

CONSTANCE WEAVER

THIRD
EDITION

Reading Process & Practice

*With Ten
Brand New
Chapters*

Reading Process and Practice

THIRD EDITION

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14

Teaching Comprehension Strategies and Phonics Skills

We believe that constructing meaning is the goal of comprehension. . . . True comprehension goes beyond literal understanding and involves the reader's interaction with text. If students are to become thoughtful, insightful readers, they must extend their thinking beyond a superficial understanding of the text

—Stephanie Harvey and Anne Goudvis

[In exemplary first-grade classrooms,] word-level, comprehension, vocabulary, spelling, and writing skills were typically taught in the context of actual reading and writing tasks.

—Center for English Learning and Achievement

Questions for Thought and Discussion

1. What are some reading “skills” that have traditionally been taught and tested? What are some differences between the traditional teaching of reading “skills” and the teaching of reading strategies?
2. What do you think are the most important strategies for readers to use in comprehending texts? In dealing with problem words?
3. How can teachers prepare themselves to teach reading strategies effectively?
4. How might we prepare to teach reading/thinking strategies through literature and short informational texts? Consider in detail, using specific texts as examples.
5. How do children commonly progress in their development of phonics-related skills and strategies?
6. How can we reflect that progression in a comprehensive literacy program?
7. How can we develop phonics-related skills and strategies during the shared reading experience, in particular?
8. Why and how is invented spelling so important in developing phonics knowledge? How can we promote children's development in inventing more sophisticated spellings, and how can we assess phonemic awareness as well as phonics knowledge through children's invented spellings?
9. Given this chapter's emphasis on teaching strategies and skills, what are some important points we should not lose sight of, as we plan a comprehensive literacy program for children?

Effective readers use a variety of reading strategies not only at what we might call the macro level, *with* texts and *among* texts, but at the micro level, for dealing with words not readily recognized in print.

This chapter provides a brief introduction to teaching comprehension strategies. These are cognitive strategies that we use not only for reading but for thinking, writing, doing mathematics

and science, and making sense of our world. However, some students seriously need, and all can benefit from, instructional help in developing and using such strategies, especially in reading, and especially since reading instruction in the primary grades is increasingly being reduced to phonics and fluency. In truth, many adults who are not students could benefit from such help, too. Effective readers use such reading strategies not only at what we might call the macro level, *with* texts and *among* texts, but at the micro level, for dealing with words not readily recognized in print. Roughly the second half of the chapter focuses on teaching phonics (and phonemic awareness) within a comprehensive literacy program. This is important for emergent readers and for older readers who have never had adequate help in learning to use phonics knowledge and skills along with everything they know in reading texts appropriately, effectively, and efficiently. We should remember, though, that not all older struggling readers need this particular kind of help, and not all are able to benefit from additional help of this nature, even if they *seem* to need it—witness the highly successful adult readers and writers in Fink’s study (1995/1996), discussed in Chapter 13.

Figure 14.1 shows the gradual release of responsibility model of instruction developed by Pearson and Gallagher (1983), and Figure 14.2 shows that model (inspired by Ritterskamp and Singleton [2001, p. 115]) applied to key aspects of a comprehensive literacy program as described in Chapter 12. This model indicates a progression from teacher modeling to shared reading and writing, to guided reading and writing in small groups, to sustained reading and writing. In other words, the model shows, from top to bottom, key literacy events that give increasing responsibility to learners. Typically this progression occurs again and again, cyclically, with many such teaching/learning opportunities occurring every day. Individual help is provided in

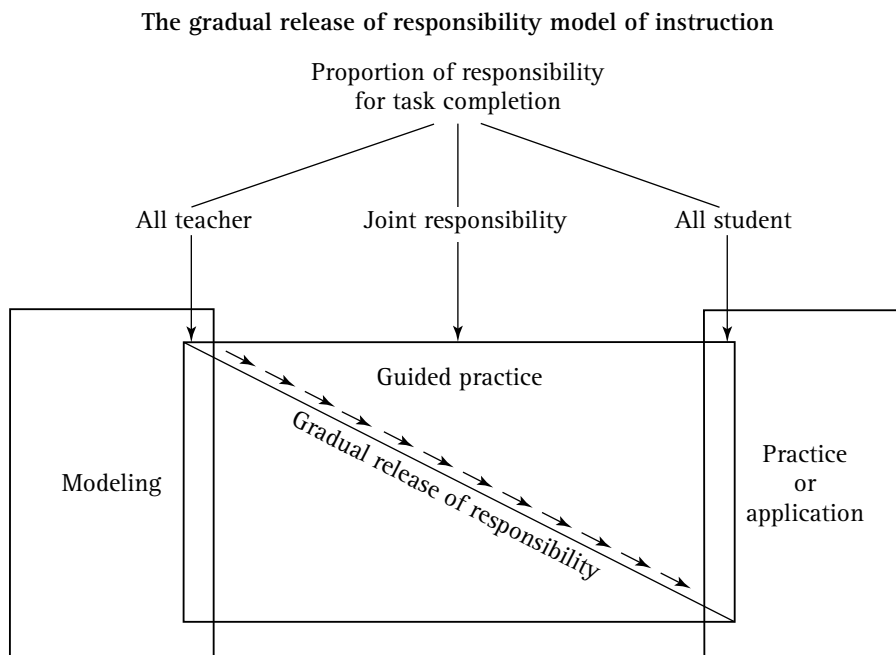


Figure 14.1 *Gradual release of responsibility model (Pearson & Gallagher 1983, after Campione, 1981).*

Reading and writing events in a first-grade comprehensive literacy classroom

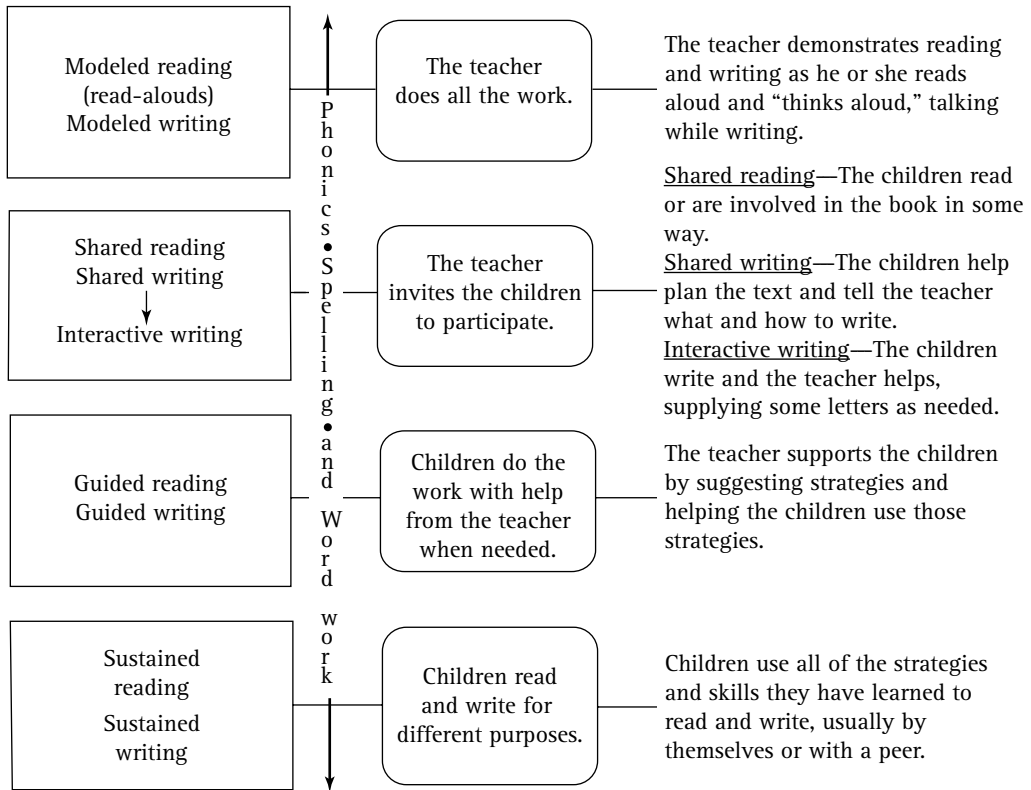


Figure 14.2 Gradual release of responsibility model applied to daily literacy events (adapted from Ritterskamp & Singleton, 2001).

teacher-student conferences if necessary. It's possible to hold brief conferences even at the secondary level, if the teacher establishes a reading workshop and/or a writing workshop in the classroom. Collaboration among peers also supports the learning process.

TEACHING READING STRATEGIES AT THE MACRO LEVEL

When my friends and I walked into Anne Ebner's first-grade classroom, we were astonished at the amount and quality of student-and-teacher-generated work that was displayed. Though it was only the seventh day of the school year, the walls were covered with children's writings and charts the teacher and children had composed together: caring and sharing rules, to which the children had signed on; a story of the month calendar with a piece of paper whereon the teacher had written, and a child had illustrated, what the class said about "what we did"; a list in response to the question "How do writers get their ideas?"; a list of spelling strategies; guidelines for "alone reading"; a list of books the children were recommending; the children's drawing and writing; and other evidence of their developing literacy.

One piece of chart paper that particularly caught my eye was a list of strategies good readers use. There were two strategies listed already, from the previous six days—strategies taught the previous year in kindergarten in that school:

Good readers use *background knowledge* to make sense of their reading.

Readers make *connections* about their reading.

That particular day, Anne was focusing on the strategy of making connections to one's own life. Here are my notes from that lesson, written as the sequence of activities unfolded:

1. Anne reads *The Relatives Came*, by Cynthia Rylant (1985). But before she begins reading, she tells the children that she will be focusing on background knowledge and especially making connections to their lives. She also tells the children that she has already put Post-its on pages she wants to come back to, after she's read the book aloud.
2. Anne demonstrates the strategy of making connections by sharing her own personal connections with the parts of the book where she has put the Post-its.
3. Before the time for alone reading, which follows, Anne asks the children to see if they can find something that generates personal connections with the book they have chosen to read. She gives each child a couple of Post-its to mark such spots. The books for alone reading are chosen from a number of bins of books arranged mostly by topic; some bins also have red, green, yellow, white, or other color dots indicating their difficulty.
4. While the children are doing alone reading, Anne sits down between two of them, reading a professional article herself but also helping the two readers with strategies as they need them. NOTE: She doesn't "give" them words; she "gives" them strategies by helping them use an appropriate strategy.
5. After read alone time, Anne begins the sharing by talking briefly about her professional article. It's an article from *Primary Voices*, she tells the children, and it's about starting writers' notebooks. She reads them a sentence about starting writers' notebooks in second grade. Anne tells the children her "connection" is she realizes that they, the children in her class, have been keeping writers' notebooks since kindergarten. Thus Anne demonstrates the kind of sharing she would like the children to do, at least eventually, with regard to the connections they make.
6. Several children share a connection and Anne responds by asking a question about the connection, or suggests a connection herself, based upon her knowledge of the student, if the child's sharing of something from the book hasn't actually included a connection. One child talks about "text-to-text" connections between two wordless picture books about the dog Carl; the child sees a pattern. Anne comments on the pattern and the background knowledge that the child drew upon in making the connection.
7. Anne brings this sequence of activities to a close by telling the children if they didn't have a chance to share their connection, they should keep the book with a sticky note right in the book.

We were amazed at the sophistication of the first grader's "text-to-text" connection, though later we learned that these strategies had been taught previously in kindergarten.

Anne's classroom is only one of several in the greater Denver area, and increasingly across the nation, that draws upon the work of Ellin Keene and Susan Zimmerman (1997), Stephanie Harvey (1998), Ann Goudvis (Harvey & Goudvis, 2000), and Chris Tovani (2000) to teach cognitive strategies that effective readers use. These educators and staff developers are affiliated with the Public Education and Business Coalition in Denver <<http://www.pebc.org>>.

