

DEEPER COMPREHENSION **101**

*101 Activities to Boost Students'
Reading Comprehension*



Save the Children®

DEEPER COMPREHENSION



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Reading Comprehension*

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Save the Children invests in childhood – every day, in times of crisis and for our future. In the United States and around the world, we give children a healthy start, the opportunity to learn, and protection from harm. By transforming children’s lives now, we change the course of their future and ours.

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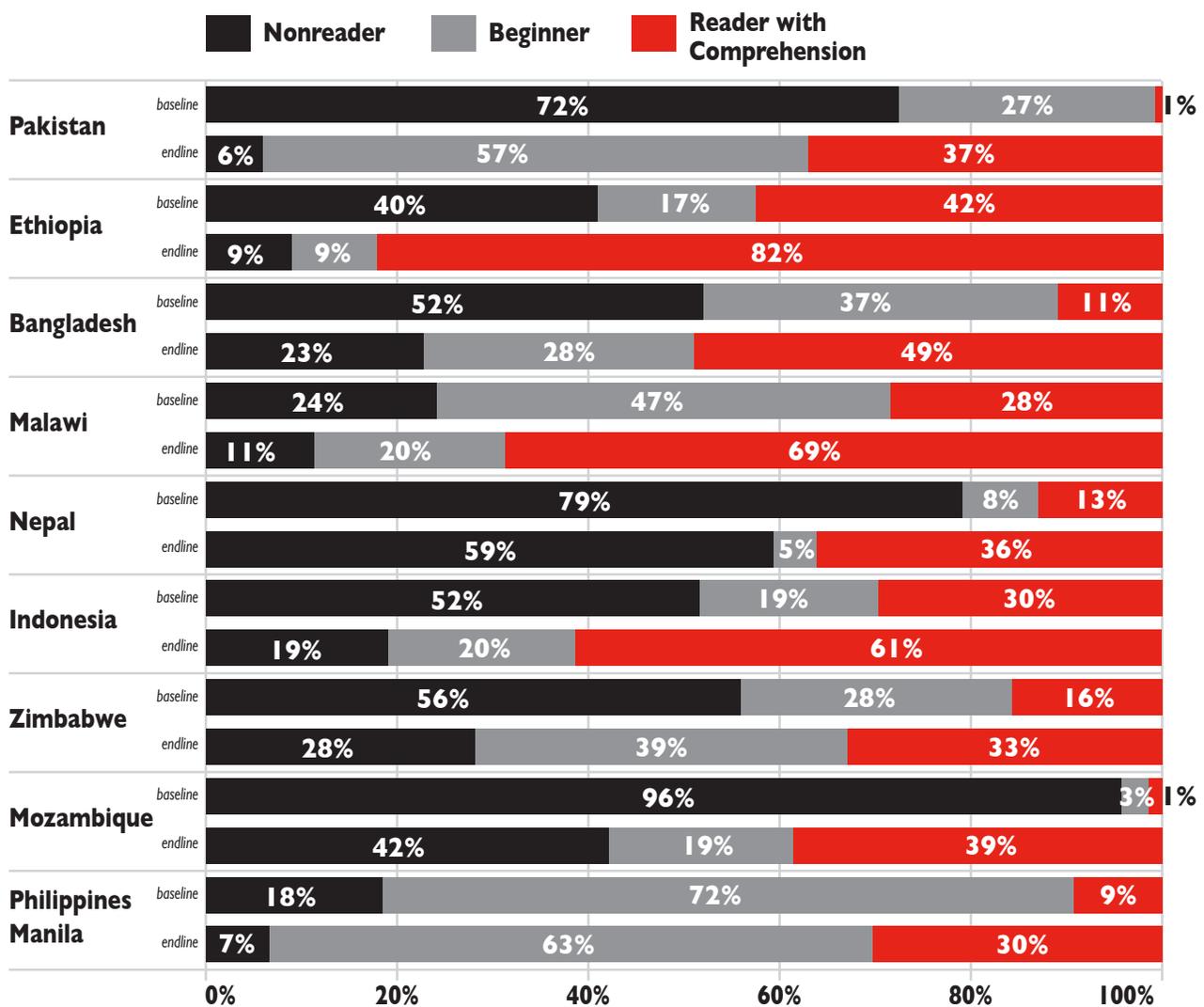
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INTRODUCTION

Comprehension is the end towards which all readers aspire. Making sense of text, connecting its message to one’s store of knowledge and experience, and deriving meaning from the words on a page—this is what reading is ultimately for and about.

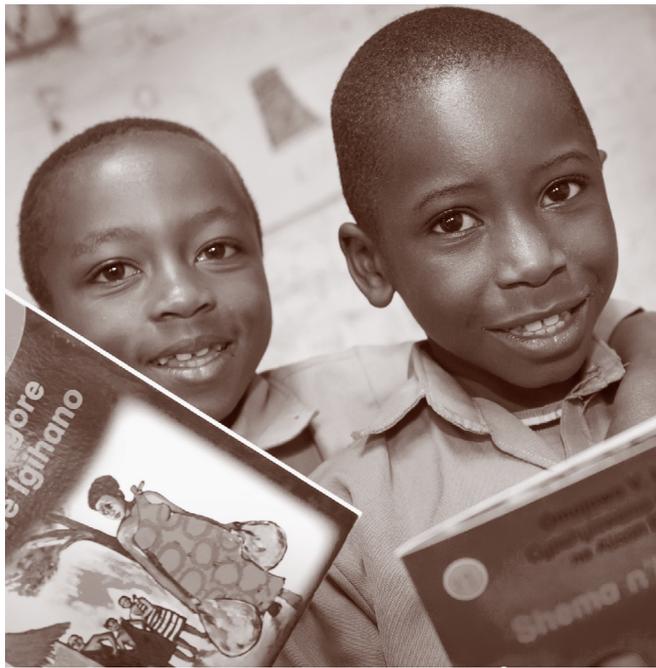
For many beginning readers, however, comprehension is still a struggle. Save the Children data from Literacy Boost end line results in several countries indicate that growth in children’s average comprehension scores is not as significant as the increase in other more basic skills such as letter knowledge or single word reading.



Note: Non-readers are those who were unable to read a single word of the grade-level text. Beginners are students who answered between 40-50 and 75-80 percent of the questions correctly. Readers with comprehension are those who correctly answered more than 75-80 percent of the comprehension questions. Tier cut-offs vary based on the number of comprehension questions asked and are set in combination with associated fluency and accuracy levels in each language and country.

The proportion of children who demonstrate full comprehension skills varies across Literacy Boost countries. Increases in the percentage of children who answer most of the questions correctly are evident. But these numbers are still far from ideal.

Comprehension, of course, is much more than being able to respond to questions about a text just read. In this sense, Literacy Boost endlines are only able to give us a snapshot of some aspects of comprehension. These assessments can show a child's ability to summarize



the main points of the text, to recount details from what was read, or to infer something that is suggested but not directly stated in the text. The limitations of time make it difficult for Literacy Boost endline tools to investigate other important aspects of comprehension, such as the child's ability to analyze the author's intended message, to connect information from what they just read to other content or themes, or to evaluate whether or not they agree with the author's point of view. But all of these strands of comprehension matter in boosting children's ability to make meaning.

Comprehension matters in children's motivation for (and continued engagement in) reading. Children need to be able to understand what they read

for it to become a rewarding exercise. If they are unable to gain information or enjoyment from the act of reading, they will not be motivated to keep doing it. "Getting" the text is the pay-off. Feeling successful in reading is what will drive children to keep looking for new texts and new opportunities to get to meaning and message.

Comprehension is also critical for children's ability to use reading for learning. For children to successfully navigate the more challenging reading tasks they will face once they reach the upper grades, they must be assisted to master the various processes and strategic actions entailed by reading comprehension.

Defining reading comprehension

The 2002 RAND Reading Study Group defined reading comprehension as "the process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning through interaction and involvement

Children need to be able to understand what they read for it to become a rewarding exercise.

with written language. It consists of three elements: the reader, the text, and the activity or purpose for reading.”¹ This definition underscores the thinking processes that readers need to employ to make meaning out of the text being read. It also emphasizes the context or rationale in which that meaning is being extracted and constructed. Readers use different thinking and comprehension strategies, depending on the purpose for which they are reading. The energy or eagerness with which they attend to a text depends on their level of interest and their motivation for reading.

The thought processes that readers use are similarly front and center in other definitions of reading comprehension. Perfetti defines reading comprehension as “thinking guided by print (1995)” while Durkin says it is “*intentional thinking during which meaning is constructed through interactions between text and reader (1993).*”² This implies that comprehension would be aided by thinking and self-monitoring strategies. These thinking strategies assist readers to check their understanding, and to problem-solve if something is still vague or unclear as they read.

Why do children struggle with comprehension?

The above definitions of reading comprehension indicate the probable factors that lead to low comprehension scores among many students in the areas where Save the Children works:

- **Decoding** matters
- **Language** matters
- **Experience and Prior Knowledge** matters
- **Thinking** matters, and
- **Motivation** matters

¹ Catherine Snow. *Reading for Understanding: toward a research and development program for reading comprehension*. RAND Study Group: 2002.

² Joseph Torgesen/FCRR. “Factors that influence reading comprehension: developmental and instructional considerations.” Presented during the Core Knowledge Conference, February 2006.

Accessed via http://www.fcrr.org/science/pdf/torgesen/Core_knowledge.pdf



Dr. Joseph Torgesen of the Florida Center for Reading Research came up with three broad categories of factors affecting reading comprehension.³ The first category of factors relates to children's **decoding skills**. The higher their accuracy, fluency and automaticity in decoding, the better their comprehension. The second category relates to children's **language and thinking/reasoning skills**, as well as their **conceptual and background knowledge**. Children will understand better if they know the meaning of most words used in a text, or if they are familiar with the topic being discussed. Where there are parts of the text not yet within their store of words, good readers can make informed judgments about what fix-up strategies they can use. Children who have learned what to do in such instances will have a much higher chance of understanding what they are reading. Finally, the third category relates to **motivation and interest**. Children who have a clear purpose and who genuinely want to do

the reading task will likely comprehend better than those who do not. The higher their level of engagement with text, the better their understanding.

Children who have a clear purpose for and interest in the reading task will likely do better in comprehending than those who do not.

The skills that students bring to reading comprehension vary greatly. Only by observing the strategies that each child uses in their reading can a teacher or community volunteer figure out what particular category of skills a child may still be struggling with. Literacy Boost endline assessments would indicate that decoding skills are slightly easier to improve upon. It is children's abilities in the second category of factors behind comprehension that has proven more challenging.

Part of the reason for this challenge is that early graders in Save the Children-assisted sites tend to start the primary grades with a far from ideal reservoir of knowledge and skills upon which reading comprehension can be built. Some children may have a limited oral vocabulary. They may not have been exposed to rich language environments, and thus can make little sense of how words are strung together to express coherent thoughts. Others may not have had opportunities to practice their reasoning skills, or to gain more knowledge about the world around them. All of these are abilities that can and should be nurtured from the earliest stages, well before children first step into an early grades classroom. Early childhood care and development (ECCD) interventions could do much to stimulate and foster these skills. Unfortunately, ECCD opportunities are still far

³ Ibid.



from universal. Moreover, even where children do have strong oral language and conceptual knowledge in their home language, these skills may be undervalued or underutilized once they arrive in formal schools that prescribe a language of instruction different from their own.

Other elements included in the second category (e.g., knowledge and use of cognitive strategies, knowledge of text structure and genre) largely

depend on the quality of instruction and reading practice that children get in their daily lives. Teachers need to explicitly teach strategies for vocabulary and comprehension, model how these are used, then guide children in applying these strategies for themselves. Children must have ample opportunities to practice these strategies through pair work, small group work or independent/individual reading. As children experience success in using these strategies, they will be encouraged to do more reading. The more they read, the more they will progress in their language, conceptual and literary genre knowledge.

Comprehension factors related to reading motivation are linked to the availability of appropriate, relevant and interesting reading materials. Reading materials (and activities) need to progressively amp up the novelty, complexity and unpredictability of their content and approach to hold children's attention and keep them interested in reading. Materials and increased reading practice also need to be relevant or useful to tasks that children have at hand. When children appreciate how reading is linked to things that interest them, they will persist and continually improve this skill.

As children experience success in using these strategies, they will be encouraged to do more reading, and thereby gain more language, conceptual and literary genre knowledge.

How to use this resource

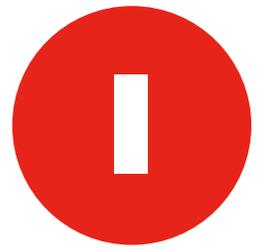
Given the difficulties that many children face with comprehension, Save the Children decided to develop this Deeper Comprehension 101 resource. These activities are designed to expand children's vocabulary, strengthen their thinking and problem solving skills while reading, and boost their ability to respond, react, and connect to texts.

We encourage country offices to adapt or translate this resource, reproduce it, and share it with classroom teachers, reading facilitators, and community volunteers working on literacy activities with children. This resource was designed so that it can be printed as a spiral-bound manual, or as individual laminated activity cards. To help them use this resource, we included an index that links literacy objectives or competencies from various national curricula to activities relevant to the skill being taught. It also includes a regular Index that lists activities by the concept or topic it touches on.



We hope you will find these activities helpful in bolstering comprehension skills, and in fostering a life-long interest in reading among all children. The stronger their ability to make meaning from text, the better their chances of succeeding in their learning. Every child deserves all the support, practice, and encouragement it takes to become a proficient reader. We cannot fail them.

THINKER'S SPINNER



Create a spinner out of a paper plate, card stock, or cartolina. Divide and label the spinner into four segments: predict, explain, summarize, evaluate.

When first using the spinner, explain each thinking task and demonstrate each task in the context of a story or text just read.

- **Predict:** *What do you think will happen next? What do you think will happen five years from now?*
- **Explain:** *What are the different steps in this process? What are the causes behind this event?*
- **Summarize:** *Who were the main characters, where did the story happen, and what were the main events in the story? What is the author's main idea and what are some supporting ideas used to illustrate that main idea?*
- **Evaluate:** *Do you think the author used good evidence or arguments to support the main idea? Why or why not? What do you like/not like about the story and why?*

Use the spinner to ensure a variety in the types of questions students get to respond to about a given text.



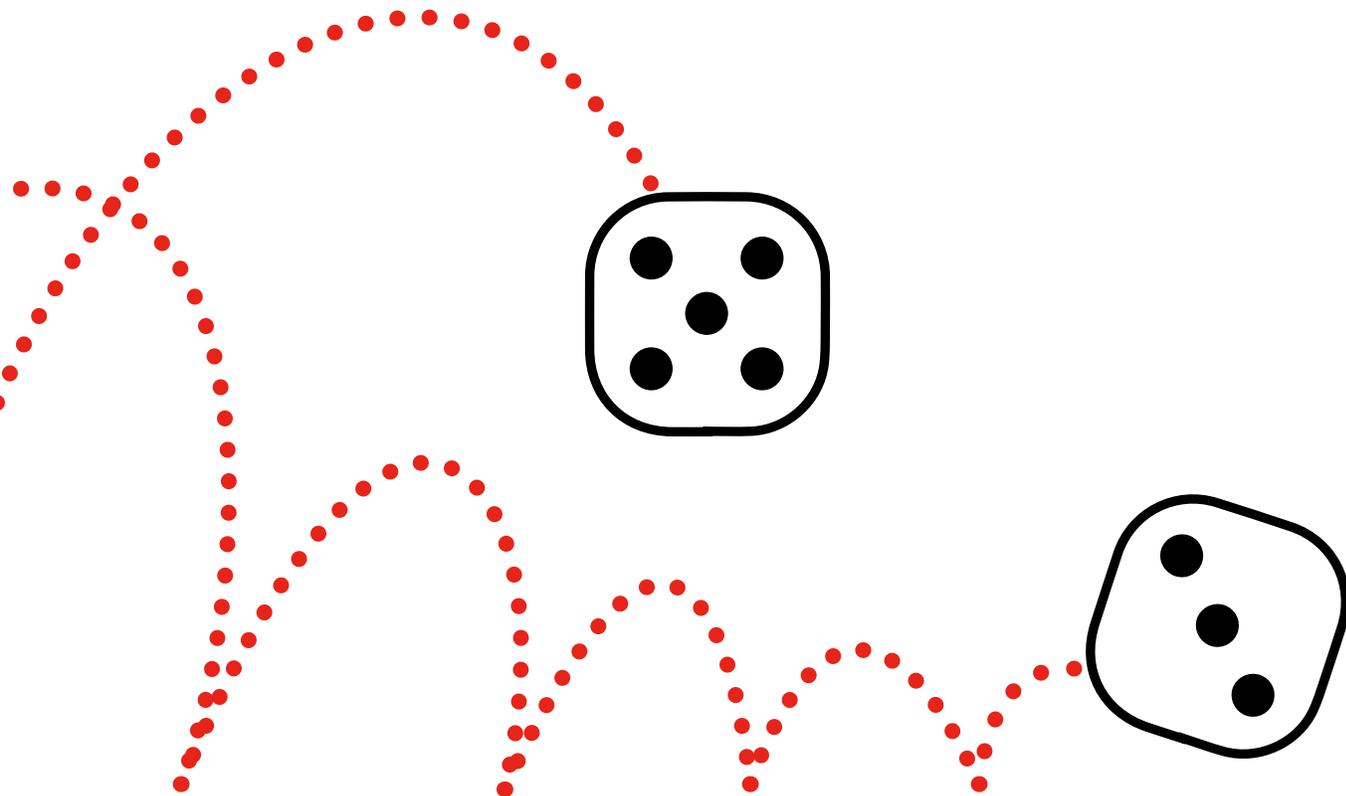
WORDS & DICE

2

Prepare dice and a set of cards with various word categories on them. Some word category cards might include:

- adjectives beginning with C
- words with three syllables
- verbs/action words used in sports
- words that rhyme with _____
- nouns/naming words used in the kitchen
- science words also used in language arts

Students take turns rolling the dice and picking a card. The number on the dice determines how many words they need to name following the word category on the card they drew. List down the words they identify on the board. After the game, take time to discuss the words' meanings and how these might be used in context. Get students to use as many of the words on the board in a coherent and meaningful sentence.



INTERACTIVE READ-ALoud

3

Most reading experts view classroom read-aloud activities as an essential part of good literacy instruction. In an interactive read-aloud, the teacher reads an interesting, age-appropriate and engaging piece of text for the whole class. These texts will often feature rich language, and will include some words that students may not yet be able to read independently. This allows all students access to quality literature, even if they cannot yet read it for themselves, thereby expanding their exposure to wider vocabulary, genres, and language and literature experiences.

What makes a regular read-aloud interactive is that the students are thinking about and responding to the text as part of the instructional routine. The teacher asks questions before the read-aloud starts. Looking at the cover together, the teacher can ask students to predict what the text may be about, or relate the theme of the story to students' own experiences. The teacher can also ask a question that the students will need to find the answer to as they listen to the text. During the read-aloud, the teacher pauses intentionally at designated times, to prompt student thinking through carefully planned questions. Finally, the teacher leads a discussion about the text just read after the read-aloud, or asks students to discuss what they learned from the text in pairs or small groups, guided by a set of questions. These questions can help students connect what they just heard to their own lives, or to things happening in the world around them. It can also help them to build their ability to recall, infer, and evaluate details from the text just read.

An interactive read-aloud can also be used to lay the foundation for other literacy activities, such as writing a response to the text, doing a book club-type of discussion in smaller groups, or having the class do a dramatization or a Readers' Theater type of activity.

Reference: Fountas and Pinnell. "Chapter 15 - Engaging Readers in Thinking and Talking About Texts Though Interactive Read-Aloud" in Teaching for Comprehending and Fluency. Heinemann: 2006.

SAME WORD, DIFFERENT MEANINGS

4

Present a list of words with more than one possible meaning. For example, in English, these may include words like: bat, plane, sink, pound, bear, current. Engage in a discussion with the class on all of the different meanings or uses of these words. Then, present them with sentence cards using these words, along with cards showing two possible meanings of the word. Let students select which meaning the given sentence uses. Then, ask students to devise a sentence that uses the other given meaning in the word cards.

The package was so big and heavy that she could hardly bear its weight.

bear (noun) – a large furry mammal with huge paws and sharp teeth

bear (verb) – to hold or carry something

She found it hard to swim because the current was going against her.

current (noun) – the movement of air or water going in a certain direction

current (adjective) – happening in the present time

The carpenter used a plane to even out the top of the wooden table.

plane (noun) – a vehicle that travels through the air; a type of aircraft

plane (noun) – a tool consisting of a block and a steel blade used to smoothen or shave off a surface

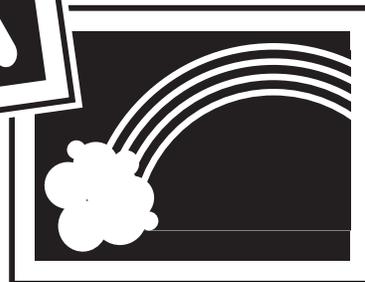
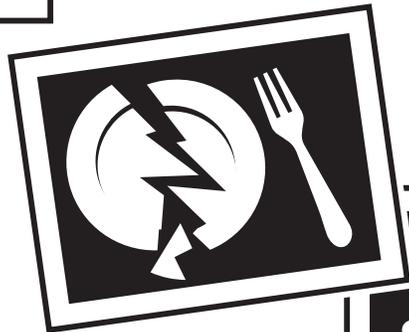
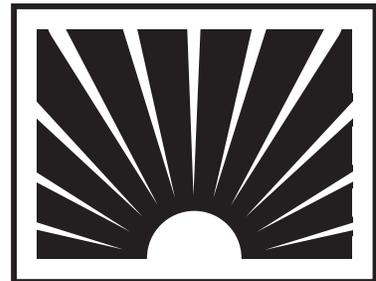
MATCHING SYMBOLIC IMAGE TO A TEXT'S MEANING OR MESSAGE

5

Present a few possible images and ask children to discuss/reason out what symbol or visual best represents the main meaning the author wanted to convey. There is no right or wrong answer in this exercise, but students will try and convince other students of their argument.

For example, a teacher may want to present images like a sunrise, a sunset, a leaf, a broken plate, and a rainbow. The students can discuss what meaning, idea, or feelings they associate with an image, and how that relates to the text they just read.

Source: Reading Wellness by Jan Miller Burkins and Kim Yaris, Stenhouse Publishers: 2014.



SUMMARY SENTENCE FRAMES: CAUSE & EFFECT



Students sometimes need verbal cues to help them construct a summary of what they just read. Summary sentence frames, where students fill in the blanks with details from the text they read, can serve that purpose. For example, for a summarization task where students are being asked to determine cause and effect, they could use the sentence frame below:

“ _____ happens because _____.”

Let’s say the students just read an informational text about air pollution. They could draw details from the text to fill in the cause and effect sentence stem. For example:

- Smog happens because there are so many motor vehicles on the road.
- Dirty air happens because there are many factories using energy from coal.
- Air pollution happens because there are no trees that can help to clean the air.

Teachers and students should feel free to use a variety of sentence frames that link cause and effect. For example: “ _____ is caused by _____.” “ _____ results from _____.”
“ _____ because _____.”

