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Contact

*sparis@umich.edu for
additional information.*



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***How To Teach and Assess
Reading Comprehension***

Scott Paris

University of Michigan



CIERA

Comprehension Includes

- Constructing meaning
 - Text to self
 - Text to world
 - Text to text
- Analyzing text and author's purpose/style
- Reasoning about text from multiple perspectives
- Using texts for personal, practical, and social purposes



Cognitive Processes of Reading Comprehension

1. Readers construct models of text and situations simultaneously as they read.
2. Prior knowledge facilitates comprehension.
3. Inferences deepen comprehension.



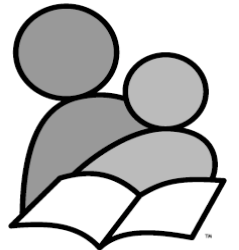
Cognitive Processes of Reading Comprehension

4. Comprehension is enhanced when decoding demands are minimized.
5. Understanding vocabulary enhances comprehension.
6. Using features of genre and text helps organize conceptual understanding.



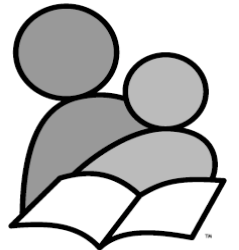
Cognitive Processes of Reading Comprehension

7. Evaluating text with multiple criteria enriches comprehension.
8. Comprehension includes paradigmatic and narrative knowing.
9. Engagement enhances comprehension.
10. Strategic reading enhances comprehension.



Let's Focus on Comprehension Strategies Because

- They are crucial for skilled reading.
- They can be taught directly.
- They have a solid research base.
- Young and poor readers do not use them appropriately.



Strategies That Work According to NRP (2000)

- Comprehension monitoring
- Cooperative learning
- Graphic organizers
- Story structure
- Question generation
- Question answering
- Summarization
- Multiple strategies



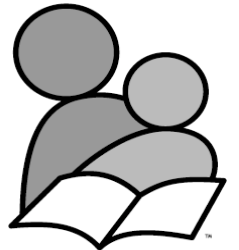
Strategic Reading & Thinking

- Increases comprehension
- Begins before decoding
- Develops from K-college
- Often not taught explicitly
- Often not assessed



Key Features of Strategic Reading

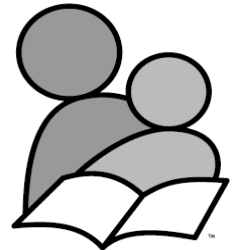
- Goal-directed
- Situated in text & context
- “Skills under consideration”
- Crucial for learning & trouble-shooting
- Become automatic with practice
- Being strategic vs having strategies



The Instructional Challenge

To create engaging instruction and materials

So students can use, practice, and understand strategic reading



How Can We Teach Strategic Reading?

- Direct explanation
- Guided strategic reading
- Reciprocal teaching & peer coaching
- Collaborative learning
- Combinations of above that include metacognitive conversations



Teaching First Graders About Narrative Structure & Strategies (Alison Paris dissertation)

- Story structure
- Inferential reasoning
- Themes and morals
- Explicit instruction and peer activities
- Practice with listening, reading, and writing
- Use sensible language for strategies
- Make thinking about reading fun



ADVANCED PAPERBACK



Pig Pig Grows Up
by David McPhail

AC-122 4-9-A

Important Parts of a Story



= Setting

"Where does the story happen?"
"Where does the story take place?"



= Characters

"Who is in the story?"
"What are the main characters?"



= Goal/Initiating Event

"What raises the problem happen?"
"What does the main character want?"



= Problem/Conflict

"What is the problem in the story?"
"What went wrong in the story?"



= Resolution/Ending

"How was the problem fixed?"
"How did the story end?"