The following strategies are emphasized by the PEBC staff developers, and most of these strategies are listed, with references from researchers, in Keene and Zimmerman (1997, p. 22–23):

- Using prior knowledge (schemas)
- Making connections (which requires prior knowledge/schemas)
- Drawing inferences (includes predicting, speculating, hypothesizing)
- Asking questions (of text and its connections to author, self, other texts, world)
- Determining importance in text (requires valuing, evaluating)
- Evoking images (visual and other sensory/mental images)
- Monitoring meaning and comprehension (for example, by paraphrasing)
- Employing fix-up strategies
- Synthesizing (requires analyzing and evaluating; may involve drawing analogies)
- Becoming metacognitively aware of the other strategies and determining when to use them

Each year in a school that has PEBC staff developers, each of the participating teachers focuses on three “new” strategies, while continuing to reinforce those previously emphasized.

“The cumulative effect of teaching comprehension strategies from kindergarten through high school is powerful” (Stephanie Harvey & Ann Goudvis, *Strategies That Work*, 2000, p. 26).

As you can readily see, this list of strategies includes three that have been emphasized in this book for getting words and meaning: predicting; monitoring comprehension; and employing fix-it strategies to correct, or try to correct, as needed. These three strategies and others are used at both the macro and micro levels, as defined previously. However, teaching all the listed strategies, again and again over time, enables readers to probe the meanings of texts much more deeply than typical instruction in “comprehension skills” does. This is partly because teaching reading strategies avoids the unnatural division into skills that the publishers of basal reading programs have made, if for no reason other than to show progression from grade to grade in the skills that are taught (e.g., Commission on Reading, 1988; see Rosenshine, 1980, on the inseparability of comprehension skills). Unlike the teaching of separate reading “skills,” the teaching of reading strategies is supported by research (Pearson & Fielding, 1991; National Reading Panel, 2000b). Teaching reading strategies helps students—and even us, as teachers—to read more deeply, to probe a text more thoughtfully and thoroughly. Teaching reading strategies helps readers not only engage with and understand texts, but make connections with other texts, the world, and their own lives.

Outstanding Resources for Teachers

Harvey, S. (1998). *Nonfiction Matters: Reading, Writing, and Research in Grades 3–8*. York, ME: Stenhouse. An invaluable resource on these topics, Harvey’s book includes several bibliographies of well-crafted materials to use with students, plus other print sources and models of different kinds of writing. My favorite bibliographies list picture books for science and social studies, many of which could be used in different ways with students of varying ages.

Harvey, S., & Goudvis, A. (2000). *Strategies That Work: Teaching Comprehension to Enhance Understanding*. York, ME: Stenhouse. This outstanding book discusses strategic thinking and reading, then focuses on five particular strategies, demonstrating how strategy instruction occurs in context. Several valuable appendices

are included, among them “Great Books and Author Sets to Launch Strategy Instruction and Practice” and “Great Books for Teaching Content in History, Social Studies, Science, Music, Art and Literacy.”

Keene, E. O., & Zimmerman, S. (1997). *Mosaic of Thought: Teaching Comprehension in a Reader's Workshop*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann. In this inspirational book, Keene and Zimmerman describe how they learned more about their own cognitive/reading strategies as they helped children develop such strategies—and in turn became better able to help children process and comprehend texts. Relevant to all levels, the book also suggests how we can help teachers understand these cognitive/reading strategies and then teach them.

Tovani, C. (2000). *I Read It, But I Don't Get It: Comprehension Strategies for Adolescent Readers*. York, ME: Stenhouse. From her experience as a high school teacher, Tovani shares how reading and English teachers at the junior high and secondary levels can teach reading strategies effectively. A highly valuable resource, her book extends the teaching practices of pioneers Keene and Harvey beyond the elementary and middle grades.

Wilhelm, J. (2001). *Improving Comprehension with Think-Aloud Strategies: Modeling What Good Readers Do*. New York: Scholastic. Think-alouds make audible the processes and strategies that a reader is using, and teacher modeling of the think-aloud strategy is important in “making strategic knowledge visible and available to students.” This book is a valuable companion to the one described next.

Wilhelm, J., Baker, T. N., & Dube, J. (2001). *Strategic Reading: Guiding Students to Lifelong Literacy, 6–12*. Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook. The teaching of reading strategies like visualization and questioning is only a small part of this book. Building on Wilhelm's “*You Gotta BE the Book*” (1995), the authors include chapters on such topics as a theory of teaching and a theory of teaching reading, authorial reading and democratic projects, teaching *before* reading, building on different strengths to make reading visible, and more.

Teaching Strategies in the Primary Grades

Especially in an election year, we routinely hear cries about how our nation's children can't even read at a basic level. Sometimes these critics of public education cite statistics from the latest National Assessment of Educational Progress. What most people don't realize, though, is that the “basic” level for fourth graders (the youngest group assessed) isn't described in terms of word identification or decoding skill, but in terms of reading strategies—namely, making connections and drawing simple inferences. The other two levels of fourth-grade achievement require even more sophisticated strategy use (NAEP, 1999, p. 19):

- “Fourth-grade students performing at the Basic level should demonstrate an understanding of the overall meaning of what they read. When reading text appropriate for fourth graders, they should be able to make relatively obvious connections between the text and their own experiences and extend the ideas in the text by making simple inferences.”
- “Fourth-grade students performing at the Proficient level should be able to demonstrate an overall understanding of the text, providing inferential as well as literal information. When reading text appropriate to fourth grade, they should be able to extend the ideas in the text by making inferences, drawing conclusions, and making connections to their own experiences. The connection between the text and what the student infers should be clear.”
- “Fourth-grade students performing at the Advanced level should be able to generalize about topics in the reading selection and demonstrate an awareness of how authors compose and use literary devices. When reading text appropriate to fourth grade, they should be able to judge text critically and, in general, give thorough answers that indicate careful thought.”

It's true that the NAEP levels and level-setting procedures are fundamentally flawed and need to be revised (e.g., NAEP 1999, pp. 10–13), but it is also true that fourth graders should be able to meet at least the criteria for the basic level as described here—either in English or in their

native language. But helping children learn to make connections and inferences is not just the job of the fourth-grade teacher; it's a responsibility shared with K–3 teachers as well.

Certain reading strategies can, and should, be taught and used in the primary grades, before teachers even help children learn words and phonics elements—though all of these may well be taught with the same text, if not during the same day. The most obvious strategy may be drawing inferences based upon prior knowledge and the pictures and words of a text, which is what we do when predicting what might happen next. Clearly, making connections is also a basic strategy, and asking questions is likely to come into play. When the teacher and children stop to discuss the appropriateness of their predictions, this is a form of monitoring comprehension. Furthermore, we can generate children's metacognitive awareness of these strategies and their usefulness by naming the strategies, demonstrating them, and involving children in applying the strategies themselves. Other reading strategies may also be demonstrated by the teacher and used by the children—even when the teacher simply reads a book aloud to the class for the first time.

One approach is to decide what strategy you want to teach and then to look for appropriate children's books, fiction as well as nonfiction. Another is to look through favorite children's books and see what strategies are most obviously required. Picture books—especially informational ones—can be good choices even for secondary students and adults, because the texts are relatively short. Most of the professional books I've recommended for teaching cognitive/reading strategies have bibliographies that can assist with either approach.

Captivated by the charm of the book *Owen*, by Kevin Henkes (1993), I have chosen it to illustrate selecting a book for young children and then deciding what strategies, if any, the book invites us to teach. *Owen* is the story of a little mouse named Owen who has a yellow blanket named Fuzzy. Fuzzy goes wherever Owen goes and participates in everything he does. A neighbor, Mrs. Tweezers, suggests to Owen's parents different strategies for getting Owen to give up his blanket, but Owen foils their attempts. Finally the situation becomes critical when Owen is about to start school. The pictures are delightful and the text is filled with gentle humor that adults, especially, will appreciate. For example, there are three incidents where Mrs. Tweezers “filled them in”—“them” being Owen's parents. The third is when it's time for school to start:

“Can't bring a blanket to school,” said Mrs. Tweezers.

“Haven't you heard of saying no?”

Owen's parents hadn't.

Mrs. Tweezers filled them in.

In all three instances of Mrs. Tweezers' “helpfulness,” the last two lines are repeated as a refrain. Sooner or later, many parents will laugh in sympathy with Owen's parents at the unsolicited advice from their neighbor. As for children, see what responses *you* receive in discussing these repeated incidents.

Upon a first reading of the book, it was immediately obvious that *Owen* would lend itself well to demonstrating and using certain cognitive/reading strategies: drawing upon prior knowledge and making connections, and drawing upon prior knowledge to make inferences—that is, predictions about what will happen next. Now that school has started, the problem of getting Owen to give up the blanket has to be solved, doesn't it? (Or does it?) But if so, how might it be solved? Clearly a kindergarten or first-grade class can be involved in hypothesizing how the problem might be solved—or not.

Other books by Kevin Henkes are especially appropriate for teaching young readers to use such reading strategies. Another of my favorites is *Chrysanthemum* (1991), about a mouse who loves her name until she starts school and other children tease her about the uncommon name. Like these two books, Henkes' picture books typically involve animal characters in situations that many young children can identify with—and adults, too, remembering their childhoods.

Remember Prior Knowledge!

While we're thinking about reading strategies, we need to keep in mind that many children may not have the background knowledge for simple picture books that we love and want to read to the class. Drawn by the illustrations and the simple text that reminded me of my childhood, I purchased one such book a year ago: *Spring Thaw*, by Steven Schnur, illustrated by Stacey Schuett (2000). But what would city children make of a sentence like "A wagon leaves the barn, its narrow wheels cutting deeply into the snow, turning it brown"? Would they realize that the snow was turning brown because it was melting and the horses' hooves cut through to the mud that was forming underneath? Before we can teach reading strategies, we often have to *provide* background knowledge for the text being read.

Teaching Strategies in the Intermediate and Middle Grades

In haste one day, I prepared a chart to share with a class of preservice teachers, showing reading strategies that one might teach from *A Boy Called Slow*, by Joseph Bruchac (1994). It's a Native American tale that describes the naming of a child who became a great leader of his people. I started reading the book to the class and immediately stumbled into a problem I hadn't anticipated: I needed to draw upon or to develop my students' prior knowledge to understand the very first sentence. Here is that opening sentence: "Many years ago, in the winter of 1831, a boy was born to the family of Returns Again of the Hunkpapa band of the Lakota Sioux." As soon as I read that sentence, I realized that just from listening to the sentence, my students probably didn't realize that Returns Again was the name of a person. I was right; most of them didn't. So we brainstormed for names that Native Americans had chosen, or might have chosen, to describe what a person did that was characteristic, such as Dances with Wolves. When I reread the opening sentence of the book more slowly, my students could then understand that Returns Again was someone's name. Figure 14.3 is the chart I prepared, with the addition of the strategy we needed to use in the very first sentence.

Before reading the final pages of the book, one could build upon students' prior experience in using reading strategies to have them predict what Slow will be renamed when he is considered an adult. This is a complex task that requires analyzing, synthesizing, inferring, and, of course, predicting. To break the task down into more manageable parts, I would photocopy four different sets of passages and give each set to one or two groups of students (see pages indicated in the chart). From each group's page(s), what would they predict Slow might be renamed? Predictions from the different groups would be listed, the text containing the photocopied pages would be reread, and the students would again be invited, as a class, to decide which predictions seem most likely. They would need to draw upon prior knowledge and information in the text, particularly from the photocopied pages. Ultimately, of course, I would read the ending of the book to the class. With this book, readers will almost certainly not make an accurate prediction regarding Slow's new name—unless they have read the subtitle of the book. However, they may decide that from the clues in the text, some of their names are more appropriate.

