

Idea Detectives Comprehension Strategy Cards

Carolyn Denton, Ph.D.
carolyndenton.com

Idea Detectives

- Idea Detectives was a program we developed to teach word reading, reading fluency, reading comprehension, and self-regulation strategies to students with serious reading difficulties in the upper elementary grades.
- The results of our study were weak, so the program is not published or publicly available.
- Although the full Idea Detectives program was not supported by our study, **these comprehension strategies are evidence based**, meaning the *strategies themselves* have demonstrated positive effects in other studies.
- Note that these are NOT the only comprehension strategies that should be taught. For example, it is probably important to teach Summarization, which was not included in our study.

Idea Detectives Comprehension Materials

- The materials for each strategy include:
 - A card, which we printed front and back on cardstock, used by teachers to plan lessons to teach and practice each strategy. Each lesson was taught using a book selected by the teacher. The book could be read *by* the students or read *to* the students.
 - We used a set of high-quality decodable books by Flyleaf Publishing (flyleafpublishing.com), but the lessons can be used with any text.
- The backs of the cards refer to the word-reading strategies taught in our program. See the free download *Evidence-Based Word Identification Strategies* at www.carolyndenton.com.
- We made bookmarks for each student so they could refer to the steps of the strategies as they were reading.

Order of Introduction of the Strategies

1. Paraphrasing (Say It in Your Own Words)
2. Finding the main ideas (What is Most Important?)
3. Creating a mental picture of the text situation
4. Linking two or more ideas across a text (Link What You Read)
5. Making inferences about character feelings (Infer a Character's Feelings)
6. Making inferences to respond to a question about the text (Infer the Answer)
7. Making inferences about character motivation or the cause of an event in text (Tell Why)

Explicitly Teaching a Strategy

- Use a “think-aloud” to model each step of the strategy in a portion of the text. Talk about your thought processes to make them obvious to the students.
- Guide students as they apply the steps of the strategy.
 - Practice “as a group” and talk through each step.
 - Have each student read a page/paragraph/section of text and apply the strategy independently (orally, so you can give feedback).
 - Younger or beginning readers read each section of the text orally, then demonstrate how they are applying the strategy. More able readers may read a section of text silently, but then should “think aloud” about the text, demonstrating how they are applying the strategy.
- Provide feedback! Model again as much as necessary.

Idea Detectives Comprehension Strategy Lesson Planning

Book Title: _____ Author: _____

COMPREHENSION STRATEGY FOCUS:

Say It In Your Own Words Strategy

1. Read.
2. Stop and ask yourself: What did I learn in this part?
3. Say it in your own words: I learned that....

LESSON PREPARATION

DETERMINE WHETHER THE BOOK WILL BE USED AS A READ-ALoud OR AS STUDENT-READ TEXT. Follow the same preparation for both. If the text is student-read, refer to the back of the card for text-reading strategies.

READ the book you plan to use for your strategy lesson. Be aware of your own thinking as you read. Look for points in the text where you will stop and paraphrase what you read by answering the question *What did I learn in this part?*

Guiding Question:
What did you learn about _____?

DEVELOP a Guiding Question for the text that will guide students to focus on the text. The question should require students to paraphrase. For example, if students read an explanatory text about space, a good guiding question might be *What are three things you learned about space by reading this (book/passage)?* Write your Guiding Question on each of three sticky notes. Place one in the front of the book, one near the middle, and one at the end.

Vocabulary

SELECT 2-3 places to model the comprehension strategy through a teacher think-aloud. The think-aloud should answer the question *What did I learn in this part?* Begin your response with *I learned that....* Write each think-aloud on a sticky note and put it on the appropriate page of the book.

Think-Alouds:
What did I learn in this part?
I learned that....

CHOOSE several excellent vocabulary words in the text. Using sticky notes, write a kid-friendly definition for each. Place each one in the text where the word is introduced.

PLAN multiple places to stop and ask a question that encourages students to use the targeted strategy to formulate a response. Use the question *What did you learn in this part?* Write each question on a sticky note and place it at the point in the text where the question will be asked.

Questions Targeting Comprehension Strategy:
What did you learn in this part?