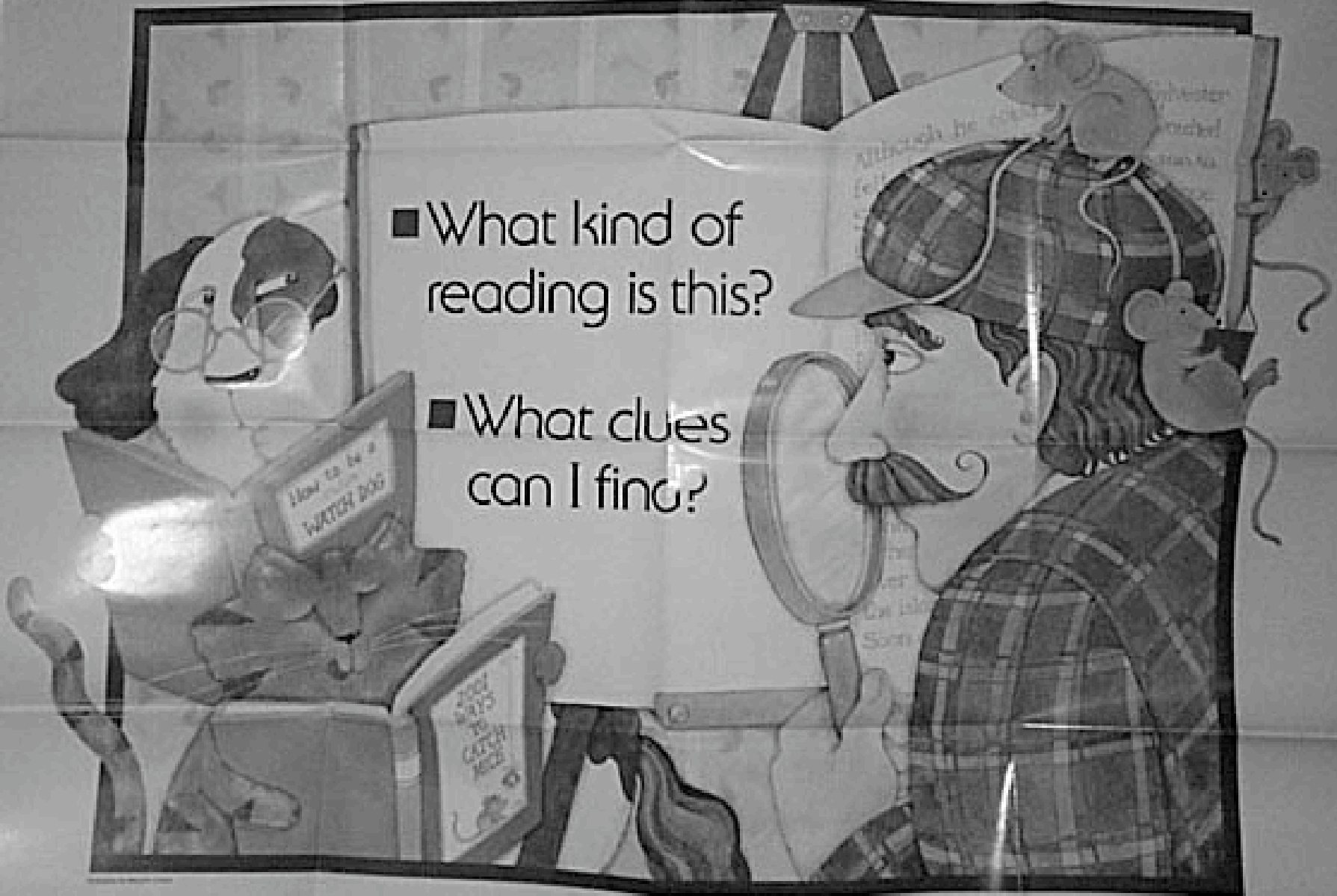


Teaching Reading Strategies with Analogies

- Tangible, comprehensible actions
- Personal agency & effort are stressed
- Provides a shared vocabulary
- Makes thinking public
- Visible evidence for assessment
- Easy to use in any subject
- Easy to share with tutors & parents
- Fun!

Be a Reading Detective

- What kind of reading is this?
- What clues can I find?



Strategies Used Before Reading

- Skimming & scanning
- Identifying topic & text elements
- Activating background knowledge
- Identifying purposes & constraints
- Generating questions
- Allocating effort



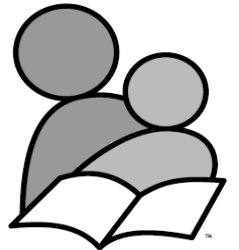
Strategies Used During Reading

- Making inferences & predictions
- Visualizing & elaborating meaning
- Monitoring understanding
- Using fix-up strategies (e.g., re-reading)
- Paraphrasing

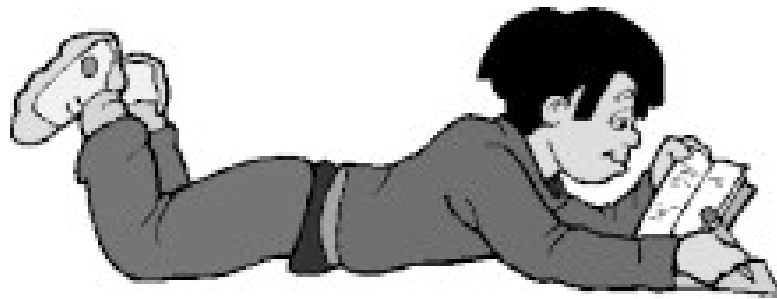


Strategies Used After Reading

- Check purposes, goals, & predictions
- Analyze author's purpose & style
- Return to text selectively
- Connect ideas to previous knowledge
- Summarize meaning
- Extend reading through discussion & writing



Comprehension: The Reason for Reading



Microsoft 2002

Comprehension Strategies and Analogies Before, During, and After Reading

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Created by:

**Donna O'Riley – Antelope Trails School
Colorado Springs, CO**

Adapted from

Scott Paris (1989). *Reading and Thinking Strategies*. (D.C. Heath).