Reference: <http://teachersites.schoolworld.com/webpages/Hultenius/sentence.cfm>

SUMMARY SENTENCE FRAMES: PROBLEM-SOLUTION



Another type of summary sentence frame enables students to state the problem and the solution from a text just read, be it fiction or non-fiction. An example of a sentence frame for this purpose is:

“ _____ wanted _____ but _____ so _____.”

If the class just read the story of The Fox and the Crow, for example, the students might say:

“The fox wanted the cheese but the crow had it in her beak, so the fox tricked the crow into singing so that the cheese would fall out.”

Teachers and students can use other sentence frames to indicate problem-solution relationships they glean from texts that they read. Some examples: “ _____ was worried that _____ so _____ to _____.” “ _____ could not _____ so _____ to _____.”

Reference: <http://teachersites.schoolworld.com/webpages/Hultenius/sentence.cfm>

SIMILARITIES & DIFFERENCES



To better understand a word or a concept, it helps to understand how it is similar or different to another word or another idea. In this strategy, students diagram out what is similar and what is different between two concepts, objects, events, or people.

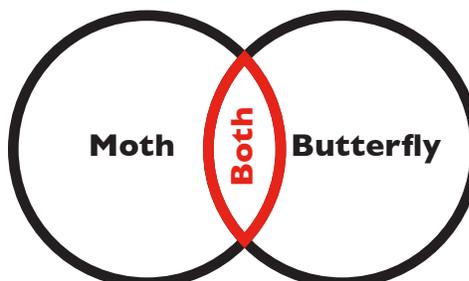
For example, let's say you wanted to discuss Moths vs. Butterflies. You could ask students to complete the following blank chart in class, or as homework:

	Moth	Butterfly
Ways they are the same		
Ways they are different		

An example of a completed chart is provided below:

	Moth	Butterfly
Ways they are the same	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Has wings● Has antennae● Is an insect● Starts as a caterpillar	
Ways they are different	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Usually active at night● Antennae have a feathery or saw-like shape at the end● Usually plain or dull colored● Wings are flat when resting● Attracted to light	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Usually active during the day● Antennae have a rounded or club shape at the end● Usually have bright colors and patterns● Wings are upright and vertical when resting● Attracted to colorful flowers

The class could also use a Venn diagram to show similarities and differences:



INTERPRETING ACADEMIC LANGUAGE

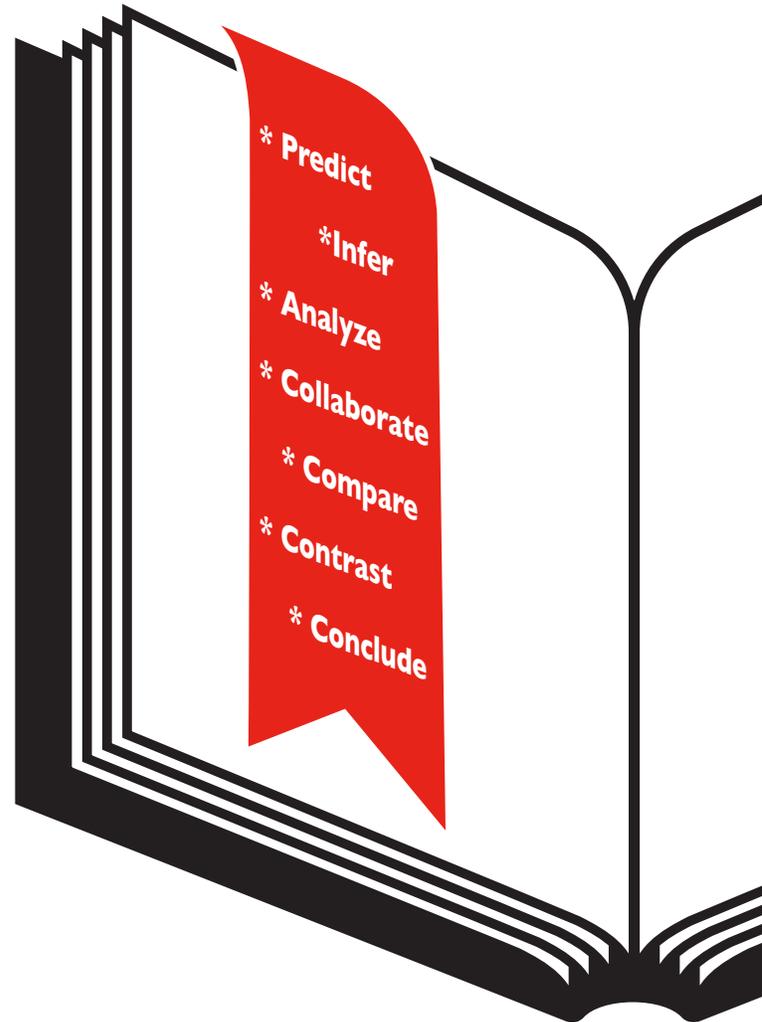


Help students to understand that the language used in school is typically more formal than what they may normally use at home or at the playground, or what they hear in their communities or on mass media. For example, instructions or directions in their books or tests may use more formal or academic language. Teachers can help students understand and use academic language by providing simple explanations of words frequently used in classroom texts. A poster or bookmark that reminds students of what these academic words mean—written in simple, clear language—can help familiarize the class about what they are being asked to do when they encounter these terms in their books, assignments, or tests.

Below are some examples of general academic terms, and how they can be explained simply and succinctly on a poster or bookmark:

- **Predict:** guess what will happen next based on information heard, read, or seen
- **Infer:** use clues to figure out what is happening in the text, even if it is not directly stated; read “between the lines”
- **Analyze:** think about the different parts or pieces of a topic or concept and how they relate to each other; take a whole idea and think about the aspects, features, or characteristics that go into it or make it what it is
- **Collaborate:** work together on a task and come up with an end product
- **Compare:** look at two things and say how they are the same
- **Contrast:** look at two things and say how they are different
- **Conclude:** think about evidence gathered about a specific question or topic and come up with a finding or an answer based on facts

Reference: <http://teachersites.schoolworld.com/webpages/Hultenius/sentence.cfm>



HEART, HEAD, HANDS & FEET

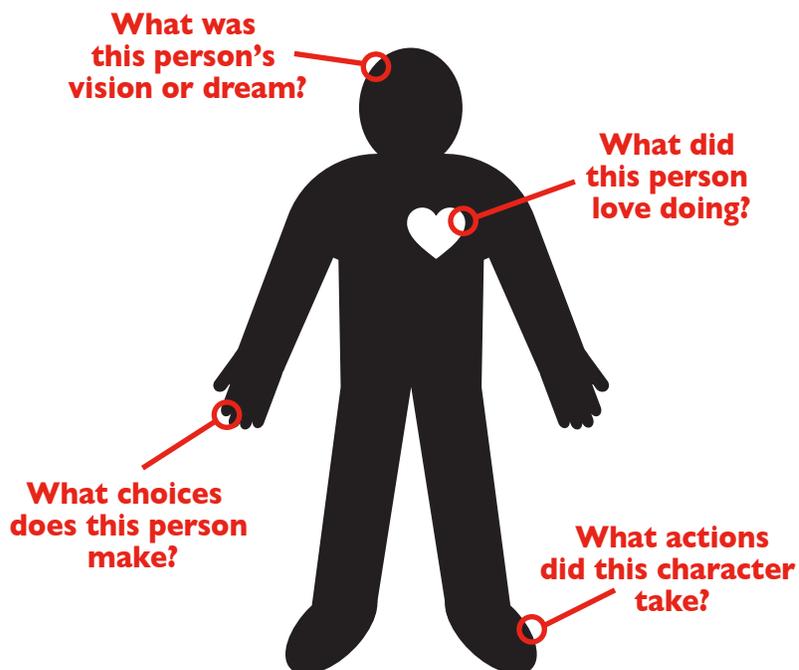


Use this activity to discuss a fictional story about a character, or an informational text such as a biography. Ask questions that relate to traits the different body parts signify. For example:

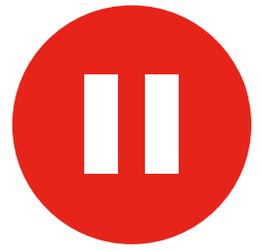
- **Heart:** what was this person/character passionate about? What did they enjoy or love doing?
- **Head:** what was this person's vision or dream? What did they imagine for the future?
- **Hands & Feet:** what choices and actions did this person make/take? What did this person do (or not do)? Where did this person go?

Students can write down their responses via graphic organizer (picture of person, or a simple chart), and then share their responses with a partner or the whole class.

Source: *Reading Wellness* by Jan Miller Burkins and Kim Yaris, Stenhouse Publishers: 2014.



STUDENT-FRIENDLY DEFINITIONS



Asking students to look up a word in a dictionary may not always be the most helpful way to get them to fully understand vocabulary. The definitions in a dictionary are often not written in a way that students can readily understand. The difficulty gets multiplied when the dictionary is in the student's second language. There may also be several definitions for a word in a dictionary, and the relevant meaning is buried way down on the list. Get students to help each other out by collaboratively thinking through the meaning of a word based on context, word structure, or other clues, and then writing down a simpler, student-friendly definition than what they would typically find in a dictionary.

For example, here is the dictionary definition for the word **investment**: *“the investing of money or capital in order to gain profitable returns, as interest, income, or appreciation in value; a thing invested in, as a business, a quantity of shares of stock, etc.”* A student-friendly definition for this word might be: *“putting money into supporting something in order to earn more money.”*

To generate student-friendly definitions, the class will need to be exposed to the target words in various contexts, as well as build on the students' collective background and conceptual knowledge. As the class works together on figuring out the meaning of the target words, either in pair or group discussions, they can come to a clearer sense of how they can explain this word in easy to understand terms. Help the class come to a consensus on what the best student-friendly definition might be for the particular context/s in which they encountered the word in class. (If needed, let the class confirm the accuracy of their class-generated definition by referring to an actual dictionary.)

When they encounter the same word in future classes, but in a context that requires a different meaning, help students come up with an additional definition. This helps them understand that words can be understood in different ways, depending on the way they are used.

LEARNING FROM MISTAKES

12

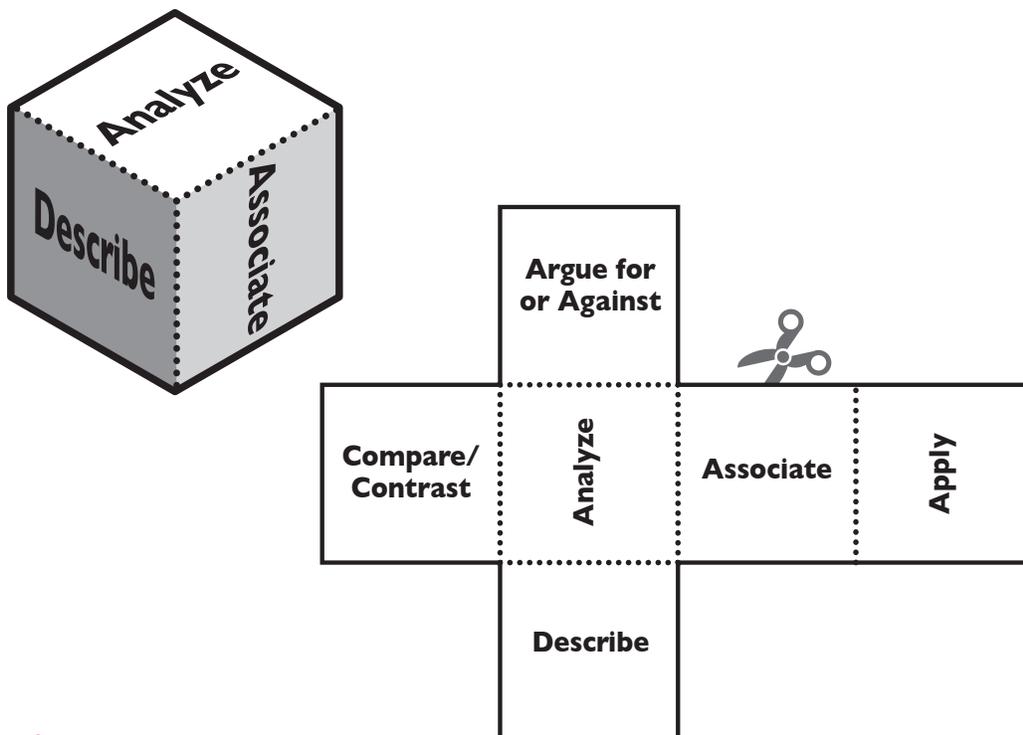
Literature can be used to help students learn vicariously from the situations and decisions that characters go through. Through guided discussions, students can learn from characters' mistakes, and thereby practice thinking and decision-making skills that they could find useful in real life situations. After reading a story where the character commits an error (for example, *The Crow and the Fox*; *The Boy Who Cried Wolf*; *The Wolf in Sheep's Clothing*), or misunderstands a situation, teachers or community volunteers can use the discussion to get students to learn critical thinking and metacognitive (thinking about thinking) skills. Ask students to analyze errors committed by a character in a given reading scenario. Guide the discussion through questions like:

- *What happened before and after the decision (or error) was made?*
- *Where do you think the confusion or mistake came from?*
- *What clue could have told the character that this thinking was incorrect?*
- *What do you think the character will do differently next time after learning from this mistake?*
- *What would you have done differently in this situation?*

A cube has six different sides. It is a good visual to help students remember a strategy for understanding a concept or topic with more depth. Cubing helps students think about and comprehend a concept by looking at it from six different sides corresponding to six thinking tasks: describe, compare, associate, analyze, apply, argue for/against. Explain and model these thinking tasks for students, and then guide them in using cubing for themselves.

- **Describe:** What is it? What does it do? What does it look like?
- **Compare/Contrast:** What is it similar to? What is it different from?
- **Associate:** What does it make you think of? What is it related to? What does it affect or change? What can affect or change it?
- **Analyze:** What are its different parts or aspects? How do these parts work together?
- **Apply:** How can it be used? What would happen if it was used in a certain situation?
- **Argue for or against:** Why does it matter (or why doesn't it matter)? What are its pros and cons? What are its positive and negative features?

You could ask students to make an actual cube and write down their thoughts on these different thinking tasks on the cube's different sides. Or you could just use this as a visual to guide them through these different ideas about the concept. Some teachers use cubing to help students write in some depth about a particular topic. Each thinking task could be a paragraph or a section of their written report.



VERBAL-VISUAL ASSOCIATION

Draw a rectangle and split into four equal parts: top left is for the target word, bottom left is for the definition, top right is for a drawing of a thing or action that illustrates the target word, and the bottom right is for a drawing of a thing/action that is the opposite of the target word.

Target word:	Visual example/ illustration:
Simple Definition:	Visual opposite:

Salubrious	This: 
(adj) Promotes health	Not this: 

Source: <http://www.litandlearn.lpb.org/workshops/LL2main.pdf>

ASK & ANSWER CIRCLES

15

Questions shouldn't only be coming from the teacher. Students should get practice in thinking of questions to ask each other, too. This activity gives students the opportunity to do just that (and to benefit from their classmates' questioning skills).

Each student should prepare 3 questions about a text just discussed. Ask students to pair up and then have the class form two circles, with one member in the outer circle and another in the inner circle. At the teacher's signal, the inner circle will move to the right while the outer circle will move to the left. At the teacher's signal, the circles will stop moving. The students facing each other at this point will ask each other the questions they prepared. After a minute of asking and answering, the teacher will give another signal for the circles to move. Do this for three to five rounds.

After the activity, ask students to share some of their questions and answers. What question did they find most challenging, and how did they come up with the answer? Were there questions to which there were a variety of possible answers? What answer did the questioner find particularly interesting? End the activity by encouraging students to ask themselves questions whenever they are reading a text, and see if the answer will come up as they read on, or if they need to read other texts (or find other sources) to get an answer to their question.



IT SAYS... I SAY... AND SO...



Teachers can use this graphic organizer to guide students through a thought process for making inferences about a text they just read or heard. Having students complete the graphic organizer makes the steps and their thinking more explicit.

The process begins with a question that requires inferential thinking. This question is written under the first column. The remaining columns guide the students in thinking through an answer. Under “It Says...” students will find details in the text that provide clues to answering the question. Under the “I Say...” column, students bring in background information that they have from their own personal knowledge or experience. The final column, “And so...”, is where students will write down the inference they were able to draw by combining details from the texts and prior information they brought to the reading task.

Question	It says...	I say...	And so...
<i>Step 1:</i> Write the question (created or provided)	<i>Step 2:</i> Find information from the text that will help answer the question.	<i>Step 3:</i> Think about what you know about that information.	<i>Step 4:</i> Combine what the text says with what you know to come up with the answer.
Example: Why did Goldilocks break Baby Bear's chair?	It says she sits in the baby chair but she is not a baby. She is a young girl.	Baby chairs aren't very big. They're for babies, but she is bigger, so she weighs more.	So...she is too heavy for it and it breaks.

Source: <http://www.readingrockets.org/pdfs/inference-graphic-organizer.pdf>

AFTER-SCHOOL WORD ENCOUNTERS



Assign specific words that students will listen or watch out for in their after-school activities related to their media experiences—be it print reading, listening to the radio, watching TV, or internet surfing. The best words to assign are words taught in class or encountered in classroom text, and which can have a range of meanings depending on the context or discipline in which it is used. For example, in English, these may include words such as analyze, accommodate, suspend, derive, consume, mutual, factor, concept, etc. Students can report back what they encountered via paper slip submissions (to include their name, the word they encountered, the context in which it was used, which particular media format they encountered it in, and the date of the encounter), or through a brief oral language activity/ classroom sharing time. Teachers should then help the students in thinking through what particular meaning of the word should be applied in the context that they encountered the word.

Reference: <http://www.readingrockets.org/article/media-expanding-students-experience-academic-vocabulary>

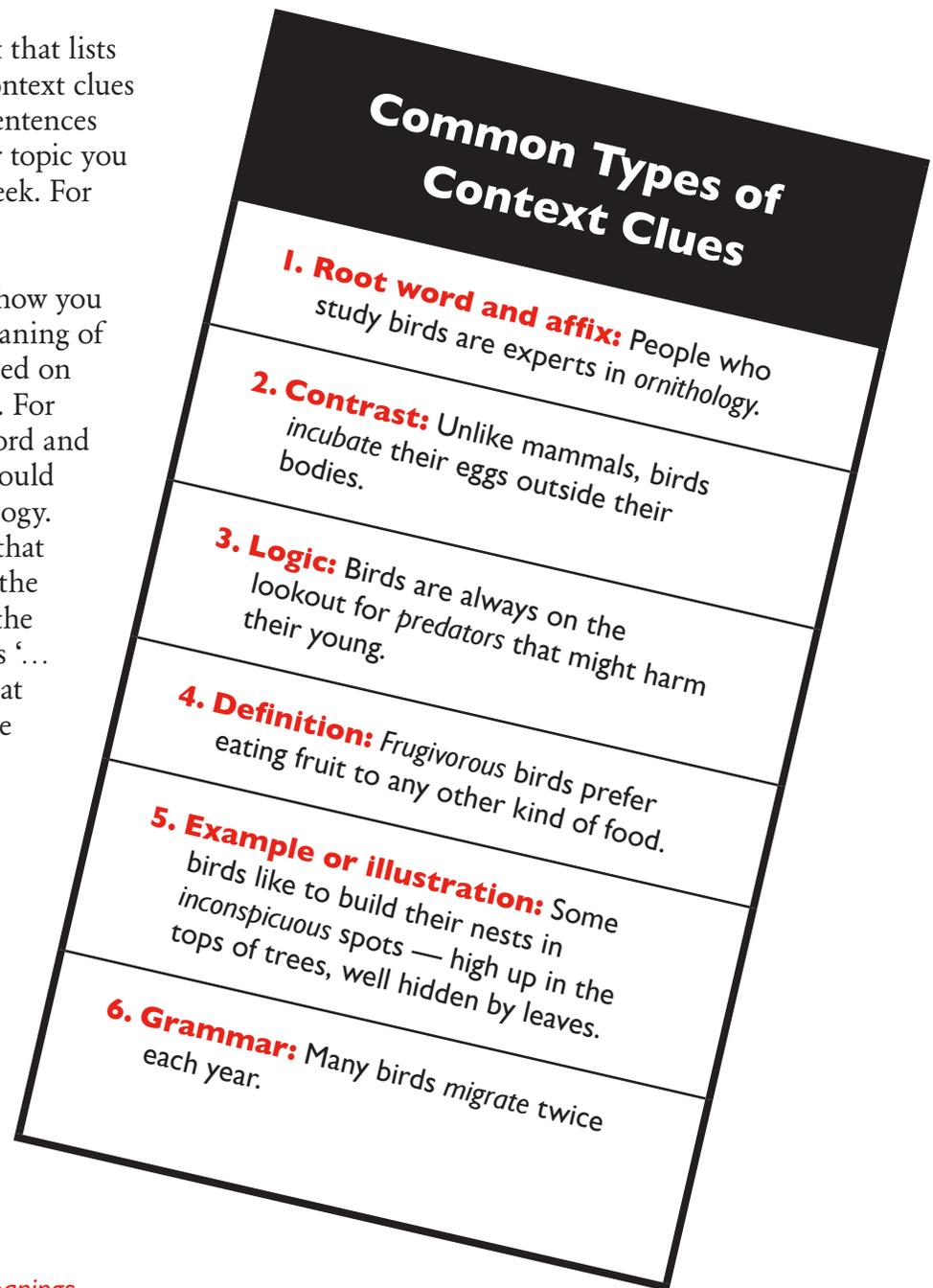


Present a poster or chart that lists out different types of context clues and provides example sentences relevant to the theme or topic you are discussing for the week. For example:

Model for the students how you might figure out the meaning of the unfamiliar word based on the type of context clue. For example, for the root word and affix context clue, you could say: “Hmmm...ornithology. I remember we learned that the suffix *-ology* means the study of something. In the sentence, I see the words ‘... study birds...’ I guess that means ornithology is the study of birds!”

Keep the poster visible for students throughout the year, and reference it whenever they encounter unfamiliar words that they may be able to solve using any of the context clue types.

Source: <http://www.readingrockets.org/article/using-context-clues-understand-word-meanings>



VOCABULARY HUNT: PREFIXES



Ask students to take two minutes to look through various print materials in the classroom (or in the school, if you have more time) that uses a particular prefix you want to focus on. (For example, in the English language, these can include prefixes like **un-**, **il-**, **re-**)

Once they come back from the hunt, list out the words, ask about meaning, and assist the children in figuring out what is common about words that use the prefix (and thereby what the prefix means).

Help the class to compile a list of prefixes that you can post in the classroom for future reference.



