

Connected Workshops™
Face to Face Professional Development for Educators

Connected Comprehension Workshop

By Classroom Connect

Glossary



Classroom Connect is an award-winning provider of professional development programs and online instructional materials for K-12 education. The company is devoted to helping teachers become better teachers by engaging them in their own learning and inspiring positive change in the classroom. Headquartered in Brisbane, CA, Classroom Connect is part of Harcourt Education, a global education provider serving students and teachers in PreK through grade 12, adult learners, and readers of all ages.

Glossary of Terms

A

anecdotal record

An informal assessment of a student made by observing and recording behavior (such as reading, collaborating, and discussing) over a course of instruction.

application

An explicit teaching technique in which the teacher helps students practice a strategy until they can apply it independently.

assessment

The ongoing process of acquiring information and making judgments about students' learning. The purposes of assessment include: (1) to assist student learning related to outcomes, (2) to make judgments about students' achievements, (3) to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching programs, and (4) to inform decisions about students' future learning. Some people broadly distinguish between formative and summative assessment.

authentic assessment

A form of assessment in which students are asked to perform real-world tasks that demonstrate meaningful application of essential knowledge and skills. Student performance on a task is typically scored on a rubric to determine how successfully the student has met specific standards.

author and Me

A QAR strategy in which the answer is an inference from the text. The reader puts together the information the author provides with information the reader already knows to come up with the answer.

B

Bloom's taxonomy

A classification of six increasingly more complex and abstract levels of thinking important in learning: knowledge, understanding, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.

buddy reading

A type of reading in which a pair of students read together. Often, a pair of students might alternate pages, paragraphs, or sentences as they read, with one reading aloud while the other follows along. Then they may reverse roles. Also referred to as paired or partnered reading.

C

cause-and-effect diagram

Graphic organizer used to help identify, sort, or display possible causes of an outcome or quality characteristic. It graphically illustrates the relationship between a given outcome and all the factors that influence it. It is sometimes called the "fishbone diagram" because of the way it looks.

character

A person, animal, or imaginary creature found in a narrative story. The character's actions influence the plot by creating conflict and solving problems.

cloze activity

An activity that requires students to use context clues to "fill in the blank" or identify and reinstate missing words from a reading passage.

cloze assessment

Assessment method in which a word is eliminated from a passage, and the child uses context clues to fill in the blank with an appropriate word.

cognitive

The process or result of recognizing, interpreting, judging, and reasoning.

compare/contrast chart

Graphic organizer showing how the supporting details or concepts of two or more main ideas are similar or different.

comprehension

1) Understanding what you read, remembering what you read, and communicating with others about what you have read. 2) Demonstrating an understanding of facts and ideas by organizing, comparing, translating, interpreting, giving descriptions and stating main ideas

comprehension monitoring

A process in which students are aware of what they *do* understand, to identify what they *do not* understand, and use appropriate "fix-up" strategies to resolve problems in comprehension.

Glossary of Terms

comprehension strategy

A conscious plan, or set of steps, that a good reader uses to make sense of text. Comprehension strategy instruction helps students become purposeful, active readers in control of their own reading comprehension.

concept map

Graphic organizer used to explore knowledge and share information.

construct meaning

To connect information in the text to what the reader knows.

context (infer word meaning thru)

The sounds, phrases, words, or sentences that surround and/or provide clues to the meaning of a particular or unknown word or passage.

context clue

Hint to the meaning of an unknown word provided in the words, phrases, and sentences that surround the word. Context clues include definitions, restatements, examples, or descriptions.

criterion-referenced assessment

A measurement of achievement of specific criteria or skills in terms of absolute levels of mastery. The focus is on performance of an individual as measured against a standard or criteria rather than against performance of others who take the same test (as with norm-referenced tests).

critical question

A question about a reading passage in which the answer is implicitly found in the text. The question requires the student to evaluate information and ideas.

D

detail

A small piece of information in a passage, such as a fact or description. Supporting details answer *who*, *what*, *where*, *when*, and *why* questions about a topic.

diagnostic assessment

An intensive, in-depth evaluation process with a relatively detailed and narrow coverage of a specific area. The purpose of this test is to determine the specific learning needs of individual students and to be able to meet those needs through regular or remedial classroom instruction.

direct explanation

An explicit teaching technique in which the teacher explains to students why the strategy helps comprehension and when to apply the strategy.

direct instruction

Another term for explicit instruction. In explicit instruction, teachers tell readers why and when they should use comprehension strategies, what strategies to use, and how to apply them. The steps of explicit instruction typically include direct explanation, teacher modeling ("thinking aloud"), guided practice, and application.

directed-reading and thinking activity (DRTA)

A strategy for developing comprehension processes during reading through open-ended questions. Students (1) predict outcomes for a text based on their experiences and knowledge, (2) read, and (3) evaluate or prove their predictions.

