

# READING STRATEGIES



Curated by



# Reading strategies guide

One of the leading predictors of future academic achievement is early reading success. Because early readers are just learning to read, many traditional reading strategies are inappropriate. It can be challenging to pinpoint practical reading approaches for the young learner. Find four fabulous early reading strategies below that you can quickly implement in your classroom for your early readers.

## Guided reading

The International Reading Association, the National Association for the Education of Young Children, and the National Council of Teachers of English found that guided reading can benefit young learners when used as part of a balanced literacy program. Many reading programs focus on guided reading as the main component.

Guided reading is a teaching method in which an instructor works with a smaller group of students who share similar reading levels and skills. A lesson lasts about 15-25 minutes, and it should allow for students to use reading strategies they already know and apply them to reading a new text with teacher support.

## Teaching tips for guided reading

Use the following procedure and suggested times for a guided reading lesson:

### Identify and group students according to reading levels and skills.

- The ideal group should be no more than six students, but if your class size is large, groups with up to 8 students can still be influential.
- Groups of more than eight students start to lose their efficacy.

### Introduce the lesson (2-3 minutes).

- Identify troublesome vocabulary, and help students decode and define the words.
- Present any background knowledge the students may need.
- Assign the number of pages students should read.

**Read the text (10 minutes).**

- Students read to themselves, either silently or quietly.
- Pay attention to each student for a portion of the reading time, providing any support where needed.
- Discourage any poor reading habits.
- Identify any areas you should reteach.

**Talk about the text (5 minutes).**

- Engage in a conversation about the reading with the students.
- Answer any questions the students may have and clear up any misconceptions.
- Ask critical thinking and open-ended questions.

**Teaching objective (5 minutes).**

- Teach one objective that students need to practice at the level you are teaching.
- Select an objective that is present in the text selection read by the students.
- Reference the text selection while teaching the objective.

**Word work (3-4 minutes).**

- Plan activities that provide a hands-on experience to work with spelling or vocabulary words.
- Word work can be done using spelling words, vocabulary words from the text, or other words the students need to know.
- Examples include word sorts, spelling patterns, learning about word parts, and rainbow spelling words.

**Independent work.**

- Assign students an activity that assesses the objective taught.
- This can be for practice or a graded assignment.

## **Focus on vocabulary**

Even before kids begin to read, they learn various vocabulary words used in various contexts and categories. A recent study in the Journal of Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics found an estimated 1.4 million word gap between children entering kindergarten who had at least five books a day read to them compared to those who were not read to at all. This startling statistic further highlights the importance of focusing on vocabulary for early learners. A higher vocabulary helps kids to develop their reading skills with more understanding and complexity.

One of the leading predictors of future academic achievement is an early reading success. Because early readers are just learning to read, many traditional reading strategies are not appropriate for them. It can be difficult to pinpoint effective reading approaches for the young learner. Find four fabulous early reading strategies below that you can easily implement in your classroom for your early readers:

## **Make predictions**

Making predictions while reading is a great way to ensure that your students are not only paying attention but are also comprehending what is being read. This is mainly due to the fact that when students make predictions, they are also asking questions about what they are reading, recalling facts from the text, rereading, and drawing conclusions.

Making predictions is simply trying to figure out what could or should logically happen next. But it's more than a guess. When you ask a student to predict what will happen, he or she must incorporate a variety of skills. Then the student must infer meaning from all the information he or she has, making a prediction about the story.

## **Teaching tips for making predictions**

Making predictions is a great reading strategy to start with early in the school year. Even kids who aren't actually reading yet can practice this skill by listening to the story, looking at the pictures, and thinking about what could happen next.

## **Check for comprehension**

Checking for comprehension, in my opinion, is perhaps the most important reading strategy. We cannot count the number of times where we've been fooled into thinking students understand every bit of what we've read, only to find out they understood nothing when we check their comprehension of the information. If students don't understand, or if they misunderstand, information, they can spend a whole lot of time learning the "wrong" things.

Checking for comprehension refers to assessing students to be sure they understand what they read. An assessment, however, is not always a test, or even on a piece of paper. This assessment can be a quick, oral check, such as asking a question. You could do a craft, or even have kids sort pictures on a storyboard.

## **Teaching tips for checking comprehension**

When working with early readers, the teacher will usually be the one checking for comprehension. However, you can introduce the idea that students can check for their own comprehension. If they don't understand something, what should they do? They could ask a friend, look in the text, or ask the teacher. In addition, asking questions is a great strategy that helps to check comprehension. However, work on crafting questions ahead of time, so you can throw in a few that might require a bit more brainpower.

Graphic organizers are also a great tool. Even if you have non-readers and writers, you can give students pictures to sort for a sequence of events, pictures to colour for accuracy based on information in the text, or even a blank piece of paper for them to draw something specific from the story.

Teaching kids to read can be cumbersome, but oh, it is so worth it! Early readers certainly benefit from many of the same strategies that older readers do, but oftentimes, these strategies must be presented in a slightly different format.

Hopefully, you have found some strategies and tips that you can integrate into your teaching routine that will be helpful for your little learners.

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