

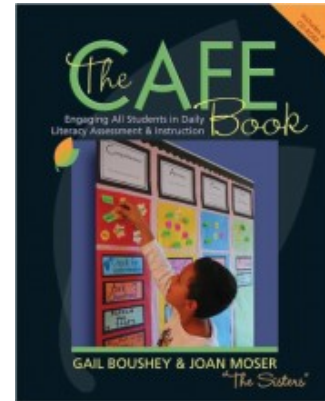
Comprehension Instruction

“Strategies breed independence because they give readers a way to interact with the words and ideas on the page rather than passively absorbing them...Different text structures require readers to have different conversations. Strategies make those conversations possible.”

-Chris Tovani

Comprehension Strategies

- Check for understanding
 - Back up and reread
 - Monitor and fix up
 - Retell the story
 - Use prior knowledge to connect with text
 - Make a picture or mental image
 - Ask question throughout the reading process
 - Predict what will happen; use text to confirm
 - Infer and support with evidence
 - Use text features (titles, headings, captions, graphics)
 - Summarize text; include sequence of main events
 - Use main idea and supporting details to determine importance
 - Determine and analyze author's purpose
 - Recognize literary elements (genre, plot, character, setting, problem/solution, theme)
 - Compare and Contrast within and between text
- (Source: Boushey and Moser, *The Café Book*, 2009)



Monitor for Meaning



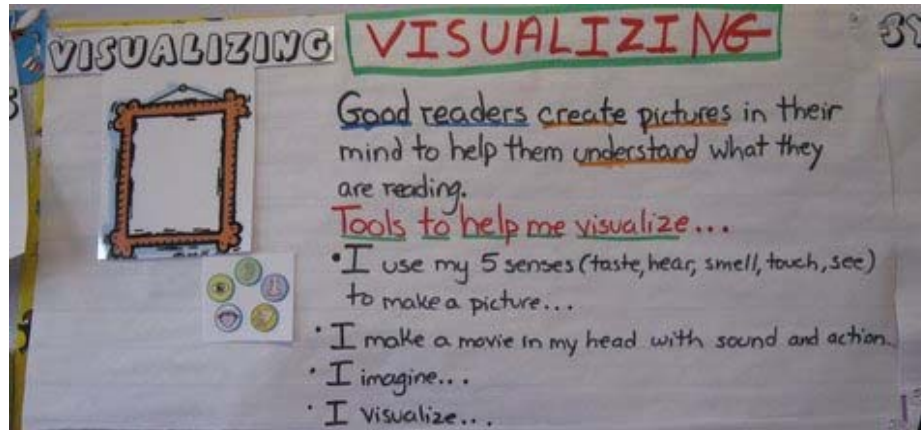
Monitoring for Meaning Strategies Include:

- Having students select just right texts.
- Using think alouds to model the inner conversation a reader has while reading.
- Using think alouds to model how to recognize when meaning breaks down.
- Modeling how to code and track thinking while reading a text.
- Teaching students to be metacognitive, asking themselves questions such as the following: How is my reading going? Do I really understand this part of the text? What should I do when meaning breaks down? What strategies will help me better understand this part of the text?
- Demonstrating for students how to infer the meaning of unfamiliar words by using context clues and synonyms.

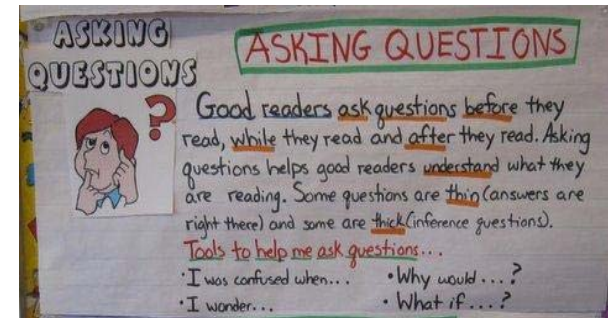
Visualizing

Visualizing Strategies Include:

- Using think aloud to model how readers pause while reading to visualize the setting, characters and action of a text.
- Modeling how words and/or phrases in a text can help the reader create mental images.
- Encouraging students during read aloud to turn and talk about what they are visualizing and/or stop and sketch what they are visualizing.



