

Teacher Training Session 4: **Reading Fluency/Teaching Comprehension**

Father and Sons

A man had several sons who were always quarreling with one another, and he could not get them to live together in harmony. So he decided to convince them of their folly by the following means. Asking them to fetch a bundle of sticks, he invited each in turn to break it across his knee. All tried and all failed. Then he untied the bundle and handed them the sticks one by one. They all had no difficulty in breaking them. “There, my boys,” he said, “united you will be more than a match for your enemies: but if you quarrel and separate, you will be weak and your enemies will defeat you.” **Union is strength.**

Discussion Questions:

1. Were you able to read the text above in one minute? Why or why not?
2. What was difficult about the text? What affects our reading? How could someone help you read texts like this?

Ways to help students read and *understand* texts:

1. Goldilocks – not too easy or too hard!	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use appropriate vocabulary and define difficult words for students 2. Use a text to teach 1-2 new ideas, no more! 3. Read piece by piece and make sure students understand every part before moving forward. 	<p>Define: -He decided to convince them... -but if you quarrel and separate...</p> <p>What level is this text appropriate for? Beginner/Intermediate/Adv.?</p>
2. Sentence Simplification	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Simplify complicated phrases by shortening them 2. Shorten sentences – cut out reference words like “and”/”but”/”or” 3. Clarify reference words - he/she/it/they/that/etc. 	<p>Shorten and clarify: There, my boys,” he said, “united you will be more than a match for your enemies: but if you quarrel and separate, you will be weak and your enemies will defeat you.”</p>
3. Ask Comprehension Questions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. At the end of each paragraph, ask students questions to make sure they understood 2. Ask Who/what/where/when/why of paragraph 	<p>Create 5 comprehension questions about “Father and Sons”</p>
4. Summarizing	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. At the end of each paragraph, ask students to explain what happened 2. Tell the students to use their own words! 	<p>Summarize “Father and Sons” in 3 sentences.</p>
5. Synthesizing and Predicting	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ask questions about ideas not in the text 2. Predictions, what will happen next, elaboration 	<p>What is the moral of this story? What do we learn? Who could you tell this story to?</p>