hates to go home.

Paco works as a flagger on a road crew. He is helping to build a new highway around El Paso. It is hot, dusty work and very noisy. All Paco wants to do when he gets home is rest. He wants an ice-cold glass of tea and some quiet.

But does he get rest? No. He can't even have a quiet day off.

Paco can find his apartment without looking. All he has to do is follow the noise. Kids screaming, crying, laughing. And Ramona yelling at them.

Every evening, Paco walks in the door and looks around. He wants to turn and go back out. Three kids in a two-room apartment is too much. Everything is always a mess. The apartment always smells of diapers.

Midnight Madness

Paco goes home later and later every day. Sometimes he goes out with other guys from his road crew. But he doesn't even like to drink. He tries to make one drink last all evening. Anything to kill time. He hates to go home.

Paco's feelings are all mixed up. He is angry at Ramona all the time. He doesn't know why. She looks so tired. This makes Paco feel guilty. Then he gets mad.

Paco works hard. He just can't get ahead. He wishes they had a better place to live. He feels guilty again.

One Friday night, Paco gets home very late. He walks up to his door and listens. All is quiet. He takes off his shoes. Then he goes in quietly.

All he can hear is breathing. Everyone is asleep. The two little girls sleep on the couch in the living room. Ramona and the baby are in the bedroom.

Paco puts his wallet on the table. He takes off his clothes quietly and walks softly into the bedroom.

Suddenly he feels something soft under his foot. It makes a noise as he steps on it.

Oh no, Paco thinks. I've stepped on the baby!

From "The Orange Grove and Other Stories", Roseanne Keller © 1992, New Readers Press, division of ProLiteracy Worldwide, Syracuse, NY. All rights reserved.

Paco reaches down and picks up what he stepped on. It doesn't move. He reaches for the light switch and turns it on. The baby begins to scream. The girls start crying in the next room.

Paco looks around. "Oh no," he groans. Paco feels like crying too.

The room is like a nightmare. Clothes cover the floor. Toys are everywhere. And the kids are crying!

Ramona is sitting up in bed. She's looking at Paco. Then she puts her hands over her face. Is she crying, too, Paco wonders? His heart sinks.

Ramona looks up. She does have tears in her eyes. But she is not crying. She points at Paco. She is laughing so much she can hardly talk.

Finally she says, "You look so funny standing there in your underwear. And holding that doll! She falls back laughing.

Paco looks down. He is holding a baby doll. He is so mad, he throws it across the room. He turns and marches back into the living room. The sound of Ramona's laugh follows him.

"Fine," says Paco. "Go ahead and laugh. I'm getting out of here." He pulls on his clothes and runs to his truck.

From "The Orange Grove and Other Stories", Roseanne Keller © 1992, New Readers Press, division of ProLiteracy Worldwide, Syracuse, NY. All rights reserved.

Vocabulary Elaboration

Take one word from your vocabulary list and elaborate on that word.

Word with syllables indicated

Gist of the word and how it is used (noun, verb, adjective, adverb)

Sample sentences using each form.

Some other examples of how the word can be used

Non-example

List 3 characteristics of that word

Illustrate (if appropriate)

3

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?	

KWLH

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

Hollywood Writers Strike Back

The writers of TV shows and movies went on strike in November. They are members of unions that are demanding more money for the writers. The writers work for studios that refuse to pay more for the writers' work. So the writers went on strike by walking out on their jobs.

TV viewers cannot see new episodes of some of their favorite shows while the writers are on strike. Unless they come to an agreement soon, viewers may have only repeats and reality shows to watch.

One of the main reasons for the strike is that writers want more money. They believe they should be paid more when the movie and TV shows they write are later released on DVD or the Internet.

Writers are paid for their scripts

Hollywood writers receive pay for writing scripts. They do not get paid when their work is shown on TV or sold on DVD.

The Writers Guild of America represents the writers. "Guild" is another word for union.

The Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers (AMPTP) represents the studios.

The writers are asking for \$151 million in pay increases over the next three years. The studios offered \$130 million.

The AMPTP says guild writers are "among the highest paid employees in America." They say the "average" writer earns more than \$200,000 a year.

The guild disagrees. It says the "typical" writer earns about \$62,000 a year. The writers union went on strike on November 5.

It was the first such strike since



Actress Nichelle Nichols, Uhura of *Star Trek*, shows her support to striking writers outside the gates of Paramount Pictures studios in Los Angeles. At her left is writer/producer David Avallone. (AP Photo/Damian Dovarganes)

writers walked out in 1988. That strike lasted five months. It cost Hollywood an estimated \$500 million.

Union membership falling

About 12 percent of workers in the United States belonged to unions in 2006. In 1983, 20 percent of workers belonged to unions. Unions were started to protect the rights of workers to fair pay and safe work conditions. There are 12,000 striking members of the Writers Guild of America.

Unions use the strength of their members to bargain for higher wages and better benefits. Sometimes union leaders decide they cannot get what they want by talking to management. They ask their members to vote to strike (stop working).

Workers often march with signs when on strike. That is called "picketing."

In some cases owners bring in new workers during strikes. Workers who are on strike call those workers

"scabs." It is a negative term. If strikes continue over long periods of time, companies can close, and workers can lose their jobs. Suppliers and non-union workers also can lose their jobs. However, most strikes result in better job agreements between the workers and employers.

The result of the writers' strike is that Hollywood is not producing new television shows. The only new shows are reality shows and news programs.

The first affected shows were talk shows like "The Daily Show with Jon Stewart," "The Late Show with David Letterman," and the "Tonight Show with Jay Leno."

Most TV dramas and comedies had four to six new shows done at the time of the strike. Unless the strike is settled soon, viewers will have to be content watching reruns of "Grey's Anatomy" or "Desperate Housewives." We suggest reading a good book instead.

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.

Who

What

Where

When

Why

What event happened?