Questioning



Questioning Strategies Include:

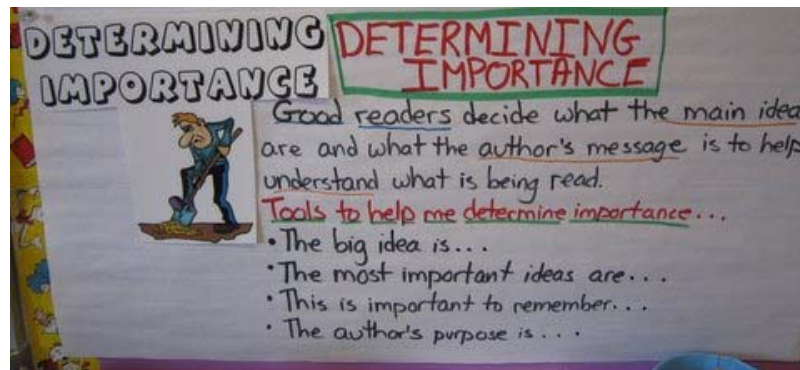
- Modeling during read aloud how readers ask questions while reading.
- Identifying different types of questions (e.g., thin vs. thick questions, inferential vs. “right there” questions).
- Keeping track of questions while reading by jotting them down. Monitoring when questions are answered and jotting accordingly (writing answer, noting page number, etc.).
- Using schema, text evidence and clues to infer the answers to questions.
- Recognizing that some questions will not be answered (e.g., lingering questions). Modeling how nonfiction readers often consult other texts to find answers to questions.
- Modeling how once a question is answered it often leads to another question – “the more you know the more you wonder” (inquiry process).
- Playing the “Question Solving Game” by developing three to six questions (range of literal, inferential, critical), choosing one question at a time, modeling through think aloud the type of thinking and reading needed to answer the question.

(Source: Owocki, *The RTI Daily Planning Book*, 2010)

Determining Importance

Determining Importance Strategies Include:

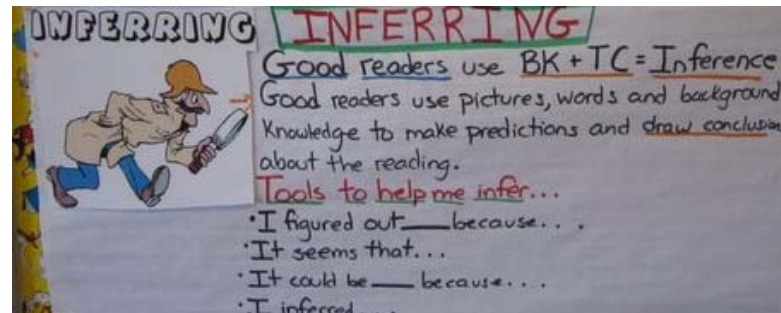
- Modeling for students during shared reading how text titles, chapter names and headings often highlight important information about the text/subject.
- Noticing vocabulary words that are repeated in a text and using them to determine the most important parts of the text.
- Thinking about the author's message by asking, Why did the author write this text? What does the author want the reader to learn? Think about?



Inferring

Inferring Strategies Include:

