

Common Core During-Reading Activities

Unit: Reading Comprehension for Business

Problem Area: Demonstrate Various Reading Strategies

Lesson: Common Core During-Reading Activities

- **Student Learning Objectives.** Instruction in this lesson should result in students achieving the following objectives:

- 1 Summarize the elements of reading.**
- 2 Apply during-reading strategies to enhance reading comprehension.**

- **Resources.** The following resources may be useful in teaching this lesson:

E-unit(s) corresponding to this lesson plan. CAERT, Inc. <http://www.mycaert.com>.

“Before, During, and After Approach to Reading,” *Jefferson County Schools, Dandridge, TN*. Accessed Sept. 19, 2013. <http://www.jc-schools.net/read6-12/ReadingCompStrategies.pdf>.

“Before, During, and After,” *Illinois Regional Offices of Education #13 and #40*. Accessed Sept. 19, 2013. <http://www.roe13.k12.il.us/services/KeriKorn/BDA/Book.pdf>.

Billmeyer, Rachel, and Mary Lee Barton. *Teaching Reading in the Content Areas*, 3rd ed. McREL, 2012.

Burke, Jim. *Reading Reminders: Tools, Tips, and Techniques*. Heinemann, 2000.

Cherry, Kendra. “Gardner’s Theory of Multiple Intelligences,” *About.com: Psychology*. Accessed Sept. 19, 2013. <http://psychology.about.com/od/educationalpsychology/ss/multiple-intell.htm>.

“Classroom Strategies,” *AdLit.org*. Accessed Sept. 19, 2013. http://www.adlit.org/strategy_library/.



- Faber, Sharon. *How to Teach Reading When You're Not a Reading Teacher*. Incentive, 2006.
- Goudvis, Anne, and Stephanie Harvey. *Strategies That Work: Teaching Comprehension for Understanding and Engagement*, 2nd ed. Stenhouse, 2007.
- Jones, Darolyn. *Painless Reading Comprehension*, 2nd ed. Barron's, 2004.
- Lapp, Diane, James Flood, and Nancy Farnan. *Content Area Reading and Learning Instructional Strategies*, 2nd ed. Allyn and Bacon, 2004.
- Porter–O'Donnell, Carol. "Beyond the Yellow Highlighter: Teaching Annotation Skills to Improve Reading Comprehension," *National Council of Teachers of English*. Accessed Sept. 19, 2013. http://www.csun.edu/~krowlands/Content/Academic_Resources/Reading/Useful%20Articles/Beyond%20the%20Yellow%20Highlighter.pdf.
- Rutenberg, David. "High School Literacy: A Quick Stats Fact Sheet," *National High School Center*. Accessed Sept. 19, 2013. http://www.betterhighschools.org/docs/nhsc_highschoolliteracy.pdf.

■ **Equipment, Tools, Supplies, and Facilities**

- ✓ Overhead or PowerPoint projector
- ✓ Visual(s) from accompanying master(s)
- ✓ Copies of sample test, lab sheet(s), and/or other items designed for duplication
- ✓ Materials listed on duplicated items
- ✓ Computers with printers and Internet access
- ✓ Classroom resource and reference materials

■ **Key Terms.** The following terms are presented in this lesson (shown in bold italics):

- ▶ active readers
- ▶ chunking
- ▶ Common Core State Standards (CCSS)
- ▶ comprehension
- ▶ Cornell Notes
- ▶ DRTA
- ▶ during-reading strategies
- ▶ learning styles
- ▶ mental disposition
- ▶ metacognition
- ▶ multiple intelligences
- ▶ passive readers
- ▶ reading
- ▶ schemata
- ▶ subvocalization
- ▶ text coding
- ▶ text marking

- **Interest Approach.** Use an interest approach that will prepare the students for the lesson. Teachers often develop approaches for their unique class and student situations. A possible approach is included here.