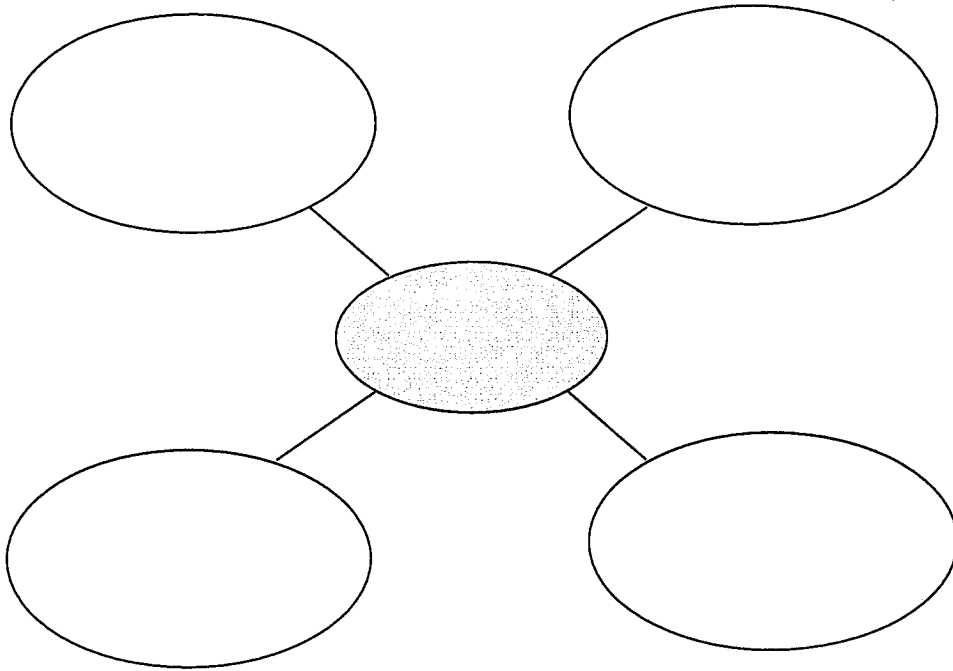
First _____

Next _____

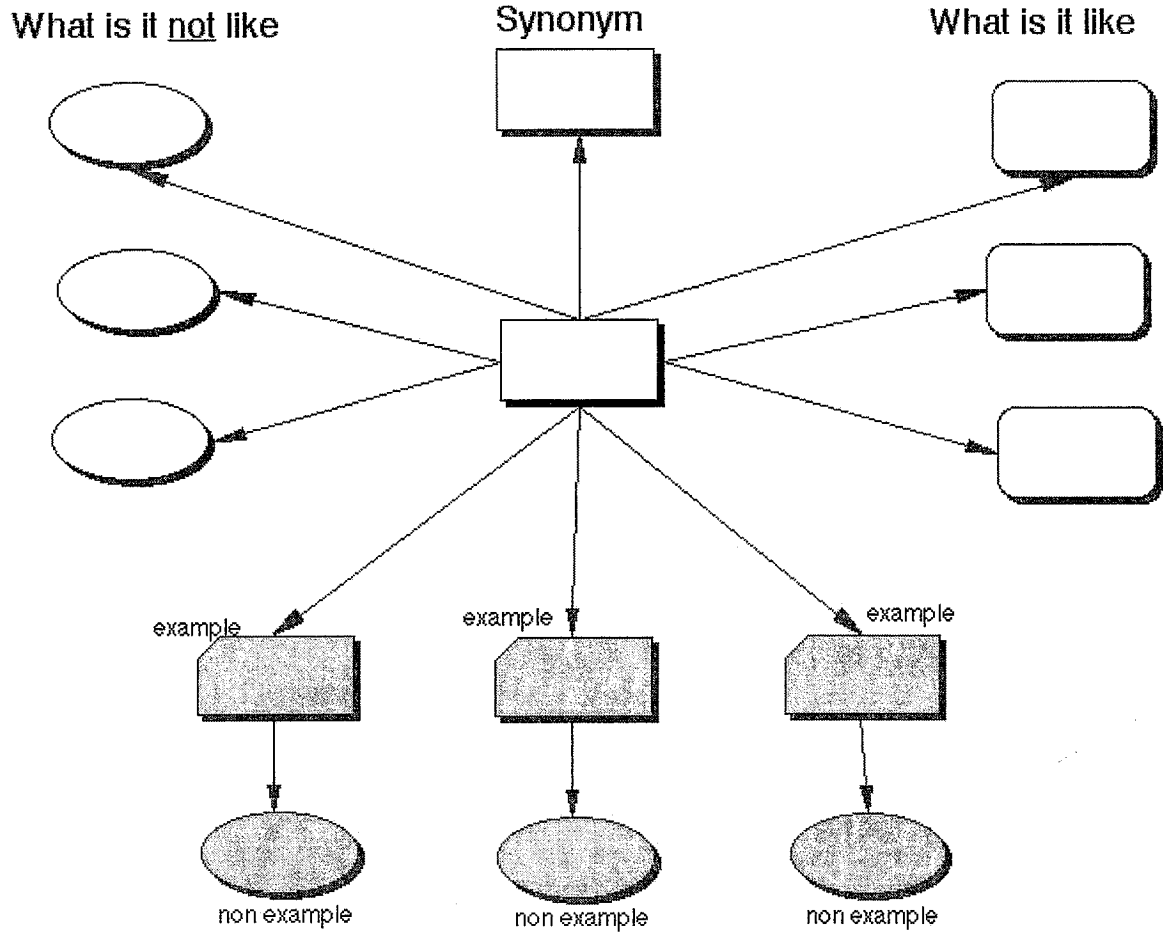
Then _____

Last _____

Semantic Map



Words in Context



Adapted from Janet Allen