

Interactive Reading

Everyone knows that effective communication between two friends or family members is a two-way, active process. One-sided communication does not help people understand each other. People best understand one another when they pay attention to each other, see things from the other person's point of view, and ask questions when they don't understand each other.

Reading is different form of communication, but the process should be the same. Reading really is about communication between the reader and the author. Now, it's true that the author is not speaking directly to the reader; however, we read best when we pretend that this is so. Reading specialists estimate that reading comprehension is a 50-50 interaction. In other words, about half of our understanding of the text is what the reader puts into the reading.

So, how can you learn to read interactively to improve your reading comprehension? The way we watch movies can provide some helpful techniques. Most people will say that they understand movies better than they understand books. Why is this so?

First of all, the light of the movie or television screen and the sound draws your complete attention and focus. Distractions are limited, so you concentrate well.

Secondly, you actually do a lot more than "watch" a movie in the movie theater or at home. It is true that movies are a visual experience, but they are also a listening experience. The audio system and quality of the movie soundtrack make a huge difference in how well you understand a movie. Anyone who has seen a foreign movie with subtitles will admit that it is harder to understand the movie without sound. Movies are multi-sensory.

Thirdly, you involve yourself in the movie that you watch. Everyone imagines themselves shooting up the bad guys, looking into the eyes of the beautiful actress or handsome actor, or running away from the evil alien-monster-robot. You may even "talk" to the characters during crucial scenes, such as "I know what's behind that door. Don't open it!" You predict what will happen and probably even compare the plot to other movies of that genre as you watch. You act as a movie critic as well, thinking of how boring or exciting a scene may be.

So, let's apply what you already do watching movies to what you *should do* as an interactive reader.

First of all, limit any distractions to improve reading concentration. In the classroom, it may be asking the teacher to move your seat away from a friend who talks too much. At home, it may be reading away from the distractions of the television, phone, music, or bothersome little brother.

Secondly, apply all of your senses to the reading. Listen to what the author is saying to *you*, try to feel what the characters feel, see the changing settings how the author describes them.

Thirdly, involve yourself in the reading by "talking to the text." This internal dialog improves concentration and helps you better interact with the author. Summarize, compare, re-read, interpret, and predict frequently as you read. Make your reading a two-way active process, not a one-way passive activity.

Reflection

1. Something I did not know about interactive reading is that _____

2. My specific goal about how to improve my interactive reading is _____

3. Accomplishing this goal will especially help me because _____

4. Experts I plan to go to for help will be _____

5. I will tell _____ about my goal so that they will hold me accountable for making progress toward my goal.

6. Before I begin working toward my goal, I will need to _____

7. I plan to begin working toward my goal when _____

8. This is how and when I will evaluate progress toward my goal: _____

9. I will know that I have accomplished my goal when _____

10. After reading the tips, I would still like to know _____

Teacher/Parent Review _____ (signature)

Teacher/Parent Comments: _____

Building Reading Comprehension Self-Assessment

	Always 5	Usually 4	Sometimes 3	Rarely 2	Never 1
1. When reading, I frequently pause to summarize.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. When reading, I frequently make connections to other parts of the text or to other readings.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. When reading, I re-think sections of the reading that I don't understand by re-reading.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. When reading, I constantly am interpreting what the author means.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. When reading, I frequently predict what will come next in the reading.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Results

- 23-25 You are an actively engaged reader who constantly monitors your comprehension of what the author is saying through a wide range of cueing strategies.
- 20-22 You often monitor your comprehension of what the author is saying through cueing strategies.
- 17-19 You sometimes monitor your comprehension of what the author is saying through cueing strategies.
- 13-16 You rarely monitor your comprehension of what the author is saying through cueing strategies. You can learn the strategies to prompt better comprehension.
- <13 You do not monitor your understanding of what the author is saying through cueing strategies. You can learn the strategies to prompt better comprehension.

