

LITERACY LEARNING: WHAT IS ESSENTIAL?

COGNITIVE STRATEGIES

Surface Structure Systems

Grapho-Phonic
letter/sound knowledge;
phonemic awareness
decoding

Lexical
visual word recognition
visual memory for words

Syntactic
language structure at the
word, sentence and text level
*see more under text
structures

Strategies for Solving Word Problems and Reading Fluently

*Identifying and pronouncing
words, reading fluently orally*

- Using context
- Visual word recognition strategies including use of environmental print
- Word analysis strategies such as prefixes, suffixes, compound words and word derivations
- Text management strategies such as rereading/reading ahead, deep reading, skimming/scanning
- Decoding strategies such as identifying word families, chunking, point & slide, looking for known words inside words
- Cross check across systems (does the word make sense, sound like language, do the letters match the sounds) or ask another reader

Deep Structure Systems

Semantic
word meanings/associations;
precision in word usage

Schematic
constructing meaning at the
whole text level; prior
knowledge that governs
storage and retrieval of
information

Pragmatic
social construction of meaning,
reading and writing for
specific purposes and
audiences - adopting the social
mores of a reader/writer,
reading and writing habitually

**Cognitive Strategies for
Comprehending**
*Probing ideas and extending
meaning, reading deeply*

- Monitoring for meaning
- Determining importance
- Creating mental images
- Synthesizing
- Relating new to known (schema)
- Questioning
- Inferring

HELPING STUDENTS UNDERSTAND TEXT STRUCTURES

Narrative Text

Text Structure (whole text)

Character
Setting
Conflict
Plot structure (character,
setting, conflict introduction,
rising action, climax,
resolution)

Narrative Writing Technique Development of ideas through:

- Exposition
- Action
- Dialogue

Creating believable character,
setting, events through use of:
I
mages
foreshadowing,
parallel plot structure,
flashback and flash
forward,
word choice
diction,
phrasing,
voice

Expository Text

Text Structure (paragraph/section)

Cause/effect
Chronological
Problem/solution
Descriptive
Enumerative

Hurdles for readers and writers of expository text

Word Hurdles
Anaphora
Vocabulary load
Text Hurdles
Insufficient schema for text
content/structures
Inefficient predicting
Naïve conceptions
Staccato reading
Concept load
Pacing demands

Expository Writing Technique
Elaborating/developing and
grouping ideas/themes
Organizing ideas with a
discernable, but not
blatant structure
Laying out and defending a
position based on an
opinion
Writing to persuade based
on factual information
Using compelling leads and
endings

RESOURCES AND MATERIALS PRACTICING THE CRAFT IN A WIDE VARIETY OF TEXT GENRES AND LEVELS

Distinguish among genres; apply
reading, writing strategies
differently depending the genre:

Biography
Historical fiction
Textbooks/Reference Text
Persuasion
Realistic fiction
Poetry
Memoir/Autobiography
Science fiction
Mystery
Journalism Opinion/Editorial
Tests
Expository text (narrative or
didactic)
Picture Book
Photo essay
Promotional Materials and
Advertising
Fantasy

Use different level texts
for different purposes

**Work in instructional
level text for:**
Practice in decoding

Practice word recognition

Practice oral reading
fluency

Practice in word work such
as recognizing prefixes and
suffixes, word analysis

**Work in challenging
text (that may have
been read to children)
for:**

Application of
comprehension strategies

Book Club discussion

Reading with a partner

Reading to learn new
content (especially when
there are charts, graphs,
pictures available)

A SCHOOL AND CLASSROOM CLIMATE OF RIGOR, INQUIRY AND INTIMACY

Living a Literate and Engaged
Life in the Classroom

Students

- Understand and engage in the processes, procedures, and rituals of the learning community; are taught to respond and react with civility and respect
- Select books, topics, authors appropriately for level, challenge, interest
- Engage deeply in book discussions; share recommendations and insights with other readers, seek to understand the insights of others
- Understand and use options for oral, artistic, dramatic, and written responses to literature
- Use oral language precisely to describe their thinking during reading and writing - use that language to apply strategies independently

Teachers:

- Create a culture of rigor, inquiry and intimacy by continually expecting more, probing ideas further and pressing children to explore their intellect
- Create a culture conducive to in-depth study of books, genres, topics, authors, and comprehension strategies
- Serve lead learner by modeling what it is to live a literate life and share insights from those literary experiences
- Provide equal access for all to the materials and expertise needed by readers and writers
- Model what readers who comprehend think about and how they create a literate life
- Model what writers who write convincingly think about and how they observe the world to feed their writing