

IMPROVING READING COMPREHENSION.

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Introduction.

Bridging the Gap Reading comprehension is a vital skill that influences learning across all subjects and is essential for students' academic success. However, many learners struggle with gaps in their reading skills, which can hinder their ability to understand, retain, and apply the information they read. To bridge this gap, it's crucial to adopt effective strategies that enhance reading comprehension and foster lifelong learning. Understanding the Gap The "gap" in reading comprehension refers to the difference between a student's actual ability to understand a text and their potential ability.

Key words: original text, text, patchwork, plagiarized not given statement.

Several factors contribute to this gap, including: Limited Vocabulary: A weak vocabulary can make it difficult to fully grasp the meaning of words, phrases, and overall context. Lack of Background Knowledge: Without sufficient prior knowledge, students may struggle to connect new information to what they already know, making comprehension harder. Inefficient Reading Strategies: Some readers lack effective strategies for decoding, analyzing, and retaining information while reading.

Engagement Issues: A lack of interest or motivation in reading materials can reduce a student's focus and understanding.

Strategies to Close the Gap

1. Build Vocabulary: Contextual Learning: Encourage students to infer meanings of new words by reading them in context. Teachers can also provide opportunities to explore words in various contexts, strengthening understanding and retention.

2. Word Mapping: Teaching word roots, prefixes, and suffixes can help students deconstruct unfamiliar words, improving both their vocabulary and comprehension. 2. Enhance Background Knowledge: Pre-reading Activities: Before diving into a text, engage students with discussions or activities that activate their prior knowledge on the topic. This could involve watching a short video, reading a related article, or brainstorming key concepts. Making Connections: Encourage students to link new information to something they already know. Using graphic organizers, such as concept maps or KWL charts (What I Know, What I Want to Know, What I Learned), can help students make these connections.

3. 3. Teach Active Reading Strategies: Previewing the Text: Before reading, students should skim headings, subheadings, and key terms to get an overview of the content. This sets expectations and helps focus attention on important information. Annotation: Encourage students to highlight, underline, or take notes while reading. This active engagement helps retain key ideas and encourages deeper processing of the material.

Summarization: After reading, students should summarize the material in their own words, which reinforces comprehension and improves recall.

4. 4. Foster Engagement with Texts: Choice and Relevance: Providing students with choices in what they read can enhance motivation. Select books, articles, and other texts that align with their interests or current events they care about. Interactive Discussions: Regular group discussions or book clubs can make reading more interactive and socially engaging. Students can share interpretations and ideas, which deepens understanding through collaboration.

5. 5. Utilize Technology and Tools: Reading Apps and Software: Many digital tools can aid reading comprehension, offering features like vocabulary enhancement, text-to-speech, or comprehension quizzes. Tools such as audiobooks and e-readers can be especially helpful for students who struggle with traditional reading. Interactive Websites: Platforms like Quizlet and Kahoot can help reinforce vocabulary and concepts in a fun, engaging way.

6. 6. Provide Differentiated Instruction: Recognize that each student learns differently. Some may benefit from visual aids, while others need auditory or kinesthetic learning methods. Adapting instruction to meet individual needs helps ensure that all students can improve their reading comprehension skills. Measuring Progress

It's important to regularly assess reading comprehension to ensure that the gap is being closed. Teachers can use a combination of formative assessments, quizzes, reading journals, and class discussions to evaluate progress. Additionally, ongoing feedback can help students recognize areas where they need improvement and celebrate their growth.

Conclusion Improving reading comprehension and filling the gap is an ongoing process that requires a combination of effective strategies, engaging materials, and continuous support. By enhancing vocabulary, activating background knowledge, teaching active reading strategies, and fostering engagement, educators can help students become more confident and proficient readers, better equipped to tackle texts across various disciplines. With the right approach, bridging the reading comprehension gap becomes an achievable goal for all learners.