**Comprehension**

**Activities**

* **The ability to provide accurate responses regarding questions concerning written language. Reading comprehension is dependent on accurate reading ability, reasoning skills, attention, and memory.**

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Activity: Who, What, Where, and When Sentence Sorting

Group Size: Pairs, Individual, Learning Center

Purpose: Used for identifying important details of who, what, where, and when.

Materials: Sentences from familiar text, scissors, envelops.

Step by Step Directions:

1. Write three or four sentences on the board. Model how to find the words or phrases that indicate who, what, where, and when. Underline the words and write the 4 “W’s” underneath.
2. Give children a sheet of paper with sentences spaced widely apart, a pair of scissors, and four envelopes. Children read the sentences and looks for information that tells the 4 “W’s”.
3. Have children write who, what, where, and when on four different envelopes.
4. Children cut each sentence into words that tell who, what, where, and when and place then into the envelope.
5. They can then take a word from each envelope and make silly sentences.

Activity: Snapshots

Group Size: Large/Small group, pairs

Purpose: Use for remembering facts and details.

Materials: One copy of a story that is cut into one or two page sections, a copy if the entire story for everyone in the group, paper, crayons, markers, or pencils.

Step by Step Directions:

1. Cut a story into single pages. Give to pairs of students.
2. Pairs read the pages, discuss events, and illustrate important facts, details, and events.
3. Ask everyone in the group to read the entire story slowly.
4. After reading the pairs tape pictures together to re-create the story.
5. Call on pairs to use pictures to tell the story.
6. Compare the pictures with the facts, details, and events in the actual story. Do the illustrations accurately portray the story events? Is all the important information depicted?
7. Write on the board important facts, details, or events that need to be added to the illustrations.
8. Children add elements to picture only when important facts, details, or events have been omitted.

Activity: Sticky Note Self-Monitoring

Group Size: Small Group or Individual

Purpose: To encourage self monitoring as students read.

Materials: Sticky Notes

Step by Step Directions:

1. Discuss prompts that encourage self monitoring as you read and write them on the board.
2. Give students sticky notes. Have them write one prompt on each sticky note. Model how to use the sticky note prompts to improve comprehension.
3. Children will read a short selection and place the sticky notes with questions in strategic places throughout the text.
4. Encourage children to add their own sticky note questions while reading the text. After reading talk about the sticky note questions and ask children to explain how they found information.

Ideas for Prompts:

-Do I understand this?

-What is the main point I should remember?

-What does this mean?

-Does this fit with what I already know?

-Why did this happen?

Activity: Sketch to Stretch

Group Size: Pairs or small groups.

Purpose: For students to comprehend and interpret readings.

Materials: Passage and paper.

Step by Step Directions:

1. The students will read a poem or a story.
2. The students will draw pictures that symbolize the main ideas or themes of the passage.
3. One student shows their pictures to a partner or a group of students and the group will interpret the picture by saying what they think it means and how its images relate to the passage.
4. After the students interpret the pictures, the students who drew the picture will give their own interpretation.
5. All students will participate in this process.

Activity: Language Chart Comprehension Strategy

Group Size: Small/Large Group

Purpose: As a way to motivate children to think more deeply about themes and other features of a book.

Materials: Language Chart and 2-5 comparable books.

Step by Step Directions:

1. Choose 2-5 books that share similarities that can be compared in the language chart.
2. Develop the language chart for a specific number of comparable books with comparable questions.
3. Children or teacher, depending on the age level fill in the chart and discuss the questions.

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| Books:  | What was the problem?  | What was the solution?  | How were things different at the end?  |
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Activity: Dual Entry Diary

Group Size: Individual, Small/Large Group

Purpose: To help students comprehend text.

Materials: Readings, blank paper

Step by Step Directions:

1. Take a blank piece of paper and draw a vertical line down the middle. On the left hand side, write a passage or draw and image from the text that affected them strongly. Maybe it reminds the students of something from experience. It may be something that puzzles them or something they disagree with.
2. On the right hand side of the page, write a comment about that passage. What made you write that quote down? What did it make you think of? What question do you have about it?
3. These can be used to share between teacher and student, student and student, or for class discussion on a book or passage that everyone reads.

Activity: Main Idea, Fact, or Detail Handprint

Group Size: Small/Large Group, Pairs, Individual

Purpose: To identify story parts, main idea, facts, and details.

Materials: Text, paper, pencils.

Step by Step Directions:

1. Conduct a read aloud and then do a think aloud and model and discuss how to find the main idea, facts, and details of the text.
2. Have the students read to identify the main idea, facts, and details of the text that you have previously selected.
3. Have children trace their hand on a piece of paper.
4. Have children fill in the main idea in the center of the palm of the hand, and write the details on the fingers.