Ask the students about their personal reading experiences. Discuss their feelings about reading as well as their thoughts on reading skills. Reflect on where they read, how they read, when they read, and what they enjoy reading and why. Place a cluster (or engage in a semantic map) on the board with “reading” in the middle. This cluster activity is a pre-reading strategy to activate prior knowledge. In our case, the intention is to probe into students’ reading experiences and use this as a springboard to dive into the lesson.

Have the students reflect for a few minutes. Then ask the following: Is there a pattern in your reading habits? Are you a strategic reader? You may want to participate in this reflective activity by sharing your cluster thoughts with the class. Students enjoy listening to the teacher’s honest thoughts. This places the teacher at the same “level” with the students, bridging the teacher-student gap. It also places even more emphasis on the life-long skill of reading. A cluster/brainstorming activity allows you to set the stage for the importance of reading for their futures, as well as the tips and strategies that can aid in overall reading comprehension.

CONTENT SUMMARY AND TEACHING STRATEGIES

Objective 1: Summarize the elements of reading.

Anticipated Problem: What are the elements of reading? How do the elements of reading help with successful reading comprehension?

- I. Elements of reading
 - A. Element 1: Reader
 1. **Reading** is the process of making meaning from written or printed words or extracting meaning from letters and symbols. Included in this extraction of meaning are reading lips, sign language, and/or braille. A key requirement of Common Core proposes as a key requirement that “all students must be able to comprehend texts of steadily increasing complexity as they progress through school.” Students are to accomplish this reading comprehension independently and proficiently with the complex texts found in college and careers—informational texts.

- a. **Common Core State Standards (CCSS)** are a state-led education initiative in the United States that established a single set of educational standards for students in kindergarten through 12th grade in English language arts and mathematics, which states can voluntarily adopt. At this writing, the CCSS are adopted by 45 states, the District of Columbia, four territories, and the Department of Defense Education Activity.
 - b. The four strands of the Common Core English Language Arts Standards
 - (1) Reading (R) focuses on reading comprehension for ELA and for history/social studies, science, and technical subjects.
 - (2) Writing (W) focuses on writing logical arguments and conducting research for ELA and for history/social studies, science, and technical subjects.
 - (3) Speaking and listening (SL) focuses on purposeful SL in various academic settings (e.g., one-on-one, small group, and whole classroom) and formal presentations.
 - (4) Language (L) focuses on vocabulary acquisition (e.g., word meanings; nuances; Tier 1, 2, 3 words; and text complexity) and conventions (e.g., grammar, usage, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling).
 - c. Media and technology—Although not set in a separate strand of the ELA Standards, skills related to critical analysis and production of media are integrated throughout the CCSS ELA Standards.
2. Nearly a billion people entered the 21st century unable to read a book. Illiterate people are not equipped to compete in today’s economy. During the past 15 years, 15 million students graduated from high school despite reading below the basic level. The act of reading and actually comprehending what is read are two different things. According to Stratford P. Sherman, author of “America Won’t Win Till It Reads More,” said “Reading transcends the mere transmission of information: It fosters an imaginative dialogue between the text and the reader’s mind that actually helps people to think.”
- a. Of adults, 43 percent at Level 1 literacy skills live in poverty compared to only 4 percent of those at Level 5 (Source: Literacy Statistics at <http://www.begintoread.com/research/literacystatistics.html>).
 - b. About 70 percent of high school students need some form of remediation. The most common problem is that students cannot comprehend the words they read.
 - c. Typically, adults with lower levels of literacy earn lower salaries than their more literate peers.
 - d. Of employers, 63 percent rated reading **comprehension** (the process of understanding the learning taking place) as “very important” for newly hired employees who are high school graduates.
3. **Learning styles** are the primary way or ways each of us prefers to take in information and to learn. Each student learns differently, and different reading strategies support different learning styles.
- a. Visual learners learn better with visual stimulation.

