

What is Comprehension?

Comprehension is:

- the process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning through interaction and involvement with written language
- an active, complex, long-term developmental, cognitive process of acquiring knowledge, of enhancing understanding, of constructing meaning that involves knowledge, experiences, thinking, and teaching
- understanding beyond knowing

Comprehension is not a product of reading. Rather, it requires purposeful, thoughtful, and active interactions between the reader, the text, the activity, and the sociocultural context.

(Anderson & Lehr, 2001; Farnhill & Pinnell, 2001; Harway & Gough, 2000; Irwin, 1991 as cited in Temple, 2001; Murray, 1990; NRP, 2000; RAND Report Executive Summary, 2000)

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COMPREHENSION

Metacognitive, Non-linear, Multi-Strategy Process
Reader-, Text-, Activity-, and Context-Specific

Active Engagement with Text as a Means to
Acquire Knowledge, Enhance Understanding, Construct Meaning

INSTRUCT AND PRACTICE WITH STRATEGIES

BEFORE

- Activate prior knowledge
- Pre-read
- Predict
- Connect
- Question
- Recognize text structure

DURING

- Connect
- Visualize
- Question
- Predict
- Monitor
- Infer
- Use fix-up strategies
- Reread
- Read selectively, fluently, and decode rapidly

AFTER

- Summarize
- Synthesize
- Question
- Interpret on different levels
- Connect
- Infer
- Verify
- Reread
- Determine what's important

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What Do Proficient Readers Do to Enhance Their Comprehension?

Proficient Readers:

- Activate background knowledge and make associations or connections with text
- Ask questions before, during, and after reading
- Use awareness of the purpose in reading the text, text forms and features, and then make decisions about reading rate based on this awareness
- Visualize and use sensory images and emotions
- Verify or change predictions based on the text and/or what is known about an author and his/her style
- Read selectively, fluently, and decode rapidly

(Keene & Zimmerman, 1997)

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