VOCABULARY HUNT: SUFFIXES

20

Ask students to take two minutes to look through various print materials in the classroom (or in the school, if you have more time) that uses a particular suffix you want to focus on. (For example, in the English language, these can include suffixes like *-able, -ic*)

Once they come back from the hunt, list out the words, ask about meaning, and assist the children in figuring out what is common about words that use the suffix (and thereby what the suffix means)

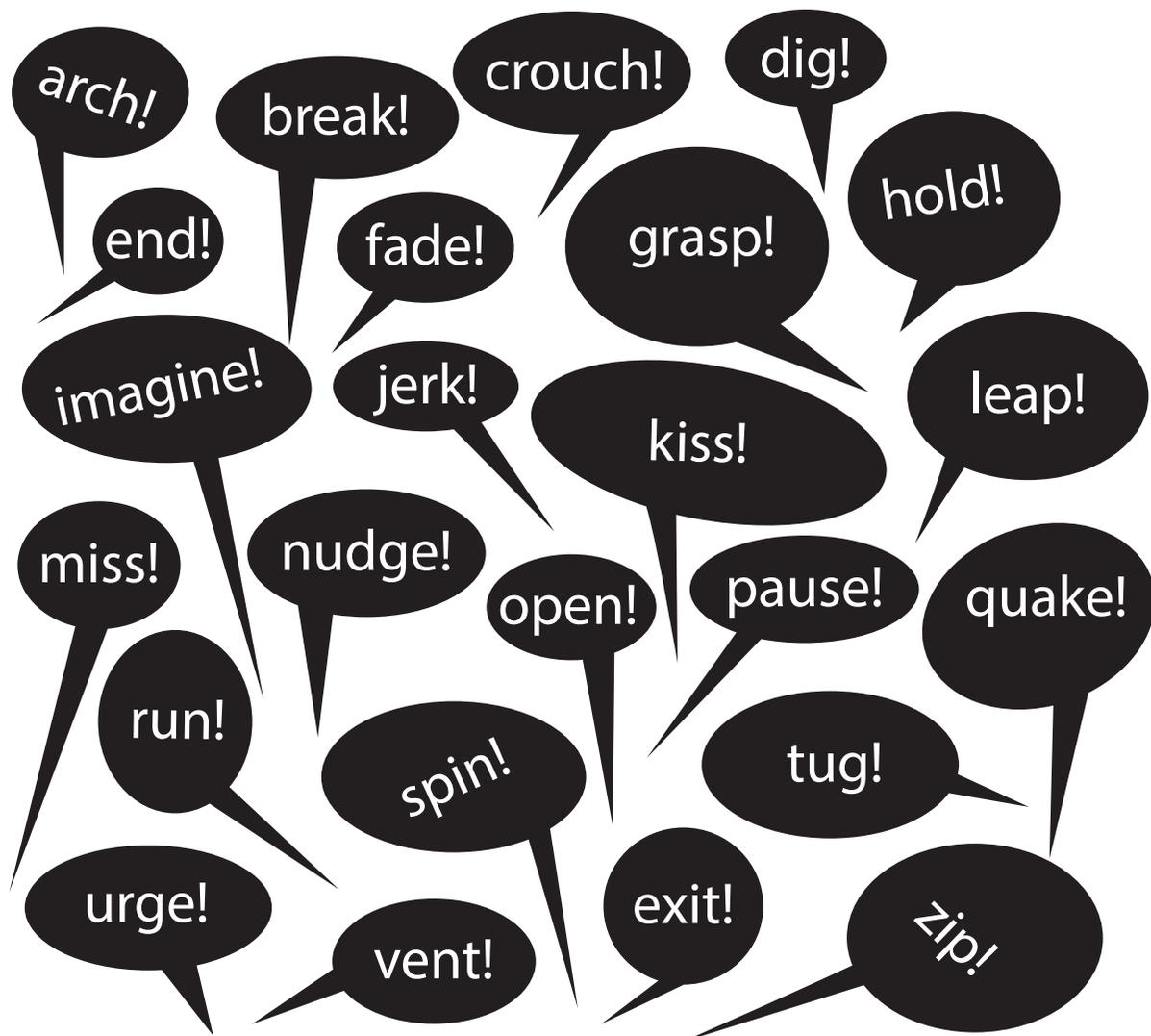


ACTION WORDS FROM A – Z

21

Challenge students to come up with a list of action words that begin with (or at the very least use) the different letters of the alphabet. Have them come up with interesting ways of presenting their list of words and using the words in a meaningful context—they can create an illustrated book, act them out, make a song, or do a rap.

You could use this strategy for other categories of words, too: adjectives from A-Z, adverbs from A-Z, words related to science from A-Z, words from our literature class from A-Z, and so on.



ANTONYM CARD GAME



Prepare a deck of 48 word cards made up of different antonym pairs. For example:

First	Last	Best	Worst	Big	Small
Dark	Bright	Pass	Fail	In	Out
Entrance	Exit	Old	New	Begin	End
Smooth	Rough	Laugh	Cry	Happy	Sad
Awake	Asleep	Plain	Fancy	True	False
Hot	Cold	For	Against	Stop	Go
Rich	Poor	Push	Pull	Warm	Cool
Wet	Dry	Thick	Thin	Lost	Found

Shuffle the cards and let students draw three to five cards each (depending on the size of the class or group playing and the number of cards available—there should be no cards left in the deck once the cards have been distributed). The object of the game is to be the first one to have no cards left. Students who find an antonym pair in the hand they have can take out those antonym pairs. Each student will then draw a card from the student behind them in an effort to find an antonym pair that they can take out from their hand. (Students should feel free to ask their teacher or the class about the meaning of a word card they drew if this is not familiar to them. The teacher could use this as a form of formative assessment, to figure out which students need assistance, or which words students find the most difficult.) Students could keep doing this until all cards are matched up if there is time.

Reference: http://www.fcrr.org/curriculum/PDF/G2-3/2-3Vocab_1.pdf

SHADES OF MEANING

Use the metaphor of color to illustrate how each different shade or variation of a color corresponds to a different word. (e.g., crimson – red – mauve – pink) Build on this metaphor to illustrate how certain words correspond to shades of intensity of a particular word (annoyed – irritated – angry – furious – livid – outraged) Get students to think of different words that are synonyms or have similar meanings, but which correspond to different intensities of that word.



Allow students to self-select words from a given text that they think need to be defined or clarified. Take time to discuss the words and assist the class in coming up with student-friendly definitions. A student-friendly definition is different from a typical dictionary definition, in that it uses clear, everyday language that is easy to visualize and understand. For example, the dictionary definition of the word “exhausted” might be “to be greatly fatigued.” A student who doesn’t know either exhausted or fatigued would not be able to make sense of this definition. A more student-friendly definition of “exhausted” might be “to feel so tired that you don’t even want to move.”

Write down the words and student-friendly definitions on a big sheet of paper, arranged in alphabetical order, and post as a class-created glossary. Encourage students to make their own copy of the glossary (using recycled paper or their own notebooks) so that they can review it as needed. Throughout the year, you could compile these class-created glossaries into a glossary collection for all of the texts discussed.

GRAMMAR BINGO

25

Make several BINGO cards, each bearing different combinations of nouns, verbs, adverbs, adjectives, and pronouns. Play a bingo game by saying (or drawing) various random combinations of a letter from the word BINGO and a part of speech (e.g., B-noun, I-adverb, N-adjective, G-pronoun, O-verb). Students place tokens on their cards by noticing if the words on their cards fit the letter column and category called out by the teacher. The first student to complete a five-token diagonal, horizontal or vertical line calls out BINGO and wins this round. The bingo winner reads out the words with tokens on his/her card. The teacher should write the words on the board, and initiate a discussion on the meaning of the words on the board. The bingo winner gets double points if they can define these words, or use them in sentences.

B	I	N	G	O
cat	sit	slowly	tiny	it
dirty	house	sing	period	erase
smile	salty	FREE	cook	lovely
tightly	you	banana	she	school
sharp	wind	skip	art	cry

B	I	N	G	O
her	luckily	throw	Rita	soft
serve	dinosaur	chew	gladly	bitter
lucky	sweet	FREE	crayons	they
hop	read	quarterly	ours	cleanly
shoes	green	float	dance	healthy

B	I	N	G	O
horse	shake	fold	tough	them
painter	books	write	pink	song
loudly	socks	FREE	us	smell
dusty	box	delicious	run	rain
she	orange	draw	brush	slice

B	I	N	G	O
think	wash	teacher	I	burn
pencil	he	quickly	bread	talk
soap	mosquito	FREE	eraser	cloudy
shoes	bottle	taste	hair	lunch
hands	science	theirs	umbrella	bake

You could also devise alternate ways to play. For example, you could use the cards for syllable BINGO (random combinations of a letter from the word BINGO and 1-syllable, 2-syllable, or 3-syllable words), beginning letter BINGO (random combinations of a letter from the word BINGO and words beginning with a given letter), and so on.

SYNONYM-ANTONYM CONNECTIONS

Use this graphic organizer to deepen students' understanding of the meaning of target vocabulary words. Prepare a 3-column chart with the target words in the middle, a column for synonyms to the left, and a column for antonyms to the right. Have children discuss in pairs possible synonyms and antonyms for the given words, and then write these in their notebooks. Give the pairs a few minutes to complete this exercise. Then, discuss answers as a whole class. Below is a blank graphic organizer and an example of a completed graphic organizer.

Synonym	Target Word	Antonym
	ruin	
	display	
	serenity	
	poverty	

Synonym	Target Word	Antonym
break, destroy	ruin	fix, build
show	display	hide
calm	serenity	disturbance
hardship	poverty	wealth

Reference: http://www.fcrr.org/curriculum/PDF/G2-3/2-3Vocab_1.pdf

HOMOPHONE HUNT

Homophones are words that sound the same, but are spelled differently and have different meanings. Present students with homophone pairs, ask them what each word means, and then ask them to identify which word should go in the two sentences provided. For example:

four for	The flowers are ___ your mother.
	She was ___ years old when they first met.

too two	I was ___ shy to say anything.
	She had ___ books in her bag.

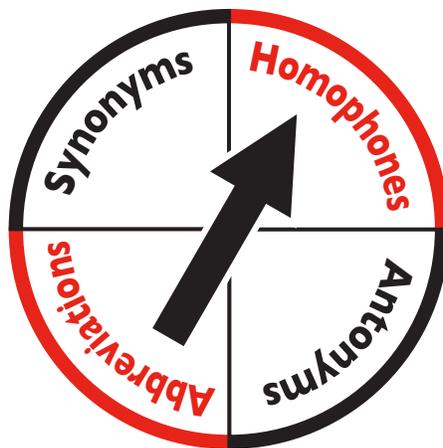
way weigh	Do you know the ___ to the store?
	Do you know how much you ___?

Reference: http://www.fcrr.org/curriculum/PDF/G2-3/2-3Vocab_1.pdf

SPIN & SELECT THE CORRECT WORD PAIR

28

Post a set of word pair cards on the board. Prepare a spinner with the following categories: synonyms, antonyms, abbreviations, homophones. Call a student to come forward. Use the spinner to identify which category the student needs to select a correct word pair for. Once the spinner stops, the student should pick out a card that corresponds to the category.



made – maid	Jr. – Junior	almost – nearly	fair – fare
start – finish	big – small	thin – thick	hour – our
stop – end	too – also	huge – large	let – allow
Mr. – Mister	first – last	leave – go	Dr. – Doctor
sea – see	win – lose	St. – Saint	sail – sale

This is a game you could use to unlock students' prior knowledge about a given topic, or to review a theme or topic you have already discussed. State a category, and ask students to name five things related to that category that begin with the letters in the word "blast." For example, if the category you gave was "animals," they could say: B -baboon, L-lion, A-antelope, S-stork, T-tiger. You could expand and enrich the discussion by asking the students to describe or define the words they gave.

(If using this in a language other than English, you could use a local word that is made up of no more than six letters, and has a similar meaning to "blast," in terms of an explosion of words, or fun with words.)



Before reading a particular text, preview the book cover and topic, then ask students to think of questions that they predict will be answered once they read the text. Write the topic of the book or the book title on the board, and then have the students give the questions that they think will be answered by the text. Write these questions down as connected shapes to the topic/title. For example:



After reading the text, go back to the questions the class predicted and confirm if the text did give answers to these questions. Add a connected shape and write down the answers that the students found in the text. For the unanswered questions, encourage the class to do research to find out the answers to these questions. Return to the unanswered questions a day or two afterwards to get the answers the class collected through research.

Explain to the class the different kinds of thoughtful connections they can make while reading a text: they can connect what they are reading to their own lives (**text to self**); they can connect it to another story or text they read in the past (**text to text**); or they can connect it to a larger issue happening in society or in the world (**text to world**). Model for the class how these types of connections can be made by reading a passage, and then stopping and saying aloud what connections the story made you think of and why.

For example, after reading the story “The Crow & The Pitcher,” the teacher could say: *“This story made me think back to when my family didn’t have any clean water to drink, so we had to boil water from the community well to make it safe. That is a text-to-self connection.”* Or *“This story has a crow for the lead character. It reminds me of the story “The Crow and The Fox,” except that the crow in this story seems much smarter than the crow in that other story. This is a text-to-text connection.”* Or *“This story made me think about how so many people who had to leave their homes due to the earthquake did not have any water to drink. Water is really an important resource that we should not waste. This is a text-to-world connection.”*

Once students are familiar with the three types of thoughtful connections they can make about text, get them to think about these connections after listening or reading to stories or informational texts. Ask them during or after reading about what text-to-self, text-to-text, or text-to-world connections they can think about in relation to what they read. They can say these aloud in class or in pairs/groups, and/or they can write these thoughts down on their notebooks.



THICK AND THIN QUESTIONS

(CLOSED VS. OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS)

32

Get students to analyze and classify the types of questions asked about a text by using the metaphor of thick vs. thin. Explain that thick questions are questions that are more complicated, need a more detailed response, and may have more than one correct answer. They usually concern large concepts or big picture ideas. (Examples: Why did... What would happen if... How would you define...) Thin questions are questions that are straightforward, require a short and simple response, and only have one answer. They usually refer to very specific content or words. (Examples: Who was...When did...How big is...How many... Where is...) Teachers could present a list of questions about a text and then ask students to state whether (and why) these are thick or thin questions. Students can also be asked to prepare their own thick questions and thin questions after reading a specific text, and then get other students to respond to these questions.



Source: McLaughlin, M. (2003). *Guided Comprehension in the Primary Grades*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

THOUGHT BUBBLE VS. SPEECH BALLOON

Use this activity to get students to think more deeply about the characters in a text and what they may be thinking or intending (but not saying outright). If students are familiar with comic strips, they may know about the conventions of when thought bubbles are used vs. speech balloons. If not, explain the convention: speech balloons mean that the character is saying the words in the balloon out loud; thought bubbles mean that the words are only in the character's head—he is only thinking the words, not saying them.

The teacher could model this activity for the students by using the story “The Crow and The Fox” (if this story has already been discussed previously). Present a picture from the story with a blank thought bubble and a filled-in speech balloon over the fox’s head. For example:



Ask the class to read the speech balloon, and then to recall what the fox’s intention was in flattering the crow. Ask them to frame that into words that could go into the thought balloon, and write those words down for the class. Get the class to read the thought balloon and the speech bubble.

Extend the conversation by asking the class if they can think about a situation in their own lives where they had unspoken thoughts different from what they said aloud at that time. Ask what the benefits and disadvantages are of not saying everything in your mind out loud. Wrap up the discussion by reminding the class that, just like them, the books they read may not be saying everything out loud; there are some things that are unsaid, but which they may be able to infer by reading between the lines.

SUMMARY CUBE

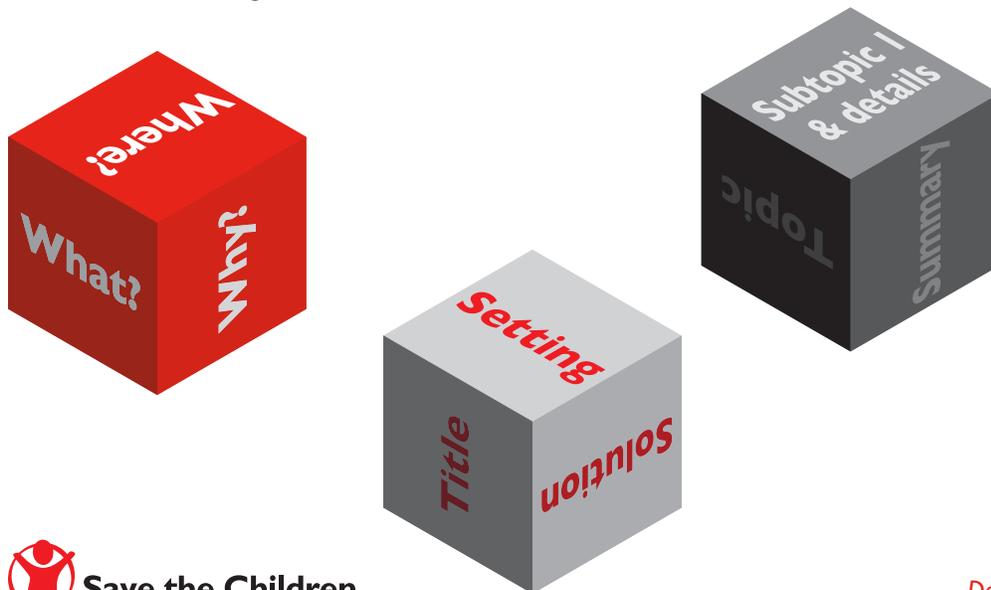
The summary cube can be used by the teacher or facilitator as a visual aid to guide students in summarizing a story. The cube provides six questions or cues, one for each side.

Students can also be asked to make group or individual summary cubes after a reading task, where they provide the answers to the six cues/questions provided.

There are a couple of options that can be used in creating the six sides of the summary cube:

	Option A (news story, account of an event)	Option B (fiction)	Option C (non-fiction)
Side 1	Who?	Title	Topic
Side 2	What?	Characters	Subtopic 1 & details
Side 3	Where?	Setting	Subtopic 2 & details
Side 4	When?	Problem	Subtopic 3 & details
Side 5	Why?	Solution	Summary
Side 6	How?	Overall theme or message	Example or illustration

Source: McLaughlin, M. (2003). *Guided Comprehension in the Primary Grades*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.



MAIN IDEA & SUPPORTING DETAILS GRAPHIC ORGANIZER

Use this graphic organizer to get students to state the main idea of a text read, and to identify the supporting details given in the text that expand on that main idea. You can also use this for specific paragraphs within a text, especially for longer pieces. You can add or subtract columns for supporting details, depending on how many such ideas there are in the text being analyzed. An example of a blank main idea/supporting details graphic organizer and a completed main idea/supporting details graphic organizer is below.

Text Title: Main Idea:		
Supporting Detail 1:	Supporting Detail 2:	Supporting Detail 3:

Text Title: <i>Clouds, Clouds, Clouds</i> Main Idea: <i>There are three main groups of clouds, based on how high or low they are in the sky.</i>		
Supporting Detail 1: <i>Cirrus clouds are high clouds, and have heights above 18,000 feet.</i>	Supporting Detail 2: <i>Alto clouds are middle clouds, with heights between 6,500 to 18,000 feet.</i>	Supporting Detail 3: <i>Stratus clouds are low clouds, with heights up to 6,500 feet.</i>

K-W-L CHART

Use this chart before reading non-fiction or informational texts to get children thinking about **what they already know** (K) about the theme or topic of the text, and **what they want to know** (W) about the topic. Use the same chart after reading to confirm **what they learned** (L) about the topic. You could also add a fourth column, and ask students **what they still want to learn** (S) about the topic after having read the text. The teacher can serve as scribe as the students give responses. The students could also write their own K-W-L charts in their notebooks, and then share their responses to the whole class, with the teacher documenting their responses on a big K-W-L chart on the board. An example of a blank K-W-L chart and a completed K-W-L chart is below.

Title of Text: Text Topic:			
K (What we k now)	W (What we w ant to know)	L (What we l earned)	S (What we s till want to know)

● **Title of Text:** All About Ants
 ● **Text Topic:** Ants

K (What we k now)	W (What we w ant to know)	L (What we l earned)	S (What we s till want to know)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ants have six legs. ● There are red ants and black ants. ● Ants work together well. ● When ants bite you, it can hurt. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How long do ants live? ● How many colors of ants are there? ● Why do ant bites hurt? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ants' bodies have three parts. ● There can be black, brown, green, yellow and red ants. ● Ants use antennae to touch and smell. ● Ants are very strong for their size. ● There are worker ants and soldier ants. There is also a queen ant. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How long do ants live? ● Why do ant bites hurt?

DRAW AND LABEL VISUALIZATIONS

37

Use this activity to encourage students to make mental images of the text they are listening to or reading. (This works best when the text has no accompanying pictures.) After reading or listening, ask the students to choose their favorite part of the text, or what they think to be the most important part of the text, then get them to sketch out or draw what they see in their minds as happening at that moment. Emphasize that the sketch does not need to be visually perfect—it should just be a basic illustration of what visual image they have in their minds about the part of the text they are sketching. Ask them to label the sketch—to write a phrase or sentence about what is happening in the image. Get them to present their visualizations and to read their written labels to the whole class.

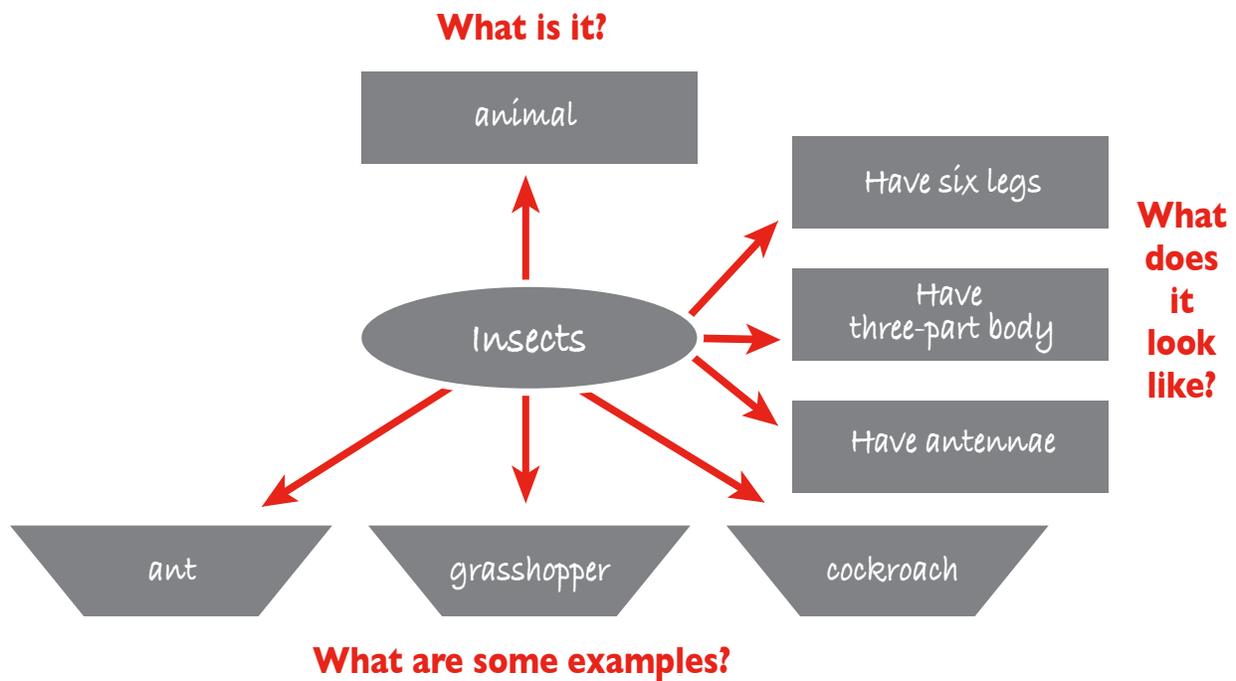
Source: McLaughlin, M. (2003). Guided Comprehension in the Primary Grades. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.