- b. Auditory learners learn better by listening.
 - c. Kinesthetic learners learn better through movement.
4. Multiple intelligences (MI)
- a. Harvard psychologist Howard Gardner’s model of multiple intelligences suggests that every learner has one or more of the eight intelligences. A learning model that identifies the strengths, abilities, and talents of each learner is **multiple intelligences**. When people know their learning modality, they can better control their learning strategies and processes. As more senses are involved in a reading experience, comprehension improves. Taking notes while reading aloud involves three senses, which is called triple strength learning: using eyes for reading, ears for hearing the reading, and touch for taking notes.
 - b. MI modality foci
 - (1) People with linguistic abilities learn by reading, writing, and speaking.
 - (2) People with logical abilities learn by using data. They collect and organize; analyze and interpret; and conclude and predict.
 - (3) People with visual abilities form and manipulate a mental model, depending on visual thinking and the imagination.
 - (4) People with musical abilities understand, create, and interpret musical pitches, rhythm, and tones.
 - (5) People with kinesthetic abilities process information through physical movement.
 - (6) People with intrapersonal abilities know themselves by understanding emotions, motivations, strengths, and weaknesses.
 - (7) People with interpersonal abilities can interpret and respond to others’ moods, emotions, motivations, strengths, and weaknesses.
 - (8) People with naturalistic abilities can make connections to real life, nature, and the sciences.
5. Prior knowledge
- a. This is the knowledge that readers bring to the reading experience to bridge and connect with new information. No two students bring the same background knowledge to the reading, so no two students can comprehend the reading in the same manner.
 - b. Researchers believe background knowledge is stored in knowledge frameworks called **schemata**. When presented with new information, the readers predict, organize, infer, reflect, and elaborate by finding ways to connect the incoming information with schemata.
6. Mental disposition
- a. **Mental disposition** is the reader’s response to and emotions about reading, which is crucial to the success rate of reading comprehension. To determine mental disposition, ask the following questions:
 - (1) Is the reader confident about his or her skills?
 - (2) Is the reader motivated to read?

- (3) What is the attitude of the reader toward reading?
 - (4) Is the reader interested in the reading topic?
 - (5) Does the reader give up when reading challenges arise?
 - (6) Does the reader monitor and control his or her learning during the reading process?
- b. Attitude, mental habits, and frame of mind affect learning when reading. Being aware of our mental disposition, monitoring it, and modifying it—as needed—improves reading comprehension.
7. **Metacognition** is the ability to think about our thinking. It is necessary for successful before-, during-, and after-reading comprehension. Metacognitive skills are strengthened when readers are conscious of what they read by creating mental pictures, monitoring comprehension, and asking questions to be actively involved with reading.
- B. Element 2: Climate or physical conditions for reading
1. Noise—Background noise vs. complete silence
 2. Lighting—Dim lighting vs. a well-lit room
 3. Environment—Comfort vs. neutral disengaged location
- C. Element 3: Text features—Previewing the text features prepares the brain for the new information.
1. Objectives of focus
 2. Key terms
 3. Reader aids: charts, illustrations, tables, graphs, FYI bubbles, etc.
 4. End-of-chapter summaries
 5. Review questions and study guides
 6. Bold print, italics, headings, titles, and bulleted lists

Teaching Strategy: Many techniques can be used to help students master this objective. Project VM–A for discussion. Have students take the inventory at <http://psychology.about.com/od/educationalpsychology/ss/multiple-intell.htm>. Brainstorm examples of during-reading comprehension strategies that might support each modality.

Objective 2: Apply during-reading strategies to enhance reading comprehension.

Anticipated Problem: Which during-reading strategies are best for each learning style?

II. During-reading strategies

- A. **During-reading strategies** are those activities and processes that help a reader make connections, monitor understanding, generate questions, and stay focused. Effectively implemented during-reading strategies increase reading comprehension. **Active readers** are proficient readers who engage with the text

before, during, and after they read. Proficient during-reading readers share the following qualities:

1. They give their fullest attention to the reading.
2. They monitor their reading comprehension as they read.
3. They utilize reading strategies for all reading materials.
4. They engage actively in the reading process using during-reading strategies.
5. They understand that not all strategies will work for every reader.
6. They practice using a blend of during-reading strategies, until they find what works best for them.
7. They know that developing strategic reading habits early on will improve and strengthen reading comprehension.