Comprehension Strategies

Before, During, and After Reading

Determining Importance

Making Connections

Questioning

Metacognition

Making Inferences

Visualizing

Summarizing

Daily Strategy Instruction

- Direct explanations and strategy modeling in whole group activities (brief mini-lessons)
- Remind students to use specific strategies and identify/praise appropriate use
- Ask how, when, and why they used strategies



Strategic Reading Is Informed by Metacognition

- Declarative knowledge - what
- Procedural knowledge - how
- Conditional knowledge - when, why



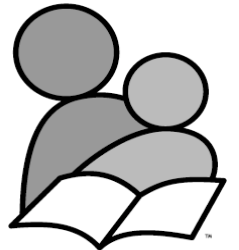
Strategic Reading Is Fueled by Motivation

- Mastery goals
- Positive attributions
- Positive self-efficacy
- Intrinsic motivation



Reasoning Beyond Strategic Reading

- Discuss coherent, elaborated, and organized retellings and summaries
- Analyze & critique text in Book Clubs and Author's Chair
- Pair-share activities to extend learning
- Projects to extend research & learning



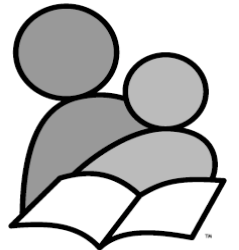
Instruction Should Provide

- Good questions about deep meaning
 - Literal, inferential, analytical, metacognitive, intertextual
- Explicit strategy instruction with frequent reminding and informal assessment
- Discussions that analyze meaning
- Responding to text in multiple ways



Materials Should Provide

- Text leveled for difficulty
- Thematic coherence
- Interspersed questions and comprehension prompts
- Technology assistance for independent reading
- Diagnostic assessments connected to instruction



Elements of Reading: Comprehension (Paris, 2005)

- K-3 supplementary program
- Texts based on science & social studies
- Whole group & small group activities
- Software support
- Assessment embedded in software



Elements of Reading: Comprehension (Paris, 2005)

5 Building Blocks of Meaning

- Text features
- Language features
- Explicit meaning
- Implicit meaning
- Conceptual/thematic meaning





Key Principles

- Multiple reading for mastery within and across text levels
- Conceptually related texts, half expository & half narrative
- Vocabulary instruction embedded in text
- Strategies taught explicitly to groups
- Extension & practice activities
- Assessment embedded in technology, no teacher time to administer & score



Assessing Comprehension

- High stakes tests define comprehension
STILL
- Comprehension is low priority until grade 3
- Designed for group administration & scoring
- Limited formats to reveal understanding
 - Multiple choice
 - Constructed response
 - Fill in the blank and cloze options
 - Matching



Different Kinds of Comprehension Assessments

- Retelling
- Answering questions
- Strategic reading
- Cloze passages
- Oral responses to text
- Written responses to text
- Portfolios
- Listening
- Wordless picture books



The Easiest Comprehension Assessment

Retelling

- Can be used while listening, viewing, and reading
- Works with children of all ages and abilities
- Can focus on sentences or entire text
- Immediate diagnostic information



But Retelling Needs To

- Be developmentally appropriate, maybe works best in K-2 reading groups
- Be evaluated for completeness, importance, and sequence of the retold information
- Lead to more complex summarizing



Raise the Bar

- Create classroom rubrics for retelling
- Encourage peer feedback about retellings
- Encourage self-assessment
- Teach summarizing rules
 - State the topic or theme
 - Identify key information
 - Sequence important events
 - Delete irrelevant information and details
 - Avoid redundancy



The Most Common Comprehension Assessment

Answering Questions

- Can be used with any text while listening, viewing, or reading
- Quick and immediate diagnostic information
- Easy to compare students' understanding
- Key features in commercial programs
- Foundation for formal tests of comprehension



Answering Questions Should Focus On

- Important factual content
- Inferences
 - Within text
 - Text-World
 - Text-Self
 - Text-Text
- Thorough & complete answers
- Using peer feedback and discussion to elaborate answers



Raise the Bar

Ask complex questions about:

- Intertextual comparisons and connections
- Conceptual information
- Structural features of text & genres
- Critical evaluation of text content & style
- Strategies used to comprehend



Raise the Bar

Ask students to explain their thinking:

- Describe the strategies they used
- Identify exact text information they used and why it was helpful
- Identify the obstacles to answering questions
- Generate their own questions and explain why they are appropriate



The Most Neglected Assessment

Strategic Reading

- Need to identify the good and bad strategies that children use while reading
- Need to assess if students have learned the strategies taught in the classroom
- Need to assess both strategy use & strategy knowledge



How Can We Assess Strategic Reading?