The individual reading strategies become quite complex and increasingly intertwined as students read more sophisticated texts and new genres. Here, for example, are some of Ellin Keene's reflections on inferring (Keene & Zimmerman, 1997):

- "To infer as we read is to go beyond literal interpretation and to open a world of meaning deeply connected to our lives. We create an original meaning, a meaning born at the intersection of our background knowledge (schema), the words printed on a page, and our mind's capacity to merge that combination into something uniquely ours. We go beyond the literal and weave our own sense into the words we read. As we read further, that meaning is revised, enriched, sometimes abandoned, based on what we continue to read" (p. 149).

- “Inference is part rational, part mystical, part definable, and part beyond definition. Individuals’ life experiences, logic, wisdom, creativity, and thoughtfulness, set against the text they are reading, form the crux of new meaning. Because each person’s experiences are different, the art of inferring takes the reader beyond the text to a place only he or she can go” (pp. 147–148).
- “Inferring has many facets and great books provoke us to consider and use them all” (p. 153). Inference can be a prediction, a conclusion, a critical analysis of a text, an argument with an author, a recognition of propaganda, or “the play of imagination as we mentally expand text” (p. 153).

Keene asks us what the consequence is if children read for just the literal meaning or the facts of a text. In part, her answer is that children may be unable to recall important content because they have not made it their own. “Yet how often do we create the context for them to discuss, ponder, argue, restate, reflect, persuade, relate, write about, or otherwise work with the information we consider critical for them to recall? To push beyond the literal text, to make it personal and three-dimensional, to weave it into our own stories—*that* is to infer” (p. 152).

We must also not settle for mere summaries of what children read but instead help them learn to synthesize information and ideas.

Synthesis as Different from Summary

A summary is a listing of the parts and synthesis is somehow the creation of a whole. It requires real creative, critical thought. It should go on throughout the process of reading, not just at the end. (Keene, in Keene & Zimmerman, 1997, p. 173)

Synthesis is the process of ordering, recalling, retelling, and recreating into a coherent whole the information with which our minds are bombarded every day. . . . It is the process by which we forsake much of what we learn [or have been exposed to] in order to make sense of that which we determine is most pivotal for us. (p. 169)

Synthesis is about organizing the different pieces to create a mosaic, a meaning, a beauty, greater than the sum of each shiny piece. It is a complex process in which children, even the youngest, engage very naturally every day. (p. 169)

As these quotes from Ellin Keene make clear, reading strategies are not only complex but inseparably intertwined in actual use. For example, in reading the first fifty pages of *The Hours* (Cunningham, 1998) and trying to be metacognitively aware of my strategies, I noticed myself doing all of the following, recursively and not just in linear order: using prior knowledge to set purposes, make inferences, and determine the importance of and within small portions of text; using prior knowledge and information from the text to make predictions and construct hypotheses about larger patterns and possible future events in the text; synthesizing information to create larger patterns of understanding; questioning the text and the author’s intentions and planned structure of the novel; and making metacognitive decisions about new purposes and strategies to use as I read further. As the staff developers at the PEBC have found, it’s absolutely crucial for teachers to become aware of their own reading strategies—and perhaps to apply more of them, or to apply them more deliberately, as well. Consciously applying reading strategies, observing our own strategy use, and discussing with other teachers what we’ve done and learned is probably the best way for us to start thinking about how to foster students’ use of reading strategies.

TEACHING READING STRATEGIES AT THE MICRO LEVEL

Of course there is no clear division between teaching reading strategies at the macro level, the level of texts, and teaching reading strategies at the micro level, the level of individual words and the strategies used to deal with them. Furthermore, teaching strategies at the macro level

| Book information | Page(s) to draw upon This book has no page numbers. The pages begin with these words ↓ | What strategies could be taught? | What will the strategy require? • Use prior knowledge in the text • Use information from other texts and sources | Questions or comments or notes |
|--|---|--|--|--|
| <p><i>A Boy Called Slow</i>, by Joseph Bruchac</p> | <p>“It was”</p> | <p>Predicting (a kind of inferring) and/or synthesizing</p> | <p>Information in the text; prior knowledge</p> | <p>What do you think they might name this boy? “If he were to take much longer eating,” his uncle Four Horns said, “the food would bite him before he bites it!”</p> |
| | <p>“One summer”</p> | <p>Inferring, predicting</p> | <p>Information in the text</p> | <p>Questions: Do you think Slow will be given four names? Why or why not?</p> |
| | <p>“Slow longed”</p> | <p>Analyzing, synthesizing, inferring, predicting; determining relevance or importance</p> | <p>Information in the text; prior knowledge</p> | <p>If Slow is given four names, what do you think they might be?</p> |
| | <p>“Returns Again was” and the next page</p> | | | |
| <p>“Slow was proud” and the next page</p> | | | | |
| <p>“Determined” and the next two pages</p> | | | | |

Figure 14.3 Strategies that could be taught with *A Boy Called Slow*, by Joseph Bruchac (1994).

| | | | | |
|--|-----------------------|------------------------------------|---|---|
| | <p>“Slow’s uncle”</p> | <p>Inferring word from context</p> | <p>Information in the text, prior knowledge</p> | <p>What do you think the word <i>travois</i> might mean, in the following passage?</p> <p>“Our Creator, Wakan-Tanka, loves the Lakota people,” his uncle would tell him. “Wakan-Tanka saw that we had only our dogs to help us pull our travois and hunt buffalo. So Wakan-Tanka sent us a new animal as faithful as our dogs but able to pull our loads and carry us as quick as the whirlwind into the hunt, the <i>Shoong-Toitkah</i>, the ‘Spirit Dog.’”</p> <p>What do you think the word <i>coup</i> might mean, in the following passage?</p> <p>“The men began to make preparations. They put on their best clothing and brought out their paint to mark their faces and their horses. They uncovered their war shields and took out their coup sticks and their knives.”</p> |
| | <p>“Determined”</p> | <p>Inferring word from context</p> | <p>Information in the text, prior knowledge</p> | |

Figure 14.3 (Continued).

can help children use some of these same strategies in reading individual words, if this use is demonstrated and encouraged when students encounter difficult words in text.

Teaching strategies at the macro level will help children use some of these same strategies in reading individual words . . . with teacher demonstrations and guidance.

In Chapter 9 I have already suggested some strategies for dealing with individual words, particularly during Retrospective Miscue Analysis sessions. Here, we will deal with three more topics: materials for a Reading Detective Club; considering micro-level reading strategies we ourselves use; plus using prompts and developing strategy charts and bookmarks with children.

A Reading Detective Club

What do detectives and good readers have in common? They look for clues (cues) to construct a meaningful scenario (text). That is, they try to solve the mystery by using the clues (cues) available to them, and their evolving hypotheses affect how they perceive and use—or miss—new clues (cues). Sometimes the new clues (cues) require them to abandon previous hypotheses (predictions) and formulate new ones. As they proceed in solving the mystery, the evolving scenario (text) teaches them more and more. Thus they increasingly use macro-level information to solve micro-level problems.

Debra Goodman has captured these and other parallels between good detectives and good readers in her book for teachers and students, *The Reading Detective Club: Solving the Mysteries of Reading* (1999). This text is not a workbook, even though it contains materials for students in the intermediate and middle grades to use. First, it offers teachers an excellent introduction to the reading process, explains the values of strategy lessons, and provides suggestions for establishing our own Reading Detective Club in the classroom. The heart of the book, however, is the detective cases for students to solve—often collaboratively. Discussion, not grading, is the means by which teachers can assess individual readers' continuing needs. The detective lessons, undertaken in a spirit of fun and sharing, help less proficient readers particularly to better understand what good readers do. As the less proficient and/or less confident readers begin to use language cues and reading strategies more effectively and efficiently, and to realize that their hypotheses and responses are valued, they typically begin also to develop better attitudes toward reading and to feel better about themselves as readers.

As an example, see Figure 14.4, which includes the first two pages of an extended case study, "The Case of the Messy Hands." After reading the case and supplying reasonable words for the smudges, see what you think is the "big idea" of this particular activity in the case.

There are other good resources for teaching reading strategies, especially Y. Goodman, D. Watson, and C. Burke, *Reading Strategies: Focus on Comprehension* (1996), which includes a wealth of strategy lessons, some for each of the language cueing systems that might need strengthening. However, I'll admit I especially like the playfulness of Debra Goodman's *The Reading Detective Club* (1999), because she plays up students' role of "linguistic detectives."

Quotable Quotes from *The Reading Detective Club*

"The Reading Detective Club helps young readers explore the wonders of the reading process and, at the same time, discover their own reading strengths and strategies. . . . My belief is that literacy learning in school can and should involve the same playfulness and delight as two-year-olds learning their mother tongue. . . .

Frank Smith (1988) talks about inviting our children to join "the literacy club." . . . I find that kids love being in a club, and they get really excited about solving their first case. That's partly because I

really ham it up. As the “club sponsor” our job is to establish a playful and enjoyable atmosphere for language learning. I wrote these stories initially for my own students. I wanted them to know that language can be fun, interesting, and exciting. I wanted to show them that they are really smart kids who already know a lot about language” (Debra Goodman, 1999, p. ix).

The Case of the Messy Hands

Jacob was a famous detective. One day Michele stormed into Jacob’s office shouting, “My stupid brother has done it again!”

Jacob asked, “What is it this time? Did he cross out some more words in your book?”

“No,” said Michele, “This time he wanted to read my book. But he never washes his hands. Every time he touched my book with his grubby paws, he smudged up the words so I can’t read them.”

“Let me take a look,” Jacob said. “I’ll see what I can do.”

Michele handed Jacob the book.


Jacob said, “I think I can solve this case.”



Psst: Work by yourself before you compare answers.

HINT!


If you can’t think of a good guess for one of the smudges, keep reading. When you have read the whole story, go back and try again. Try to come up with a word that makes sense for each smudge.


THE THREE LITTLE PIGS

Once upon a  there were three little pigs.


One day the  pigs decided to go out into the world to make their .


Each little pig  a house.

The first little pig built a house of .

The  little pig built a house of sticks.

The third little pig built a  of bricks.

One  a wolf saw the three little pigs.

“A little  will make a tasty meal for me,”

he .

Your solutions:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

Figure 14.4 “The Case of the Messy Hands” (D. Goodman, 1999).

DEBRIEFING:**The Case of the Messy Hands**

*Readers Have Different Interpretations
When They Read*

Congratulations on solving your second case! If you are working with a group of friends, take a look at some of your friends' answers for each Use this chart to compare your answers.

| Number | My Answer | Friends' Answers | Clues We Used to Get Answers |
|--------|-----------|------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 2. | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 3. | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 4. | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 5. | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 6. | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 7. | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 8. | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 9. | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 10. | _____ | _____ | _____ |

Figure 14.4 (Continued).

Considering Strategies for Dealing with Words

One way to determine what strategies students might need to learn for dealing with problem words is to start by brainstorming the strategies we ourselves use. One group of preservice teachers came up with the following list:

- Skip it!
- Read on and see if that helps.
- Just go on—period.
- Come back to it if it seems important.
- Go back to the beginning of the sentence and reread.
- Sound it out.
- Ask my roommate.
- Look it up in the dictionary—but I don't really do that.

- Maybe try the glossary, if I'm reading a textbook and the word seems to be really important.
- Hope that the teacher will explain it in class!
- Don't worry about pronouncing it, but see if you can figure out what it means.
- Look at the word parts and see if they help with meaning.

We discussed in what order we usually use different reading strategies, to see if there were any patterns, and I later tried to draw generalizations from what we said (Figure 14.5). However, we all realized that this branching diagram was no more than one attempt to capture one pattern for dealing with problem words. Any given person, at any given time, might use different strategies or use strategies in a different order.

