

The Structure of a Reading Comprehension Lesson

The basic structure of a reading comprehension lesson will model for students what good readers do and will give them practice strategically applying the skills. Generally, the texts used for reading comprehension lessons are intentionally above the reading level of the students to create a context of productive struggle.

Many Comprehensive Reading Programs break the reading comprehension lesson over the first four days in a 5-day cycle. In general, educators will likely be able to identify the major activities in Table 1 because they follow the sequence of strategies that good readers engage in while reading meaningful text.

Table 1. Instructional Strategies to promote good reading¹

Good Readers...	So teachers explicitly teach and model...
<p>Before Reading</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Have a purpose for reading the text ➤ Preview the content and structure of the text ➤ Make predictions about what the text has to say 	<p>Before 1st Read</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Metacognition about why a reader selects certain texts ✓ Recognizing text structure ✓ Predicting (macro) ✓ Asking questions (What do I want to learn? How might this text help?) ✓ Preview complex vocabulary (i.e., specific word instruction) ✓ Discussion of strategies for setting purpose, previewing, and predicting

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¹ Sources

Honig, B., Diamond, L., Gutlohn, L., & Cole, C. L. (2013). *Teaching Reading Sourcebook*. Academic Therapy Publications, Incorporated.

Pressley, M. (2002). Comprehension strategies instruction: A turn-of-the-century status report. *Comprehension instruction: Research-based best practices*, 11-27.

Pressley, M., & Afflerbach, P. (1995). *Verbal protocols of reading: The nature of constructively responsive reading*. Routledge.

Table 1 (continued). Instructional Strategies to promote good reading

Good Readers...	So teachers explicitly teach and model...
<p>During Reading</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Read with purpose (sometimes sequentially and in depth; other times skimming to focus on key parts) ➤ Reread parts of the text when needed ➤ Attend to main ideas and ideas that are related to their purpose for reading ➤ Verify or refute predictions or assumptions they had before reading the text and adapt their understanding ➤ Monitor and adjust their understanding of the text based on close reading ➤ Make informed inferences about the meaning in the text using world knowledge or connections to other information ➤ Restate the text (paraphrase or summarize) to demonstrate comprehension ➤ Respond to and evaluate the ideas or content in the text 	<p>1st Read</p> <p>Focus is initial understanding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Monitoring comprehension ✓ Close reading (to understand) ✓ Asking questions (What does this text mean?) ✓ Answering questions ✓ Constructing mental images ✓ Summarizing (to understand) ✓ Predicting (micro) ✓ Making inferences (to understand the text) ✓ Word-learning vocabulary strategies (i.e., contextual analysis, cognate awareness, morphemic analysis, dictionary use) ✓ Discussion of strategies to understand text <p>2nd Read</p> <p>Focus is deeper synthesis, application, analysis.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Making inferences (to apply) ✓ Close reading (to apply) ✓ Summarizing (to synthesize existing concepts) ✓ Discussion of response to text ✓ Written response to text ✓ Critique in context
<p>After Reading</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Reread select portions of the text purposefully ➤ Summarize the text ➤ Reflect on the value and use of the text ➤ Apply learning from the text to current or future situations 	<p>2nd Read or beyond</p> <p>Focus is on extended thinking about how the text can be applied to other contexts, situations, or learning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Investigate further ✓ Critique comparatively to other texts ✓ Write to synthesize into new concepts