- Observe strategies in use
- Ask students to think aloud while reading
- Interview students about reading strategies
- Observe students teaching other students to read strategically, e.g., Reciprocal Teaching
- Cloze tasks
- Metacognitive questions



Comprehension Assessments that Do Not Require Decoding

- Need to balance assessments of decoding skills with comprehension in K-2
- Need to provide comprehension assessments for beginning readers and struggling readers
- Need to create comprehension assessments for English Language Learners



Comprehension Assessments for Non-Readers

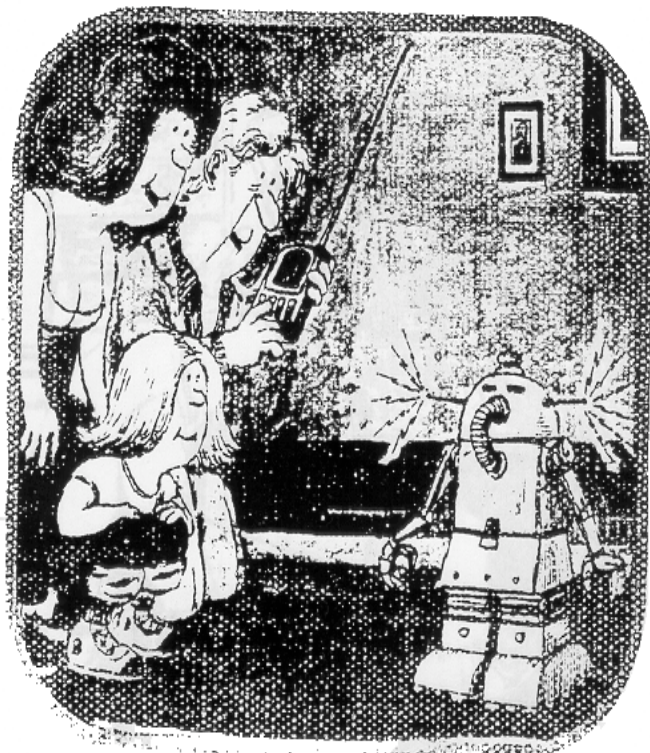
- Listening comprehension
 - Retelling & Summarizing
 - Answering questions
 - Cloze
- Wordless Picture Books to assess narrative comprehension



The Narrative Comprehension Task (Paris & Paris, RRQ, 2003)

- Authentic measure of emergent readers' narrative comprehension skills
- Does not require decoding skills
- Links assessment and instruction

ROBOT-BOT-BOT



Fernando Krahn





Parts of the NC Task

- Picture Walk
- Retelling
- Comprehension questions
- Picture sequence
- Aural cloze



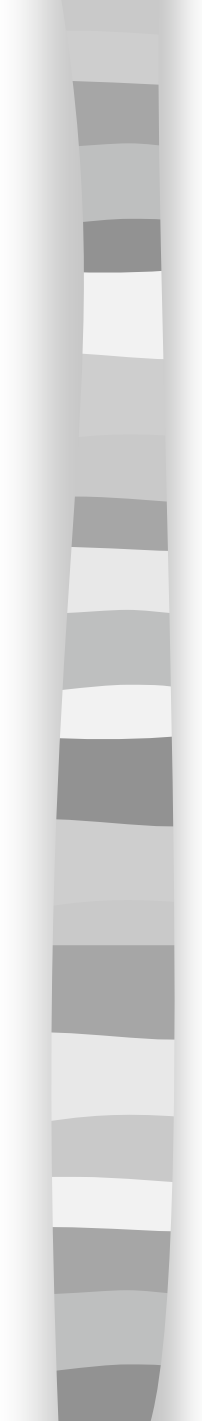
Conclusions About Assessment

- Assess comprehension daily
- Read many times for learning, not once for testing
- Ask students to explain their answers and thinking
- Provide multiple ways to demonstrate understanding



Conclusions to Promote Comprehension

- Build interest & background in texts
- Insure fluent decoding
- Ask variety of questions about text
- Teach strategic reading
- Discuss, analyze, & extend meaning
- Assess and re-teach as needed



The entire purpose of education is to nurture individuals to discover their full power and potential.

John Dewey