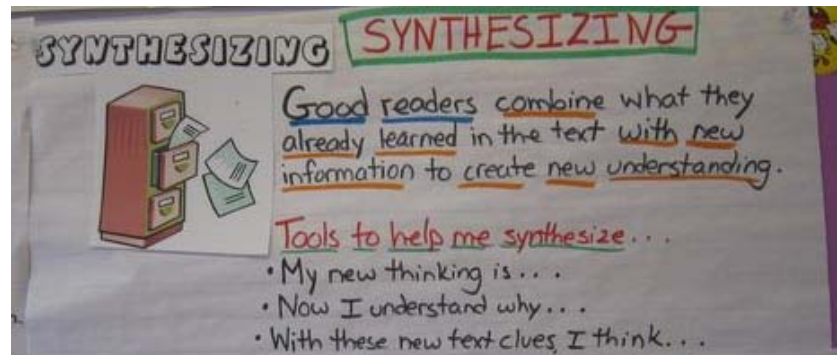
- Modeling during read aloud and shared reading how to figure out the meaning of unknown words by asking key questions: What does this probably mean? Why did the author or illustrator include this word? What does the author assume we know in this part? What does the author probably want us to consider? (Source: Owocki, *The RTI Daily Planning Book*, 2010)
- Playing the Inferring Game by reading a few sentences/statements to students (e.g., “Your mom came home with a bag from the Nintendo store.”), asking students to jot down in one column text clues that help them think about what’s going on and then jot down what they can infer from the clues in a second column. (Source: Boushey and Moser, *The Café Book*, 2009)
- Using wordless picture books to model how readers making inferences using illustrations. (Chris Van Allsburg is one suggested author.)



Synthesizing

Synthesizing Strategies Include:

- Explaining the concept of synthesizing by comparing the brain to a file cabinet. Share with students that their brain is essentially made up of many file folders. As they gain new information they are able to open up one of these files and add or revise their previous thinking.
- Modeling how readers retell what they have as a way of synthesizing using familiar read alouds. Give students the framework for thinking about retelling as they synthesize by teaching them to tell tell what's important, in a way that makes sense, without telling too much. (For additional recommended strategies for teaching synthesis see Miller, *Reading With Meaning*, 2002.)



Attention All Readers: Signal Words

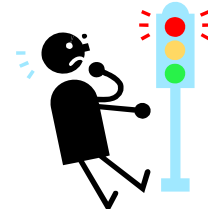


- Speakers and writers use signal words to help listeners access underlying structures. “Signal words help readers anticipate the organization of ideas presented in a fiction or nonfiction text. Signal words are especially important in comprehending nonfiction texts because they are related to the underlying structures through which the writers provide information.”

(Source: Fountas and Pinnell, *Teaching for Comprehension and Fluency*, 2006.)



Examples of Signal Words



- **Sequence:** after, before, first, second, finally, not long after, then, next
- **Compare/Contrast:** although, but, same, as, similar to, yet, on the other hand, like, unlike, in contrast to, compared to
- **Problem/Solution and Cause/Effect:** If....,then, so that, due to, because of, as a result, since, therefore, for this reason, so that, that's why
- **Question/Answer:** who, what, when, where, why, how, how many

Word Accuracy

You must be able to read words with accuracy in order to truly comprehend text!

Strategies for Figuring Out Unknown Words Include:

- Cross Checking: Does it look right? Does it sound right? Does it make sense?
- Use the Pictures: Do the words and the pictures match?
- Use the beginning and ending sounds
- Blend Sounds: Stretch and reread
- Flip the Sound
- Chunk letters and sounds together
- Skip the word and then come back
- Trade a Word: Guess a word (synonym) that makes sense

(Source: Boushey and Moser, *The Café Book*, 2009)

Fluency: A Key to Comprehension

Tips for Teaching Fluency Include:

- Making sure students are matched to books.
- Encouraging students to reread familiar picture books, poems, short texts as a way to develop their fluency.
- Modeling how fluent readers read with intonation. Have students practice using intonation while telling stories from everyday life and then transfer this to the reading of texts.
- Modeling how fluent readers read with phrasing.
- Modeling how fluent readers read with expression.
- Modeling how fluent readers pay attention to punctuation (pause at a period, stop at a period, etc.)
- Additional recommended activities for developing fluency include repeated reading, echo reading, paired/team reading, performance reading (reader's theater) and audio recordings of oral reading.

(Sources: Owocki, *The RTI Daily Planning Book*, 2010
Johnson, *One Child at a Time*, 2006)