Passage Comprehension and Read-Aloud

Comprehension questions can be categorized into the following 3 categories:

Level	Description	Examples
Literal	Student is asked to answer questions by using information explicitly stated in the text.	In a story that states "Mary ate dinner at an Italian restaurant," a literal question might ask: Where did Mary eat dinner? (*Italian restaurant*)
Inferential	Student is asked to answer questions using their background knowledge in combination with information from the text.	An inferential question might ask: What might Mary have ordered at the Italian restaurant? (*lasagna*)
Applied	Student is asked to evaluate or to make judgments about what they have just read.	An applied question might ask: Why do you think Mary went to a restaurant to eat? (*hungry, celebration, likes Italian*)

Consider the following strategies when asking your student comprehension questions:

Question	Considerations
What level of communication is appropriate for your student?	Real Objects Photos of real objects Symbols to represent the item/object/concept Pictures/Symbols paired with words Words
How will your student communicate a response?	Grab – your student may grab an item, object or picture to indicate their response Point/touch – your student may touch or point to an item, object or picture to indicate their response Eye gaze – your student will look towards an item, object, or picture to indicate their response Verbal – your student will verbalize their response orally
How will your student respond?	Construct the response spontaneously Multiple choice responses (example: utilize a 4-choice picture array with realistic and non-realistic choices) Consider the presentation of an array of choices – such as a row, column or on 4 corners of a square

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Can your student answer questions?	If not, consider having your student demonstrate comprehension in a different way – selecting pictures or objects related to the story to record story elements such as character, setting, or events

Does your student require prompts?

Consider following the proceeding sequence for prompting a response:
1. Wait for the student to answer the question.
   a. If the student does not give an answer or asks for help, **REREAD PARAGRAPH** WITH ANSWER (about 3 sentences).
2. Wait for the student to answer the question.
   . If the student does not give an answer or asks for help, **REREAD SENTENCE** WITH ANSWER.
3. Wait for the student to answer the question.
   . If the student does not give an answer or asks for help, **REREAD KEY WORD OR PHRASE** WITH ANSWER. (If using a response board, also point to the correct answer on the board).

General Pointers for Text Comprehension:

- Pre-read the book/chapter to identify questions to ask and have preset response options and distractors ready to present to your student
- Ask a variety of comprehension questions that vary the depth of understanding (see the chart above on the 3 types of questions)
- Use "think-aloud" strategies to support your student with answering the question.
  - For example, if asked "Why were the girls scared?" the first prompt might be "Think of a time when you felt scared. Why did you feel scared? Why do you think the girls were scared?" The next prompt might be, "I can think of a time when I felt scared. I felt scared because I was alone. The girls were alone in the story. Why do you think the girls were scared?"
- Introduce your student to new vocabulary that will support comprehension questions
  - Utilize picture supports to pair with the vocabulary words and phrases to build understanding of that concept

Additional Considerations for Enhancing Comprehension

Comprehension can be enhanced when students are encouraged to make different connections. There are 3 areas of connections:

Type	Description	Examples

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Text-to-Self	The student will reflect on how the text or reading experiences relate to events in his or her own life.	When reading about transportation, a student might share about traveling in different types of vehicles.
Text-to-Text	The student will recognize when a new text reminds them of a character, setting, event, or problem that they may have encountered in a previously read text.	When reading about transportation, a student might recall stories or poems about the theme of transportation.
Text-to-World	The student will advanced and requires broader background knowledge or personal experiences than the previous types of connections.	When reading about transportation, students might be aware of a community transportation issue.

In informational texts, the following five text structures are common:

Type	Description	Key phrases or signals
Description	Provides information about a topic, concept, event, or person. The text explains facts and characteristics related to its main topic.	To begin with, most important, also, for example
Sequence	Explains steps in a process or traces the development of a topic or event.	On, now, before, after, first, second, then, finally
Comparison and Contrast	Explains the similarities and/or differences among facts, people, events, and topics.	However, on the other hand, either/or, while, similarly
Cause and Effect	Shows how events or concepts occur because of other events or concepts.	Because, since, therefore, as a result, if/then, thus
Problem and Solution	Shows the development of a problem and one or more solutions to the problem.	Similar to the cause & effect words

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