CONCEPT OF DEFINITION MAP

Use this graphic organizer to get students to think more deeply about a word or concept and to connect it with other words. Select a word (or have students select a word) that will be explored via this graphic and write it in the central oval of the map. Ask students to identify a broad category under which this word might fall and write it in the “What is it?” box. Get students to provide three words that describe the focus word and write in the “What does it look like?” section. Finally, have students provide some examples of the focus word, or some details about the focus word, and write it in the “What are some examples/details?” section.

An example concept of definition map is provided below:



Source: McLaughlin, M. (2003). *Guided Comprehension in the Primary Grades*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

WORDS WITHIN WORDS



Give the class a long, multi-syllabic word (three syllables or more) that is related to the theme for the week, or used in a text just read. Get the students to form as many words as they can from the longer word in a span of three minutes, and write these down in their notebooks. These can be 2-letter words, 3-letter words, 4-letter words, or even longer words.

(For example, you could use the word “environment” and the students could list out words like: me, to, on, men, ten, net, vet, vine, more, morn, torn, ever, even, etc.)

After three minutes, have 5-6 volunteers come up to board to write their word lists. Ask them to explain the meaning of the words they write on the board. Ask the class if they have other words in their notes that are not yet on the board, and write these words for the whole class to see. Get students to explain what these additional words mean as well.

FORTUNATELY-UNFORTUNATELY CIRCLE STORY



Circle stories are class-invented or created stories, with each student adding a sentence to the one that came before it. In this circle story format, the students must alternately start their additional sentence with either “fortunately” or “unfortunately.” The sentence they give must conform to the first word they use. If they have to use “fortunately,” it must be a happy or good development in the story. If they have to use “unfortunately,” it has to be a problem, obstacle or challenge in the story. The teacher will give the first few sentences that lay out the character, setting, and initial details upon which the rest of the students will build their sentences.

For example, the teacher may say: “Once upon a time, there was a young girl who loved to make bread.” The first student in the circle may say: “Fortunately, the village where she lived grew wheat.” The next student may then say: “Unfortunately, no one in the village knew how to turn the wheat into flour.” The next student could say: “Fortunately, there was a visitor to the village who taught them how to make flour.” The next student would then continue: “Unfortunately...” This goes on until all students have contributed to the story.

Once the circle story is completed, have the class recount all the problems or challenges that the character encountered, and the solutions given to address these challenges. Write these down as a chart on the board (Problem Met vs. Solution Given).

A *cinquain* is a five-line poem or stanza about a given topic. You may use this type of *cinquain* to get students to reflect on or synthesize a theme or topic discussed in their class readings. This *cinquain* follows the following format or formula:

One word – Noun

Two adjectives describing line one

Three –ing verbs telling actions of line 1

Four-word phrase describing a feeling related to line 1

One word – synonym or reference to line 1

An example of a *cinquain* is provided below:

Malala
Young, Brave,
Leading, learning, inspiring
You make us proud.
Hero!

SWAP-THE-LYRICS SUMMARY OR RETELLING



Using a popular song or tune, get students to write new lyrics that retell or summarize a text they just read or listened to. Model this activity for children by presenting an example.

For instance, you could change the words to the song “Twinkle Twinkle Little Star” to summarize facts provided in a text about The Moon:

*The moon is our earth's satellite.
It shines brightly every night.
It goes around the earth's orbit.
Its shape depends on the way it's lit.
The moon is our earth's satellite.
It shines brightly every night.*

The lyrics do not need to rhyme, as they do here. What matters is that the new lyrics can be sung in time with the provided tune. Students can work in pairs or groups, and then sing their songs to the whole class in a mini-concert.

SETTING THE SCENE

43

After a reading activity, get the class to identify words in the text that describe (or from which they can infer) what the setting of the story or informational text is like.

- Where does the action take place?
- What does the scene look like?
- What is the mood like?
- What details does the text provide that give an image or a visual of where the story or action occurs?

Get students to work in groups and list down their responses. Once the groups have completed their task, get the groups to share their responses out loud, while volunteers from the class sketch out on the board (or on flip chart paper) what they are describing. By the end of the sharing, there should be a visual representation of the setting completed, based on what the class discussed. Have the students individually write 2-3 sentences describing the setting of the text in their notebooks, based on what they read, discussed, and sketched.

PAIRED READING – READERS’ CHECKLIST

Students pair up and take turns reading a given grade-level text. The listener will provide feedback to the reader based on their observations, guided by a checklist such as the one below:

The reader...	Yes	No	Details and examples
...read at a good pace, not too fast and not too slow			
...read all or most words correctly			
...corrected any mistakes immediately while reading			
...showed appropriate expression while reading			
...skipped or missed words in the text			
...did not follow punctuation marks			
...read too slowly, word by word, with long pauses			
...misread or mispronounced words			

The teacher should explain the checklist to the whole class before the pairs proceed with this activity. Emphasize that getting clear feedback from others is a useful way of knowing what students are doing well and where they can still improve. The checklist helps listeners provide clear feedback, because it guides them in what they should listen for, and asks them to provide proof, details, or examples of the findings they are marking. The checklist also helps the readers because it lets them know what is considered good practice (pink section) and what clues indicate that they can still improve on their reading (gray section).

As the pairs read and listen to each other, the teachers should make the rounds and observe how the listeners are using and completing the checklist. After both partners have read and listened/provided feedback, do another round of paired reading where the readers use the pointers they received to improve their reading performance.

Alternate way to use this activity:

Create 3-member groups, with the third member observing and providing feedback to the listener. The third member can use the checklist below:

The Listener...	Yes	No	Details and examples
...was paying close attention to the reader			
...listed out clear and logical details and examples for the marks he/she was giving			
...presented the feedback clearly and politely to the reader			
...gave suggestions for improvement to the reader			
...was only paying attention to the checklist			
...did not list down examples and details			
...focused only on what the reader did wrong			
...did not give any suggestions for improvement			

Who Am I? – CUES FROM CLUES

45

This is a good review game when the class has discussed two or more stories and have encountered five or more different characters in those texts. Divide the class into five groups. Give each group a card with the name of a character from one of the stories tackled in class. Each group should discuss and list down three clues at the back of the card—with the clues going from hard to easy in descending order. For example, if the assigned character is Rapunzel, the clues could be: *a. I'm often left alone; b. I live in a tower; c. I have long golden hair*. The groups take turns in getting another group to guess their assigned character by giving the clues one by one. The group that guesses correctly using the fewest clues wins.

Alternate ways to use this activity:

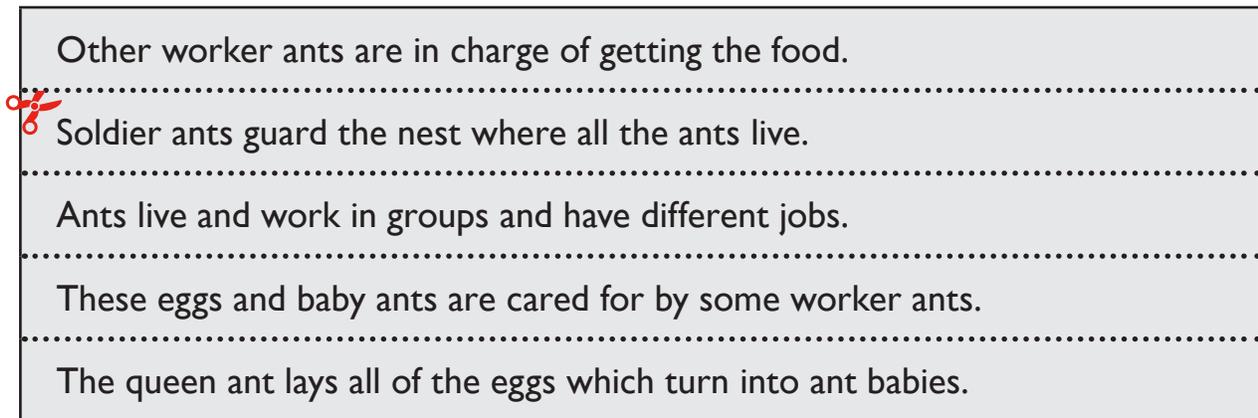
You could turn this into a “Where Am I?” game by using settings or locations of different narrative or non-fiction texts. You could also use content concepts (science concepts, historical events, math concepts) and turn the game into a “What Is It?” activity.

Help students to understand the order and logic that writers use when writing sentences and/or paragraphs. Divide the students into groups with 3-5 members each. Give each group an envelope with individual cut-up words from a sentence, or individual cut-up sentences from a paragraph. Have them arrange the cut-up parts into an orderly sequence; they should be prepared to explain why the arrangement they did is the correct order.

Example of a cut-up sentence:



Example of a cut-up paragraph:



When students are explaining why they arranged the words or sentences in the order that they did, check if they are able to articulate rules or principles such as:

- Words that begin sentences are capitalized.
- Words that end sentences are punctuated.
- A noun usually follows an article like “the”.
- The word “was” is typically followed by an adjective or another verb.
- The first sentence in a paragraph usually gives the main idea.
- Sentences in a later part of the paragraph often refer to words that were used in a sentence that precedes it.
- When the order of words or sentences is correct, the sentence or paragraph flows well and reads smoothly.

CONNOTATION: POSITIVE OR NEGATIVE?



Students need to be able to decipher unstated feelings or attitudes from the words that an author or speaker is using in any given text. This is what connotation is all about. It is an idea, attitude, or feeling that a word suggests or brings to mind. The feelings or attitudes that are associated with particular words reflect either a positive/favorable or negative/unfavorable emotion or state of mind. Getting students to be perceptive enough to detect these unspoken feelings and attitudes can help them comprehend texts more deeply.

Help students understand the concept of connotation by first presenting pairs of words that have similar or related meanings, but which have a range of feelings or intensities associated with them. For example: lean/scrawny; stink/aroma; arrogant/confident; unique/bizarre. Ask the class—which word from the pair do you consider positive, and which do you consider negative? Which word would you want to hear spoken about you? Would you prefer to be called arrogant or confident? Unique or bizarre? Why? (Note: If connotation is being discussed in the context of a second language, the teacher could use first language examples first to help ground the discussion in something that students will understand.)

Build on their understanding of connotations by conducting this exercise. Ask students to complete a given sentence by giving them two options and asking them to choose the word that gives the sentence a positive tone. Then, ask students to use the word that gives a negative connotation in another sentence. Some sample items are listed below:

- *The machine they bought was a (costly – valuable) investment.*
- *She was (fearless – reckless) when making travel decisions.*
- *The way she made her points known during the meeting made her seem very (pushy – assertive).*
- *The fruit she brought from her trip abroad tasted (strange – exotic).*
- *He asks questions all the time; he’s really very (nosy – inquisitive).*

Students can either answer the questions on their own, or pair up with a classmate. Once students have had a chance to formulate their answers for all items, get the students to share and explain their answers to the whole class. State and explain the correct answers for the given sentences, and share your own example sentences that use the words with a negative connotation. Some possible sentences for the negative connotation words:

- *It was a costly purchase that wasted resources.*
- *Jumping off that cliff was a risky and reckless thing to do.*
- *I don't like people who are pushy and always want to get their way.*
- *That strange tasting fruit made me lose my appetite.*
- *Some things should be kept private, so please don't ask such nosy questions.*

WORD GAME: THERE ARE PATTERNS, BUT THERE ARE NO RULES

48

This game helps students build their word knowledge (and their spelling skills), while also sharpening their critical thinking skills. The teacher leads by saying: “There are patterns, but there are no rules. I like ____, but I don’t like ____.” The object of the game is for the students to figure out the rule that the teacher is using when she chooses words that s/he says s/he likes and the words s/he says s/he doesn’t like. All students will take turns in trying to create a sentence that follows the “I like...but I don’t like...” structure the teacher is using. The teacher will not tell students the rule s/he is using; students have to figure it out after listening to what the teacher says, and listening to the attempts made by their classmates to make a similar sentence that correctly applies the rule. Students who are able to apply the unstated rule when they say their sentences can sit down. Students unable to guess the rule and apply it correctly in their sentences will have to remain standing and keep trying out sentences when their turn comes around.

Here’s an example exchange between the teacher (T) and students (S):

T: There are patterns, but there are no rules. I like butter, but I don’t like jam.

S1: I like marmalade, but I don’t like jelly. *(T shakes head to let S1 know s/he cannot sit down yet. S1 waits for her next turn to come around before she can try again.)*

T: There are patterns, but there are no rules. I like zippers, but I don’t like laces.

S2: I like zippers, but I don’t like buttons. *(T shakes head to let S2 know s/he cannot sit down yet. S2 waits for her next turn to come around before she can try again.)*

T: There are patterns, but there are no rules. I like cookies, but I don’t like cake.

S3: I like cookies, but I don’t like pie. *(T nods head to let S3 know s/he can sit down.)*

T: There are patterns, but there are no rules. I like spaghetti, but I don’t like pasta.

S4: I like rubber, but I don’t like plastic. *(T nods head to let S4 know s/he can sit down.)*

T: There are patterns, but there are no rules. I like kittens, but I don’t like cats.

S5: I like puppies, but I don’t like kittens. *(T shakes head to let S5 know s/he cannot sit down yet. S5 waits for her next turn to come around before she can try again.)*

T: There are patterns, but there are no rules. I like puppies, but I don’t like cars.

S6: I like bottles, but I don’t like cups. *(T nods head to let S6 know s/he can sit down.)*

Let the game continue until all children have had a chance to play. Before letting everyone sit, have the students who were able to sit down state what they think the rule is. (Some of them may have only lucked out, and do not know the rule themselves.) Students will probably be puzzling over the rule, as they tried to notice what responses got accepted and what did not.



Have you figured out the rule? **The rule is related to spelling.** The teacher likes words that have a double letter formation (like the word “pattern”), and doesn’t like words that do not use double letters (like the word “rule”). It may help, when all children have played, to write down the words that were liked on one column, and the words not liked on another column. Seeing the words spelled out may help the students figure out what the rule was.

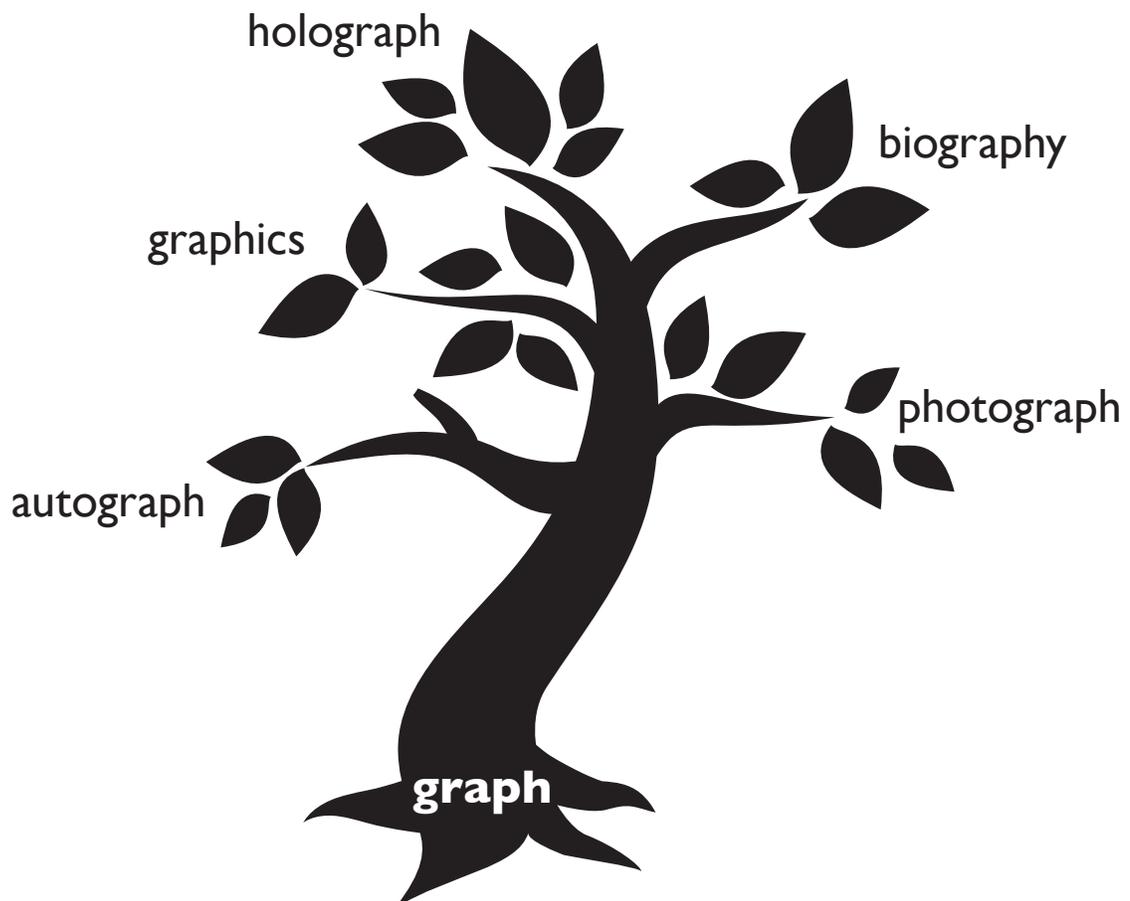
Alternative ways to use this activity: If your language does not use a lot of double letters, and if there are other rules you want to apply for this game, you could do so. You can use a different rule when completing the “I like __, but I don’t like __” sentences to focus on a specific skill or concept. For example, the teacher could say s/he likes verbs, but not adverbs; adjectives, but not nouns; animals, but not fruits; the possibilities are plenty. It is useful to do this activity as

a way of doing formative assessment, too. The teacher can notice the range of words that the students know, the thinking processes that the students are apparently using, the confidence with which they express themselves, etc. All of this is useful information in identifying students who may need support, and students who may be able to help their peers out via additional/after-class activities.

Give students a set of words that have a common root or base (examples in English would be: cyclical-bicycle-recycle; airport-porter-portable; biology-geology-sociology; photograph-autograph-graphics).

Ask them to identify what the common root is, what they think it means, and how the root's meaning connects with the meaning of the words in the set. Have them use the words in sentences or phrases to help illustrate the meaning. Then, get the students thinking about other words that use the same root, and to connect the meanings of those words to the common root.

Help students visualize the common roots concept by using an illustration of a tree, with the common root at the tree's roots, and the different words using that root (plus their meaning) on the branches. The class could further build the tree out by adding sentence cards that use the words in context.



LIST-GROUP-LABEL (L-G-L)

50

Students build vocabulary, thinking, and comprehension skills through the List-Group-Label strategy. As its name suggests, there are three main steps to this strategy:

- **List:** brainstorming a set of words related to a concept that the class just discussed;
- **Group:** clustering words listed into smaller categories based on an idea or reason as to how they relate to or connect with each other; and
- **Label:** giving a title or name to the words that were grouped together

If students have never used this strategy before, the teacher should start by modeling the process with a broad brainstorm concept. Let's say the class recently read a book about a road trip, or someone who traveled by land. The teacher could model the L-G-L process by writing "Travel Words" on the board, and then modeling the brainstorming process.

The teacher could say: "*When I think about travel, I think about...*" and then write down a few words related to travel. For example, the teacher could say/write: **bus, schedule, suitcase, wheels, clothes, countries, beach, hotel, train, car, plane, tickets**. At this point, the class can be asked to join the brainstorm, with the teacher writing their words down on the board. There will be no particular order or reason during brainstorming—anything that comes to mind can be written down.

Next, the teacher models how to group the words into sub-categories. The teacher can say: "Now, let me look at these words and group a few of them that are related in some way. Let's see: I think train, car, and plane are all connected, because they're all ways people can travel from one place to another. Let me write them down as a small cluster of words here. Are there other words on our big list that might belong with this group of words?" The teacher pauses to get the class to find other words that could be added to this sub-category.

Finally, the teacher models the "label" step. The teacher can say: "Now I'm going to give this smaller list here a title. What might a good title or label be? I said they're connected because they're ways to travel to another place. So I can write that down here on top: Ways to Travel." (If the class has more developed academic vocabulary, the teacher could also write something more appropriate as a label, such as Modes of Transportation.)

With the strategy demonstrated, the class can now be asked to use L-G-L in small groups. The teacher can assign a new broad concept for the brainstorm that is still linked to the earlier topic. (For example, "Destination Words" or "Places To Go When Traveling") The small groups go through the entire L-G-L process, and then come together as whole class to share this lists, groups, and labels. Groups should make sure that all members get to contribute and participate during all of the steps.

Source: http://www.readingrockets.org/strategies/list_group_label

WORD KNOWLEDGE RATINGS



Knowing what words students already know and what they have never even heard of can help teachers to plan and frame their vocabulary instruction. One way to do formative assessment of students' word knowledge about a set of target vocabulary is to have them assess their own knowledge about these words, using the following chart/ rating system:

	No idea what it means	Have heard or seen it	Know the word	Know it well and can define it
Word 1:				
Word 2:				
Word 3:				
Word 4:				
Word 5:				

Have the students do the self-assessment individually, and then get them to share and discuss their responses in pairs or groups of four. After the student discussion, ask the class to report back on which words most of them said were unfamiliar, and their ideas about the possible meanings of those words might be. If time is limited, the teacher could also just ask for a quick show of hands on where students placed each word on the rating system, and use that information to adjust planned instructional activities.

Reference: No More “Look Up The List” Vocabulary Instruction by Charlene Cobb and Camille Blachowicz. Not This But That Series. Heinemann: 2014.

Transitions or signal words can provide students with clues on what type of detail or information is coming next in a piece of text, and thereby aid their understanding. Knowledge about these words can also help students when they are being asked to write text themselves. Providing guided instruction on the use of these words, and taking care to notice their use as the class listens to read-alouds or does independent reading activities, will help students build their vocabulary, comprehension, and writing skills. While **it is not recommended that these words be introduced all at once**, carving out time to do mini-lessons or to remark on how these words are used when they are encountered in text will go a long way.

Below is an initial list of transitions and signal words in English, categorized by how they are typically used. Other languages may have similar types of words and categories of use. It would be handy to have such a list specific to the local language, or even enlist students' help in compiling such a list and creating a class poster that they can refer to when reading and writing.