More recently, my students and I have concluded that "Try to make sense," or something of the sort, must be at the center of any diagram that attempts to capture the strategies that effective readers use. Our most recent attempts at a diagram begin with a circle in which we've written not only "THINK: What would make sense here?" but also "CHECK: Does that make sense here?" In

*WHAT GOOD READERS DO MORE OR LESS AUTOMATICALLY
BUT OTHER READERS MAY NEED HELP IN LEARNING TO DO*

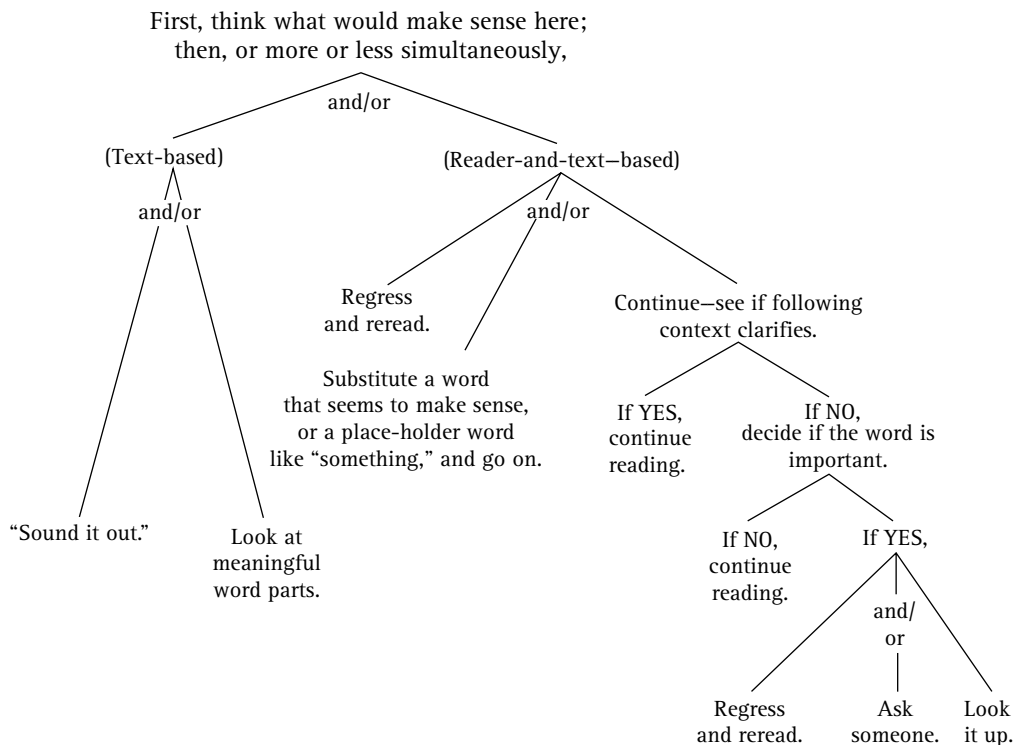
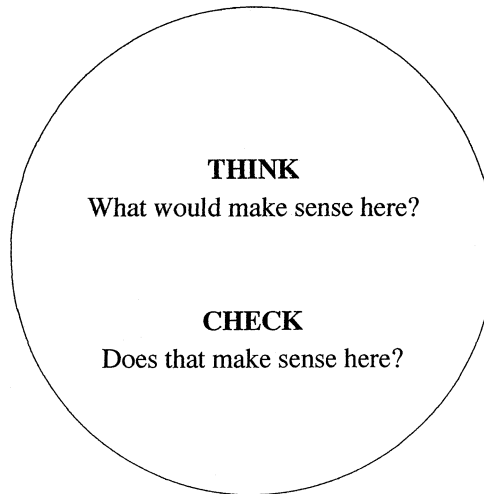


Figure 14.5 Sample ordering of how good readers sometimes use strategies for dealing with problem words (Weaver, 1990, p. 15).

other words, trying to make sense and monitoring for sense are crucial to effectively using other strategies for dealing with problem words (see diagram below). We invite you to elaborate upon the diagram, showing how more specific strategies intersect with these basic ones, or to develop your own list or visual of strategies for dealing with problem words.



Using Prompts and Developing Strategy Charts and Bookmarks

As we demonstrate reading strategies with the whole class, we can discuss and use prompts that, over time, will help readers learn to use effective strategies for dealing with problem words. We can use prompts during shared, whole-class reading and within guided reading groups, then follow up with individual readers who need continued prompting.

Here, for example, are some prompts that Fountas and Pinnell (1996) suggest for supporting the reader's use of all sources of information (p. 161):

- "Check the picture."
- "Does that make sense?"
- "Does that look right?"
- "Does that sound right?"
- "You said (. . .). Can we say it that way?"
- "You said (. . .). Does that make sense?"
- "What's wrong with this?" (repeat what child said)
- "Try that again and think what would make sense."
- "Try that again and think what would sound right."
- "Do you know a word like that?" [if the child says a nonword close to the actual word]
- "Do you know a word that starts with those letters?"
- "Do you know a word that ends with those letters?"

- “What do you know that might help?”
- “What can you do to help yourself?”

Of course prompts often have to be used in sequence, in response to what the reader says and does. Here are some possibilities:

- “Check the picture. What is so-and-so doing? [for example] Try that word here. Does it fit? What else might fit?”
- “Look at the first letter(s). What word would fit here? Does that make sense?” and so forth.
- “Can you think of some words that would fit here? Try to sound out the word in chunks. Does that sound like a word? Does that word make sense here?” and so forth.
- “Does that sound like a word? Try again. Hmmm . . . that still doesn’t sound like a word. Can you figure out what this *part* of the word [point to it] means? Okay, what do you think the word might mean?”
- “Does this word seem really important in the sentence? Why? What else could you do to get the word?” (focusing here on decision making and metacognitive awareness)
- “Does this word seem really important in the sentence? No? Okay, what do you want to do about it?” (helping readers understand that it’s okay to decide that a word doesn’t seem really important, and go on)

Of course whatever prompts we use must be not only tailored to the individual reader’s strategies and needs but chosen according to what cues in the text would be particularly helpful. Sometimes, for instance, a quick glance at the sentence should tell us that the rest of the sentence isn’t particularly helpful, so we wouldn’t suggest that the reader back up and try the sentence again, or read on to see if the rest of the sentence helps. Also, we need to take into account the individual reader’s personality, the particular text, and the reading situation. Though my general rule is “give a reader a strategy, not a word,” we certainly don’t want to make every problem word an opportunity for a strategy lesson, or to focus so much on getting the reader to use certain strategies that the reader gives up in frustration. With each reader and text, we need to develop a balance between teaching strategies and just helping the reader navigate the text successfully. We need also to consider whether the reader should be reading an easier text—or a more challenging one—the next time we work with the reader individually, to teach and guide the use of effective reading strategies.

Prompts are used, obviously, to promote reading strategies, and reminders of useful strategies can be displayed in the classroom. When teachers make charts or other classroom visuals of strategies good readers use, it is important to develop them together with the class. Notice, for example, that Anne, the first-grade teacher whose teaching of strategies I described earlier in the chapter, had started a list of strategies that good readers use. She would add to this over the school year as she demonstrated additional strategies and the children began to use them more consciously.

From such lists, the teacher can make bookmarks with increasingly complete and detailed strategies, over the school year and across the grades.

Figure 14.6 includes two examples that Lorraine Gillmeister-Krause, Grace Vento-Zogby, and I created together during one summer, not with students, but drawing upon our experiences in helping students develop such strategies. Generally speaking, the bookmark on the left is for independent readers in the primary grades (1996, T6.9a). The other is for independent readers in the intermediate grades and beyond. But I recommend using these only for ideas of what



What to do?

Check the picture.

Think what would make sense.

Look at the first letters. What word would fit here?

Back up and try again.

Skip the word and go on to the end of the sentence.

Then come back and try again.

Put in something that makes sense.

If necessary ...
just go on, or
ask someone.

What to do?

Think what would make sense.

Then, try to sound out the word in chunks and/or

See if you can figure out what the parts of the word mean.

Back up and try the word again.

Skip the word and go on to the end of the sentence.

Then come back and try again.

Put in something that makes sense.

If necessary ...
just go on, or
ask someone, or
use a dictionary.

Figure 14.6 *Sample bookmarks (Weaver, Gillmeister-Krause, & Vento-Zogby, 1996, p. T6.9a).*

strategies you want to help children develop, because students have more ownership over the bookmarks—and, we hope, the strategies—when the list of strategies is developed collaboratively.

In conclusion, if you'll look back at the strategies my students brainstormed (p. 338–339), you will notice that several of these strategies for dealing with words at the micro level of a text are the same or similar to those we use in dealing with whole texts, at the macro level (p. 329). The

strategies explicit or implicit in both these lists include: try to make sense; use prior knowledge and the evolving sense to construct meaning(s), make predictions, monitor comprehension, and revise predictions if needed; and use fix-it strategies as needed. Of course either or both lists could be expanded, and other strategies could be added, too. But the aforementioned commonalities are basic, for they deal with constructing meaning from texts, and that is the basic purpose of reading.

TEACHING PHONICS AND PHONEMIC AWARENESS

How are phonics and phonemic awareness taught in comprehensive literacy classrooms? Phonics skills are not taught first. Figure 14.7 suggests the typical progression from whole texts to words and word parts, with phonics and phonemic awareness taught in the course of reading and writing interesting texts. During a shared reading experience, for example, phonics and phonemic awareness are taught when the teacher and children have read and reread a familiar predictable text, until the children have virtually memorized it.

First, however, the teacher will have guided the children in using and understanding such reading strategies as drawing inferences and predicting from the title and cover and from the pictures throughout the text. Thus, strategies are taught or reinforced before skills. If needed, the teacher will already have focused on certain concepts of print with that text, so the children will easily read from left to right and return down left. The teacher is also likely to have called the children's attention to particular words in the text—eventually, perhaps, by inviting individual children to use a pointer to show where a particular word is located in the text, or to frame the word with two fingers or two narrow sticky notes. Perhaps the predictable text rhymes, and after the first readings of the text, the teacher has covered up the second word of the rhyming pairs with sticky notes, inviting the children to predict the rhyme words. In short, the teacher and children will read and work with a text over several days, and—with emergent readers—might then attend to phonics.

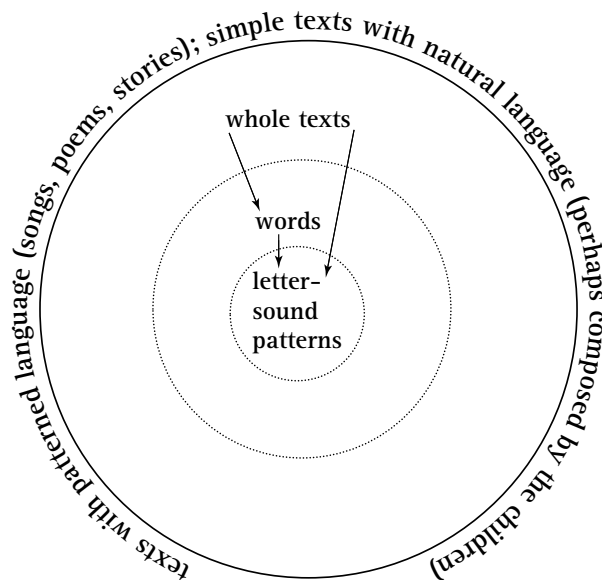


Figure 14.7 From texts to words and letter-sound patterns.

Why Teach Just Phonemic Awareness and Phonics, When We Can Teach All of the Following?

- Reading for meaning
- Strategies for understanding and reading texts
- Recognition of some interesting words and some high-utility words
- Phonics: letter-sound patterns, onsets and rimes
- Decoding new print words by using context and the parts of known words (such as onsets and rimes)
- Phonemic awareness

These aspects of reading can be taught even in preschool, as long as the children are not assessed for mastery. Each child will learn what he or she is ready to learn—as children and adults all do.

