



## Teaching Reading

### **The What, Why's and How's**

For many parents/caregivers, the development of their child's reading skills is an area they are passionate about, yet are unfamiliar with how the programmes are run in class and how they can assist their child to learn at home. In the upcoming Connects, we are going to be including some information to help parents understand why and how we teach comprehension strategies to students and how they can help at home.

### **Comprehension**

Can be defined as the reader being able to understand and get meaning from what is read. A strategy is something we consciously use, for example, when we want to solve a problem, do or make something. Good readers choose the comprehension strategies they need, depending on the reading. Strategies are used at the beginning of reading, during the reading and after the reading is finished. Teachers generally use **10 KEY** strategies with students to help them understand what they are reading more deeply.

These strategies are:

### **Making connections**

Readers think about what they know about the world, their culture, and reading itself, and link these ideas with the text they are reading. This helps them to understand the text more clearly.

### **Forming and testing hypotheses about texts**

Readers make predictions before and during reading the text. Then while they are reading they may change these predictions as they get more information. Readers use clues such as the cover of a text, the contents page or knowledge they have about language to form a hypothesis. As they read, they use new information to change their hypothesis or prediction.

### **Asking questions**

As a good reader reads, they ask questions for themselves and then try to answer these questions with information from the text. When they have more information as a result of asking the question, they can then think about how their thinking has changed about the text or how they understand the text in a deeper way.

### **Creating mental images or visualising**

Readers think about what they are reading and can make a picture in their minds. This can be with any of the five senses – sight, sound, taste, smell and touch. Being able to do this means a reader can use the senses to get a deeper understanding and enjoyment of the text.

### **Inferring**

Readers use clues from the text, with what they know about the world and put this information together to understand something in the text that the author has not directly told them. Inferring can help readers become thoughtful, keep them interested in what they are reading and stimulate their imagination.

### **Identifying the author's purpose and point of view**

Readers need to know that every writer has a point of view or a message that they want the reader to understand. This could be to give the reader information, to make them use their imagination, to entertain them, or to tell important stories. Readers who are aware of the author's point of view or purpose are able to look for clues in the text that describe how the author is thinking, to think about what the author doesn't say and to think more carefully about whether they agree with the author.

### **Identifying the main idea or theme**

This strategy is used to decide what the text is mainly about, that is what the author thinks is important. It might be the important information in a non-fiction text, or the theme in a story (e.g. how someone deals with loss). Readers gain a deeper understanding of texts when they know what the main idea is.

### **Summarising**

When readers summarise text, they find the most important information and can remember or describe this in a shorter way. Readers who are able to summarise texts have a clear idea of the structure and what is important in the text, which gives a deeper understanding of what they are reading.

### **Analysing and synthesising ideas**

Readers read the text, pull apart what they have read, think about the information from their own point of view and experience of the world and then put it back together again. This makes them 'own' the text and get a greater understanding of what they have read.

### **Evaluating ideas and information**

Readers take ideas from the text and then make judgments about these ideas, once again using what they know about the world. This helps readers become thoughtful, both about what is written and how it has been written.

Reading is more than just sounding out the words, it is understanding the ideas and messages in the text. By spending time reading with your children at home and asking them questions using the above strategies, it will consolidate the work that is done by our staff here at the College.