- **Illustration:** *thus, for example, for instance, namely, to illustrate, in other words, in particular, specifically, such as, in fact*
- **Contrast:** *on the contrary, but, however, nevertheless, in spite of, in contrast, and yet, on one hand/on the other hand, rather, conversely, while this may be true.*
- **Addition:** *and, in addition to, furthermore, moreover, besides, than, too, also, both-and, another, equally important, first, second, etc., again, further, last, finally, not only-but also, as well as, likewise, similarly, in the same way,*
- **Time:** *after, afterward, before, then, once, next, last, at last, at length, first, second, etc., at first, formerly, rarely, usually, another, finally, soon, meanwhile, at the same time, for a minute/hour/day, during the morning/day/week, later, to begin with, afterwards, generally, in order to, subsequently, previously, in the meantime, immediately, eventually, concurrently, simultaneously.*
- **Emphasis:** *above all, indeed, truly, of course, certainly, surely, in fact, really, in truth, again, besides, also, furthermore, it is important to note.*
- **Details:** *specifically, especially, in particular, to explain, to list, to enumerate, in detail, namely, including.*
- **Examples:** *for example, for instance, to illustrate, as an illustration, in particular.*
- **Consequence or Result:** *thus, consequently, hence, accordingly, for this reason, therefore, so, because, since, due to, as a result, in other words, then*
- **Summary:** *in short, in brief, to sum up*
- **Conclusion:** *therefore, finally, in conclusion*

Reference: <http://writing2.richmond.edu/writing/wweb/transl.html>





Pairing students up to read together (either silently or out loud) and to discuss what they just read helps to foster frequent practice and collaborative learning. Teachers can help establish a routine for how pairs read together by lining up some patterns that they will know how to use together. Teachers can assign these patterns to certain days of the week, or even have students choose which pattern would make the most sense given the kind of text they just read. Some sample patterns are listed below:

- **“Questions, Questions” days:** Partners read a paragraph (or a page) silently, and then ask each other a question about what they just read. They keep following this pattern until they reach the end of the text.
- **“Picture This” days:** Partners read a paragraph (or a page), pause, and then describe the images or visuals that came to their minds as they read the text. (They could also draw while they’re describing the image in words.) They move on to the next paragraph and page and do the same thing until the end of the text.
- **“This Was The Most” days:** Partners read the whole text together, think about what they just read, and then share what part or detail they found to be [a] the most interesting, [b] the most important, and [c] the most confusing.
- **“Read & Retell” days:** Partners read a paragraph (or a page), and then restate in their own words what they just read. An alternate way to do it would be to have one person reading aloud, and the other person doing the retelling, and then alternating roles for each paragraph or page of text.
- **“Connect the Text” days:** Partners read a page (or a paragraph), and then connect what they just read to any of the following: their own experience (text-to-self connection), another book or text that they read in the past (text-to-text connection), or an item in the news or something they saw or heard on the media (text-to-world connection).

Source: McLaughlin, *Guided Comprehension*, 2003.

SEMANTIC FEATURE ANALYSIS

A semantic feature analysis activity helps students compare and contrast different texts, concepts, or vocabulary. Students list a variety of features vertically on the columns in the top row. They then analyze a set of three or more different concepts on the rows under the first column based on the features they listed. Individually or after a group discussion, students will put a check mark under the appropriate column if the text or concept being analyzed has that feature. They will then use their findings from their semantic feature analysis to make statements comparing and contrasting the concepts under analysis.

Here's an example of a completed semantic feature analysis chart, comparing the features of three different Aesop's Fables:

Feature Analysis of Three (3) Aesop's Fables	Has more than one character.	Involves one character tricking another.	Includes a bird as a character.	A character learns an important lesson at the end of the story.	Shows ingenuity or quick thinking by a character
The Fox and the Crow	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
The Crow and the Pitcher	X	X	✓	✓	✓
The Wolf in Sheep's Clothing	✓	✓	X	✓	✓

Teachers can ask questions to help the class synthesize their findings. For example, for the above chart, the teacher can ask: Is there a text that has all of the features listed? What two texts have more than three features in common? What feature/s do all of the texts have in common? Can we make any initial generalizations about the three texts we analyzed based on our findings? Are there things we previously thought were true about Aesop's Fables that this analysis has shown to be false? What else did we learn from this exercise?

Semantic feature analysis can also be used to deepen understanding of concepts from other subjects, such as science, history, or math. Any subject area that would benefit from cross-concept or cross-vocabulary comparisons could use the chart to facilitate student analysis and discussion.

Reference: http://www.readingrockets.org/strategies/semantic_feature_analysis

Riddles are a form of word play that lets students have fun while using their thinking skills. It helps to build inferential thinking, because riddles use indirect clues and deliberately vague language. Riddles also rely on students' ability to use what they already know to figure out the clues. Because some riddles use figurative language, they are an excellent way to introduce students to the type of interpretation and thinking required when dealing with metaphors or personifications that they may meet in other texts. Some riddles also use puns, which can help to teach the concept of homophones (words that sound alike but have different spellings) or homographs (words that are spelled alike but have different meanings). It would be best to use riddles as a way of introducing (or expanding upon) a concept that the class is discussing, so that it ties into something related to the curriculum.

Here are a couple of examples of riddles (although each country or culture will likely have tons of other relevant examples):

- Take one out and scratch my head, I am now black but once was red. (*Answer: a match*)
- What has 100 legs, but cannot walk? (*Answer: 50 pairs of pants*)
- I am weightless, but you can see me. Put me in a bucket, and I'll make it lighter. What am I? (*Answer: a hole*)



FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION WALL

Put up several pieces of chart paper on the wall and encourage students to write poems, questions, suggestions, jokes/riddles relating to topics you discussed in class. Discuss as a class what ground rules everyone needs to follow (e.g., no insults, no offensive words, keep it linked to what we're learning about in class, etc.) and collectively agree what the consequences would be if these ground rules weren't followed (e.g., we will put down the freedom wall).

The teacher can use the freedom wall as a formative assessment mechanism, noting how the entries reflect students' understanding and appreciation of topics discussed, as well as how the students are progressing in their spelling, vocabulary, and composition skills.



USE YOUR MARBLES

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You can use this strategy to encourage all learners to ask questions that will help the entire class to think and learn. (It is also a great way to do informal formative assessments, to get a sense of which students and/or concepts taught in class need more supportive instruction.) This is especially useful for classes where there are second language learners who are often hesitant in asking questions, because they are not yet confident in expressing themselves.

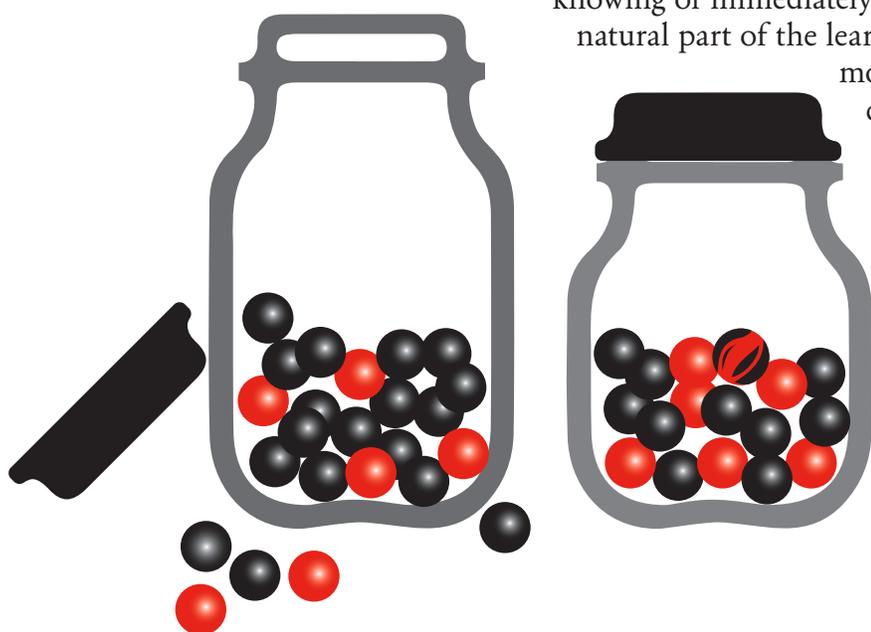
You will need two equally sized glass jars, and a set of 100 marbles (or any other small item that can be moved from one jar to another, like pebbles or colored sticks). Explain to the class that asking questions is a good way to clarify and deepen their understanding, and that sharing any questions they may have with the whole class will not only help the person asking the question, but all other students as well.

Present the two jars. Explain that every time someone in class shares a question that clarifies or deepens a topic that the class is discussing, the teacher will move one marble into the empty jar. Once all of the marbles have been transferred into the “Question Asked” jar, the whole class will agree to do something they can all enjoy. Examples might be getting 10 extra minutes of free reading/writing time; going outdoors to play a quick game during class; taking time to learn a new dance step or a new song; getting extra time for a teacher read-aloud of a favorite book, etc.

At the initial stages, help students to deepen the kinds of questions they ask, so that they are increasingly more open-ended or elaborative. If necessary, the teacher can do a mini-lesson about questioning skills to help clarify this task for the class.

This strategy helps to demonstrate to students that not knowing or immediately understanding everything is a natural part of the learning process. It also get students more practice in thinking and questioning skills, which are an important part of the self-monitoring tasks critical to deeper comprehension.

Reference: Kathleen and Eric Mohr. “Extending English Language Learners’ Classroom Interactions Using the Response Protocol.” Article accessed on the Reading Rockets website: www.readingrockets.org.



SYNONYM DOMINOES

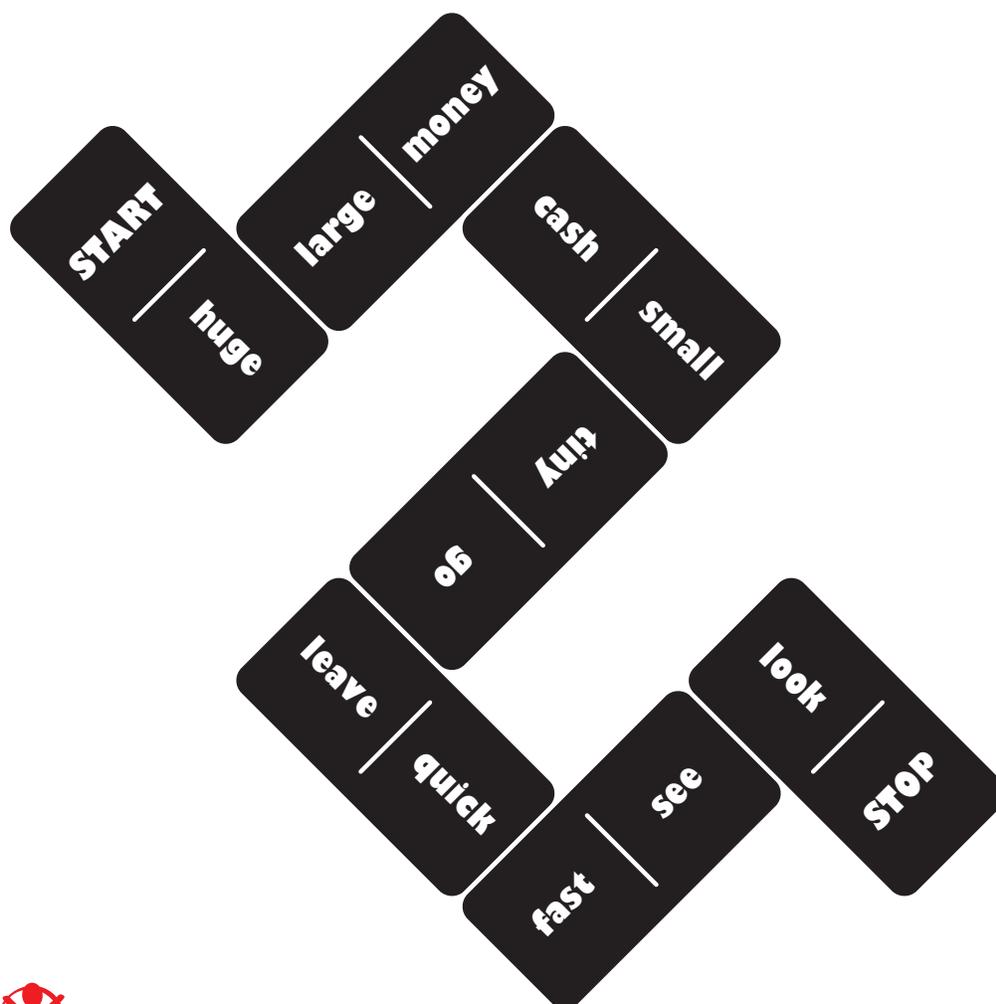
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Prepare a set of word dominoes with a pair of words on each one. Each word on a domino should have a synonym on another domino. (One of the word dominoes should have the START logo, and another domino should have the STOP logo, along with another word that is a synonym for another word on another domino.)

Use the word dominoes to play a round of synonym dominoes. Distribute the dominoes equally among the students, or have each student take one domino from a pile when their turn is up. The game starts by putting down the domino with the START logo on it. Students will take turns and put down cards to connect synonyms together, as in the example below.

Have students demonstrate that the words are indeed synonyms by using both words interchangeably in a sentence. The game ends when the student puts down the domino with the STOP logo on it.

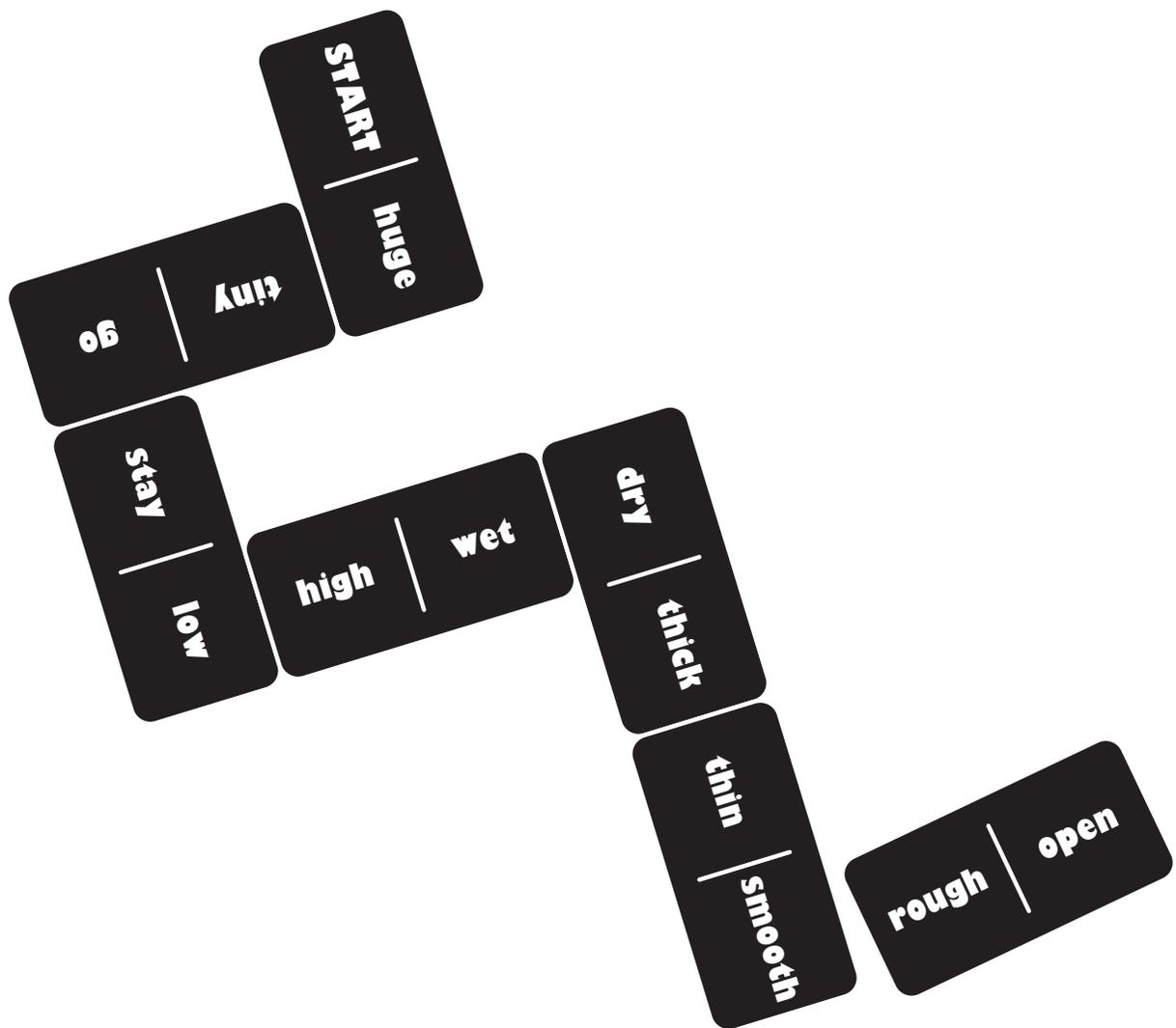
Reference: http://www.fcrr.org/studentactivities/v_002b.pdf



ANTONYM DOMINOES

This is similar to the Synonym Dominoes game, except that this time students will connect two words that are the opposite of each other. The class can use the same set of word dominoes, with play beginning once the player with the piece containing the START logo lays it down. The example below shows how the beginnings of a game might look like.

Have students use gestures or drawings to demonstrate what each word in the antonym pair means, and then get them to use the antonym pair in one or two sentences. The game ends when the domino with the STOP logo is laid down (or when no other possible antonym pairs can be found).



THUMBS UP, THUMBS DOWN, THUMBS SIDeways



Teachers or facilitators can do this quick activity to check on how each member of the class assesses their understanding of words or concepts being discussed. It is a way to get students to self-monitor their comprehension. It also lets the teacher or facilitator know what is still unclear, or whether adjustments need to be made in instruction so that the whole class gets the ideas being discussed.

Explain what each gesture means before asking the students to show the thumb sign that best describes their level of understanding about a word, concept, or text just studied:

- **Thumbs Up:** I completely understand all of this. I can explain this to someone else.
- **Thumbs Sideways:** I understand part of it, but I am still unsure about a few things. I need to confirm whether my idea is right.
- **Thumbs Down:** I am just starting to learn this, and I don't understand it yet. I need more help to understand what this means.

Once everyone knows what each thumb sign means, give the prompt to which the students will respond using their thumb. For example, the teacher can say: "I fully understand what the story "The Crow and the Pitcher" was all about. How much do you agree with this sentence? Are you thumbs up, thumbs down, or thumbs sideways?"

Observe and note the students who gave a thumbs down sign, and hold a small group session with them to further clarify the text. You could also ask the thumbs up and thumbs sideways students to pair up and discuss the text so that the thumbs sideways students can clarify or confirm their ideas.

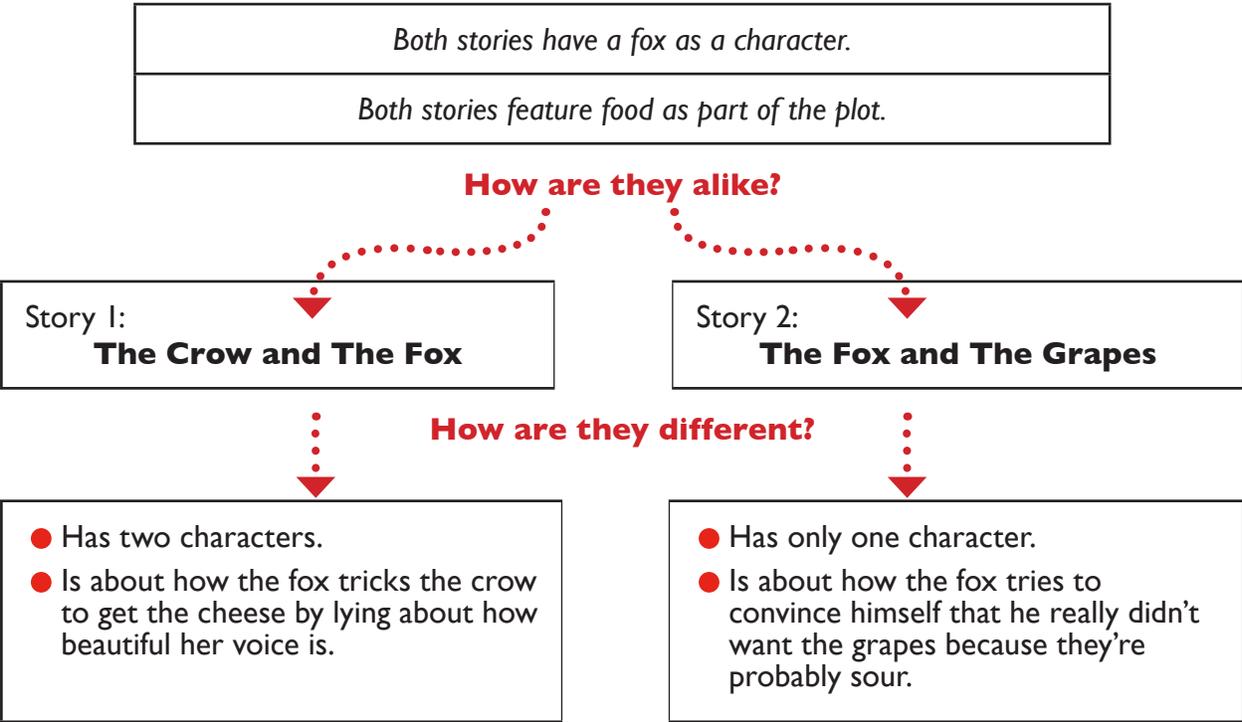


COMPARE-A-STORY



Select two stories and get students to use a graphic organizer to compare and contrast these two texts. Students will write down the title of each story in the designated boxes in the middle. Students will then discuss what story elements the stories have in common, and list those in the section “How Are They Alike?” Finally, students will discuss what is unique to each story, and write those down in each story’s designated section under “How Are They Different?”

A graphic organizer with sample responses filled in is provided below:



Source: http://www.fcrr.org/studentactivities/c_010b.pdf

SENTENCE FRAMES: MONITORING AND CLARIFYING UNDERSTANDING



Teachers can help students be more conscious about the strategies they use to check their own comprehension. Monitoring and clarifying understanding helps students do just that. The teacher can explain what a student does when monitoring and clarifying for understanding. (e.g., “Monitoring your understanding is when you ask yourself if what you are reading makes sense. Clarifying is when you use different strategies to figure out the meaning of text.”)

Teachers can guide students in monitoring and clarifying their understanding by providing some sentence frames that the students will complete. Completing and writing down these sentence frames helps the students make their thinking explicit. The teacher can thus get a sense of what strategies the students already know how to use, whether they choose strategies appropriate to the task, and what strategies they may not yet be comfortable with.

Below are some sample sentence frames that students can use:

- a. *The part about _____ did not make sense so I reread and now I know _____.*
- b. *The part about _____ did not make sense so I read two sentences back and two sentences forward and now I know _____.*
- c. *I didn't know the word _____ but I used context clues to figure out that it means _____.*
- d. *The part about _____ confused me so I _____ to figure it out. (reread / read ahead / used context clues / used the dictionary / used pictures)*

Source: <http://teachersites.schoolworld.com/webpages/Hultenius/sentence.cfm>

SENTENCE FRAME: COMPARE AND CONTRAST



Sometimes, students have a clear idea in their head about a task or question in class, but are not yet fully able (or are not confident about their ability) to express it. This is especially true for second language learners. Teachers can help to guide students through to expression by providing sentence frames that they can complete. As students get more practice in expressing their ideas, they will eventually not need the scaffolding that sentence frames provide.

Let's say students are being asked to compare and contrast. As was mentioned in items 6 and 9, to compare is to state how two things are similar, while to contrast is to state how they are different. After students have been given time to think about the two things they are being asked to compare and contrast, the teacher can guide students in expressing their ideas orally or in writing by providing this sample sentence frame:

“X and Y are similar in that they both _____. But they are also different because X _____, while Y _____.”