Chapters 11, 13, and 15 offer some of the research support for such a progression, and for integrating writing with reading. Focusing on reading strategies first keeps the children's attention on meaning, as they also discuss and enjoy the text together, relating it to their own lives and to other texts if relevant. Focusing on phonics a few days later postpones dealing with the more abstract elements of language, letters and sounds, but only for a very short time. It's not a matter of dealing with meaning in the fall and phonics in the winter and spring (though Ayres' [1993] research suggests that this, too, works better than focusing on phonics before attending to meaning in texts). Rather, comprehensive literacy classrooms teach and focus on everything cyclically, again and again, with each cycle taking a few days. During each cycle, teachers guide children in using strategies for constructing meaning from texts and for appreciating them; developing fluency through rereading texts; recognizing new print words and developing automaticity in recognizing them; developing skills for making connections between letter and sound relationships; and developing the ability to decode words, in context first. Writing strategies and skills are also employed and taught.

"Inventive" Spelling Promotes Phonics and Phonemic Awareness

In a detailed study of invented versus traditional spelling in first graders' writings, Linda Clarke (1988) examined the differing effects on learning to spell and read. At the end of the study, she found not only that the children who used invented spellings wrote much more (40.9 words on the average, compared to 13.2) and spelled substantially more words correctly (13.7 to 9.8), but that they read substantially more real words in an untimed situation and demonstrated better word attack skills on nonsense words from lists.

The National Reading Panel report (2000b) also reports positive effects for helping children invent spellings: "One instructional activity that is maximally effective for teaching PA [phonemic awareness] in a way that builds a bridge to reading and spelling is that of teaching children to invent phonemically more complex spellings of words. . . . The effect size [in a study by Ehri & Wilce, 1987] was large, $d=0.97$. These findings indicate that teaching children to segment and spell [spoken words] helps them learn to read as well as to spell words" (p. 2-39).

It's important to keep in mind the typical developmental progression that we examined in Chapter 13 (pp. 312–314) and to teach various aspects of phonics accordingly. The following is a common developmental pattern for emerging readers, especially when their emergent writing is also encouraged and supported. Over time, children tend to

- read words mostly as wholes, especially in familiar contexts;
- begin to read words by analogy with chunks of familiar words—for example, to blend familiar onsets and rimes (see pp. 305–306 for a definition of these terms);
- begin to write the sounds they hear in words;
- begin to develop the ability to analyze written words into letters and their related sounds;
- begin to write more of the sounds they hear in words, then begin to represent sounds with patterns they've seen in words; and
- become independent readers and writers of predictable and simple, natural texts.

This sequence is reflected in Figure 14.8, which indicates (1) emergent reading and writing skills and strategies; (2) teaching and learning situations within which they are fostered and/or extended toward more sophisticated skills and strategies; and (3) some basic instructional procedures appropriate to each phase. These are phases we can expect to find among children in kindergarten and first grade, though such activities as those involved in the shared reading experience can be started with preschoolers and extended at least into second grade for some students, as needed.

When examining Figure 14.8, please keep in mind the following:

- This chart focuses on reading and writing activities that are especially important for promoting the development of reading. The development of writing is not addressed quite as thoroughly.
- The list of instructional suggestions certainly does not include every kind of reading and writing experience that could or should be included in comprehensive literacy classrooms at the earliest grades, nor does it include related oral language experiences or art.
- The suggested “teaching and learning environments” include only those that seem best for promoting the strategies and skills mentioned, not all of the environments that might conceivably be productive.
- The term *shared reading* stands for a sequence of activities, as explained most fully in Chapter 12. It does not just mean reading a text together.
- Phases of reading and writing are sometimes separated in the chart, to reflect typical developmental patterns more accurately. In each instance, the reading phase promotes the next phase of writing, or the writing phase promotes the next phase of reading. However, reading and writing should be taught together, not sequentially, as these phases might seem to imply.
- This chart does not include the many other opportunities in comprehensive literacy classrooms for children to make use of, or “practice,” the strategies and skills they've been learning: during sustained reading and writing, including journal writing; and soon through literature circles and inquiry reading and writing, which at first must be led, guided, and scaffolded by the teacher.

Given these caveats, you may find the chart in Figure 14.8 useful in planning for strategy and skill instruction, particularly in kindergarten and first grade.

Of course we will continue to teach reading and writing strategies and skills to newly independent readers and writers. As we introduce children to many sophisticated and diverse texts, we must continue, across the years, to guide them in developing increasingly complex strategies and skills.

| Developmental trends | Teaching and learning environments | Instructional suggestions and goals for emergent readers and writers |
|---|--|--|
| <p>LOGOGRAPHIC READING PHASE AND SYMBOLIC WRITING PHASE May begin well before kindergarten.</p> | | |
| <p>begin learning to attend to meaning first</p> | <p>guided reading (whole class, group, individual)</p> <p>read-aloud</p> <p>shared reading</p> | <p>Help children read words in environmental contexts, such as signs, labels, brief directions, and eventually such texts as a morning message (composed by the teacher or by the teacher and children together).</p> <p><i>Goals:</i> *Understand that print is meaningful and that context can help in reading words; begin to be functionally literate in the environment.</p> <p>Read to children a lot, and demonstrate how you predict and draw inferences from pictures and text. Encourage the children to do the same, as you read more and more books.</p> <p><i>Goals:</i> *Enjoy the text, realize that we read to make meaning, and begin to develop reading strategies.</p> <p>Help children develop strategies for predicting, drawing inferences, and making connections to text (and other strategies as relevant).</p> <p><i>Goal:</i> *Learn to focus on making meaning from texts; develop strategies for doing so.</p> |
| <p>“write” with just pictures</p> <p>add “text” to pictures by using scribbles or other symbols that represent the child’s meaning (individual words may not be separately represented)</p> | <p>write-aloud (demonstration); shared and guided writing; individual writing conferences</p> | <p>Help children write as best they can, whether it be a scribble, shapes, or other symbolic marks that at least begin to resemble letters (even if they are reversed or sideways).</p> <p>Begin to model strategies for writing, such as drawing a picture and then writing something with it.</p> <p><i>Goal:</i> *Focus on conveying meaning, which thereby also reinforces the understanding that texts are supposed to mean something.</p> |

Figure 14.8

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| in reading, begin to attend not only to pictures but to interesting words | shared reading; guided reading; individual reading conferences | Engage children in repeatedly reading a familiar, predictable text. <i>New goals:</i> *Fluency, word recognition. |
| LOGOGRAPHIC WRITING PHASE | | |
| begin to use symbols that stand for words as they write | guided writing; individual writing conferences | Continue to encourage children to write the best they can. Point out when they have used symbols to stand for individual words and encourage this strategy. <i>Goal:</i> *Use symbols to represent words, not entire stretches of words. |
| LOGOGRAPHIC READING AND WRITING PHASES (more advanced) | | |
| read words mostly as wholes (on sight), especially in familiar contexts read words that they find personally meaningful before reading the little “glue” words like <i>a, an, the; and, but; in, on, to</i> ; and pronouns, such as <i>this, that, these, those</i> | shared and guided reading; write-aloud and shared writing shared and guided reading; guided writing and individual writing conferences | Help children learn to identify and become familiar with new print words before focusing on parts of words, including phonics. <i>New goals:</i> *Developing automaticity in indentifying these new words. Start with words that are predictable from the context. Later (in the same reading/writing cycle or another cycle) focus on meaningful words that aren’t so predictable. Finally—but still soon—start focusing on some of the glue words and pronouns within texts, since they occur so frequently in a text. |
| begin to use <i>letters</i> to represent words, though not necessarily to represent the sounds in words: a pre-phonemic phase of spelling | shared and guided reading and writing; individual reading and writing conferences; write-aloud | Continue to encourage children to write as best they can. Teach other strategies for writing, such as talking about what you want to write, both before and during writing, and getting feedback. <i>Writing goals:</i> * Begin to write some words as wholes, using remembered spellings. * Expand repertoire of writing strategies. |

Figure 14.8 (Continued).

| ANALOGIC READING PHASE | | |
|---|---|--|
| begin to read new print words by | shared reading, guided reading, | In order to facilitate the emergence of this stage, teachers can have children predict rhyming |
| analogy with chunks of familiar words, often onset-rime chunks of one-syllable words | individual reading conferences | <p>words in a text, then attend to the spellings of the rhymed part. With single-syllable words, this rhymed part of the word is also the rime part of the syllable. (Poems, songs, and predictable books with rhyme are excellent for this purpose.)</p> <p>Teachers can also focus on the onsets of words, starting with single-consonant onsets and later focusing on digraphs (two letters that make one sound) and initial consonant clusters. For a list of these, see appendix to this chapter. (Alphabet books are excellent for this purpose.)</p> <p>Begin to focus children’s attention, during repeated shared readings and guided reading, on meaningful parts in words—particularly simple prefixes such as <i>un-</i> and simple affixes such as <i>-ing</i>.</p> <p><i>Reading and writing goals:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * To read new print words by using familiar onset and rime patterns. * To begin to develop phonemic awareness and letter-sound correspondences. * To begin to grasp the “alphabetic principle,” that there are correlations between letters and sounds. * To understand that words may have meaningful parts within them. * To use prefixes and suffixes in reading unfamiliar print words. * To internalize more and more of these chunks of words, which can then be used for writing as well as reading. |
| ANALOGIC TO ANALYTIC PHASE IN WRITING | | |
| <p>begin to write words using onsets, familiar rime patterns, and other patterns seen in print, such as prefixes and suffixes</p> <p>begin to use letters to represent some of the sounds in words: the beginnings of a phonemic phase of writing</p> | write-aloud (modeling); shared and guided writing; individual writing conferences | <p>Help children hear and write some of the sounds they hear in words, starting with initial consonants, and then other consonants, especially final consonant sounds—a sequence that follows developmental tendencies.</p> <p><i>Goals:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Increased phonemic awareness. * Ability to read new words more readily. * Ability to write well enough that their writing can be read by others. |

Figure 14.8 (Continued).

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| <p>write increasingly more of the sounds they hear in words, including vowel sounds</p> | <p>write-aloud (demonstration); shared and guided writing; individual writing conferences</p> | <p>Help children hear and write more of the sounds they hear in words, including vowel sounds. At this point you may also want to provide the conventional spelling, perhaps writing the child's text on the back of the page or, with the child's permission, lightly above the words as the child wrote them.</p> <p>Begin to teach simple strategies for checking and revising spelling, such as circling a word and asking for help later, or writing a word two or three times and choosing the one that looks best.</p> <p>Teach any other writing strategies or skills that at least some children might be ready to learn. For example, one such skill would be to put periods where the child stops to take a breath in reading his or her own work, then later adding a capital to the first word that comes after the period. One strategy might be to have a definite beginning, middle, and end to the writing.</p> <p><i>Writing and reading goals:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * To increase their repertoire of writing strategies and skills, including spelling strategies. * To spell words they commonly write increasingly closer to the conventional spellings. * To increase phonemic awareness and letter-sound knowledge. * To identify individual letter sounds in reading unfamiliar print words, if or as needed. |
| <p>ANALYTIC READING PHASE</p> | | |
| <p>use knowledge of individual letter-sound correspondences in reading, if or as needed (using context, too, as needed)</p> | <p>shared reading, guided reading, and individual reading conferences</p> | <p>If trying to read unfamiliar print words in chunks isn't successful, even though the words are read in context, decide whether using some of the individual letter sounds would help. If so, guide readers in using them.</p> <p><i>Goal:</i> Increase flexibility of strategies for reading words.</p> |

Figure 14.8 (Continued).