B. Engagement

1. During-reading strategies enable readers to engage in the text and strengthen the comprehension process.
 - a. Readers should practice **subvocalization** (the process of listening to an inner voice while reading; literally or mentally).
 - b. Readers should practice mental visualization by preparing movies in the mind about what is being read.
 - c. Readers should utilize reading fix-up strategies when trouble occurs with comprehension.
 - (1) They may slow down the reading rate.
 - (2) They may reread.
 - (3) They may do the reading aloud.
 - d. Readers may prepare learning logs.
 - e. Readers may practice **chunking** (focusing on smaller sections of reading or breaking the reading into manageable parts) the reading assignment.
 - f. Readers may question what is being read.
 - g. Readers may support initial predictions performed during the pre-reading phase.
2. Text marking and text coding
 - a. **Text marking** is using different highlighter colors to emphasize important information. Text marking should not be overwhelming. Instead, it should be a helpful dissection of the passage and emphasis on important concepts by extracting unnecessary details. The goal of text marking is for readers to only find it necessary to thoroughly read the selection one time and then review by reading the text markings and text codes.
 - (1) They may highlight what was covered or emphasized in class.
 - (2) They may highlight what might be forgotten but shouldn't be.
 - (3) They should not highlight complete passages. Instead, they should highlight key words or phrases.
 - (4) They should highlight key words that may summarize the main idea.

- b. **Text coding** is a strategy to keep track of thoughts while reading. Text codes emphasize important information in the reading with colorful pens or pencils to “color code,” stars, exclamation points, question marks, arrows, underlining, etc. Spelling and grammar are not imperative when text coding. Text codes include:
- (1) Selecting a color that signifies extremely important information (e.g., red)
 - (2) Writing notes, explanations, opinions, thoughts, reactions, feelings, questions, or quick sum-ups in the margins
 - (3) Using color-coded sticky notes (when the reader cannot write in the book)
 - (4) Changing the title of the passage into a question (to help “gear” the reading)
 - (5) Using abbreviations to create shortcuts (e.g., “CCSS” for Common Core State Standards and “sit’n” for situation)
3. Structured notes using graphic organizers
- a. Walter Pauk, a professor at Cornell University in New York, devised Cornell Notes in the 1950s. It has been called two-column notes or T-chart. **Cornell Notes** is a graphic organizer broken into three main sections; yet it can be used rather flexibly. The tool typically calls for the left column to document a sentence, concept, or word. Meanwhile, the right column is to document an explanation, a reaction, or an examination of it. Below is a section to summarize the overall idea. This tool is useful when taking notes during reading, but it is also useful when taking notes during a lecture or video.
- (1) It condenses and organizes notes in a visually appealing way that is not intimidating or complex.
 - (2) Its structure allows for it to be a great review tool, as the chart can be folded in half to allow for self-assessment.
 - (3) The two columns may be any of the following:
 - (a) Key points (column 1) and notes (column 2)
 - (b) Question and answer
 - (c) Word and definition
 - (d) Concept and explanation
- b. Other structured note-taking organizers include KWL charts, semantic mapping, process charts, and learning logs.
4. DRTA (**D**irected **R**eading **T**hinking **A**ctivities)
- a. **DRTA** is a comprehension strategy that guides readers to ask questions, make predictions, and read to confirm or refute predictions. Practicing the DRTA strategy involves three processes: predicting, reading, and proving. The goal of this strategy is for readers to become independent, mindful, and active.