If needed, the teacher can provide an example of how to use the sentence frame. If the class were being asked to compare two characters from the Harry Potter series, for example, the teacher could say:

“Harry and Draco are similar in that they both have parents that studied at Hogwarts. But they are also different because Harry did not grow up with his parents, while Draco was raised by parents who looked after his every need.”

SENTENCE FRAME: SUMMARIZING THE SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

The sentence frame scaffolding can also be used to guide students in recounting the sequence of events in a given story. When learning to summarize the main plot points in a story, students might begin with the basic beginning-middle-end plot structure. In this case, the teacher could provide the following sentence frame:

“The story of _____ begins with _____; continues with _____; and ends with _____.”

Again, the teacher could show the class how to use this sentence frame by applying it to a story different from what the class is being asked to summarize. It would be best to use a story that the class has previously learned. For example, the teacher could demonstrate the sentence frame using the story of *The Crow and the Pitcher*:

*“The story of **The Crow and the Pitcher** begins with **the thirsty crow finding a pitcher of water**; continues with **the crow dropping pebbles in to make the water rise**; and ends with **the crow finally able to drink and quench her thirst**.”*

Other sequence of events sentence frames could be used when the class is being asked to give a slightly more detailed recollection of the events in the story. For example:

- **In the story of _____, everything began when _____. Then, _____. After that, _____. Next, _____. Finally, _____.**
- **This was what happened in the story of _____. First, _____. Second, _____. Third, _____. Fourth, _____. Finally, _____.**

SENTENCE FRAME: DESCRIPTION OR DEFINITION

Another task for which the sentence frame can be used is when students are being asked to describe or define a specific concept or object. This can be used for vocabulary activities (or even grammar-related topics) in language arts. It can also be used for content subjects like science, geography, or math.

Let's say the class is discussing the Aesop fable "The Dog in the Manger" and you need to clarify what a manger is. After showing photos, or leading the class in discussions about feeding animals in a farm to build on background knowledge the students already have, the teacher can have the students write a complete sentence definition or description of the word "manger" using the sentence frame below:

"A manger is a kind of _____ that _____."

The teacher should go around the room as the students are writing or sharing their sentence with a seatmate to see if any students need additional support with this task. Students can then be asked to share their sentence with their seatmate, after which one student can be asked to state their definition to the whole class. An example of a completed sentence might be: ***"A manger is a kind of container where hay or other types of food for farm animals is placed so that the animals can eat from it."***



UNDERSTANDING CHARACTERS



Teachers can help students to gain a deeper understanding of who the characters in a story are and what may have driven them to do certain actions. Understanding characters in this way enriches students' comprehension of the text, and facilitates students' ability to connect their own thoughts, feelings and experiences to those of the characters they meet in literature.

Teachers can aid this process by explicitly teaching skills like:

- Noticing what a given character says
- Noticing what the narrator says about a particular character
- Noting what other characters say about a given character
- Understanding that certain details in a story can serve as clues to what a character is thinking or feeling (especially where these are only implied and not specifically stated by the narrator or the character)
- Understanding a character's point of view, purpose, or motive

Teachers can also use an interactive writing activity to get students to think about the characters, using a simple chart like the one below. The teacher can serve as a scribe for the whole class to analyze Character 1, before asking students to work in pairs or on their own in completing the analysis for the other character/s. Students can also work on the chart in small groups.

Story:		
Name of Character	What the Character Did	Why the Character Did This
Character 1:	a. b. c.	a. b. c.
Character 2:	a. b. c.	a. b. c.

An example of a completed chart is provided below:

Story: The Hare and the Tortoise		
Name of Character	What the Character Did	Why the Character Did This
Character 1: Hare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Bragged about how fast he could run b. Agreed to a race against Tortoise c. Made fun of how slow Tortoise was going d. Decided to sleep during the race 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Was overly proud about his speed b. Thought he could easily win a race against anyone because of how fast he was c. Was very boastful and thought it was okay to belittle others who were not as fast as him. Maybe wanted to discourage Tortoise? d. Was so confident he could catch up with Tortoise even if he stopped to sleep
Character 2: Tortoise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Challenged Hare to a race b. Kept on going even after Hare made fun of her c. Never stopped until she reached the finish line 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Was tired of hearing the Hare boast and brag about his speed b. Knew that it was important to keep her word and to finish the race. Wanted to teach Hare a lesson. c. Was determined to meet her goal.

Source: Fountas and Pinnell (2006). "Chapter 23 – Designing Minilessons to Support Thinking About Texts in a Reading Workshop." *Teaching for Comprehending and Fluency*. Heinemann.

WORD STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS: ROOTS, ROOT WORDS, AFFIXES



Students need to learn strategies for learning new words or solving unknown words so that they can deal with word learning independently, be it in inside or outside the classroom. One way that students can figure out word meaning is by analyzing the parts that make up that word.

Words can be made up of a root, a root word, and affixes. Students will need to understand what each of these word parts are:

- An **affix** is a word part that you add to the beginning (prefix) or the end (suffix) of a word to form a new word. Re-, pre-, and un- are examples of prefixes, while -ly and -ful are examples of suffixes.
- A **root word** is a complete word to which an affix can be added to form a new word. Quick, write, heat, and happy are examples of root words. Adding a prefix or suffix can change these root words to form a new word.
- A **root** is a word part that often cannot stand on its own. In the English language, roots are usually words from the Greek or Latin languages. Aqua, logy, and multi are examples of roots. They do not mean anything on their own in English, but they are often seen as part of English words like aquarium, biology, and multiply.

A student who knows the meaning of a number of affixes and roots will be better able to solve unfamiliar words and read these independently. Taking the time to help students notice these word parts as they are studying a set of vocabulary words, and asking them to connect these word parts to other words they may know, can get students to understand how words are formed.

Different languages will have different ways of forming words, but getting students to understand the rules and patterns that go into a word's structure will help them in figuring out how to deal with new words.

Source: www.readingrockets.org/article/root-words-and-affixes/

Understanding a story deeply goes beyond just being able to retell what happened. Students need to be able to state the larger message or theme that the author is trying to convey.

Help students to collaborate in identifying the main theme of a particular story by asking them to form theme teams. Divide the class into groups of four or five. Each small group should consider the story they just heard or read, and come up with a common response to at least three of the following questions:

- *Why do you think the author wrote this story?*
- *What did this story make you think about or feel?*
- *What does this story mean to you? How does it relate to your life or your experiences?*
- *What is the author really trying to say? What message is the author trying to express through this story?*
- *Does the title relate to the theme of the story? Does the title give a clue about the author's bigger message?*
- *Is there more than one theme or important message in this story?*
- *Does this story remind you of another story (or movie, song, poem) with a similar message or theme? Why? What is similar between them?*

Have the theme teams present their thoughts on the theme of the story through a creative activity, like making a poster or singing a song that relates to the theme they identified. Then have each team share their answer to at least one of the questions in the list.

Source: Fountas and Pinnell (2006). "Chapter 23 – Designing Minilessons to Support Thinking About Texts in a Reading Workshop." *Teaching for Comprehending and Fluency*. Heinemann.

IDIOMATIC EXPRESSIONS



Idioms are time-worn, colorful expressions that have come to mean something in a particular culture, but which cannot be understood in a word-for-word, literal sense. In English, for example, the expression “I’m feeling under the weather” means the speaker does not feel well or healthy. A native speaker of English or someone who has heard this expression several times in specific contexts will understand what the expression means. But learners to whom English is a new language and who have not had the same exposure may find it hard to get what it means. Most languages, not just English, have idioms and expressions like these. Teachers thus need to watch out for these expressions, and help second language learners get at their meaning so that they do not end up getting confused because they were interpreting the expression literally.

A good way to help students deal with idioms is to use them in context, and in different scenarios. For example, for the idiom “let the cat out of the bag,” you could use these example sentences and ask the students to figure out the meaning based on context clues:

“Stella has no idea that we are planning this party for her. We want this to be a big surprise, so when you see her, don’t let the cat out of the bag.”

“Paul was starting to suspect that something was wrong. Even though I didn’t want to tell him my secret yet, I had to let the cat out of the bag. I told him that we were having a baby.”

Have the students analyze these two sentences and figure out what the expression means. Then, get them to restate the sentence using words that can be understood literally. You could also get them to draw the literal meaning of the expression and the actual meaning of the expression, and put a big check mark next to the correct drawing. This can help make the meaning stick, especially for visual learners.

Source: <http://www.vocabulary.co.il/idioms/#bottom>

IF TWO PICTURES PAINT A COMPOUND WORD...

Compound words combine two separate words to form a new word. The individual words that make up the compound word often give a clue to its meaning.

Help students get familiar with a set of compound words by presenting the words that make them up in drawing form and as a math equation. You could also provide the meanings to these compound words in a separate box; let the class identify the compound word and the meaning that matches it. For example:

 +  = _____

 +  = _____

 +  = _____

 +  = _____

 +  = _____

- Possible meanings:
- Something to protect you from getting wet
 - Something beautiful that grows in the garden
 - A sport where you kick the ball
 - Someone who heads a committee
 - A sport where you dribble and shoot the ball

(Answers:
football;
sunflower;
raincoat;
basketball;
chairperson)

Have the students write or say sentences that use these compound words after discussing their meaning.

Get them to think of other compound words, and then draw their own drawing equations and ask a partner to solve it.

Source: <http://www.vocabulary.co.il/compound-words/>

FIGURING OUT FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE: SIMILE



Writers use figures of speech or figurative language to add color and depth to the ideas they are trying to express. It is an attempt to create a mental image, to help readers to form a picture of an idea through words.

Many figures of speech attempt to draw comparisons between things that are not at all like each other at first blush. For example, people can be compared to animals, places, or objects. The intent of this comparison is to highlight features or characteristics that make the text's description of that person, place, or thing come alive for the reader.

A simile is a type of figurative language that compares two things that may not seem to have a lot in common. It does this by using the words “**like**” or “**as**.” Some widely used examples of similes include the phrases “busy as a bee” or “fits like a glove.” Sometimes, the point of comparison can be easy to see, and can be done in one short sentence. For example: “Her eyes shone like the sun.” At other times, the simile may need to be explained a bit further, as in the line “Life is like a box of chocolates; you never know what you’re going to get.”

Teachers or facilitators can help students understand the use of similes by helping them to compare dissimilar things, but which share a distinct characteristic. One exercise is to provide a simile completion task, like the one below:

- *He clung like a _____ to his mother.*
- *She laughed like a _____.*
- *The crowd trooped in like a _____.*
- *She was as graceful as a _____.*
- *He moved as fast as _____.*

If students are not yet familiar with comparing unlike things, a box of words from which they can choose the appropriate word to fill in the blanks above could be provided:

leech hyena herd of elephants swan lightning

It would also help to have a deeper discussion of why these two unlike things are being compared to each other. What does a hyena sound like? How does a swan move, or a herd of elephants? What is the speed of lightning? How is that similar to the subject of this sentence? What other things can we compare the subject to? Having this type of discussion deepens students' understanding of similes, and how they can use them in both their reading and their writing.

Source: <http://www.mywordwizard.com/similes-for-kids.html>

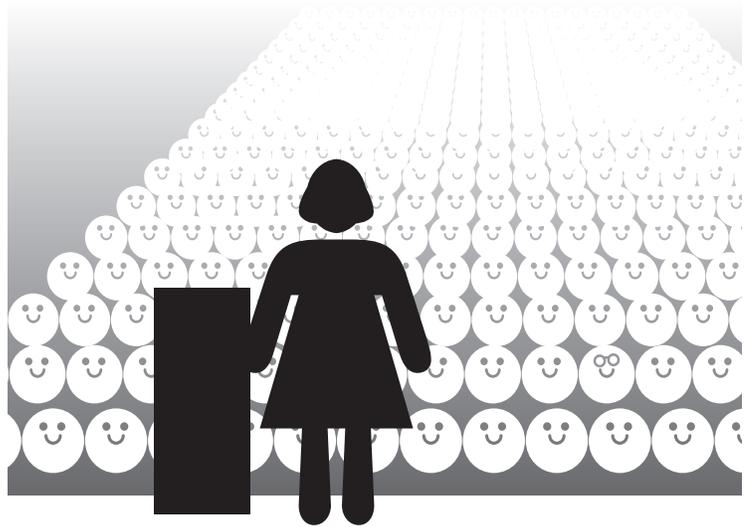
FIGURING OUT FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE: METAPHORS

Another type of figurative language is the metaphor. Metaphors also compare two dissimilar things, but do not use the words “like” or “as.” Metaphors compare two things directly. One thing is not just like another thing—it IS that thing. Because the point of comparison or similarity is not stated up front, as in a simile, metaphors may be more challenging to figure out. It is harder to understand the metaphor “He is such a dinosaur” than the sentence “His views are so old-fashioned that he’s like a dinosaur,” where a simile is used.

That said, it is the effort and thinking it takes to get at the meaning that is the metaphor’s own reward. When students have to work at figuring out what could possibly be similar between these two things, their understanding of it becomes that much stronger.

To help students figure out metaphors, it would help to discuss a couple of examples. These can be a discussion of metaphors found in a story, poem, or text that they are reading. It can also be a more direct lesson that gives them a set of metaphors that they can analyze to get at what each sentence is trying to express. For example, students can pair up to figure out these metaphors, and why they work:

- *His life was a rollercoaster.*
- *You are my sunshine.*
- *She looked out and saw a sea of faces.*
- *His room was a disaster area.*
- *Laughter is the best medicine.*



Teachers and facilitators can provide guide questions to help the pairs along. For example, pairs could be asked to think about the following: *What does a rollercoaster do, and why is that just like life? How does sunshine make you feel/ what does sunshine do for you? What does the sea look like, and what would a sea of faces look like? What does a disaster area look like? What is similar between how laughter and medicine make you feel?)*

Teachers and facilitators can also model a think-aloud, to demonstrate the thought process in one's head when one is trying to figure out what a metaphor is trying to say. For example, let's take this sample text:

He was such a dinosaur. He insisted on doing things the old-fashioned way. He wasn't interested in hearing about what he called "new-fangled distractions." He didn't even want to touch a computer.

A teacher could model a think-aloud of what the dinosaur metaphor means by saying out loud: *"Hmm...it says he's a dinosaur. Is the author trying to say he is big and scary? I'll read on and see if there are more clues in the text. Now it says he's old-fashioned and doesn't want to learn new things. How is a dinosaur old-fashioned? Is it because dinosaurs lived years and years ago and weren't able to keep up with what was changing in the world? Maybe that's what the author means. The person is a dinosaur because he couldn't be bothered to adapt and learn new things."*

Reference: <https://blog.udemy.com/metaphor-examples-for-kids/>

FIGURING OUT FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE: PERSONIFICATION



Personification is a figure of speech popularly used in poems, songs, and even advertisements. It gives objects the qualities or abilities of people. By doing so, the text provides a clearer image or idea of what is being described. For example, consider the following examples:

- *That last piece of pie is calling my name.*
- *Time flies and waits for no one.*
- *Their town was firmly in winter's icy grip.*
- *The camera just loves her.*
- *The wind howled all night.*

To help students appreciate and understand personification, get them to think through what the sentence is trying to say, and translate the sentence in straightforward terms. Then, get them to compare what makes a sentence that uses personification more colorful or more appealing than a straightforward sentence. For example, you could ask: *Which of these sentences gets you to use more senses in understanding what it is trying to say?*

“The camera just loves her.” VS. **“She is very photogenic.”**

“Their town was firmly in winter's icy grip.” VS. **“They had sub-zero weather for months.”**

The discussion should underscore that there are times and places where personification is appropriate. Like any other literary device, it can be overused, and its effectiveness diminished. However, when used appropriately and judiciously, personification can help to hold readers' interest and make the text come alive for them.

Reference: <http://examples.yourdictionary.com/examples-of-personification-for-kids.html>

STORY ELEMENT SORT

A key part of comprehension is being able to identify the key elements of a story read or heard. Story elements include:

- **Characters:** the key players in the story
- **Setting:** where the story takes place
- **Plot:** the main events that take place in a story, or a statement that boils down those key events into a summary
- **Problem:** the issue or obstacle in the story that the lead character/s must solve
- **Solution:** how the problem or issue is addressed in the story
- **Theme:** the main message that the story is trying to convey

Get students to review the story elements in stories that they have heard or read by doing a Story Element Sort. On the board, post big cards labeled with the different story elements. Alternately, you could also prepare a blank chart or matrix like the one below:

Characters	Setting	Plot	Problem	Solution	Theme

Prepare a set of cards that correspond to the different story elements for stories that the students have heard or read. Shuffle the cards so that they are in random order. Get volunteers to take one card, read it aloud, and then classify what story element it should fall under.

Words to put on cards that can be sorted under this activity are provided below, as examples. These are from the fables “The Crow and the Pitcher,” “The Man With The Cloak,” and “The Fox and The Crow.” But you could create your own cards based on other stories that you’ve used with students.

a. Characters cards

- Fox and Crow
- Crow
- Man with a cloak, the Sun, the Wind

b. Setting cards

- A hot desert
- A tree in the forest
- A country road

c. Plot cards

- Fox tricks crow into dropping cheese
- Sun and Wind argue over who is stronger and more powerful
- Crow tries to quench her thirst

d. Problem cards

- Crow cannot reach water at the bottom of the pitcher
- Sun and Wind want to take the cloak off the man to show their power
- Fox is hungry and wants to get the cheese from the Crow

e. Solution cards

- Crow drops pebbles into the pitcher and the water rises
- Sun succeeds by shining on the man and making him feel warm
- Fox flatters the Crow and gets the Crow to drop the cheese when it sings

f. Theme cards

- Necessity is the mother of invention.
- Persuasion is better than force.
- Do not be fooled by flattery.

Reference: http://www.fcrr.org/studentactivities/c_005b.pdf

Scaffolding is a temporary support that a teacher or facilitator provides to aid students in accomplishing a task that they cannot yet do on their own. By providing initial guidance, a teacher helps students to practice a skill with some assistance, and then gradually reduces the amount of support until students can do the skill on their own. (It takes its name from the scaffolding that is temporarily put around a building during repair, and later removed.)

A scaffolded reading experience is a planned instructional approach that uses pre-reading, during-reading, and post-reading tasks to help learners succeed in a given reading activity. Teachers and facilitators can use this as a framework for planning the depth and duration of the support that students will need, depending on three things: the characteristics and abilities of the **students**; the relative complexity of the **text**; and the **purpose** for which the text is being read.

Teachers can choose from a range of activities for the pre-, during-, and post-reading stages, depending on: [a] how able or ready the students are to undertake the task, [b] how complex the vocabulary or content of the text is, and [c] how much depth the purpose of the reading task demands.

Pre-reading Activities	During-reading activities	Post-reading activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Motivating interest ● Activating background knowledge ● Providing text-specific knowledge ● Pre-teaching vocabulary ● Pre-teaching concepts ● Stating predictions ● Relating the reading to students' lives ● Expressing content or vocabulary in students' mother tongue ● Using students or community members as resource persons (e.g., to speak about the topic of the reading, or to share knowledge related to the reading) ● Assigning a question that students need to find the answer to, or a detail that they can locate (or that they need to infer) from the text 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Silent reading, with students asked to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Note down questions they may have, or interesting details they noted ● Notice vocabulary words that they learned during the pre-reading stage ● Determine if the predictions they made during pre-reading turned out to be correct ● Make new predictions as they are reading ● Interactive read-aloud ● Paired reading, with students taking turns in reading text out loud and asking questions of each other 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Small group discussion ● Whole class question-and-answer session ● Debate ● Writing about the text read (poster, letter, diary entry, reaction paragraph, song parody, rap, etc.) ● Artistic/graphic/non-verbal activities ● Application or field-based service activity ● Drama ● Readers' theater ● Students posing questions to each other ● Students teaching (or relaying) what they learned to someone else (e.g., younger sibling, parent, neighbor)

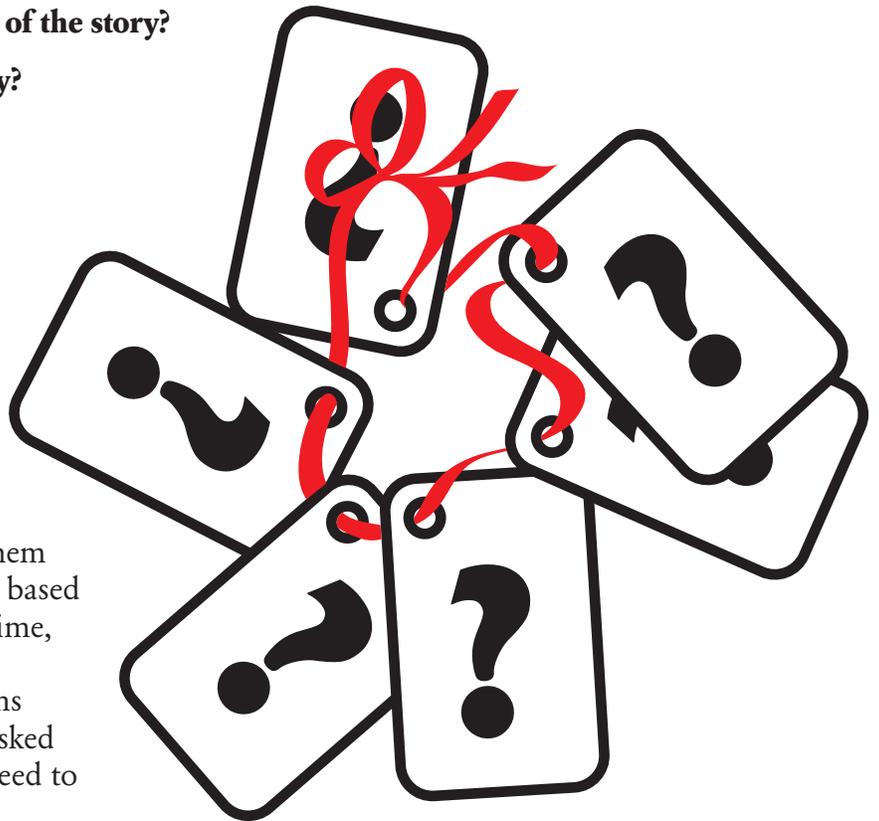
Source: <http://www.learner.org/workshops/readingk2/support/ScaffoldingReadingExp.1.pdf>

Guide students in retelling a story that they just read or heard by providing them with seven basic questions, all written on cards and bound together by a binder ring or a strong piece of yarn.

The seven question cards are:

- **What is the title of the story, and who is the author (and illustrator, if that information is provided)?**
- **Who are the main characters?**
- **Where and when does the story take place?**
- **What happens in the beginning of the story?**
- **What is the problem in the story?**
- **How is the problem solved?**
- **How does the story end?**

Have the students form groups with eight members. Each member will answer one question card from the retell ring, and then pass it on to the person to their left or right, who will answer the next question. Once all students have answered the questions, have them prepare or write a summary retelling based on their retell ring responses. Over time, with repeated use of the retell ring, students will know the basic questions they need to answer when they are asked to retell a story, and will no longer need to be prompted by using the ring.



Source: http://www.fcrr.org/studentactivities/c_008b.pdf

ASK AND ANSWER



Get students to monitor their understanding of a story or informational text that they are reading. Get them to generate their own questions about the text, based off a prompt from a question word card.