INDEPENDENT READING PHASE

The newly independent reader can do all or most of the following:

- * focus on meaning while reading;
- * use three or more strategies to construct meaning from texts;
- * use context and prior knowledge plus letter-sound knowledge to read words;
- * read most unfamiliar print words (in suitable texts) by analogy with parts of known words;
- * read a substantial number of words on sight, automatically;
- * use context to understand many print words, as needed; and
- * read simple informational texts as well as simple stories.

INDEPENDENT WRITING PHASE

The newly independent writer can do all or most of the following:

- * convey meaning through writing;
- * use some strategies for preparing to write, such as drawing and talking;
- * use invented (constructed) spellings as needed, representing most consonant and vowel sounds accurately enough that the writing can be read by others;
- * use strategies for checking and correcting spellings;
- * spell many common words and some less common words conventionally; and
- * employ some editing strategies, such as adding periods and capitals.

Figure 14.8 (Continued).

Shared Reading: Veteran and Novice Teacher Describe How They Do It

Fisher, B., & Fisher-Medvic, E. (2000). *Perspectives on Shared Reading: Planning and Practice*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann. An excellent resource.

Meanwhile, the most fundamental instructional framework for accomplishing many of the instructional goals in the chart is the shared reading experience, or rather the set and sequence of related experiences undertaken in conjunction with the reading of a shared text, usually a Big Book or other text that has been printed on paper (often by the teacher) large enough for all the children in a class or group to see. The next section of this chapter will illustrate with an extended example.

Shared Reading Most Important!

After discussing language experience reading, shared reading, assisted reading, and assisted reading with CD-ROM interactive stories, Moustafa concludes:

While teachers need to have all of these tools at their disposal, over time the single most important of these instructional strategies for the purpose of teaching reading, in my experience and the experience of knowledgeable colleagues, is shared reading with predictable stories. Shared reading of lots of predictable stories with knowledgeable teachers is a powerful and effective way to launch children into lifelong reading. Extensive, pleasant experiences with shared reading with predictable stories enables children to see themselves as readers and to become readers more quickly and more easily than any other single experience teachers can provide. (Margaret Moustafa, *Beyond Traditional Phonics: Research Discoveries and Reading Instruction*, 1997, p. 30)

The Shared Reading Experience—and More

Mr. Peters is a first-grade teacher. He also plays the guitar, which has helped him teach reading and writing through singing, though Mrs. Albers down the hall has been quite successful using just the audiocassettes and accompanying books in the Wee Sing® packages she bought at the local bookstore. Both of them also use Big Books and audiocassettes, and accompanying small books from Scholastic and other publishers.

Though the kindergarten teacher in Mr. Peters' school has used similar materials with the children, only a few of his first graders are almost independent readers and writers. Therefore, Mr. Peters uses the shared reading experience, with its many facets, as the mainstay of instruction in reading. He has been teaching his students the strategies of predicting and drawing inferences, and making connections to their own lives, along with phonics skills. He likes the shared reading approach to phonics because he can introduce and reinforce needed skills, teaching them intensively and systematically, starting with the developmentally easiest. Furthermore, this approach to phonics helps him avoid overdosing kids on phonics when they need very little if any basic instruction, while setting the stage for additional work with small groups and, in some instances, individual students. Indeed, he realizes, the beauty of the shared reading experience is that it provides a basic framework that allows for variety within it, to teach needed strategies and skills.

"Shared reading is a time when the entire class gathers together to share a variety of literacy experiences by reading and discussing a variety of texts. Many of the texts are enlarged so that all the children can see the print and pictures and thus talk more easily about them. Shared reading is a noncompetitive time when children of different abilities and experiences learn from and with each other." (Bobbi Fisher, in *Perspectives on Shared Reading: Planning and Practice*, by Bobbi Fisher and Emily Fisher-Medvic, 2000, p. 3)

Early in November, Mr. Peters decided to launch another shared reading cycle with the old rhyme that some people know as "This Old Man" and others know as "Knick Knack Paddy Wack" (a copy is included in Weaver, Gillmeister-Krause, & Vento-Zogby, 1996). For the last three days, he's been singing the traditional rhyme to the accompaniment of the guitar, with the children chiming in. By now most of the children can easily sing the repetitive parts:

This old man, he played . . . ,
 He played knick knack on my
 With a knick knack, paddy wack
 Give the dog a bone,
 This old man came rolling home.

The children have also come up with their own ideas as to what "knick knack" and "paddy wack" might mean and have been tapping the eraser tips of their pencils on their elbows when they sing "knick knack" and slapping their knees when they sing "paddy wack." Of course they aren't all together rhythmically, and sometimes they drop their pencils, but they enjoy accompanying the song with this physical activity.

Mr. Peters decides it's time to connect their singing with print. But instead of copying the traditional version on chart paper for the children, Mr. Peters decides to copy a modified version he found in a professional book for teachers (Weaver, Gillmeister-Krause, & Vento-Zogby, 1996, p. T5.26). He chooses this version for two reasons: partly because it includes the six basic colors as rhyme words, but also because the rhymes are all spelled the same after the initial sound(s). At first, he writes only the initial verse on chart paper:

This old man, he played red,
 He played knick knack on my bed,

With a knick knack, paddy wack
 Give the dog a bone,
 This old man came rolling home.

Mr. Peters underlines the word *red* with a red marker and shows the children that the rhyming word is *bed*. Then he plays the guitar and sings this verse, with the children chiming in—though naturally some children are still singing the words to the first verse of the traditional rhyme. Mr. Peters reminds the children that the rhymed words are *red* and *bed*, and points to them again. They repeat these steps until most of the children are singing the rhyme with “red” and “bed.” Then Mr. Peters puts down the guitar and uses a pointer to point to each word as he and the children sing the verse.

Most of the children still seem to be involved in the singing and able to attend to the written text, so after another round of the first verse, Mr. Peters asks who would like to come forward and frame the words *knick knack* with two fingers. Aliya volunteers first, pointing out *knick knack* in the first line. Trevor waves his hand, and Mr. Peters lets him frame the other instance of *knick knack*, in the third line. “I’ll do *paddy wack*,” claims LaNorris, strutting to the front and framing the words with his fingers. Mr. Peters figures this is enough for one day, but Kevin quickly says “I’ll do *red*,” and Carmen volunteers to do *bed*.

“Enough, enough,” Mr. Peters cries in mock distress, after they have all sung the verse one last time—followed by an encore on demand. “I’ll sing the whole song for you and tomorrow I’ll have three more verses written out, okay?” He then sings the song with all six verses, which are as follows (without repeating the refrain here):

This old man, he played red,
 He played knick knack on my bed.
 This old man, he played blue,
 He played knick knack with our glue.
 This old man, he played yellow,
 He played knick knack with a fellow.
 This old man, he played purple,
 He played knick knack with a burple.
 This old man, he played green,
 He played knick knack with the queen.
 This old man, he played orange,
 He played knick knack in Florange.

The children clap and yell, and Mr. Peters feels satisfied that he has successfully launched a new shared reading cycle.

Over the next few days, Mr. Peters and the children focus on predicting from prior knowledge and context, then on rimes and onsets. Here are some of the activities they engage in:

1. Mr. Peters cuts out squares of colored construction paper and invites the children to match the squares with the color words. This works fine except that John, who is colorblind in the blue-purple range, volunteers first. He chooses the purple square to match with the color word *blue*, so Mr. Peters intervenes gently. When a few children snicker, Mr. Peters asks the rest of the class to remind these children how to act and react when someone has made a mistake.
2. Mr. Peters covers all but the initial consonant(s) of the words that rhyme with the color words, and has the children predict these words as they read the song together. Again, Mr. Peters points at the words of the text, stopping when they have predicted a rhyming

word. He uncovers the rest of the word and the children check to see if the end of the word confirms their prediction. The children have previously focused on predicting rhymes in one-syllable words within other songs, poems, and stories, so this task of checking the letter patterns is a familiar one, but a little more demanding with some of the longer rhymes. Mr. Peters asks the children if *burple* is a real word, and some of the boys burp, but ultimately Mr. Peters says he couldn't find *burple* in the dictionary, so it must have been made up, to rhyme with *purple*.

3. The children and Mr. Peters add the rhyming words to their word wall. They have been categorizing the words by sound, so the children suggest that *red* and *bed* belong with words they already have on the wall that rhyme the same: *head*, *dead*, *said*, and *red* (which, they discover, is already on the word wall).
4. Mr. Peters wonders if it's time to subdivide their list into words that spell the /ed/ rhyme differently. The children agree, so they help him create three subcategories; add *bed* to the appropriate list; and then brainstorm for other words to add to the subcategories. No rhyming word they suggest spells the /ed/ rime as it's spelled in *said*, but they come up with words like *Fred*, *bread*, and /led/. Mr. Peters asks Kevin to use /led/ in a sentence, but he only mumbles something, so Mr. Peters suggests "Matt led us to victory." Students cheer, and Mr. Peters writes *led* in the list with *red* and *bed*. He considers whether to offer the spelling *lead* and point out the lead in their pencils, but he decides not to, because *lead* also spells the verb "to lead," which has a different pronunciation.
5. On another day, Mr. Peters and the children focus on the onsets of the rhyming words. Some of these onsets are already on their word wall, but the children decide to think of other words that start with *gl-*, *gr-*, and *fl-* and add these categories to the wall. They struggle with *gl-* words, offering such possibilities as *green*, *grow*, and *go*, so Mr. Peters suggests they leave this category until later. Meanwhile, though, they've suggested words with the *gr-* onset of *green*, so Mr. Peters helps them hear the *gr* in all the words, and writes these on the word wall. The onset *fl-* is easier, and the children suggest *fly*, *flip*, and *flop*. Some children again have difficulty hearing the difference between /l/ and /r/ in the consonant cluster, so they suggest *frog* and *fry*. Again Mr. Peters helps the children hear the difference and makes two lists, one of *fl-* words and one of *fr-* words. Mr. Peters makes a mental note to work with certain children on differentiating these onsets. Reiko and her brother will especially need help, he knows, since their native Japanese language does not have both of these sounds.
6. Mr. Peters guides the children in blending onsets and rimes to read simple words that some of the children do not know on sight. He illustrates such blending and the class does it together during shared reading, after which he gives certain children additional help during guided reading and individual conferences.

And so the days progress, and Mr. Peters thinks about introducing and working with another version of the same traditional song, one created by fourth graders for their buddies in a primary class to read; see Figure 14.9. Instead, however, he asks his children if they would like to write their own version of the song. Of course the children are excited about doing this, and they begin to brainstorm for possible rhyming pairs. It takes the class three sessions, over three days, to complete the process. They brainstorm for rhymes, select some and draft the new verses, and check to see if they are satisfied with their verses or need to make some changes. During this shared writing process, Mr. Peters helps the children compose the new rhyming lines if absolutely necessary; helps them decide if the lines have the right rhythm; and helps the children revise these lines when needed. As he writes what they compose, he also encourages the children to provide the spellings of some common words he thinks they already know how to spell, words that at least are in the "Common words" chart they've been compiling together. The children write a

This old man, was so nice,
He played knick knack with the mice.
With a knick knack paddy wack
Give the dog a bone,
This old man came rolling home.

Additional verses:
This old man, went to sleep,
He played knick knack counting sheep.

This old man, liked to run,
He played knick knack just for fun.

This old man, swam all day,
He played knick knack by the bay.

This old man, danced all night,
He played knick knack by the light.

This old man, jumped way up,
He played knick knack with his pup.

This old man, wasn't greedy,
He played knick knack with the needy.

