

Teach Students How to Use Reading Comprehension Strategies

Purpose

This document provides educators with information about a high-leverage, evidence-based practice recommended in the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) practice guide, [Improving Reading Comprehension in Kindergarten Through 3rd Grade](#).¹

Introduction

Teaching students how to use reading comprehension strategies is an evidence-based practice to help educators increase student achievement in critical foundational skills for early readers. Page 10 of the practice guide states:

Good readers use many forms of thinking and analyzing text as they read. It is therefore important to teach beginning readers strategies for constructing meaning from text. A strategy is the intentional application of a cognitive routine by a reader before, during, or after reading a text...Comprehension strategies help readers enhance their understanding, overcome difficulties in comprehending text, and compensate for weak or imperfect knowledge related to the text.

For more information about this practice guide, see the [AOE's Annotated Guide](#), as well as [Resources for Educators](#) on the WWC (including videos and instructional rubrics).

ESSA Level of Evidence

ESSA levels of evidence are the result of a synthesis of current evidence-based research. Below is the level of evidence for this recommendation:

- **Tier 3 – Promising (Strong Evidence)**

See the [full practice guide](#) for more information about specific studies. For more information about levels of evidence, see the REL document [ESSA Tiers of Evidence: What You Need to Know](#).

¹ [What Works Clearinghouse/IES Practice Guides](#) provide recommendations for educators of evidence-based practices to improve student outcomes. WWC/IES Practice Guides were developed by a panel of literacy experts based on reviews of research, practitioner experiences, and expert opinions.

Contact Information:

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How to Carry Out the Recommendation

Listed below are ways to [teach students how to use reading comprehension strategies](#). See the pages of the guide referenced next to each instructional practice to find more specific implementation strategies.

- Teach students how to use several research-based reading comprehension strategies (12-13).
- Teach reading comprehension strategies individually or in combination (13-14).
- Teach reading comprehension strategies by using a gradual release of responsibility (15).

Connections to Literacy Essential Practices

[Literacy Essentials](#) provide evidence- and research-based approaches educators can use to support early literacy. This resource was introduced to Vermont through work done with [Dr. Nell Duke](#) and includes classroom practices teachers can use daily to implement the recommendations in the WWC practice guides. See the page number referenced next to each Essential Practice to find more specific implementation strategies.

[Literacy Essential Practices for Prekindergarten](#)

- **Essential Practice #2:** Read aloud with reference to print (3)
- **Essential Practice #3:** Interactive read-alouds with a comprehension and vocabulary focus (4)
- **Essential Practice #7:** Extended conversation (6)
- **Essential Practice #9:** Ongoing observation and other forms of assessment of children’s language and literacy development that informs their education (7)

[Literacy Essential Practices for Grades K-3](#)

- **Essential Practice #2:** Read-alouds of age-appropriate books and other materials, print or digital, including culturally relevant texts (3)
- **Essential Practice #3:** Small group and individual instruction, using a variety of grouping strategies, most often with flexible groups formed and instruction targeted to (i.e., differentiated by) children’s observed and assessed needs in specific aspects of literacy, including both writing and reading development (and therefore not by perceived general “ability” or “level”) (4)
- **Essential Practice #9:** Ongoing observation and other forms of assessment of children’s language and literacy development that informs their education (7)