Already Know: What I already know about monitoring my own reading comprehension is...

Want to Know: What I want to know about monitoring my own reading comprehension is...

Building Comprehension-The SCRIP Comprehension Strategies

Readers fail to understand text because they lack cueing strategies to prompt effective interaction with what the text says. This is a fancy way of saying that poor readers don't know how to prompt themselves to understand what they are reading. Reading research is clear that readers who prompt themselves with self-questioning strategies as they read, understand and remember what they read far better than readers who don't.

The five **SCRIP** reading comprehension strategies teach readers how to independently interact with and understand both narrative and expository text to improve reading comprehension. The **SCRIP** acronym stands for Summarize, Connect, Re-think, Interpret, and Predict.

Summarize means to put together the main ideas and important details of a reading into a short-version of what the author has said. A summary can be of an entire reading, but it is more useful to summarize more than once at key transition points in the author's train of thought. It frequently requires the reader to skim that part of the reading once more.

Connect means to notice the relationship between one part of the text with another part of the text. The parts may compare (be similar) or contrast (be different). The parts may be a sequence (an order) of events or ideas. The parts may respond to other parts of the text, such as to provide reasons for or effects of what came before in the reading. Next, Connect also means to examine the relationship between one part of the text with something outside of the text. It could be something from another book, movie, television show, or historical event. Finally, Connect also means to see the relationship between one part of the text with your own personal experience. You may have had a similar experience in your own life to that described in the text.

Re-think means to re-read the text when you are confused or have lost the author's train of thought. Reviewing what has just been read will improve understanding. You may even understand what the author has said in a different way than how you understood that section the first time reading it.

Interpret means to focus on what the author means. Authors may directly say what they mean right in the lines of the text. They also may suggest what they mean with hints to allow readers to draw their own conclusions. These hints can be found in the tone (feeling/attitude) of the writing, the word choice, or in other parts of the writing that may be more directly stated.

Predict means to make an educated guess about what will happen or be said next in the text. A good prediction uses the clues presented in the reading to make a logical guess that makes sense. Good readers check their predictions with what actually happens or is said next.

Good reading is interactive reading. The more you put into the text and talk with the author as you read, the more you will understand and remember.

Reflection

1. Something I did not know about improving my reading comprehension is that _____

2. My specific goal about improving my reading comprehension is _____

3. Accomplishing this goal will especially help me because _____

4. Experts I plan to go to for help will be _____

5. I will tell _____ about my goal so that they will hold me accountable for making progress toward my goal.

6. Before I begin working toward my goal, I will need to _____

7. I plan to begin working toward my goal when _____

8. This is how and when I will evaluate progress toward my goal: _____

9. I will know that I have accomplished my goal when _____

10. After reading the tips, I would still like to know _____

Teacher/Parent Review _____ (signature)

Teacher/Parent Comments: _____

Inferences Self-Assessment

	Always 5	Usually 4	Sometimes 3	Rarely 2	Never 1
1. When reading an unclear section of text, I apply specific strategies to problem-solve what the author means.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. When reading an unclear section of text, I see it as an interesting challenge, or puzzle to solve.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. When reading an unclear section of text, I re-read the section to figure out the meaning.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. When reading an unclear section of text, I re-read what is before and what is after that section.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. When reading an unclear section of text, I ask for help to interpret what the author is saying.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Results

- 23-25 You see reading as a mental challenge to figure out what is in the author’s mind, and you use specific, intentional strategies to problem-solve what is being said.
- 20-22 You try to figure out the meaning of unclear text, and you use some strategies to problem-solve what is being said.
- 17-19 You sometimes try to figure out the meaning of unclear text, but you do not use specific, intentional strategies to problem-solve what is being said.
- 13-16 You rarely try to figure out the meaning of unclear text. You can learn specific strategies that will help you to problem-solve the meaning of these sections.
- <13 You don’t try to figure out the meaning of unclear text, but tend to skip these sections. You can learn specific strategies that will help you to problem-solve the meaning of these sections.