Figure 14.9 *Fourth graders' version of "Knick Knack Paddy Wack" (Weaver, Gillmeister-Krause, & Vento-Zogby, 1996, p. T5.26).*

needed word on another piece of chart paper at the front of the room, and then Mr. Peters and the class correct the spelling if necessary before he adds the word to the evolving draft. As he writes down certain other words in the verses they've composed, Mr. Peters helps the children hear the initial sounds and tell him what letters he should write. With words that end in a common rime and are already on their word wall, he sometimes invites the children to supply the rime—and he merely helps them find the word on the word wall if they offer another spelling for the end of this particular word. At the end of each line, Mr. Peters asks what punctuation mark is needed. At first he has to supply the commas, but the children quickly catch on, using the first verse as an example. They decide to put a comma at the end of the third line of each verse, too, though their original model didn't have a comma. After the song has been composed to the class' satisfaction, Mr. Peters demonstrates how he proofreads their text before publication.

The children decide they want to publish their song in two ways: by learning to sing it and then singing it for a kindergarten class next door, and by submitting their song for the next school newsletter, which includes one page from every class in the school. Mr. Peters points out that they should also learn to read their song, and they agree. As they work with the large copy, he uses this opportunity to help them blend onsets and rimes to read words that many of the children don't yet know in print. They also attend to single-sound onsets in some of the words, so as to promote phonemic awareness along with letter-sound knowledge.

On the weekend, Mr. Peters makes a one-page copy to submit to the monthly newsletter and for children to take home to their parents, plus small booklets, one verse per page, with room above the new verse for the children to draw a picture and with the refrain on the opposite page. He also makes some audiotapes for the listening center in the classroom, so that as many as three children at a time can listen to their song and read along during sustained reading and

writing time the following week. During that week, some of the children listen repeatedly to the tape as they read, or at least turn the pages of, their book. Many of the children choose to illustrate their pages during sustained reading and writing time. A few simply read the booklet with the story they have composed together. Others ask for blank booklets they can draw and write in, preferring to create a new book rather than reread the song during that time. During shared reading time, Mr. Peters and the children continue to reread the song for a few days, and Mr. Peters gives additional help as needed in guided reading groups and individual conferences.

Meanwhile, on these same days, Mr. Peters is reading two or three books aloud to the children and giving them repeated opportunities to predict what will come next, along with opportunities to share how the characters or the stories relate to their own lives or other texts. During sustained reading and writing time, he conducts guided reading and writing groups and individual conferences while the rest of the children are rereading a familiar book or chart; listening to a book, poem, or song on tape (he and some of the parents have made most of these tapes themselves); “reading” the pictures in a book that they cannot read by themselves; reading with a buddy; drawing a picture and writing something with it; playing with magnetic letters to make words; writing in personal journals about events in their lives; writing something with a buddy; or reading or writing with a parent or older student who has come in to help. Every day Mr. Peters and the class sing the alphabet song together, while he plays the guitar.

By occupying most of the class in these literacy experiences and getting the children accustomed to asking each other for help when they’re stuck with something, Mr. Peters has created time to help children with reading strategies and skills during guided reading in small groups, time to help with writing strategies and skills—especially spelling—during guided writing groups, and time to hold an individual reading and/or writing conference with each child about once a week. His teaching is based upon continuous assessment as the children engage in daily reading and writing. For example, when he sees that a child or a small group of children are writing more than one or two letters for the sounds in a word, he may assist their spelling development through interactive writing, perhaps offering the conventional way to spell certain sounds in a word or supplying silent letters. Continuous assessment enables him not only to plan for instruction but to decide which children need additional teaching and support from the learning support teacher, Mrs. Gaines, who fortunately supplements Mr. Peters’ ways of teaching. Thank goodness for Mrs. Gaines!

Sometime after the holiday season, Mr. Peters plans to start literature study groups, too (Egawa, 1990), and for those children who seem ready, to guide them in reading and taking notes on informational texts. He also incorporates reading and writing into science and math, as well as social studies. It takes time to establish such routines, of course, but Mr. Peters has discovered that as a result of his whole-class, group, and individual teaching, almost all of his students leave his first-grade class having emerged as independent readers and writers of simple texts.

What reading and writing strategies and skills have been taught during these ten or so days?

1. Predicting, which requires drawing inferences and using prior knowledge; making connections to one’s life (done mostly during the read-alouds)
2. Using context and letters to predict specific words; using the rest of the letters to confirm or show the need for correction
3. Onsets and rimes, and their use in chunking unfamiliar words—that is, reading them by analogy with the parts of known words. Also the use of onsets and rimes to help in spelling words.
4. Phonemic awareness (through the focus on onsets during reading experiences, and when Mr. Peters helped children in small groups and individual conferences hear some of the sounds in words they wanted to write, and to write letters for these sounds)

5. Phonics: letter-sound correspondences (see item 4), and blending onsets and rimes in decoding words
6. Spelling strategies, with particular emphasis on writing the sounds they hear in words. The more advanced spellers were taught strategies for identifying some (only two or three) possible misspellings and making the spellings more conventional.
7. Writing strategies. Those children who chose blank paper or booklets for writing were encouraged to draw a picture before they wrote, and/or to share their ideas with a classmate before and during writing.

In addition, what important attitudes were the children learning?

- Reading is something “I can do,” even though at first I need the support of my teacher and peers. I can write, too.
- Reading and writing are fun.
- When we work together and help each other, we learn better.

Intensive, Systematic Phonics

Though Mr. Peters doesn’t teach phonics in isolation from reading, writing, and the texts children are enjoying, his teaching of phonics is nevertheless both intensive and systematic. It’s intensive because Mr. Peters teaches phonics several ways each day, with attention to learning common rimes and onsets; using context and blending word parts to identify words (decoding); and developing letter-sound knowledge and phonemic awareness—the latter especially by helping children spell the sounds they hear in words. Not surprisingly, Mr. Peters teaches phonics and phonemic awareness through some of the means found successful in the National Reading Panel’s meta-analysis—namely, learning common onsets and rime patterns and reading new print words by analogy with the parts of known print words (“analogy phonics”), and inventive spelling (“phonics-through-spelling”). Moreover, Mr. Peters’ class exemplifies the kind of highly successful first-grade classroom described by researchers from the Center on English Learning and Achievement (1998; also Pressley, Allington, et al., 2001). Among the characteristics of such classrooms are a great deal of reading and writing, plus the teaching of skills in context. Each of these characteristics can be seen in the previous description of Mr. Peters’ teaching. In addition, he reads good literature to the children, includes high-quality predictable books among the texts they use for shared reading, and employs interesting texts that allow him to focus on different phonic elements, particularly rime and onsets. He copies the texts of shorter books on chart paper for the children, so they can learn to read the texts together and attend to varying aspects of phonics. Less predictable Big Books are also used, and Mr. Peters helps children learn to figure out problem words by using context and blending together the familiar parts of the words. See Figure 14.10 for a list of books that are useful for teaching phonics, spelling, and words. Opitz’s *Rhymes and Reasons* (2000) refers to many books you might want to use with young children.

In classrooms where phonics is taught as an integral part of daily reading and writing activities, children typically learn phonics as well as do children in classrooms where intensive, systematic phonics is taught in isolation (e.g., Freppon, 1991, which is also included in the National Reading Panel report, 2000b). They may even make better use of their phonics knowledge in reading (Freppon, 1991). They begin to develop effective reading strategies. They also learn to enjoy reading and writing and to feel good about their progress as readers and writers. Most important, though, children actually learn to read and write!

Recommended Books on Understanding and Teaching Phonics, Spelling, and Words

Primary Grades Especially

Dahl, K. L., Scharer, P. L., Lawson, L. L., & Grogan, P. R. (2001). *Rethinking Phonics: Making the Best Teaching Decisions*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann. Based upon research in reading and writing classrooms, this excellent book articulates and exemplifies six principles for effective phonics instruction. It includes a variety of strategies for developing phonics skills and discusses in detail ways of helping children who struggle with phonics.

Fountas, I. C., & Pinnell, G. S. (Eds.) (1999b). *Voices on Word Matters: Learning About Phonics and Spelling in the Literacy Classroom*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann. An excellent collection of articles, focusing on phonics and spelling in grades K–3.

Moustafa, M. (1997). *Beyond Traditional Phonics: Research Discoveries and Reading Instruction*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann. Focuses particularly on the research base for teaching phonics as described in this chapter, but also discusses the importance of shared reading and describes Moustafa's particular approach to teaching phonics in context, "whole-to-parts phonics." For more details on the latter, see especially Moustafa 1998 and 2000.

Opitz M. F. (2000). *Rhymes & Reasons: Literature and Language Play for Phonological Awareness*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann. Lists many wonderful books for use with young children and offers teaching suggestions to accompany them.

Strickland, D. S. (1998). *Teaching Phonics Today: A Primer for Educators*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association. Discusses issues with regard to the teaching of phonics; provides suggestions for helping children learn to use phonics as part of their overall reading development.

Wilde, S. (1997). *What's a Schwa Sound Anyway? A Holistic Guide to Phonetics, Phonics, and Spelling*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann. This book provides a wealth of background knowledge for teachers' understanding, including chapters on what children's invented spellings tell us about their development of phonics knowledge and what miscues tell us about children's use of phonics when they read.

Primary Grades and Beyond

Bear, D. R., Invernizzi, M., Templeton, S., & Johnston, F. (2000). *Words Their Way: Word Study for Phonics, Vocabulary and Spelling Instruction*. (2nd ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill/Prentice Hall. This popular resource includes a wealth of teaching ideas. Grades 1–12.

Cunningham, P. M. (2000). *Phonics They Use: Words for Reading and Writing*. (3rd ed.). New York: Addison Wesley Longman. Excellent for teaching onsets and rimes (though often in isolation) plus understanding and reading longer words, including those that have meaningful parts within them.

Hughes, M., & Searle, D. (1997). *The Violent E and Other Tricky Sounds: Learning to Spell from Kindergarten Through Grade 6*. York, ME: Stenhouse. Describing children's spelling development throughout the elementary grades, this book enables teachers to recognize and monitor growth and to plan effective spelling programs for their students. The authors note that "The good spellers demonstrate that the basis for their success is their ability to understand the systematic nature of spelling, rather than the ability to learn a set of discrete spellings" (back cover).

Laminack, L. L., & Wood, K. (1996). *Spelling in Use: Looking Closely at Spelling in Whole Language Classrooms*. Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English. Includes a rich collection of student writing, which is analyzed in detail. Includes chapters to help teachers include parents in conversations about spelling and writing Grades K–8.

Pinnell, G. S., & Fountas, I. C. (Eds.) (1998). *Word Matters: Teaching Phonics and Spelling in the Reading/Writing Classroom*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann. The central goal of this extensive resource is to “teach children to become ‘word solvers’: readers who can take words apart while reading for meaning, and writers who can construct words while writing to communicate” (back cover).

Intermediate Grades Through High School

Allen, J. (1999). *Words, Words, Words: Teaching Vocabulary in Grades 4–12*. York, ME: Stenhouse. An invaluable resource for helping students understand and decipher the meanings of words, this book includes a chapter on alternatives to “Look it up in the dictionary!” and a chapter on reading as the heart of word-rich classrooms.

See some of the books in the “Primary Grades and Beyond” section.

Figure 14.10 (Continued).

A Perspective on Teaching Phonics

Politicians and policy makers, not to mention textbook publishers, increasingly promote “programs” to teach phonemic awareness and phonics. Teaching by program—more accurately, teaching a program rather than teaching the children—flies in the face of what knowledgeable teachers know and do. They know that exemplary phonics instruction will

- make provision for addressing the needs of children with varying backgrounds, native languages, and other instructional needs by using small-group, individual, and even extra tutorial help if needed;
- occur in a context where children are read to a lot—ideally, several times daily;
- occur only after such foundational experiences have developed the concept of reading for meaning, plus basic concepts about print (such as directionality and the concept of a written word);
- immerse children in reading every day—shared, guided, and sustained reading in varying ways;
- include various kinds of assisted reading, in which children have the opportunity to match spoken with written words;
- include many writing experiences every day—such as guided writing, interactive writing, and sustained writing;
- encourage children to write and spell the best they can, and provide help in hearing and writing the sounds in words;
- require children to think, not passively complete worksheets or engage in oral drill;
- involve interaction and collaboration, between teacher and class and among children;

- derive partly from alphabet books, nursery rhymes, other poetry and stories with alliteration and/or rhyme and other sound effects; and
- relate to and derive from the reading and writing that the children are doing.