E

explicit instruction

In explicit, or direct, instruction, teachers tell readers why and when they should use comprehension strategies, what strategies to use, and how to apply them. The steps of explicit instruction typically include direct explanation, teacher modeling ("thinking aloud"), guided practice, and application.

expository text

Text written by authors to inform, to explain, to describe, to present information or to persuade. Expository text is subject-oriented and contains facts and information using little dialogue. The seven basic text structures are definition, description, process (collection, time order, or listing), classification, comparison, analysis, and persuasion.

Glossary of Terms

F

fiction

Writing that is wholly invented by an author. A fantasy is an example of fiction.

fix-up strategy

A strategy readers use to monitor their understanding of text by going back and "fixing up" something in the text they did not quite understand.

flashback

A plot technique of interrupting the action in a narrative to relate something that happened earlier.

foreshadowing

A plot technique of giving clues in a narrative to hint at what is to happen later.

formal assessment

A traditional method of assessment, which includes objective tests that measure factual knowledge and standardized tests that compare students to standards or norms.

formative assessment

Ongoing monitoring of student progress to define the specific focus of instruction. Teacher observations, informal or formal tests, curriculum tasks, and diagnostic tests are examples of formative assessments.

G

generalization

A generalization states an idea that is true for all information presented in a passage or text.

genre

A category of literary work. In critical theory, genre may refer to both the *content* of a given work—tragedy, comedy, pastoral—and to its *form*, such as poetry, novel, or drama.

graphic organizer

A graphic organizer illustrates concepts and interrelationships among concepts in a text, using diagrams or other pictorial devices. Graphic organizers are known by different names, such as maps, webs, graphs, charts, frames, or clusters.

guided practice

An explicit teaching technique in which the teacher guides and assists students as they learn how and when to apply a learning strategy.

H I

historical fiction

A story with fictional characters that take part in actual historical events and interact with real people from the past. Typically, historical fiction includes some made-up events and details.

implicit instruction

Instruction that relies heavily on student-directed learning. The learner is able to understand what is being taught even though it is not directly expressed.

independent reading

In independent reading, children read on their own or with partners from a wide range of materials. Some reading is from a special collection at their reading level.

independent reading level

Readability of a text that is relatively easy for the reader, with no more than about 1 in 20 words difficult for the reader (95% success).

inferential question

A question about a reading passage, which can be answered either entirely from prior knowledge or prior knowledge and text clues provided by the author.

informal assessment

A non-standardized test designed to give an approximate index of an individual's level of ability or learning style; often teacher-constructed.

informal reading inventory (IRI)

Graded reading passages of increasing difficulty used to determine student's strengths, weaknesses, and strategies for word identification and comprehension.

instructional reading level

Readability of a text that is challenging but manageable for the reader, with no more than about one in ten words difficult for the reader (90% success).

Glossary of Terms

J K

knowledge

Learning represented by recalling facts, terms, basic concepts and answers (the lowest level of Bloom's taxonomy).

K-W-L chart

Graphic organizer often labeled with the following headings: K: What We Know, W: What We Want to Know/Learn, L: What We Learned.

M

main idea

The most important idea of a passage, often expressed in a sentence or phrase.

metacognition

Thinking about your thinking.

modeling

An explicit teaching technique in which the teacher models, or demonstrates, how to apply the strategy, usually by "thinking aloud" while reading the text that the students are using.

monitoring comprehension

Readers who monitor their comprehension know when they understand what they read and when they do not. Students are able to use appropriate "fix-up" strategies to resolve problems in comprehension.

N

narrative text

Text written to entertain, to tell a story, or to provide an aesthetic literary experience. Narrative text is often based on life experiences and is person-oriented using dialogue and familiar language. Narrative text is organized using story grammar.

national norm

The range of test scores that represents the average or usual performance in a nationwide sample rather than in a local one. National norms vary widely with respect to such factors as sample size and the degree to which they represent the population from which the sample is drawn.

National Reading Panel

Asked by Congress in 1997 to assess the status of research-based knowledge about reading and the effectiveness of various reading approaches. The two year effort is summarized in two reports and a video titled, "Teaching Children to Read."

nationally normed test

Test that enables a score to be compared to levels of achievement of the average or usual performance in a nationwide sample rather than in a local one.