Already Know: What I already know about how to figure out the meaning of unclear text is...

Want to Know: What I want to know about how to figure out the meaning of unclear text is...

Linking Memorization Technique

The Linking Technique can be a helpful tool to help you memorize many seemingly unrelated items or ideas. Linking ideas together is a powerful memory aid. We all experience the connections of one event or idea in life to that of other events or ideas. You may link drinking a tall glass of fresh lemonade with the idea of relaxation, because you usually drink that beverage in the summertime when you are out of school. In fact, an entire chain of events are linked together in our memories, even though some may, at first glance seem unrelated.

For example, the lemonade links to summer; summer links to relaxation; relaxation links to your favorite beanbag chair; beanbag chair links to your favorite video game, etc.

The Linking Technique intentionally connects an item or idea you want to remember to one other item or idea that you want to remember, etc. Here's how to link together everything you need to remember, say for an upcoming quiz or for the key ideas of a memorized speech. If you establish solid relationships within each link and between each link of the chain, the chain will be unbreakable, and you won't forget the items or ideas on your test or in your speech.

Directions

Select two concrete (visual) objects that can have a clear relationship and form a memorable pair. Think of this pair like the left and right sides of one link in a chain. Next, link the right side of the first link to the left side of another link to create a second connection in the chain. Continue in this manner to create a memorable chain of paired objects. The links can be endless; however each connection must be well-established and very visual. Substitute concrete objects for any key words that are too abstract to remember well. For example, substituting the concrete "peace sign" for the abstract "peace" would be a much more memorable object with which to pair.

Example

If memorizing a tree, bucket, grass, policeman, horse, cow, a candy bar and a golden ring, you might link them as follows:

Picture a tall oak tree with a golden ring hanging from one of its branches. The ring drops in a red bucket at the base of the tree on the bright green grass. A cow is busy nibbling the grass next to the bucket, while swishing its tail. At the end of the tail a candy bar is attached. A policeman on a white horse is frantically trying to grab the candy bar.

A bit of rehearsal will place these objects into your long-term memory. It may help to draw out the links. Memorizing using the **The Linking Technique** will enable you to retain the memory of many seemingly unrelated items.

Reflection

1. Something I did not know about the linking memorization technique is that _____

2. My specific goal about the linking memorization technique is _____

3. Accomplishing this goal will especially help me because _____

4. Experts I plan to go to for help will be _____

5. I will tell _____ about my goal so that they will hold me accountable for making progress toward my goal.

6. Before I begin working toward my goal, I will need to _____

7. I plan to begin working toward my goal when _____

8. This is how and when I will evaluate progress toward my goal: _____

9. I will know that I have accomplished my goal when _____

10. After reading the tips, I would still like to know _____

Teacher/Parent Review _____ (signature)

Teacher/Parent Comments: _____

Catch Words Memorization Technique Self-Assessment

	Always 5	Usually 4	Sometimes 3	Rarely 2	Never 1
1. When I organize each day's work, I organize in memorable forms.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. When I organize each day's work, I organize for test study.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. When I memorize, I try to visualize.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. When I memorize, I organize items or ideas into similar items.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. When I memorize, I use first letters of items or ideas to form catch words.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Results

- 23-25 You already use catch words frequently to organize learning for test study.
- 20-22 You are familiar with catch words and sometimes use them to organize learning for test study.
- 17-19 You are familiar with catch words but rarely use them to organize learning for test study.
- 13-16 You are not familiar with catch words and have not used them. If you learn the catch words memorization technique, you will better remember items and ideas on tests.
- <13 You don't group items or ideas that need to be memorized in patterns. If you learn the catch words memorization technique, you will better remember items and ideas on tests.

Already Know: What I already know about the catch words memorization technique is...

Want to Know: What I want to know about the catch words memorization technique is...