The teacher or facilitator can prepare a set of question word card prompts that the student can choose from at a designated time while reading the text. Options may include the following:

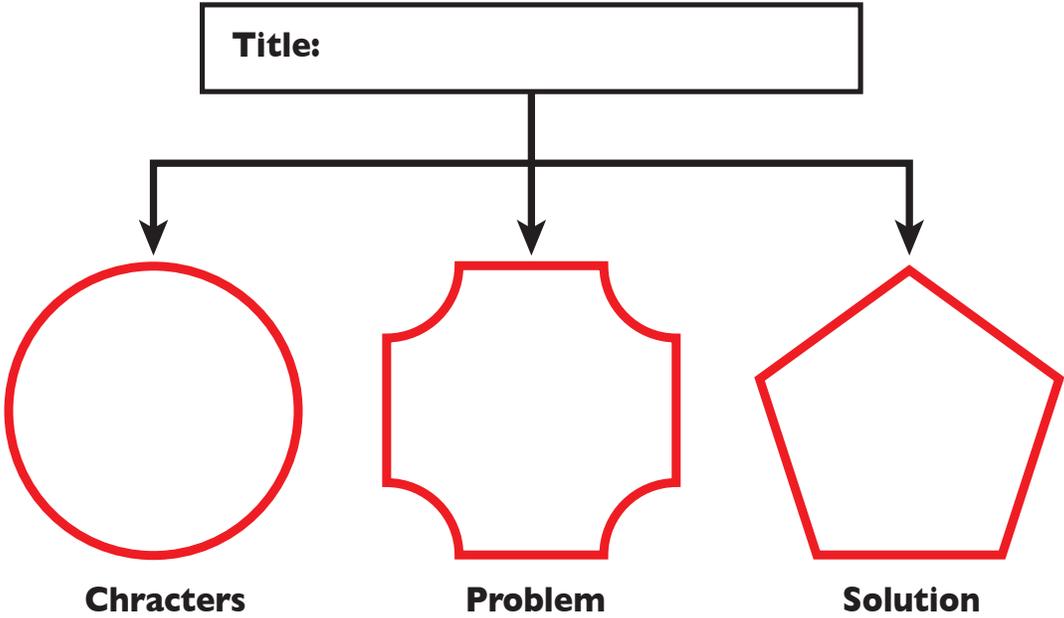
Who	When	Where
Why	How	What
Define	Compare	What if
List	Summarize	Identify

The student will pause reading at a specified part of the text (e.g., after three paragraphs, before the next sub-heading or section, after two pages, etc.), select a question word prompt, and then ask a question beginning with that word prompt that relates to the section just read. The student can then answer his or her own question. If working in pairs, students can take turns reading the text aloud and asking each other questions. Get students to use as many of the question word prompts as possible during this exercise.

Source: http://www.fcrr.org/studentactivities/c_029b.pdf

SUM SUMMARY!

Help students come up with a summary of a story they just read by using a graphic organizer. The graphic organizer asks them for the title of the story, the characters, the problem, and the solution. Then, a summary box asks them to add these different pieces to come up with a summary in sentence or paragraph form. The graphic organizer is show below:



 +  +  = **Summary Statement**

Source: http://www.fcrr.org/studentactivities/c_031b.pdf

Post the following poster of tips and pointers to help students identify solutions they can try out when they are stuck or do not understand what they are reading.

When I Read...	Things I Can Do To Help Me Understand What I Read:
<p>Before I read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Think: What do I already know about this? ● Predict: What do I think will happen? <p>As I read, ask:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Did I understand what I just read? ● Were there any words I didn't understand? ● Was anything confusing? ● Can I retell in my own words what I just read? ● Did what I predict before I started reading really happen in the story? ● Do I have a new prediction of what might happen next? <p>After I read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Summarize: What were the main events or ideas in the text? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Sound out an unknown word. b. Go back and reread the passage. c. Look up the meaning of an unknown word. d. Read ahead and see if it makes sense. e. Ask a question and try to find the answer. f. Slow down as I read.

Students can also make their own bookmarks with these pointers on it, so that they have their own copy of these tips close at hand whenever they need it.

Source: http://www.fcrr.org/studentactivities/c_033b.pdf

Students need to be able to distinguish facts from opinions. Facts are details that can be checked, researched, or verified. They have been proven to be true. Opinions are points of view or beliefs held by certain people, and they can be argued over or debated without reaching a clear resolution. All people are entitled to an opinion, and no one opinion can be assumed to be truer than others. In contrast, facts are facts, and their truth applies everywhere.

Prepare a list of statements about a set of topics. Some statements should be facts, and others should be opinions. Write or post the labels “Fact” and “Opinion” on opposite corners of the room. Get all students to stand up and listen as the teacher or facilitator reads each statement. The students will go to either the Fact or the Opinion corner, depending on their assessment of the statement read.

Some possible statements that could be used are below:

- Chocolate is made from cacao pods. (*Fact*)
- Chocolate tastes best when it is cold. (*Opinion*)
- Cars are better than trains. (*Opinion*)
- Cars have engines. (*Fact*)
- Dogs make the best pets. (*Opinion*)
- Dogs have four paws. (*Fact*)
- Stories have a beginning, a middle, and an end. (*Fact*)
- Stories are better than poems. (*Opinion*)
- Goldilocks is a character from a children’s story. (*Fact*)
- Goldilocks is too greedy and naughty. (*Opinion*)

(An alternate way to use this activity is to have the statements written down on cards, then getting a student to pick one, read it aloud, and post it under the appropriate column.)

After the activity, get students to think of their own Fact and Opinion statements, writing a fact and an opinion about a given topic. They could then have their own guessing games with other classmates’ statements.

Source: http://www.fcrr.org/studentactivities/c_020a.pdf

CAUSE AND EFFECT MATCH

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Help students to understand the cause-effect relationship between two events or incidents. That is, certain occurrences in a story (or in real life) are the result or effect of a particular factor or cause.

Prepare a set of cause and effect cards. Separate out the cause cards, and post the effect cards on the board. Shuffle the cause cards and get children to pick one card, read it out loud, and match it to the correct effect card on the board. Get other students to explain why they agree (or disagree) that these two cards match. (Alternatively, the teacher or facilitator could post the cause cards on the board, and then get students to match up the effects cards.)

Cause-effect cards can be linked to stories that have already been discussed. They can also just be general situation-related cards that show the cause-effect relationship. A sample set of cards that relate to some Aesop Fable story lines is provided below:

<p>The crow threw a pebble into the pitcher.</p> <p><i>Cause</i></p>	<p>The water in the pitcher rose a little higher.</p> <p><i>Effect</i></p>
<p>The boy cried wolf so many times, but the villagers found he really wasn't in any danger.</p> <p><i>Cause</i></p>	<p>When the boy cried wolf and he was really in danger, no one believed him and no one came to help.</p> <p><i>Effect</i></p>
<p>The fox tricked the crow into singing, using false praise and flattery.</p> <p><i>Cause</i></p>	<p>The crow opened her beak to sing, and the cheese fell to the ground where the fox could eat it.</p> <p><i>Effect</i></p>

<p>The hare was so sure he would win against the tortoise that he took a nap in the middle of the race.</p> <p><i>Cause</i></p>	<p>The tortoise won over the hare.</p> <p><i>Effect</i></p>
<p>The Wind blew and blew to try to get the cloak off the man.</p> <p><i>Cause</i></p>	<p>The man pulled the cloak even tighter around him.</p> <p><i>Effect</i></p>
<p>The Sun shone brightly on the man with the cloak.</p> <p><i>Cause</i></p>	<p>The man felt so warm under the sun's rays that he took off his cloak.</p> <p><i>Effect</i></p>
<p>The fox jumped and jumped to try to get the grapes, but he couldn't reach them.</p> <p><i>Cause</i></p>	<p>The fox walked away and told himself: "I'm sure they were sour anyway."</p> <p><i>Effect</i></p>
<p>The wolf put on some sheep wool as a disguise and went to mingle with the sheep.</p> <p><i>Cause</i></p>	<p>The sheep didn't know the wolf was among them, and the wolf was able to eat some sheep.</p> <p><i>Effect</i></p>

Teachers and facilitators can make their own cause-effect cards, based on stories they have read together, or on situations that the students would be familiar with.

Source: http://www.fcrr.org/studentactivities/c_020b.pdf

Teachers and facilitators can use this game to give students practice in making inferences based on a given situation. An inference is a conclusion that must be drawn based on facts given, combined with the reader’s own background knowledge. Inferences need to be deduced from the text, because this information is not directly stated.

In this game, the teacher or facilitator posts an Inference Triangle on the board. The circles in the triangle represent answers or inferences that can be drawn from a set of situations that the teacher has written down on separate situation cards. Students will draw a situation card, read it aloud, and find the appropriate inference that answers the question on the card.

A sample Inference Triangle and situation cards are provided below:



When discussing students’ answers, teachers and facilitators should get children to identify what clues in the situation cards prompted them to choose their answer from the Inference Triangle.

Teachers and facilitators can change up the situation cards and the circles in the inference triangles into situations relevant to their contexts. Just make sure that there are enough clues in the situation cards that can help students match it up with an answer in the Inference Triangle.

<p>Ana came rushing into the room, sweating, panting, trying to catch her breath. “I (hah-hah)...came (hah-hah)...as fast (hah-hah)...as I (hah-hah)...could (hah-hah)...Are you (hah-hah)...okay?”</p> <p><i>What was Ana doing before she came into the room?</i></p>	<p>Mother felt Ben’s forehead. It felt warm to the touch. She took the thermometer and checked his temperature. “I don’t feel well, Mother,” Ben said. “Oh dear. Your temperature is at 38 degrees Celsius. I think we should go to the clinic.”</p> <p><i>What is happening to Ben?</i></p>
<p>Carlos was helping his mother in the kitchen. “Help me cut these up, please,” his mother requested. After a minute, Carlos had tears in his eyes and was sniffing.</p> <p><i>What is Carlos doing?</i></p>	<p>“Rita, have you packed everything you need? Do you have your ticket with you? What time is the train leaving?” Rita’s mother was asking her a flurry of questions. “Yes, mother, don’t worry. I have everything I need ready.”</p> <p><i>What will Rita be doing?</i></p>
<p>“Shush,” Roy’s sister whispered to him. “Don’t make a noise. Father just got back from a long trip and he’s very tired. We shouldn’t wake him.”</p> <p><i>What is Roy’s father doing?</i></p>	<p>Celia entered a big room filled with books. There were large tables all throughout, where students were reading and studying. “You can borrow books from here and bring them home, too!” her sister said.</p> <p><i>Where is Celia?</i></p>
<p>My brother came in with two baskets filled with fruits, vegetables, fish, and spices. “You bought a lot of ingredients today,” I said. “These are our supplies for the whole week,” he answered. “There were so many people shopping today.”</p> <p><i>Where did the brother just come from?</i></p>	<p>Tina kept slapping at her arms and legs. “It’s so itchy!” Tina complained, as she scratched the insect bites on her skin. “And they keep making noises in my ear. It’s hard to sleep with them flying around.”</p> <p><i>What insect is bothering Tina?</i></p>
<p>Sara and Kate were dripping wet when they entered the house. “Too bad we didn’t have an umbrella handy,” Kate said. “I hope the papers in my bag are still dry,” said Sara.</p> <p><i>What did Kate and Sara get caught in?</i></p>	<p>Mother’s belly was getting bigger by the day. Father was busy setting up a crib in their room. Grandmother was sewing initials on all the diapers she had just bought. “My sister will be here any day now,” Ed thought. “I can’t wait to meet her.”</p> <p><i>What is Ed’s family expecting?</i></p>

Reference: http://www.fcrr.org/studentactivities/c_022b.pdf

PHRASE PROGRESSION

83

The objective of this activity is to help students practice reading with proper phrasing, expression, and intonation. Students can be paired up so that they take turns reading the whole sentence card, or they can take turns reading each progressively longer phrase in the card until it becomes the whole sentence.

It will be good to prepare phrase-to-sentence cards that use different punctuation marks, so that students can practice putting the appropriate phrasing and expression to the appropriate punctuation mark. Below are some sample phrase-to-sentence cards that students can use.

The cat
The cat **found**
The cat found **a warm place**
The cat found a warm place **to settle down**
The cat found a warm place to settle down **for a nap.**

Do you think
Do you think **you could**
Do you think you could **go to the store**
Do you think you could go to the store **and buy**
Do you think you could go to the store and buy **some milk?**

I was surprised
I was surprised **to see**
I was surprised to see **a huge painting**
I was surprised to see a huge painting **of my face**
I was surprised to see a huge painting of my face **posted on the classroom wall!**

We bought

We bought **vegetables, fruit, and spices**

We bought vegetables, fruit, and spices **from our favorite seller**

We bought vegetables, fruit, and spices from our favorite seller **at the weekend market**

We bought vegetables, fruit, and spices from our favorite seller at the weekend market **yesterday morning.**

It is important

It is important **to look both ways**

It is important to look both ways **before crossing**

It is important to look both ways before crossing **the road**

It is important to look both ways before crossing the road **to keep safe.**

Reference: http://www.fcrr.org/studentactivities/F_015b.pdf

Students' fluent reading can be aided by an ability to chunk sentences into shorter phrases. Chunking helps students know when it is appropriate to pause briefly while reading. Chunking also helps students to process the words into meaningful parts, so they can comprehend better and read with the appropriate expression or feeling.

For this activity, teachers can use any passage or connected text that they would want students to read aloud. On the blackboard, or on individual sheets, students will be asked to chunk each sentence into segments, and place a single slash mark after each word on which they should pause briefly while reading. They can put a double slash after each sentence, to indicate that there should be a longer pause between sentences.

The teacher should demonstrate how to do this with some sample text, using a think-aloud and read-aloud strategy to help students understand why slash marks are being placed after particular words. For example, below is a sample passage:

Goats are very/ useful animals.// This is why/ people raise/ and keep them.// Female goats/ produce milk.// People drink/ goats' milk/ as a source/ of energy.// The milk/ can be used/ to make other food,/ like butter/ or cheese.// Some goats/ have hair/ that is used/ to make wool.// Wool/ is turned into yarn/ that can be made/ into shawls,/ coats,/ or scarves.//

As the teacher or facilitator is marking the text up with slashes or double slashes, it would help if he or she does a think-aloud. The teacher/facilitator could say: *"Hmm...I want the reading to sound natural, and to make sense. So with this first sentence, I think I'll pause after the word 'very,' to give it some emphasis. Then we come to the end of the sentence, so I'll put two slash marks there. Let me try reading that aloud. 'Goats are very (brief pause) useful animals (long pause).'* That sounds right. *Let me go on to the next sentence. I think I'll put a slash mark after why. And then another pause after the word 'raise.'* And then a double slash after the period. *Let me read that aloud and see if the pauses are where they should be...*" Keep doing this for the rest of the passage.

Give students some reminders that they should keep in mind when chunking:

- *There are no defined rules to separate sentences into phrases.*
- *Most people pause somewhere in the middle of sentences.*
- *Sometimes subjects and predicates are placed in separate phrases.*
- *Prepositional phrases, verb phrases, and noun phrases may signal a pause.*
- *Punctuation marks within and at the end of sentences signal phrases and pauses.*

Let the students do the exercise with their assigned text. After marking up the text with single or double slash marks, the students will then be asked to read the text aloud, and put in pauses where the slash marks indicate.

Reference: http://www.fcrr.org/studentactivities/F_013c.pdf

This activity is designed to help students determine the meaning of target words using context clues. Students will work in pairs with a stack of sentence cards. One student will read the sentence aloud to his or her partner, and the other student will give an answer by choosing from the two options written in the sentence. The reader will know which word is the right answer, because the target word and its meaning will both be underlined. Students should alternate between reading/asking the question and figuring out the answer.

Below are some sample sentence cards for this activity:

If a leaf <u>quivers</u> in the wind, does the leaf change colors or <u>shake</u> ?	If a policeman is <u>stern</u> with a person who breaks the law, is he telling jokes or being <u>firm and strict</u> ?
If you didn't get enough sleep and are <u>grumpy</u> , are you hungry or in a <u>bad mood</u> ?	If an office is <u>vacant</u> on Sunday because no one is at work, is it <u>empty</u> or busy?
If a dress is <u>exquisite</u> because it is made of lace, is it too big or <u>very beautiful</u> ?	If a farmer has to <u>prod</u> the cow to move, does he sing to it or <u>push it</u> ?
If the rocks <u>glisten</u> in the river, are they falling from the mountain or <u>reflecting light because they are wet</u> ?	If a mouse knows that a cat is near, he may <u>scurry</u> away. Will the mouse <u>hurry</u> or will he walk slowly?
If you had to <u>yank</u> on a door to open it, do you <u>pull hard</u> or use a key?	If the children had a <u>splendid</u> day at the fair, did they have an <u>enjoyable</u> or unhappy day?

After doing this paired activity, the students could copy the target word and their meanings from the sentence card, and then try to write their own sentences using the target word.

Source: http://www.fcrr.org/studentactivities/V_034b.pdf

Get students to demonstrate their understanding of target vocabulary words through this activity. Present the following table or worksheet. The first column uses the target vocabulary word and poses a yes or no question. The students will answer Yes or No in the second column, and state why they gave that answer in the third column labeled “Why.”

Sentence	Yes or No?	Why?
Would it be <u>astonishing</u> to see a person walking?		
Is a cat <u>frisky</u> when it is sleeping?		
Can a gorilla be <u>enormous</u> ?		
Could you see something if it had <u>vanished</u> ?		
Would you say someone who gives help to the poor is <u>generous</u> ?		
Would you <u>celebrate</u> if you were in trouble?		

Students can do this as an individual exercise, or they can work in groups, with one person assigned as note-taker.

Source: http://www.fcrr.org/studentactivities/v_036b.pdf

ANALOGY TYPES

87

Analogies are an important part of vocabulary and comprehension. In making analogies, students are analyzing word pairs, and finding the pattern that can be applied when completing it, or creating their own.

In this activity, teachers or facilitators will present the different types of analogies, listed below. After presentation and discussion, get students to create their own analogies, using the analogy types and examples as a pattern to follow.

- **Antonyms:** Thick is to thin as wet is to dry.
- **Synonyms:** Happy is to glad as angry is to mad.
- **Characteristic:** Yellow is to banana as red is to tomato.
- **Object/Action:** Ice is to melt as rain is to fall.
- **Part/Whole:** Petal is to flower as toe is to foot.
- **Tool/Worker:** Hammer is to carpenter as paintbrush is to painter.
- **Examples/Types:** Ant is to insect as shark is to fish.

Source: <http://www.vocabulary.co.il/analogies/analogy-types-video/>

COMPLETE THE ANALOGY



Students can work in pairs when doing this activity. They will use a set of analogy cards, placed between them, face down. Pair members will take turns in asking and answering the analogy completion task written in the stack of cards assigned them. One student will read the card aloud to his or her partner, who will then give the answer. The answer to the analogy is given in the card, so that the student reading the card and asking the question will know if their partner's answer is correct. After getting an answer, the pairs can discuss why the answer fits in that analogy. What is the rule governing the analogy? They could also state what type of analogy it is. (See activity 87)

Sample analogy cards are provided below:

necklace is to jewelry as couch is to _____ <i>Answer: furniture</i>	smile is to lips as wink is to _____ <i>Answer: eyes</i>	write is to wrote as hide is to _____ <i>Answer: hid</i>
up is to down as left is to _____ <i>Answer: right</i>	pencil is to write as knife is to _____ <i>Answer: cut</i>	good is to wonderful as tasty is to _____ <i>Answer: delicious</i>
water is to wet as paper is to _____ <i>Answer: dry</i>	bed is to bedroom as toilet is to _____ <i>Answer: bathroom</i>	scales are to fish as _____ is to goats <i>Answer: fur</i>
hungry is to eat as tired is to _____ <i>Answer: rest/sleep</i>	out is to in as above is to _____ <i>Answer: below</i>	scene is to play as chapter is to _____ <i>Answer: book/novel</i>

Source: http://www.fcrr.org/studentactivities/v_033c.pdf

Get students to extend and document their thinking about the vocabulary they have learned during the week. Have students select a word from texts they read that they will define, cite examples for, and write a sentence about (or use in a sentence). Challenge students to choose words that have some depth or complexity to them, whenever possible.

Each student will do this task on half a sheet of letter-sized paper, cut lengthwise. They will write their word on the bottom half part of the front side of their sheet. They will write the target word, its definition, examples or illustrations of the target word, and a sentence using the word in the opposite side of the sheet. It will look like this:

	Target word: <i>mammals</i>
<i>mammals</i>	What it means: <i>Animals that give birth to babies, do not lay eggs, and feed their babies milk</i>
	Examples/Illustration: <i>cats, dogs, monkeys, dolphins, people</i>
	Sentence: <i>Mammals can be as small as a mouse or as big as an elephant.</i>

Once they are done, have students post their word flaps on the wall or on a big poster-sized board. Encourage students to study the other students' word flaps, to state what they like about some of the word flaps, and/or to suggest other definitions, examples or sentences for select words.

ASK-EXPLAIN-LIST



Use this activity to get students to show their understanding of target vocabulary and to list some examples that reference the target word. Students should read the first column, think about what it is asking, and then explain why they answered yes or no in the second column. They will then list examples asked for in the third column.

Use the first item to demonstrate the task to the students. Sample answers are provided for the first row.

Ask:	Answer & Explain:	List:
If you are <u>curious</u> about something, do you want to learn about it?	Why or why not? <i>Yes, because to be curious is to want to know more.</i>	What are some things that you are <u>curious</u> about? <i>I am curious about outer space, about how computers work, and why I sneeze.</i>
If something is <u>familiar</u> to you is it strange?	Why or why not?	List some things that are <u>familiar</u> to you.
If he was <u>patient</u> in waiting for his turn, was he angry?	Why or why not?	What are some times when you need to be <u>patient</u> ?
If a horse runs <u>swiftly</u> , does it move slowly?	Why or why not?	What are some things that move <u>swiftly</u> ?
If you <u>announce</u> something, are you keeping it a secret?	Why or why not?	What are some things that someone may <u>announce</u> ?

Change up the target words and questions in the first and third columns to suit your vocabulary assignments for each week. Make sure to get students to share their answers with the whole class, and to provide additional guidance as needed, especially when the explain and list tasks aren't on point.

Source: http://www.fcrr.org/studentactivities/v_037b.pdf

ROOTING FOR MEANING – MEMORY GAME



One of the ways to build students' capacity to figure out word meaning is to get them to understand how words are structured or formed. Many words build off of another word or word part, and that word or word part's meaning. In some languages it can be a root word to which prefixes or suffixes are added. In other languages, it is a root (or word part) borrowed from another language, such as Greek or Latin. Many languages have a mix of both roots and root words as part of their word structures. Teaching students about roots and root words (or morphemes, as they are called by language experts) helps students recognize and analyze the new words they encounter that use these morphemes. In English, for example, it is said that up to 80% of the words in the English dictionary contain Greek or Latin roots, prefixes, or suffixes. Knowing these word parts prepares students to learn and figure out a huge chunk of English vocabulary, without having to be taught these words directly.