No Child Left Behind

Signed into law in 2001 by President George W. Bush, the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act embodies four key principles: stronger accountability for results; greater flexibility for states, school districts and schools in the use of federal funds; more choices for parents of children from disadvantaged backgrounds; and an emphasis on effective teaching methods.

nonfiction

Writing that is about real things, people, or events. An autobiography is an example of nonfiction.

norm

Performance standards that are established by a reference group and that describe average or typical performance. Usually norms are determined by testing a representative group and then calculating the group's test performance.

norm-referenced assessment

A norm-referenced assessment expresses the students' scores in rank order, based on a distribution of scores. It is comparative, telling us that one student has performed at a higher level than another student.

Glossary of Terms

O

on My Own

A QAR strategy in which the answer to a question is prior knowledge only. The reader does not use the text at all to answer the question. The answer is based on the reader's opinions and experiences.

open-ended assessment

An assessment in which students must generate a solution to a problem or perform a task when there is no single, right answer

P

paired summarizing

A reading strategy to help students summarize by practicing retelling and abstracting. Immediately after reading, a student writes a retelling of a selection. When finished, the student exchanges his or her paper with a partner.

performance-based assessment

A form of assessment that measures students' understanding of concepts, procedures, or strategies by demonstrating what they have learned in an authentic context. Often, students will create a product or answer.

plot

A series of events created by an author to tell a story. Plot revolves around a central conflict and may follow a cycle of exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution.

problem/solution chart

Graphic organizer used to help identify, sort, or display possible causes of a problem and includes the possible solutions. It is similar to a cause-and-effect diagram.

process assessment

A process assessment assesses *how* a student knows or does something and often involves observing students to see how well they use strategies.

putting It Together

A QAR strategy, also known as *Think and Search*, in which the answer to a question is in different places in the text or different sentences. The reader must put together different parts of the text to get the answer.

Q

question generation strategy

Reading comprehension strategy in which readers ask themselves questions about various aspects of the story or text.

question-answer relationships (QAR)

An activity for helping students analyze and understand questions. Developed by Taffy Rafael, the Question Answer Relationships (known as QARs) break questions into two categories: those with answers supplied by an author ("in the book" QARs) and those with answers that need to be developed based on the reader's ideas and experiences ("in my head" QARs). Question Answer Relationships help students recognize the kind of thinking they need when responding to questions.

R

read aloud

During a read aloud, a book that is too advanced for a child to read aloud independently is read aloud by an adult. The child will listen, ask questions, and use art and dramatization to develop his or her own interpretations. The purpose of a read aloud is to expose children to a variety of books and to inspire a love for reading.

realistic fiction

A story that portrays familiar characters, situations, and settings in a realistic manner. This story is usually contemporary rather than historical.

Glossary of Terms

reciprocal teaching

An example of multiple-strategy instruction in which the teacher and students work together so that the students learn four comprehension strategies: 1) asking questions about the text they are reading 2) summarizing parts of the text 3) clarifying words and sentences they don't understand, and 4) predicting what might occur next in the text.

right there

A QAR strategy in which the answer to a question is found in the text word-for-word from a single sentence. The words in the question and the words in the answer are usually in the same sentence. The reader can point to the answer.

S

scaffolding

A form of support. In instruction, a way of teaching systematically in which the teacher provides to students, early in the learning process, a significant amount of support in the form of modeling, prompts, direct explanations and targeted questions. Instruction during this phase is primarily teacher-guided. Then, as students begin to acquire mastery of the targeted objectives, direct teacher supports are reduced and the major responsibility for learning is transferred to the student. When students assume more responsibility, it is referred to as student-guided learning.

schema

Previous experience and prior knowledge; also refers to a process of comprehension through the integration of new information with a network of prior knowledge.

selective underlining

A way for students to read for a passage's key ideas, essential vocabulary, and cause and effect. Also known as selective highlighting.

self-questioning

A learning strategy in which students formulate their own questions for the content that they are learning. These questions can be asked before reading (What do I already know about this topic/subject?), during reading (What is the author's purpose for providing this information?), and after reading (What are the main points in the text?).

semantic feature

An attribute or meaning of a word, such as *orange*, *bouncing*, and *round* for *basketball*.

semantic organizer

Graphic organizer that looks somewhat like a spider web. In a semantic organizer, lines connect a central concept to a variety of related ideas and events. (Also called semantic map or semantic web).

sensory detail

A supporting passage description or detail that tells how something looks, sounds, feels, tastes, or smells.

sequence chain/ sequence chart

Graphic organizer showing how the main idea is supported by details that must be in a particular sequence or order. A sequence chain is a sequence chart.

setting

When and where a story occurs.