- b. DRTA activates prior knowledge, monitors understanding, and strengthens reading and critical thinking skills. The four aspects of DRTA are:
- (1) D—Teachers direct students to preview the reading selection and change titles and headings into questions. The answers to these questions can be used as predictions prior to reading.
 - (2) R—Students read actively and with a purpose by monitoring comprehension along the way and by confirming their predictions. At a pre-arranged stopping point in the reading (a point selected by the teacher), the teacher prompts the students with questions about what has been read and asks them to evaluate any of the predictions that were made. This part of the process is repeated as necessary to complete the reading assignment.
 - (3) T—Thinking out loud while reading helps students justify predictions and process information. In addition, it promotes digging deeper into the text selection by having an informal conversation with the author. Prompt the students with the following questions at the end of a reading section:
 - (a) What is the status of your predictions now?
 - (b) What did you find to prove your predictions?
 - (c) What made you change your predictions?
 - (4) A—Activities
- C. **Passive readers** are ineffective readers who do not engage in the material that is read. Qualities of ineffective during-reading readers are:
1. They do not know if they understand what they are reading.
 2. They do not know how to utilize during-reading strategies, but they simply sweep their eyes across the page passively.
 3. They do not monitor and adjust their comprehension during the reading process.
 4. They lose their place during reading and do not give their complete attention to the task.
 5. They find the reading process boring because they do not believe it is an active activity.
- D. Study strategies for visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learners
1. Visual learner study strategies
 - a. Using pictures, posters, PowerPoints, and Prezi
 - b. Utilizing books with diagrams and pictures
 - c. Using graphs and infographics
 - d. Utilizing symbols (e.g., @, \$, %, $\sqrt{\quad}$, [™], and ®) and white space
 - e. Underlining and highlighting in colors
 - f. Creating flow charts
 2. Auditory learner study strategies
 - a. Participating in discussions and tutorials (with peers, teacher, and others)

- b. Using recorded lectures and audio books
 - c. Explaining a concept to others
 - d. Describing pictures, artwork, etc.
 - e. Telling or reading a story or informational text out loud
 - f. Taking notes and leaving spaces in notes for later recall or “fill-in-the-blank” exercises
 - g. Reading notes out loud and/or explaining notes to others
 - h. Studying for tests by replaying the tape in the order the material was presented
3. Kinesthetic learner study strategies
- a. Using all senses to relate to a concept (e.g., sight, touch, taste, smell, and hearing)
 - b. Participating in laboratory work (e.g., recall experiments)
 - c. Going on field trips (e.g., remember the “real” things that happen)
 - d. Examining examples of principles (e.g., case studies)
 - e. Reviewing real-life examples (especially when lecturing)
 - f. Using applications and hands-on approaches
 - g. Utilizing trial and error
 - h. Looking at collections, exhibits, and examples (e.g., recipes and photographs)

Teaching Strategy: Use VM–B and VM–C. Have students construct an organizer using a chapter to be assigned. Read a section together, and complete a row of the Cornell Notes. Have volunteers complete the other rows of this structured note-taking tool. Use VM–D, VM–E, and VM–F to review. NOTE: If students have not taken a Learning Styles Inventory recently, have them take the one at <http://sunburst.usd.edu/~bwjames/tut/learning-style/index.html>. Assign LS–A.

- **Review/Summary.** Use the student learning objectives to summarize the lesson. Have students explain the content associated with each objective. Student responses can be used in determining which objectives need to be reviewed or taught from a different angle. If a textbook is being used, questions at the ends of chapters may be included in the Review/Summary.
- **Application.** Use the included visual master(s) and lab sheet(s) to apply the information presented in the lesson.
- **Evaluation.** Evaluation should focus on student achievement of the objectives for the lesson. Various techniques can be used, such as student performance on the application activities. A sample written test is provided.

■ Answers to Sample Test:

Part One: Completion

1. reading
2. comprehension
3. during-reading strategies
4. Cornell Notes
5. DRTA
6. subvocalization

Part Two: True/False

1. F
2. T
3. T
4. T
5. F
6. T

Part Three: Short Answer

1. Answers will vary but should include four of the following text marking and text-coding strategies: highlighter markers and colorful pens or pencils to “color code,” stars, exclamation points, question marks, arrows, and underlining.
2. The goal of text marking is for the reader to only find it necessary to thoroughly read the selection one time and then to review by reading the text markings and text codes.
3. Answers will vary but should include five of the following during-reading strategies: practice subvocalization, practice mental visualization, use during-reading fix-up strategies, prepare learning logos, chunk the reading into manageable parts, question what you read, support your initial predictions performed during the pre-reading phase, text mark effectively, take structured notes using graphic organizers (e.g., Cornell Notes), and practice DRTA (Directed Reading Thinking Activities).