This activity helps to solidify students' knowledge of Greek and Latin roots. (It can be adapted to whatever morphemes are relevant to the local language.) Prepare a set of cards that match up a root with its meaning. The Greek or Latin root is on one card, its meaning is on another. Shuffle these cards and lay them out face down in rows. Each student will get a chance to turn over or place face-up two cards at a time. If the cards they turn over are a root-meaning match, they get to take those cards. If they are not a match, they need to turn the cards face down again and let others take their turn. The key to getting more matches is to remember where specific word cards are located as other students turn them up.

When a student makes a match, the teacher or facilitator should ask the rest of the class for some examples of words that use this root and that demonstrate its meaning. For example, if a student matches up the root "aqua" and its meaning, water, students could mention words like aquarium or aquamarine.

A suggested set of root-and-meaning cards is provided below. Teachers can add on to this initial set, depending on what grade level students are on and what roots they will likely be meeting in the texts that they read.

<i>aqua</i>		water	<i>mal</i>	bad	<i>rupt</i>	to break
<i>aud</i>		to hear	<i>fract</i>	break	<i>spect</i>	to look
<i>bene</i>		good	<i>fac</i>	to make, to do	<i>vis</i>	to see
<i>cent</i>		one hundred	<i>multi</i>	many	<i>jud</i>	judge
<i>homo</i>		same	<i>phon</i>	sound	<i>hetero</i>	different
<i>mono</i>		one	<i>bio</i>	life	<i>tele</i>	far off
<i>fort</i>		strength	<i>port</i>	to carry	<i>circum</i>	around

Source: http://www.fcrr.org/studentactivities/v_014c.pdf

AFFIX MATCH – MEMORY GAME



Teachers and facilitators can use the same memory game activity discussed in item 91 for matching prefixes and suffixes to their meaning. They will use affix-and-meaning word cards instead. Country teams can adapt this activity to use affixes used for the language relevant to each country context.

Below are some suggested affix-meaning word cards that could be used for English vocabulary:

re- again	pre- before	mis- not correctly
un- not	-ful full of	-est most (when comparing)
-er more (when comparing)	anti- against	non- not
im- not	mid- middle	over- go above
sub- under	-able can be done	-ment action or process
-al having characteristic/s of	-less without	-ness state of being
-tion the act or process of	ir- not	-ic having characteristics of
in- not	-ly describes a way of doing	-er person who does the action

As with the other memory game, students will be asked for examples of words that use the prefix or suffix after a match is made. For example, if a student matches **-ful** and **full of**, the class could give words that use this suffix, like beautiful or thoughtful.

Note that some of the prefixes and suffixes mean the same thing. As long as there is a matching meaning card for each prefix or suffix (even if there are multiple cards with the meaning “not” on them), this should not be a problem. There is also at least one suffix here that has two possible meanings, which means that there can be two possible matches to the **-er** suffix card.

As the students give examples, though, it would be important to point out that not all words that have some of these word parts in them use them as a meaningful prefix or suffix. For example, the word **panic** is not a good example for the suffix **-ic**, since this word does NOT mean “to have the characteristics of a pan.” Students should understand that word parts analysis is only one of many strategies that they can use to solve word meanings. They will often need to use other strategies, such as using context clues, or verifying meaning against a dictionary or glossary, to get a fuller sense of what a word means.

Reference: http://www.fcrr.org/studentactivities/v_010b.pdf

Teachers and facilitators can use this activity to help students do word structure analysis to deepen their understanding of words that use prefixes or suffixes. This activity can be used after reading a text that includes words with affixes. It can also be used with a predetermined vocabulary list.

Get students to list words with affixes under the first column, and encircle the prefix or suffix used. In the second column, students will state the meaning of the affix that was used. In the third column, they will write the meaning of the word in the first column, building on the meaning they wrote down for the affix in the second column.

Word	Affix Meaning	Meaning of the Word
nonsense	not	something that makes no sense; foolishness
affordable	can be done	can be afforded; within one's means
misplaced	not correctly	not correctly placed; lost
frequently	describes a way of doing	done often
insensitive	not	not sensitive; unfeeling
fearless	without	without fear; brave

After doing this exercise, teachers and facilitators can ask students to give examples of things, people, or situations that these words can be associated with. For example, ask students: *What things do you consider to be **nonsense**? What is an **affordable** brand of soap? What things do you **frequently misplace**? What would be an **insensitive** thing to say to someone who is feeling bad? What are some things that a **fearless** person would do?* Linking these words to familiar contexts helps to cement students' understanding of the words on the list.

Source: http://www.fcrr.org/studentactivities/v_011c.pdf

Cloze is another word for a fill-in-the-blanks activity. Teachers and facilitators can use this exercise to help students practice the use of context clues and sentence structure or syntax cues in completing their understanding of a text.

Teachers will need to provide a copy of an altered text, where certain words have been removed and replaced with a blank. The removed words go to a word bank, which will also be provided to the students. The words in the word bank should be rearranged in no particular order, so that students will need to rely on their understanding of the words in the word bank, and the syntax and context clues in the altered text, to determine which option best fits each blank.

In doing this exercise, students can do the following steps:

- Read the text and pause after reading a sentence with a blank.
- Use context clues and read the words in the word bank to select a word that best completes the sentence.
- Read the sentence with the selected word.
- If the sentence sounds correct, write the selected word in the blank.
- If the sentence doesn't sound correct, select another word from the word bank.
- Repeat this process until all blanks are filled and the text is complete.
- Reread the completed text.
- Make any changes or corrections, if needed.
- Compare their completed text against a copy of the original/unaltered text.

Here is an example of an altered text, a word bank, and the completed text.

The wettest place on Earth is the _____ of Mawsynram in India. Here, it rains most of the year—from March to October.

Scientists say the village gets 467 inches of _____ a year. If you left a soda _____ out for every day that it rained, you would _____ up about 60 bottles in a year. New Delhi, India's _____, is a rainy place too, but it gets only 51 _____ of rain a year. That's just six bottles.

People in Mawsynram don't seem to mind all that rain. They still spend a lot of _____ outdoors. Villagers in Mawsynram _____ a body cover called a knup on their head and backs to keep them _____. The knup is made of bamboo and banana or palm _____ woven together.

Word Bank

wear capital fill leaves inches
dry rain bottle time village

Original, complete text (show to students after the exercise):

The wettest place on Earth is the village of Mawsynram in India. Here, it rains most of the year—from March to October.

Scientists say the village gets 467 inches of rain a year. If you left a soda bottle out for every day that it rained, you would fill up about 60 bottles in a year. New Delhi, India's capital, is a rainy place too, but it gets only 51 inches of rain a year. That's just six bottles.

People in Mawsynram don't seem to mind all that rain. They still spend a lot of time outdoors. Villagers in Mawsynram wear a body cover called a knup on their head and backs to keep them dry. The knup is made of bamboo and banana or palm leaves woven together.

Reference: http://www.fccr.org/studentactivities/v_042c.pdf

This activity helps students become more aware of the different types of context clues they can use as they are reading a story or informational text and encountering unfamiliar words.

First, get students to create their own reminder bookmark about the different context clues and how they can use them while they read. You can let students copy their bookmarks off of a template like this one: (They can fold a sheet of paper in two so that the first column is one side of the bookmark, and the other column is on another.)

5 Types of Context Clues	How I Can Use Context Clues To Figure Out The Meaning of Words
<p>a. DEFINITION: Meaning of the unfamiliar word is given right in the sentence. Signal words: <i>is, are, or, means, refers to</i> <i>(Caverns are very large caves.)</i></p> <p>b. SYNONYM: A similar word is given for the unfamiliar word. Signal words: <i>also, as, like, same, too</i> <i>(She is cautious crossing the street and also careful riding her bike.)</i></p> <p>c. ANTONYM: A word meaning the opposite of the unfamiliar word is given. Signal words: <i>but, unlike, though, however, instead of</i> <i>(The water was shallow, but it was deep enough to catch a fish.)</i></p> <p>d. EXAMPLE: Samples, instances, or ideas of the unfamiliar word are given. Signal words: <i>for example, like, such as, including</i> <i>(Souvenirs such as T-shirts, key chains, and postcards are fun ways to remember trips.)</i></p> <p>e. GENERAL: General clues are given about the unfamiliar word. No signal words <i>(I appreciate the way you encouraged me. I won first prize.)</i></p>	<p>Think about the five types of context clues.</p> <p>Look for words, phrases, and signal words that may help to figure out the meaning of the unfamiliar word.</p> <p>If necessary, reread or read ahead to find other clues about the word.</p> <p>Use the clues to help figure out the meaning of the word.</p> <p>Try the learned meaning in the sentence.</p> <p>If it makes sense, continue reading.</p> <p>If no clues are available, or if unable to figure out the meaning, look the word up in the dictionary.</p>

Next, have the students read an assigned text and then note down which of these context clues they used, using a chart like the one below:

Unfamiliar Word	Clue Used?		If yes, context clue type	Meaning of Unfamiliar Word
	Yes	No		

Ask students to share their experience as they read the text and filled in their chart. Help students deepen their understanding of the unfamiliar word by using it in additional contexts, or facilitating a discussion that guides them in using these words themselves.

Source: http://www.fcrr.org/studentactivities/v_041c.pdf

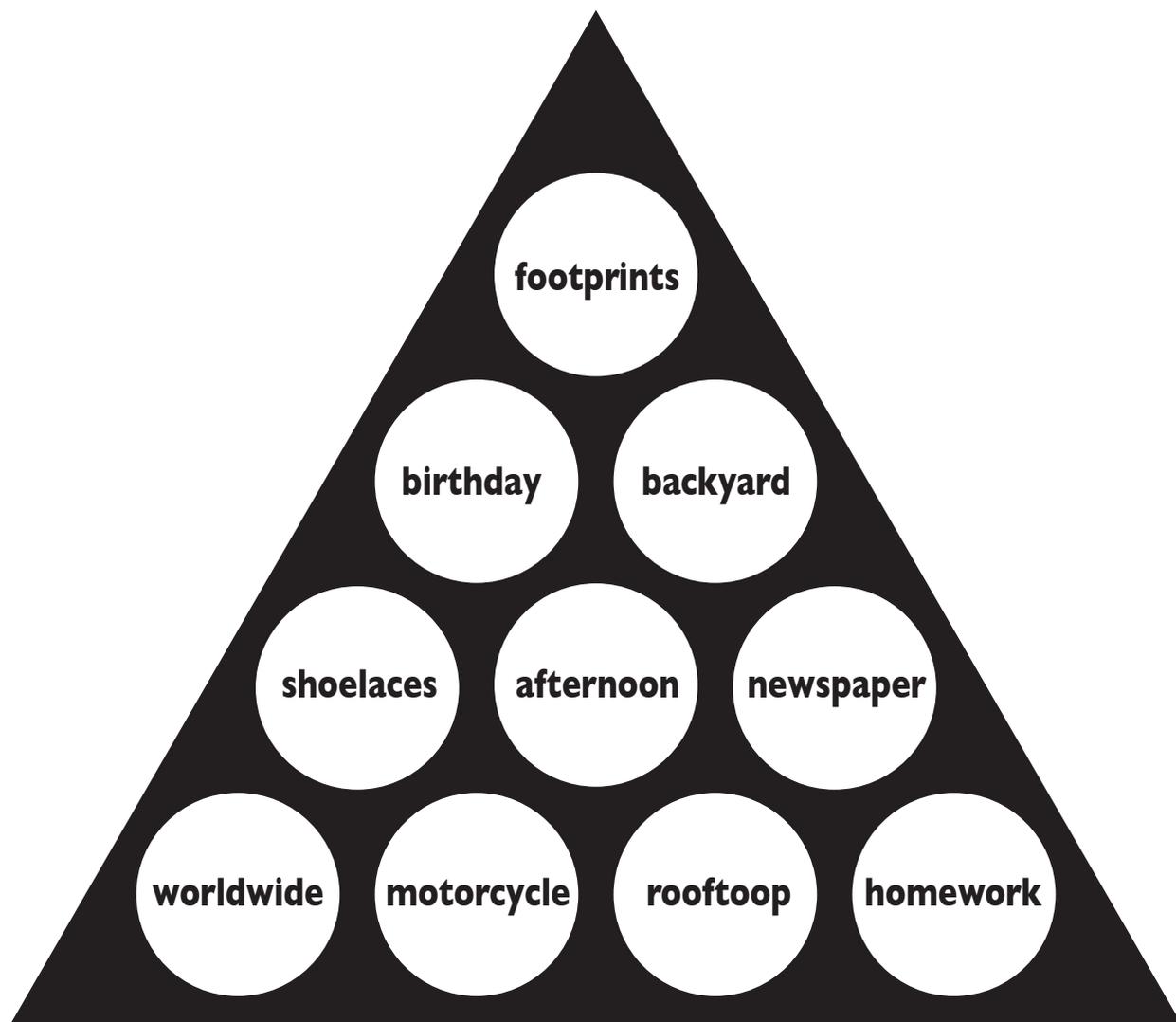
COMPOUND WORD TRIVIA



This activity helps students become familiar with different compound words and what they mean. Post or write a large version of a compound word triangle on the board. An example of a compound word triangle is below:

Students will draw from a stack of trivia cards, each of which gives a clue that matches one of the compound words on the triangle. The students will match up the card they picked out to the compound word that it describes. The students could also draw a picture, act out a gesture, or write a sentence that gives additional ideas on what the compound word means.

The trivia card clues that can be used with the compound words in the triangle are provided below:



<p>A date celebrated by each person every year to remember when he/she was born</p>	<p>What you tie your shoes with so they don't fall</p>
<p>Collection of stories on current events printed on sheets of paper</p>	<p>The highest part of a house or building</p>
<p>Something you ride that has two wheels and an engine</p>	<p>Area or land behind a house</p>
<p>All over the globe</p>	<p>A task for school that you complete in the place where you live</p>
<p>Time that comes after 12:00 in the daytime</p>	<p>Tracks made by the body part you walk with</p>

Non-English languages can change up the compound words and the trivia card clues so that the activity can be used for the relevant language/s.

Source: http://www.fcrr.org/studentactivities/v_009b.pdf

GUESS THE HOMOGRAPH



Homographs are words that have the same spelling, but have different possible meanings. (Some homographs also have different pronunciations.) This activity will help students identify the correct word to which two different given meanings can apply.

Students can choose the correct word from a homograph bank, posted on the board. For example:

duck	mind	novel	sign	tear	bow
-------------	-------------	--------------	-------------	-------------	------------

They will then draw cards on which two possible meanings for the same word are written. Their task is to identify which word from the homograph bank matches the two meanings provided on the card. (For more advanced students, teachers may opt to do away with the homograph bank altogether and just let students guess what the word is.)

Sample meaning cards that match the words in the above homograph bank are as follows:

To bend one's head and body forward to show respect or when being recognized with applause A ribbon tied beautifully, as on a gift or a dress	To put one's signature on a document A symbol that sends a message or gives information
A long story, written as a book with several chapters Something new or unfamiliar	The brain To be annoyed or bothered by something
A bird that quacks To bend or stoop down low to avoid something that might hit you	What flows from your eyes when you cry To rip apart

After students match up the homograph to their meanings, encourage them to use the homographs in two different sentences, each sentence using one possible meaning.

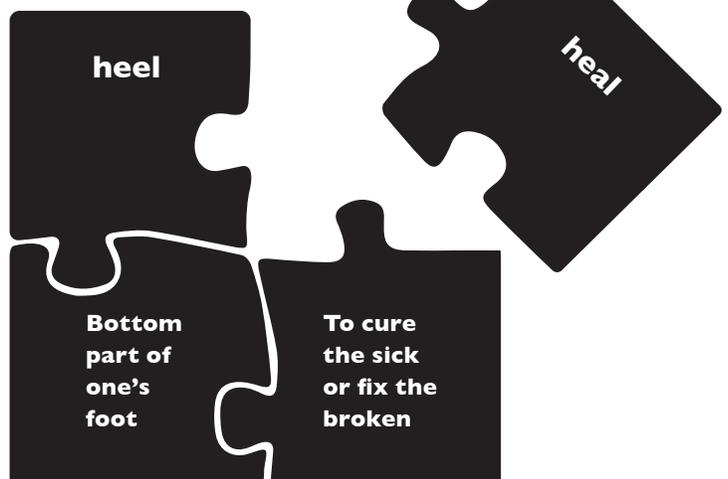
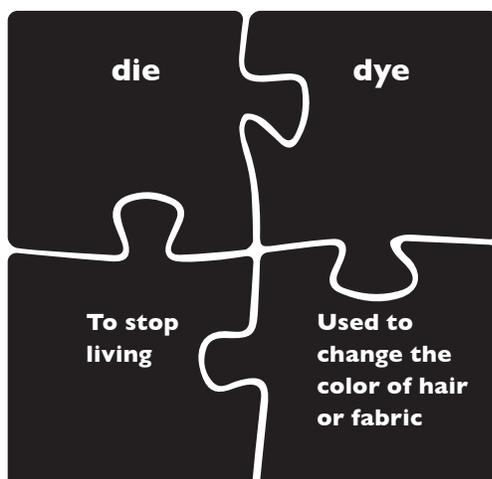
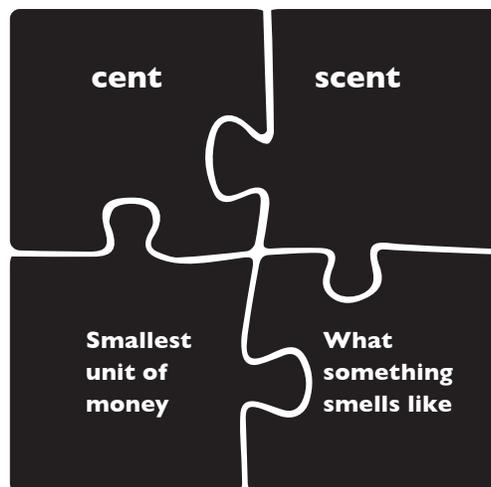
Students may also want to make their own homograph cards, with the word at the center top, the two possible meanings beneath it, and illustrations or sentences for each meaning included.

HOMOPHONE PUZZLE

Homophones are words that sound the same, but are spelled differently and mean different things. This activity will help students associate homophones with each other, and match the correct meaning to each homophone.

Prepare a four part puzzle for each homophone. On one side of the puzzle, in two separate quadrants, will be one homophone and its meaning. The other homophone and its meaning will be on the opposite two quadrants. For example:

Cut up the puzzle pieces and place in a box. Let each student pick a puzzle piece. Once every student has a piece, they will go around the room searching for the other students with the other three pieces of their homophone puzzle. When they have reassembled their puzzle, have the teams of four think of sentences, gestures, or examples that can demonstrate the two different homophones. Let them present their ideas to the whole class.



CROSS OUT AND CATEGORIZE



Students need to be able to organize and sort through the ideas and concepts that underlie vocabulary. They need to understand how certain words relate to each other, and how these words can be classified under specific categories based on what they have in common. Use this activity to help students strengthen their conceptual understanding of the words they know. Present a variety of word sets. In each word set, one word will not belong. Students will cross out the word that doesn't belong, and then write the category or label that describes how the remaining three words relate to each other. For example:

violin	radio	harmonica	flute
Category: <i>Musical instruments</i>			

Some sample word sets that can be used for this activity are provided below:

asteroid	comet	planet	animals
Category:			

spoon	fork	skirt	plate
Category:			

mailman	post office	airport	market
Category:			

car	pilot	train	bus
Category:			

pen	rock	crayon	pencil
Category:			

This activity helps reinforce children's understanding of word structure. It demonstrates that many words are built out of root words through the addition of prefixes and suffixes. Post a set of prefixes and suffixes on the board, and discuss the meaning associated with each affix. For example, for English words, you could post the following:

mis	dis	un	er	able	est
------------	------------	-----------	-----------	-------------	------------

il	re	im	ly	or	ion
-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------	------------

Prepare a stack of root word cards to which one or more of the affix cards can be attached. Examples of root word cards that can be linked to the affixes above are:

act	do	cover
fix	understand	legal
order	break	distinct
perfect	trust	match
close	possible	fast
mature	honest	warm

Have each student pick out a root word card from the stack, read it aloud, and say what it means. Then, have the student place the root word next to one of the affix cards, and state what the new word is. Make sure that the new word is an actual word. Ask other students to define or explain the new word, based on the earlier mentioned meanings of the affix and the root word. List all of the new words that the students will form on the board, along with their given meaning. Have students write these down on their notebooks as well.

When all of the root words have been linked to an affix card, ask the children to write a few sentences or a paragraph that uses two or more of the words that they built during the activity.

An alternate way to use these cards is to post all of the affix cards and root word cards on the board, form teams, and then challenge each team to come up with as many new words as they can using the affixes and root words. Give teams five minutes to come up with their word list. Have teams report out on the words they formed.

THREE-EIGHT-FIVE WORD CHALLENGE



In this challenge, students will have **three** minutes to form as many words as they can out of **eight** randomly selected consonants or consonant clusters, and **five** randomly selected vowels or vowel combinations.

Prepare two separate bags or baskets of letters—one for consonants, and the other for vowels. Have students prepare the following template for writing down their words:

Round 1	Round 2	Round 3
Consonants: _____ _____	Consonants: _____ _____	Consonants: _____ _____
Vowels: _____ _____	Vowels: _____ _____	Vowels: _____ _____
Words Formed	Words Formed	Words Formed

For the first round, get one student to draw eight cards from the consonant bag, and have another student draw five cards from the vowel bag. Set the timer for three minutes and let the students write the words they can form from the given letters. Below is how a completed round 1 column might look like:

Round 1	Round 2	Round 3
<p>Consonants:</p> <p><u>ck</u> <u>m</u> <u>f</u> <u>ll</u></p> <p><u>r</u> <u>s</u> <u>w</u> <u>h</u></p>	<p>Consonants:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>Consonants:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
<p>Vowels:</p> <p><u>a</u> <u>ee</u> <u>u</u> <u>ea</u> <u>o</u></p>	<p>Vowels:</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>Vowels:</p> <p>_____</p>
<p>Words Formed</p> <p>hear seem sock suck fall sea fear wall hall sear mow wars wears swear sack foam rock mock</p>	<p>Words Formed</p>	<p>Words Formed</p>

When the three minutes end, call on a couple of students to read out their lists, with each succeeding student only mentioning words that were not mentioned/ found by the students reading before them. Write the words that were found by the fewest number of students on the board before proceeding to the next round. Do another two rounds, and follow the same process. Once all three rounds are done, engage students in a discussion about the meaning of the words that most students did not identify, and how these words might be used in context.

Reference: http://www.fcrr.org/studentactivities/ap_006.pdf

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DEEPER COMPREHENSION 101

*101 Activities to Boost Students'
Reading Comprehension*

Comprehension is the end towards which all readers aspire. Making sense of text, connecting its message to one's store of knowledge and experience, and deriving meaning from the words on a page—this is what reading is ultimately for and about.

Given its importance, and the difficulties that many children face in attaining full reading comprehension, Save the Children decided to develop this Deeper Comprehension 101 resource. These activities are designed to expand children's vocabulary; strengthen their thinking and problem solving skills while reading; and boost their ability to respond, react, and connect to texts.

We encourage Save the Children country offices and its partner literacy practitioners to adapt or translate this resource, reproduce it, and share it with classroom teachers, reading facilitators, and community volunteers working on literacy activities with children. We hope you will find these activities helpful in bolstering comprehension skills, and in fostering a life-long interest in reading among all children. The stronger their ability to make meaning from text, the better their chances of succeeding in their learning.



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