DURING THE LESSON

At the beginning of the activity, **pose the Guiding Question** (in the front of the book). Use the sticky notes to prompt you to remind students of the Guiding Question, model the comprehension strategy through **think-alouds**, **teach vocabulary words** in context, and allow students to **respond to the text** by providing opportunities for them to share in response to a planned question. At the end of the book, **pose the Guiding Question** (in the back of the book) again, and allow students to discuss. When possible, go back to the text to validate their responses.

Idea Detectives Comprehension Strategy Lesson Planning

USING STUDENT-READ TEXT

DECODABLE AND NON-DECODABLE TEXT:

Decodable text refers to text in which the words are restricted to spelling patterns that the reader can decode based on his/her existing knowledge of letter-sound correspondences, plus a limited number of high-frequency words.

Non-decodable text refers to text which contains some words which are not decodable based on a reader's existing knowledge of letter-sound correspondences. Leveled texts are often considered non-decodable.

TEXT READING STRATEGIES IN READING RULES:

The **Reading RULES!** and **Read Big Words** strategies can be used to figure out both decodable and non-decodable words. Using the strategies with non-decodable words require students to generalize the strategies to support decoding challenging words which contain one or more spelling patterns which are not decodable based on the student's existing letter-sound knowledge. Prompt students to read unfamiliar words using these strategies.

READING RULES! STRATEGY (for use with single-syllable words):

1. **Look for parts you know.** (These may include letter-sounds, special endings, or chunks within a word.)
2. **Sound it out.** (Sound out and blend the word from left to right, connecting the sounds as much as possible.)
3. **Check it.** (Put the word back in the sentence and read the whole sentence to see if it makes sense.)

READ BIG WORDS STRATEGY (for use with multi-syllable words):

1. **Find the vowels.** (Identifying the vowels helps students identify the syllables.)
2. **Look for parts you know.** (These may include letter-sounds, special endings, or chunks within a word.)
3. **Read the first chunk. Read the next chunk. Sound out if needed.** (Look around each vowel to find chunks/syllables. Read each chunk from left to right. Sound out and blend chunks when needed, connecting the sounds as much as possible.)
4. **Put the chunks together.** (Read the whole word.)
5. **Make it sound like a real word.** (If there is a syllable that doesn't sound quite right, change the vowel sound in it to the lazy schwa sound. Then read the word again to see if it makes sense.)

SCAFFOLDING WORD READING IN NON-DECODABLE TEXT

For words that contain letters or letter combinations that have not yet been taught:

1. Before students look for parts they know, **point out any letter combinations** (such as vowel teams, digraphs, etc.) in the word that have not yet been taught. Tell students that those letters work together as a team to make one sound. Tell the sound the letter combination makes.
2. Students **look for parts they know**. If they try to give separate sounds for the letters in a combination, tell them again that those letters work together to make just one sound.
3. Students **sound out the word**, including the new sounds. Sound out part of the word for them, if needed.
 - Point to the letters or letter combinations students do not know. (You may give a key word to help students remember the pattern.)
 - Tell their sounds.
 - Students repeat.
4. Students **reread the sentence** with the word in it.

ROUTINE FOR TELLING NON-DECODABLE WORDS

For words that are not decodable or are very challenging, or when there are several difficult words on a page, tell the word, using this routine:

- **That word is ____.**
- **What's the word? Student repeats the word.**
- **Read the sentence again.**

Idea Detectives Comprehension Strategy Lesson Planning

Book Title: _____ Author: _____

COMPREHENSION STRATEGY FOCUS:

What Is Most Important? Strategy

1. Read.
2. Stop and ask yourself: Who or what is this about? What's the most important thing I learned about that?
3. Say it in your own words.

LESSON PREPARATION

DETERMINE WHETHER THE BOOK WILL BE USED AS A READ-ALoud OR AS STUDENT-READ TEXT. Follow the same preparation for both. If the text is student-read, refer to the back of the card for text-reading strategies.

READ the book you plan to use for your strategy lesson. Be aware of your own thinking as you read. Look for points in the text where you will stop and answer two questions: *Who or what is this about? What's the most important thing I learned about that?*

Guiding Question:

What's the most important thing you learned about _____?