Common Core During-Reading Activities

► Part One: Completion

Instructions: Provide the word or words to complete the following statements.

1. The process of making meaning from written or printed words is _____.
2. The process of understanding the learning that is taking place is _____.
3. Those activities and processes that help a reader make connections, monitor understanding, generate questions, and stay focused are called _____.
4. A graphic organizer broken into three main sections for note taking is _____.
5. A comprehension strategy that guides the reader to ask questions, make predictions, and read to confirm or refute predictions is _____.
6. Listening to your inner voice as you read is called _____.

► Part Two: True/False

Instructions: Write *T* for true or *F* for false.

- ___ 1. Visual, musical, kinesthetic, and hobbyist are examples of the multiple intelligences.
- ___ 2. Learning styles are the primary way or ways each of us prefers to take in information and to learn.
- ___ 3. Fix-up strategies include reading out loud.



- _____ 4. Developing strategic reading habits early on will help you improve and strengthen your reading comprehension.
- _____ 5. When reading, lighting and physical space has little to do with a successful reading experience.
- _____ 6. Chunking the material into manageable parts when reading is an effective during-reading strategy.

► **Part Three: Short Answer**



Instructions: Answer the following.




1. List four text marking and text-coding strategies.




2. What is the goal of text marking?

3. List five during-reading strategies.

HOWARD GARDNER'S MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES—WHAT KIND OF A LEARNER ARE YOU?

| Modality | Details | Visual Representation |
|--------------------------|---|--|
| <p>Linguistic</p> | <p>Ability to read, write, and speak; overall verbal and written communication</p> |  |
| <p>Logical</p> | <p>Ability to use data: collect and organize, analyze and interpret, conclude and predict</p> |  |

| Modality | Details | Visual Representation |
|--------------------|---|--|
| Visual | Ability to form and manipulate a mental model, depending on visual thinking and the imagination |  |
| Musical | Ability to understand, create, and interpret musical pitches, rhythm, and tones |  |
| Kinesthetic | Ability to process information through physical movement |  |

| Modality | Details | Visual Representation |
|----------------------|---|--|
| Intrapersonal | Ability to know oneself by understanding emotions, motivations, strengths, and weaknesses |  |
| Interpersonal | Ability to interpret and respond to others' moods, emotions, motivations, strengths, and weaknesses |  |
| Naturalistic | Ability to make connections to real life, nature, and the sciences |  |

CORNELL NOTES

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>Title: _____</p> <p>Directions: In the boxes below, write a focus question, a main idea, a reference quote, or a concept referred to in the reading.</p> | <p>Name: _____</p> <p>Date: _____</p> <p>Directions: In the boxes below, elaborate, explain, reflect, or react to the reference points shown to the left.</p> |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| <p>Summary: Explain the overall meaning of the article, chapter, or concept using your own words.</p> | |

TOP 10 DURING-READING STRATEGIES

To increase your reading comprehension:

