

EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES OF IMPROVING READING COMPREHENSION IN TEACHING ENGLISH.

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Annotation: This scientific article informs about the most effective ways of improving reading comprehension.

Keywords: comprehension, strategy, types of texts, inferences, visualizing, determining importance, synthesizing, skimming.

Аннотация: В данной научной статье рассказывается о наиболее эффективных способах улучшения понимания прочитанного текста.

Ключевые слова: понимание, стратегия, виды текстов, логический вывод.

Introduction.

The use of effective comprehension strategies is highly important when learning to improve reading comprehension. These strategies provide specific instructions for developing comprehension skills across all ages. Applying methods to attain an overt phonemic awareness with intermittent practice has been found to improve reading in early ages, specifically those affected by mental disabilities.

Research studies on reading and comprehension have shown that highly proficient readers utilize a number of different strategies to comprehend various types of texts, strategies that can also be used by less proficient readers in order to improve their comprehension. (Bernhardt, E. 2011.p.87)

Making Inferences: In everyday terms we refer to this as “reading between the lines”. It involves connecting various parts of texts that aren’t directly linked in order to form a sensible conclusion. A form of assumption, the reader speculates what connections lie within the texts.

Planning and Monitoring: This strategy centers around the reader’s mental awareness and their ability to control their comprehension by way of awareness. By previewing text (via outlines, table of contents, etc.) one can establish a goal for reading-“what do I need to get out of this”? Readers use context clues and other evaluation strategies to clarify texts and ideas, and thus monitoring their level of understanding.



Asking Questions: To solidify one's understanding of passages of texts readers inquire and develop their own opinion of the author's writing, character motivations, relationships, etc. This strategy involves allowing oneself to be completely objective in order to find various meanings within the text.

Determining Importance: Pinpointing the important ideas and messages within the text. Readers are taught to identify direct and indirect ideas and to summarize the relevance of each. (Grabe, W., & Stoller, F. 2002.p.189)

Visualizing: With this sensory-driven strategy readers form mental and visual images of the contents of text. Being able to connect visually allows for a better understanding with the text through emotional responses.

Synthesizing: This method involves marrying multiple ideas from various texts in order to draw conclusions and make comparisons across different texts; with the reader's goal being to understand how they all fit together.

Making Connections: A cognitive approach also referred to as "reading beyond the lines", which involves (A) finding a personal connection to reading, such as personal experience, previously read texts, etc. to help establish a deeper understanding of the context of the text, or (B) thinking about implications that have no immediate connection with the theme of the text.

There are informal and formal assessments to monitor an individual's comprehension ability and use of comprehension strategies. Informal assessments are generally through observation and the use of tools, like story boards, word sorts, and interactive writing. Many teachers use Formative assessments to determine if a student has mastered content of the lesson. Formative assessments can be verbal as in a Think-Pair-Share or Partner Share. Formative Assessments can also be Ticket out the door or digital summarizers. Formal assessments are district or state assessments that evaluates all students on important skills and concepts. Summative assessments are typically assessments given at the end of a unit to measure a student's learning.

The use of effective comprehension strategies is highly important when learning to improve reading comprehension. These strategies provide specific instructions for developing and retaining comprehension skills across all ages. Applying methods to attain an overt phonemic awareness with intermittent practice has been found to improve reading in early ages, specifically those affected by mental disabilities. Improving your reading skills will reduce unnecessary reading time and enable you to read in a more focused and selective manner. You will also be able to increase your levels of understanding and concentration. This guide shows you how to read with greater efficiency and effectiveness by using a range of different reading skills. If it is

a magazine you are reading, you might flick through the pages to see which articles are of interest. When you look in a telephone directory for a particular name, you purposefully ignore all other entries and focus your attention on spotting the name you want. These everyday reading skills can be applied to your studies.

To improve your reading skills you need to:

- have clear reading goals;
- choose the right texts;
- use the right reading style;
- use note taking techniques.

Skimming

Skimming is the process of speedy reading for general meaning. Let your eyes skip over sentences or phrases which contain detail. Concentrate on identifying the central or main points. Use this technique to:

- pre-view a selection of text prior to detailed reading;
- refresh your understanding of a selection of text following detailed reading.

Detailed reading and note taking

Once you have selected useful information, you can begin to read in detail. Note taking techniques provide a useful aid to reading. Use underlining and highlighting to pick out what seem to you the most central or important words and phrases. Do this in your own copy of texts or on photocopies - never on borrowed texts; keywords to record the main headings as you read. Use one or two keywords for each main point. Keywords can be used when you don't want to mark the text; questions to encourage you to take an active approach to your reading. Record your questions as you read. They can also be used as prompts for follow up work; summaries to check you have understood what you have read. Pause after a section of text and put what you have read in your own words. Skim over the text to check the accuracy of your summary, filling in any significant gaps. These techniques encourage an active engagement with the text as well as providing you with a useful record of your reading. Avoid passively reading large amounts of text, it does not make effective use of your time. Always use a note taking technique to increase your levels of concentration and understanding.

Increasing your reading speed

It is more important to improve your reading skills than your reading speed. Being focused and selective in your reading habits will reduce the time you spend reading. If, in addition to using a range of reading skills you want to increase your reading speed, then the following technique will be of use. The average reading speed

is about 240-300 words per minute. For the average reader, the eye fixes on each word individually.

It is easy for your eye to recognise 4 or 5 words in a single fixation without a loss of understanding. The key to increasing your reading speed is not to increase the speed at which your eyes move across the page, but to increase the word span for a single fixation. A simple way of developing the habit of taking in more than one word per fixation is to take a page of text and divide it length ways into three with two lines drawn down the page. Using a pen or pencil as a pointer, read each line of text by allowing your eye to fall only in the middle of each of the three sections, as indicated by your pointer.

Developing your reading speed

Don't worry about how quickly you are reading but instead, concentrate on reading the line in only three fixations. As this becomes more natural, practise without drawing lines. Later, reduce the number of fixations to two per line. Once this increased word span becomes a comfortable habit, an increase in your reading speed will occur.

Summary.

Have a clear focus for your reading. Set your reading goals.

Survey the text before you spend the time and effort involved in detailed reading.

Scan and skim to select the text for detailed reading.

Scan and skim after detailed reading to reinforce your understanding.

Use a form of note taking whilst reading in detail, to keep you concentrating, aid understanding and provide you with a record of your reading.

Conclusion.

Using clear reading goals and a variety of reading skills is more important than increasing your reading speed. To improve your reading speed, don't increase the speed of the eye across the page, but increase the number of words the eye recognises in a single fixation.

You already use a range of reading styles in everyday situations. The normal reading style that you might use for reading a novel is to read in detail, focusing on every word in sequence from start to finish.

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