



Teaching Reading Comprehension



Reading comprehension is very important in a child's learning process. In order to understand and learn new things, students must be able to comprehend what they read, so they now how to obtain information and/or apply concepts to their learning process. Make reading purposeful with this quick guide to teaching reading comprehension.

Learn with ABCs

This is an activity where students work in groups to brainstorm ideas based on a particular topic that you give the entire class. Each group is assigned letters of the alphabet (e.g., ABCD - group 1, EFGH - group 2, etc.). Each group is to write down something they believe is associated with the topic that you give them. For instances, if you give the class the topic of "Ice Age," each group will come up with a word or phrase using each letter of the alphabet that you assigned to them. This works really well with helping students focus on their topic, rather than having to go through the whole alphabet by themselves.

Going By the Clock

Use this interesting activity to time students on thoughts and ideas about a story or topic they recently read. The first step is to pair students as partners. Give each pair 1 minute to write down ideas they gathered from their reading. When the time is up, the students have 10 seconds to find a new partner and gather new ideas that are not already on their paper. You can continue doing this for 10 to 15 minutes. When the class is back in order, go over the results and have a discussion time with the class.

Concept Maps

Since some students learn best with visual representations, using concept maps (graphic organizers) will help them grasp ideas much more proficiently. When students have completed reading a passage from a book or just learned about a topic in your class, give them the opportunity to compare plot, setting, characters, etc. with Venn diagrams, flow charts, or comparison-contrast graph. You can find many examples of these concept maps on the Internet that you just need to print.



The K-W-L Chart

This is a popular worksheet used by many teachers to help students with reading comprehension. The "K" means Know, the "W" means Want, and the "L" means Learned. The purpose of the chart is to have students list the things they already know ("K") about a topic that you present. Then they are to list the things that they want ("W") to know about the topic. The last step is to list the new things that they learned ("L") about the topic once you are done teaching. Teachers use these charts to assess the students' understanding of the topic, and if enough material was covered about the topic.

Author on Target

Use this activity to help students answer questions about what the author wrote. The idea is to have the students think beyond what they read and try to understand what the author intended for them to learn. Have students read a paragraph or passage from a book (not a whole chapter), and then stop to answer these questions:

- What is the author telling me here?
- Why is the author telling me this information?
- Is the author clear about what he telling me?
- What other way could the author have said this passage more clearly?
- I would have said this instead...

By answering these questions, students will be able to identify how well they understand what they are reading, as well as think of ways that the author could have improved on clarity, content, and organization.