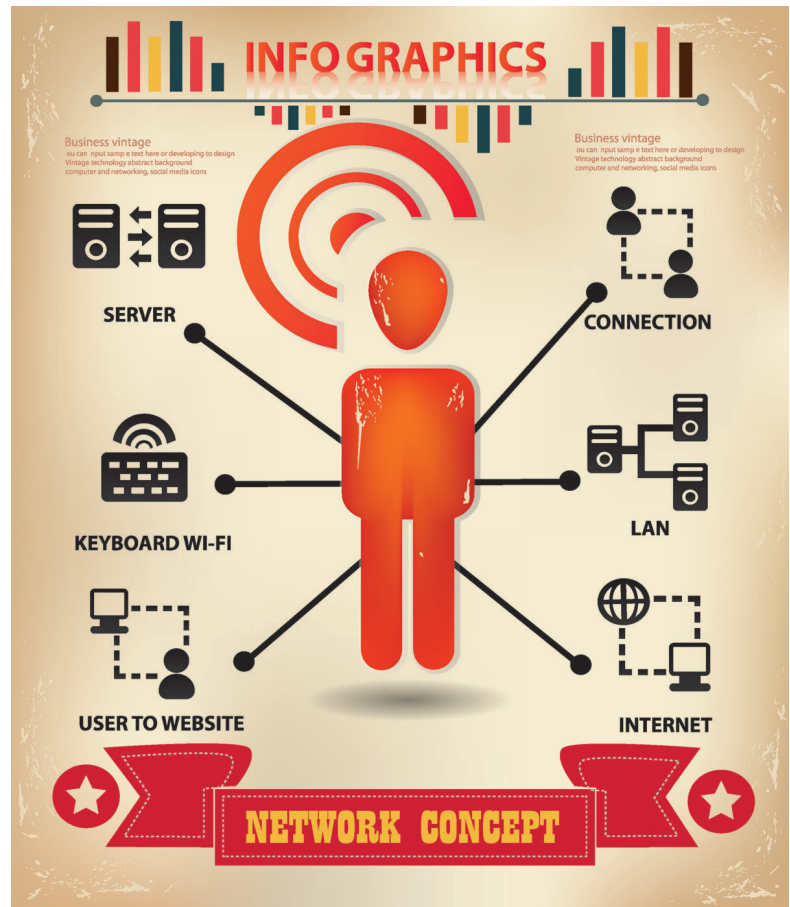
- ◆ Practice sub-vocalization.
- ◆ Practice mental visualization.
- ◆ Use during-reading fix-up strategies.
- ◆ Prepare learning logs.
- ◆ Chunk the reading into manageable parts.
- ◆ Question what you read.
- ◆ Support your initial predictions performed during the pre-reading phase.
- ◆ Text mark effectively.
- ◆ Take structured notes using graphic organizers (e.g., Cornell Notes).
- ◆ Practice DRTA (Directed Reading Thinking Activities).



STUDY STRATEGIES FOR VISUAL LEARNERS

Visual learners learn best when using:

- ◆ Pictures
- ◆ Posters
- ◆ PowerPoints or Prezi
- ◆ Books with diagrams and pictures
- ◆ Graphs and infographics
- ◆ Symbols (e.g., @, \$, %, √, ™, and ®) and white space
- ◆ Underlining and highlighting in colors
- ◆ Flow charts



STUDY STRATEGIES FOR AUDITORY LEARNERS

Auditory learners learn best when:

- ◆ Participating in discussions and tutorials (with peers, teacher, and others)
- ◆ Listening to recorded lectures and audio books
- ◆ Explaining a concept to others
- ◆ Describing pictures, artwork, etc.
- ◆ Telling or reading a story or informational text out loud
- ◆ Taking notes and leaving spaces in notes for later recall or “fill-in-the-blank”
- ◆ Reading notes out loud and/or explaining notes to others
- ◆ Studying for tests by replaying the tape in the order the material was presented



STUDY STRATEGIES FOR KINESTHETIC LEARNERS

Kinesthetic learners learn best when using:

- ◆ All senses to relate to a concept (e.g., sight, touch, taste, smell, and hearing)
- ◆ Laboratories (e.g., recall experiments)
- ◆ Field trips (e.g., remember the “real” things that happen)
- ◆ Examples of principles (e.g., case studies)
- ◆ Real-life examples
- ◆ Applications and hands-on approaches
- ◆ Trial and error
- ◆ Collections, exhibits, and examples



Text Marking for Better Comprehension

Purpose

The purpose of this activity is to use text-marking strategies.

Objectives

1. Examine text-marking strategies.
2. Practice text marking using the sample provided.
3. Determine the effectiveness of your text-marking ability as it relates to reading comprehension.