Only teacher-planned instruction can meet such criteria adequately, avoiding the “one-size-fits-all” approach that, in fact, leaves many children behind, making their reading of enjoyable and natural texts a dream deferred.

AND LET US KEEP IN MIND . . .

Were your reading experiences in school mostly positive, or negative? What kinds of experiences are we currently giving our own students during classroom reading time, and what are the effects? Do we need to make changes in what we’re doing? To prompt your reflection, let me share an important reading memory that I drafted in a workshop conducted by the Public Education and Business Coalition in Denver:

I already knew how to read when I entered school, just from my mother reading to me every day since I was little. Fortunately, I was allowed to read books of my own choosing in the elementary grades (once I had finished the Dick and Jane books independently in first grade). One reason independent reading was important is that nobody was looking over my shoulder to see if I got all the words right. Nobody previewed the book for me; I was allowed to discover its treasures myself. Nobody gave me vocabulary quizzes on words I encountered in the book. Nobody required me to do a book report or some other project on a book I had chosen (well, not on most of the books). Nobody even required me to journal about the book. Instead, the book was mine, all mine—to savor, to get lost in, and to identify with the adventures and values of the main character (usually male!). I was allowed just to be a reader instead of having to keep proving, again and again, that I could use certain strategies and skills, or even that I had actually read the book. What an exhilarating way for me to learn to read more and more challenging and interesting texts!

My wish for every child would be to experience the same joy I did, and do, in reading.

So Let Us Not Forget . . .

Given this chapter’s emphasis on teaching reading strategies and skills, let us not forget that there is *much* more to a good literacy program than direct teaching. Let us not forget, in particular, that sustained reading and writing are not merely the desired ends of instruction but the means of accomplishing our goal of helping students become adults who *choose* to read and write for many purposes—adults who are not only functionally literate, but joyfully literate.

And let us not forget that only teacher-planned instruction can come close to making this goal, this dream, a reality.

FOR FURTHER EXPLORATION

1. Develop your own visual representation of reading strategies, as preparation for teaching strategies and helping students develop a visual with you. You might develop a visual for macro-level strategies, one for micro-level strategies, and/or a visual for both. Feel free to draw upon your own strategies and the strategies other adults use, even if you would not plan to teach all of these strategies to the students in your class.
2. Use the following chart (Figure 14.11) to brainstorm for what cognitive/reading strategies you might teach, using a favorite book. The chart of *A Boy Called Slow* (Figure 14.3) may be useful as a model.

| Book information | Page(s) to draw upon | What strategies could be taught? | What will the strategy require? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use prior knowledge • Use information in the text • Use information from other texts and sources | Questions or comments or notes |
|------------------|----------------------|----------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| | | | | |

Cognitive strategies for understanding include monitoring for meaning, inferring (includes predicting), making connections, creating mental images, synthesizing, analyzing, evaluating (includes determining importance), relating new to known, questioning, using fix-up strategies.

Figure 14.11 Strategy chart.

3. Following is a selection from the reading material given to an eleven-year-old boy in a special education classroom, with his miscues marked on the text (Figure 14.12). Examine the miscues to determine his apparent reading strengths and needs. Then discuss what kind of reading program you might design for this boy. Be specific and detailed.

Gail and Ben can not get home. The ^{light} ~~lake~~ is wide. "I can ^{2 bake} ~~make~~
^{1 mim}
 a boat," said Ben. "Use the ^{You Gail} ~~pat~~," said Gail. "The ^{Gail} ~~pat~~ is big,"
^{2 ... not}
^{is} ^{1 Pete boat} ~~said~~ Ben. "A ^{pail} ~~nut~~ can make a ^{Ben they said boat boat} ~~fine~~ boat." "Nail the sail to the ~~pot~~,"
^{sailed}
 said Gail. Gail and Ben ~~set sail~~ in the boat. "It is ^{I we} ~~wet~~ in the
^{is} ^{to} ^{is}
 boat," said Gail. "The boat ~~has~~ a hole in it." "Take the cap," ~~said~~
^{and eat} ^{Gail} ^{pail}
 Ben. "Use it to ~~bat~~." Gail did ~~bat~~, but the hole is big. "I ^{said} ~~see~~
^{sail mad} ^{pail} ^{is}
 rain," said Gail. The ~~rain~~ ~~came~~. "The ~~sail~~ is in the lake," ~~said~~
^{Tom}
 Gail. ~~Tim~~ is in the lake. "Wait," ^{Pete} ~~said~~ Ben. "Save us," said Gail.
^{Tom} ^{lake} ^{Tim} ^{Not is}
~~Tim~~ came up to the ~~boat~~. "Tim can save us," said ~~Ben~~. "Take his
^{Not is} ^{ride} ^{Tim}
 tail," said Gail. "Get ~~on~~ top," said Tim. Gail and Ben ~~rode~~ on ~~top~~
^{is} ^{is}
 of Tim. "Tim ~~got~~ us home," ~~said~~ Gail. "Tim is a fine boat," said
^{Tim}
~~Ben~~.

(The reader made some corrections, but most were prompted by the teacher. Since she did not indicate which were prompted and which were not, I have not marked any of the miscues as corrected.)

Figure 14.12 Eleven-year-old's miscues.

4. Susan Ohanian, author of *One Size Fits Few* (1999) and other books and articles, shares a significant teaching experience below (listserv message, 6/25/2001; used with permission). Reflect on her experience and what it suggests about learning and teaching, with particular regard to literacy.

I confess that when I taught 3rd grade I didn't know a whole lot about reading, but when I discovered that my third graders, carefully segregated by the school as the worst readers in 3rd grade, didn't "hear" rhyme, this seemed significant to me. So I got all the library books I could find and read the kids rhyming books throughout the day. And I carefully salted their universe of "choice" books for the free reading period with lots of rhyming books.

Each kid in the room discovered "rhyme." One by one. It was quite an earth-shattering occurrence—every time. And once that light bulb went off, they really did become energetic readers.

I don't think I could have given them a shortcut. Actually I confess that before this pedagogical light bulb went off for me, I labored over showing them rhyming patterns in spelling words. To no avail. They just didn't "get" it. They "got" it after hearing me read a zillion books. And reading another zillion on their own. But their zillion was free choice. And a large variety of books brought different kids to that moment of awareness. My selection of their universe of texts was so varied that it was pretty close to "free" choice. I had an agenda but it wasn't oppressive to the kids. For a while it wasn't apparent either. Then suddenly a kid would look astonished and violate every principle of sustained silent reading by rushing up to me and announcing, "This book rhymes!!" It truly was an exciting moment.

I don't know that anyone ever caught on that for the first six weeks of school ALL the books rhymed.

5. In "For Further Exploration" at the end of Chapter 12, you were invited to draw lines on a chart to indicate in which instructional settings reading strategies and skills might be taught. If you did that activity, see whether you have anything to add after reading the present chapter. If you didn't do that activity, you might do it now.

APPENDIX: ONSETS AND RIMES

ONSETS:
BEGINNING CONSONANT SOUNDSSingle Consonants

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| b | h | n | v |
| c | j | p | w |
| d | k | r | y |
| f | l | s | z |
| g | m | t | |

Important Exceptions

qu = /kw/ blend as in *quick*
 (the letter *q* is never used without *u*)
 ph = /f/ sound as in *phone*
 c = /s/ before *i*, *e*, or *y*, as in *city*
 c = /k/ before *a*, *o*, or *u*, as in *cat*
 g = /j/ before *i*, *e*, or *y*, as in *gem*
 g = /g/ before *a*, *o*, or *u*, as in *good*

Rare Exceptions

ch = /k/ as in *character*
 ch = /sh/ as in *chef*
 s = /sh/ as in *sure*

Consonant Digraphs

ch as in *church*
 sh as in *shoe*
 th (voiceless) as in *thin*
 th (voiced) as in *this*
 wh (hw blend) as in *which*

Silent Consonants

gn = /n/ as in *gnat*
 kn = /n/ as in *knife*
 wr = /r/ as in *write*

Beginning Consonant Blends

| <i>(r family)</i> | <i>(l family)</i> | <i>(s letter)</i> | <i>(s family)</i> | <i>(no family)</i> |
|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| br | bl | sc | scr | dw |
| cr | cl | sk | squ | tw |
| dr | fl | sm | str | thr |
| fr | gl | sn | spr | |
| gr | pl | sp | spl | |
| pr | sl | st | shr | |
| tr | | sw | sch | |
| wr | | | | |

Most common phonograms in rank order based on frequency (number of uses in monosyllabic words)*

| Frequency | Rime | Example words |
|-----------|-------|--------------------------------|
| 26 | -ay | jay say pay day play |
| 26 | -ill | hill Bill will fill spill |
| 22 | -ip | ship dip tip skip trip |
| 19 | -at | cat fat bat rat sat |
| 19 | -am | ham jam dam ram Sam |
| 19 | -ag | bag rag tag wag sag |
| 19 | -ack | back sack Jack black track |
| 19 | -ank | bank sank tank blank drank |
| 19 | -ick | sick Dick pick quick chick |
| 18 | -ell | bell sell fell tell yell |
| 18 | -ot | pot not hot dot got |
| 18 | -ing | ring sing king wing thing |
| 18 | -ap | cap map tap clap trap |
| 18 | -unk | sunk junk bunk flunk skunk |
| 17 | -ail | pail jail nail sail tail |
| 17 | -ain | rain pain main chain plain |
| 17 | -eed | feed seed weed need freed |
| 17 | -y | my by dry try fly |
| 17 | -out | pout trout scout shout spout |
| 17 | -ug | rug bug hug dug tug |
| 16 | -op | mop cop pop top hop |
| 16 | -in | pin tin win chin thin |
| 16 | -an | pan man ran tan Dan |
| 16 | -est | best nest pest rest test |
| 16 | -ink | pink sink link link drink |
| 16 | -ow | low slow grow show snow |
| 16 | -ew | new few chew grew blew |
| 16 | -ore | more sore tore store score |
| 15 | -ed | bed red fed led Ted |
| 15 | -ab | cab dab jab lab crab |
| 15 | -ob | cob job rob Bob knob |
| 15 | -ock | sock rock lock dock block |
| 15 | -ake | cake lake make take brake |
| 15 | -ine | line nine pine fine shine |
| 14 | -ight | knight light right night fight |
| 14 | -im | swim him Kim rim brim |
| 14 | -uck | duck luck suck truck buck |
| 14 | -um | gum bum hum drum plum |

* For a complete list of all example words see Fry (1998).

38 Phonograms in 600 Common Words*

| | V-C/V-C-C | V-C-e/V-V-C | Diphthongs, r-controlled, others |
|---|----------------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------------|
| a | at, am, ag, ack, ank, ap, an, ab | ay, ail, ain, ake | |
| e | ell, est, ed | eed | ew |
| i | ill, ip, ick, ing, in, ink, im | ine | ight |
| o | ot, op, ob, ock | | out, ow, ore |
| u | unk, ug, uck, um | | |
| y | | | y |

Center for the Improvement of Early Reading Achievement (CIERA). (1998). Phonics and word recognition accuracy. No. 3 in the series Every child a reader, by E. H. Hiebert, P. D. Pearson, B. M. Taylor, V. Richardson, & S. G. Paris. Ann Arbor, MI: Michigan State University, CIERA. Based on Edward Fry's "The Most Common Phonograms." *Reading Teacher* 51: 620-622.