Activity: Save the Last Word for Me!

Group Size: Small/Large Group

Purpose: To encourage students to take the lead in discussing their reading.

Materials: Text, notecards, pencils.

Step by Step Directions:

1. After being assigned a reading independently, students are given notecards and asked to find 3-4 quotations they consider particularly interesting or worthy of comment.
2. On the other sides of the cards, the students write comments about their chosen quotations.
3. The students bring the quotation cards to discussion groups. The teacher calls on someone to read the card aloud.
4. After reading the quotation, the student invites their peers to comment on the quotation.
5. Once others have had their say about the quotation, the student who chose it reads their comments aloud. There can be no further discussion. The student who chose it gets to have the last word.
6. The student can now call on another student to share his or her quotation and begin the process all over again.

Activity: Close Reading

Group Size: Small/Large Group

Purpose: To comprehend text.

Materials: Texts about a specific issue.

Step by Step Directions:

1. Give the class texts that deal with different issues in society. (Hunting, School Rules, Age to Vote, etc.)
2. Students will read the text they are given and underline things that stuck out to them.
3. Students will then find students who had the same text and talk about “Why I underlined that.” Other students will hear the underlined piece and predict why their peer underlined what he/she did. The person who underlined will then tell their partner why.
4. As a group the students will then write down the top ten things they learned as well as 5 questions they have.
5. The students will then form an opinion about the issue and have a debate with the rest of the class about their issue.
6. This could be turned into a writing piece.

**QAR: Question Answer Relationship**

Reading Comprehension Strategy

The QAR strategy is a tool that students can use as they read text and answer questions. By using this strategy students become aware that they may have to use information from the text, as well as their background knowledge to answer given questions. Often times our students focus solely on either the text or their background knowledge; this strategy teaches students to consider both textual information and experiences when answering questions.

Why should students be taught this strategy? First and foremost, students learn to understand that there are different levels of questions that they will be asked in school and in life that are going to be answered differently. This awareness allows students to be able to analyze, understand, and respond to the ideas in the text. QAR can be used to improve a student’s comprehension. When using QAR students are asked to locate information whether it is in the text or in their heads. If students are not able to locate information in the text it caused them to “think deeper” or “read between the lines” to answer a question.

There are two ways in which students can use QAR. First teachers may choose to teach their students about QAR and then have them examine questions about a given text. This allows students to get a deeper understanding about the text as they discuss the “type” of question and then locate the answer. Once a student has a solid understanding of the different “types” of questions, they could then create their own QAR questions to accompany something they read. This allows students to check their own understanding of the text by creating appropriate questions, and it also allows them to think deeper about the text as they develop their “In my head” questions.

When teaching the strategy, the first thing a teacher would want to do is explain to his or her students why questions are important. Students have to be able to understand and appreciate questioning. Next, the teacher should introduce the QAR four square that shows the different question answer relationships: *Right There, Think and Search, Author and Me,* and *On my Own. Right There* questions can be used after reading a text, these are very literal and do not take a lot of though. *Think and Search* questions are good questions to use during reading activities that allow students to of course, think and search for the answers. “In my head” questions, *Author and Me* and *On my Own* are the questions that are usually discussed after reading. These questions are created for critical thinking to occur. *On my Own* questions are also great to use before reading a text as a way to build prior knowledge. Once students understand the different levels of questions, it would be best to examine questions that have been written about a text. This would allow students time to evaluate and discuss why a question falls into a specific level. Finally, when students are able to identify the levels of premade questions, allow them to create their own about a text that they read. This is a great way for them to show their comprehension of a text that they read. If students are able to do this, it shows that they have mastered the strategy.

Below are QAR squares that I’d give my students. One explains the four-leveled questions. The other can be used for students to record questions and answers that have already been made, or ones that they’ve personally created about a text.

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| **In-The-Book Questions** | **In-My-Head-Questions** |
| **Right There** The answer is in the text. The words used to answer the question are found in the open%20booksame sentence.  | **Author and Me** The answer is not in the text. You need to think about what you already know, what the author tells you, thinking%20about%20readingand how it fits together.  |
| **Think and Search** The answer is in the text, but you need to put together different pieces of information to find it. The Think%20and%20Searchanswer comes from different places in a text.  | **On My Own** **j0396744**The answer is not in the text. You can answer the question without even reading the text. The answer is based on your own experiences and knowledge.  |

**Directions:** Think of some questions that could be answered from reading the text. Create your own questions under each QAR heading. You must do at least one question in each box, but are encouraged to do more! Put the answer to your questions on a separate sheet of paper.

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| **In-The-Book Questions** | **In-My-Head-Questions** |
| **Right There**  | **Author and Me**  |
| **Think and Search**  | **On My Own**  |