Materials

- ◆ copies of the text marking examples: “Why Writing Skills Matter More Than Ever” and “Mastering Nonverbal Communication Skills” for each pair
- ◆ highlighters
- ◆ writing utensils
- ◆ sticky notes (optional)

Procedure

1. With a partner, examine and discuss the different text-marking techniques demonstrated in “Why Writing Skills Matter More Than Ever.”
2. Then read the article, “Mastering Nonverbal Communication Skills” to practice text marking. While thinking aloud, text mark and text code accordingly.
3. Share and discuss your text-marking and text-coding selections with another pair. Relate the text marking to your increased reading comprehension.



4. Make any necessary edits.
5. Share your text marking with your instructor, and explain how the marks improve reading comprehension.
6. Make any needed edits.
7. Turn in your completed lab sheet to your instructor.

Text Marking for Better Comprehension

Directions: Use the text-marking sample as a guide to text mark the sample passage provided for you on the right.

| SAMPLE | |
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| <p style="color: blue; font-size: 1.2em;">→ Why do they matter so much now??</p> <p>Why Writing Skills Matter More Than Ever</p> <p>Today's workplace revolves around communication. Workers communicate more or less, since information technology and the Internet have transformed the world of work in the last two decades. The modern office is mobile and fast paced. Technology enables us to transmit messages faster, farther, to potentially larger audiences, and more easily than in the past. Many people work together but are physically apart. They stay connected through spoken and written messages. Writing skills, which were always a career advantage, are now a necessity. A survey of American corporations revealed that two third of salaried employees have some writing responsibility. About one third of them, however, do not meet the writing requirements for their positions. → WOW!</p> <p style="color: blue;">→ desperate need</p> <p>"Businesses are crying out – they need to have people who write better," said Gaston Caperton, business executive and College Board president. The ability to write opens doors to professional employment. People who cannot write and communicate clearly will not be hired. If already working, they are unlikely to last long enough to be considered for promotion. Writing is a marker of high-skill, high-wage, professional work, according to Bob Kerrey, president of The New School university in New York and chair of the National Commission on Writing. If you can't express yourself clearly, he says, you limit your opportunities for many positions.</p> <p style="color: blue;">both are important!</p> <p>Not surprisingly, many job listings explicitly ask for excellent oral and written communication skills. In a poll of recruiters, oral and written communication skills were by a large margin the top skill set sought. Employers consistently state that communication skills are critical to effective job placement, performance, career advancement, and organizational success. Among the top choices in two other polls were teamwork, critical thinking, analytical reasoning, and oral and written communication skills.</p> <p style="color: blue; font-size: 1.2em;">Answer to Question: Employees are lacking this skill and it is a very demanding skill to have today in the mobile and fast paced office.</p> | <p>Mastering Nonverbal Communication Skills</p> <p>Understanding messages often involves more than merely listening to spoken words. Nonverbal cues, in fact, can speak louder than words. These cues include eye contact, facial expressions, body movements, space, time, territory, and appearance. All these nonverbal cues affect how a message is interpreted, or decoded by the receiver.</p> <p>Just what is nonverbal communication? It includes all unwritten and unspoken messages, whether intended or not. These silent signals have a strong effect on receivers. But understanding them is not simple. Does a downward glance indicate modesty? Fatigue? Does a constant stare reflect coldness? Dullness? Aggression? Do crossed arms mean defensiveness? Withdrawal? Or just that the person is shivering?</p> <p>Messages are even harder to decipher when the verbal and nonverbal cues do not agree. What will you think if Scott says he is not angry, but he slams the door when he leaves? What if Alicia assures the hostess that the meal is excellent, but she eats very little? The nonverbal messages in these situations speak more loudly than the words. In fact, researchers believe that over 90 percent of a message that we receive is nonverbal.</p> <p>Successful communicators recognize the power of nonverbal messages. Cues broadcast by body language might be helpful in understanding the feelings and attitudes of senders. It is unwise, however, to attach specific meanings to gestures or actions because behavior and its interpretations strongly depend on one's cultural background.</p> |

Source: Essentials of Business Communication
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