

SESSION: Reading Fluency/Teaching Reading

Date: 13 November 2016

Time: (2 hour)

Learning Outcomes: By the end of this session participants will be able to:

- Understand strategies for building reading comprehension
- Practice techniques to build reading comprehension when reading texts with students

Step 1: Reading Warm-Up ----- 15 mins

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**

Give students one minute to read the above text. Ask discussion question 1: Were you able to read the text above in one minute? Why or why not?

Give students five minutes to read the above text. Tell them to read it at their own speed, for full comprehension. Ask DQ 2: What was difficult about the text? What affects our reading? How could someone help you read texts like this?

Step 2: Strategies for Improving Reading Comprehension ----- 20 mins

Present strategies for teaching texts. For each example, use the text above to model each strategy.

1. “Goldilocks” theory – give students texts that fit, not too easy or too hard
 - a. Make sure your vocabulary is appropriate for students’ levels
 - b. Define and explain complicated words for students
 - c. Use a text to teach one or two new concepts. Do not try to teach many new ideas in one text!
 - d. Read piece by piece and make sure students understand each piece before moving on to the next
2. Sentence Simplification

- a. Help students understand complicated sentences by simplifying complicated phrases
 - b. Reference words – and/but/or can be shortened to smaller phrases
 - i. “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.” – How do we shorten this?
 - c. Reference words – he/she/it/they/them/this/that/his/her/those/these/its
 - i. Make sure students understand what these words are referring to!
 - ii. A man had several sons who were always quarreling with one another, and he could not get them to live together in harmony – who is he/them?
 - iii. Asking them to fetch a bundle of sticks, he invited each in turn to break it across his knee.
3. Ask Comprehension Questions
- a. After each paragraph/at the end of each text, create comprehension questions to make sure students understand big ideas.
 - b. Go through chronologically, and create who/what/when/where/why questions
4. Summarizing
- a. Ask students to rephrase what happened at the end of each paragraph or text
 - b. Tell the students to put it in their own words – this way they think through the information presented
5. Synthesizing and Predictions
- a. Ask students to speculate (as they go through) about ideas NOT described in the text
 - b. Perhaps halfway through, ask students what they think will happen? Why?
 - c. At the end of the text, ask broad discussion questions – what did we learn? Who did it end this way? What is the meaning of this text? Who would you tell this story to?

Divide students into 10 groups. Give each group a second text (The Tortoise and the Hare) and give each group a different strategy (2 groups/strategy) Each group gets 15 minutes to read the text and prepare how they would teach it to the group.

When all groups are ready, create 2 big groups. Each group will then present in their bigger group their reading strategy on how to teach the text.

Step 4: Final Discussion ----- 5 mins

How did that go? Final thoughts?

The Tortoise and the Hare

Once upon a time, there was a proud hare and a wise tortoise that lived together in the forest. The hare ran everywhere quickly and he loved to tease the tortoise as he moved slowly along.

“You are so slow!” the hare laughed loudly. “I get tired just watching you!” The other animals in the forest listened carefully as the wise tortoise replied, “You are very fast, Mr. Hare, but even you can be beaten.”

The hare laughed proudly. “Beaten in a race? By whom? Not you, that’s for sure! I think there’s nobody in the world that can win against me; I’m so fast. Let’s have a race, Mr. Tortoise.” Surprisingly, the tortoise accepted and a race was quickly organized for the next day.

The next morning many animals excitedly came to see the race. Mr. Fox started the race shouting loudly, “On your mark, get set, go!” The hare laughed softly and then suddenly sped away out of sight. The tortoise walked slowly down the path saying over and over, “slowly, slowly wins the race!” The hare ran quickly for a while but eventually became hot and tired and stopped for a drink of water and a short rest in the shade of an extremely large tree.

After two hours, the hare suddenly woke up and looked around, looking for the tortoise. Tortoise was far down the trail, nearing the finish line. The hare jumped up immediately and ran hard toward the finish line. He got closer and closer to the tortoise, but the tortoise crossed the finish line victoriously a few seconds before the hare and all the animals cheered loudly.

Poor hare! Tired and totally ashamed, he sat down silently beside the tortoise that was smiling wisely at him. “Slowly, slowly wins the race!” said tortoise.