SQ3R

A 5-step reading comprehension technique for use when reading or studying content material, especially textbooks. SQ3R stands for the stages in which information can be assimilated: 1) Survey, 2) Question, 3) Read, 4) Recall, and 5) Review.

standardized assessment

Also called a *standardized test*, a form of measurement that has been normed against a specific population. Standardization is obtained by administering the test to a given population and then calculating means, standard deviations, standardized scores, and percentiles. Equivalent scores are then produced for comparisons of an individual score with the norm group's performance.

story grammar

The common structure or basic plan of narrative text. The typical elements include setting, character, initiating event, conflict/goal, events, resolution, and theme.

story map

A graphic organizer that shows the basic organization, sequence of events, or story grammar of a narrative text.

story structure

The way the content and events of a story are organized into a plot. See story grammar. Reading comprehension strategy in which students are taught to use the structure of the story to help them recall story content in order to answer questions about what they have read.

Glossary of Terms

summarization

A synthesis of the important ideas in a text. Summarizing requires students to determine what is important in what they are reading, condense this information, and put it into their own words.

summative assessment

Assessment of student progress done at the end of major units of instruction and at year's end. It provides data about accomplishments and is useful for planning the next major segment of instruction for individual students.

synthesis

Compiling information in a different way by combining elements into a new pattern or proposing alternative solutions (the fifth level of Bloom's taxonomy).

systematic instruction

The strategic design and delivery of instruction that examines the nature of the objective to be learned and selects and sequences the essential skills, examples, and strategies necessary to achieve the objective by (1) allocating sufficient time to essential skills; (2) scheduling information to minimize confusion on the part of the learner; (3) introducing information in manageable and sequential units; (4) identifying prerequisite skills and building on prior knowledge of the learner; (5) reviewing previously taught skills; (6) strategically integrating old knowledge with new knowledge; and (7) progressing from skills in easier, manageable contexts to more complex contexts.

T

text comprehension

The ability to understand what is read, with readers reading actively (engaging in the complex process of making sense from text) and with purpose (for learning, understanding, or enjoyment).

text structure

The common structure or basic plan of written text. Expository text has seven basic text structures: definition, description, process (collection, time order, or listing), classification, comparison, analysis, and persuasion.

theme

The main concept, point, or moral of a story.

think aloud procedure

A text comprehension technique in which teachers model, or "think aloud," about their own thinking and understanding as they read to students.

think and search

A QAR strategy in which the answer to a question is in different places in the text. The reader must put together different parts of the text to get the answer.

think-along assessment

An informal technique that focuses on how students think while reading and whether they're learning to construct meaning. Instead of merely asking students to read and answer questions, you ask them to tell what they're thinking about while reading. Their reading comprehension improves because the assessment actually encourages them to construct meaning.

think-pair-share

A cooperative learning activity that generally follows these steps: (1) Provide the class with a topic for discussion or problem to solve. (2) Give students *think* time. (3) Ask students to *pair* with an assigned partner to discuss their ideas. (4) Call on students to *share* their ideas with the class.

time line

The presentation of a chronological sequence of events along a drawn line that enables a reader to understand temporal relationships quickly.

trade book

A book found in retail bookstores and intended for general readership.

U V

venn diagram

A graphic organizer showing how two or more items or concepts are similar or different in characteristics or attributes.

visual cue

A signaling device or distinctive feature in text structure that helps the reader comprehend the material. Examples include headings, graphics, and signal words.

Glossary of Terms

W

web

A graphic organizer of information, whether for levels of information, sequence or ordering, or relationships. Webs work from a central idea, concept, topic or question. Related topics are drawn from the central idea like branches on a web. Webbing can be used to encourage students to consider what they know about each subtopic or what they want to know.

X Y Z

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<http://www.fcrr.org/Interventions/pdf/teachingAllStudentsToReadSummary.pdf>

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Tovani, Cris. **I Read it, but I Don't Get it: Comprehension Strategies for Adolescent Readers.** Portland, ME: Stenhouse, 2000.

Web Resources:

Children’s Literature Web Guide, <http://www.ucalgary.ca/~dkbrown/lists.html>

Fluency With Beginning Readers, http://reading.uoregon.edu/flu/flu_benchmarks.php

No Child Left Behind: Fact Sheets, <http://www.nochildleftbehind.gov/>

Resources and References, (con't):

Reading Assessment Database & Reading Assessment Summary and Comparison Chart
<http://www.sedl.org/reading/rad/database.html>

Reading Resources at *OOPS*: <http://www.oops.bizland.com/read.htm>

Reading Rockets: An Action Plan for Improving Reading Instruction, www.readingrockets.org/lp.php?CID=12

The Official DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills) Home Page, <http://dibels.uoregon.edu/>

Books Shared in Day 1 and Day 2 Workshops:

The Watsons Go To Birmingham, by Christopher Paul Curtis

Last Shot: A Final Four Mystery, by John Feinstein

When the Teacher Isn't Looking, by Kenn Nesbitt

The Giver, by Lois Lowry

Akeelah and the Bee, by James W. Ellison

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