DEVELOP a Guiding Question for the text that will guide students to focus on the text. The question should require students to determine what is most important. For example, if students read an explanatory text about earthquakes, a good guiding question might be *What's the most important thing you learned about what to do during an earthquake?* Write your Guiding Question on each of three sticky notes. Place one in the front of the book, one near the middle, and one at the end.

Vocabulary

SELECT 2-3 places to model the comprehension strategy through a teacher think-aloud. The think-aloud should answer the questions *Who or what is this about? What's the most important thing I learned about that?* Begin your response with I learned that.... Write each think-aloud on a sticky note and put it on the appropriate page of the book.

CHOOSE several excellent vocabulary words in the text. Using sticky notes, write a kid-friendly definition for each. Place each one in the text where the word is introduced.

Think-Alouds:

*Who or what is this about?
What is most important?*

PLAN multiple places to stop and ask a question that encourages students to use the targeted strategy to formulate a response. Use the questions *Who or what is this about?* and *What's the most important thing about that?* Write each question on a sticky note and place it at the point in the text where the question will be asked.

Questions Targeting Comprehension Strategy:

Who or what is this about? What is most important? Questions

DURING THE LESSON

At the beginning of the activity, **pose the Guiding Question** (in the front of the book). Use the sticky notes to prompt you to remind students of the Guiding Question, model the comprehension strategy through **think-alouds**, **teach vocabulary words** in context, and allow students to **respond to the text** by providing opportunities for them to share in response to a planned question. At the end of the book, **pose the Guiding Question** (in the back of the book) again, and allow students to discuss. When possible, go back to the text to validate their responses.

Idea Detectives Comprehension Strategy Lesson Planning

USING STUDENT-READ TEXT

DECODABLE AND NON-DECODABLE TEXT:

Decodable text refers to text in which the words are restricted to spelling patterns that the reader can decode based on his/her existing knowledge of letter-sound correspondences, plus a limited number of high-frequency words.

Non-decodable text refers to text which contains some words which are not decodable based on a reader's existing knowledge of letter-sound correspondences. Leveled texts are often considered non-decodable.

TEXT READING STRATEGIES IN READING RULES:

The **Reading RULES!** and **Read Big Words** strategies can be used to figure out both decodable and non-decodable words. Using the strategies with non-decodable words require students to generalize the strategies to support decoding challenging words which contain one or more spelling patterns which are not decodable based on the student's existing letter-sound knowledge. Prompt students to read unfamiliar words using these strategies.

READING RULES! STRATEGY (for use with single-syllable words):

1. **Look for parts you know.** (These may include letter-sounds, special endings, or chunks within a word.)
2. **Sound it out.** (Sound out and blend the word from left to right, connecting the sounds as much as possible.)
3. **Check it.** (Put the word back in the sentence and read the whole sentence to see if it makes sense.)

READ BIG WORDS STRATEGY (for use with multi-syllable words):

1. **Find the vowels.** (Identifying the vowels helps students identify the syllables.)
2. **Look for parts you know.** (These may include letter-sounds, special endings, or chunks within a word.)
3. **Read the first chunk. Read the next chunk. Sound out if needed.** (Look around each vowel to find chunks/syllables. Read each chunk from left to right. Sound out and blend chunks when needed, connecting the sounds as much as possible.)
4. **Put the chunks together.** (Read the whole word.)
5. **Make it sound like a real word.** (If there is a syllable that doesn't sound quite right, change the vowel sound in it to the lazy schwa sound. Then read the word again to see if it makes sense.)

SCAFFOLDING WORD READING IN NON-DECODABLE TEXT

For words that contain letters or letter combinations that have not yet been taught:

1. Before students look for parts they know, **point out any letter combinations** (such as vowel teams, digraphs, etc.) in the word that have not yet been taught. Tell students that those letters work together as a team to make one sound. Tell the sound the letter combination makes.
2. Students **look for parts they know**. If they try to give separate sounds for the letters in a combination, tell them again that those letters work together to make just one sound.
3. Students **sound out the word**, including the new sounds. Sound out part of the word for them, if needed.
 - Point to the letters or letter combinations students do not know. (You may give a key word to help students remember the pattern.)
 - Tell their sounds.
 - Students repeat.
4. Students **reread the sentence** with the word in it.

ROUTINE FOR TELLING NON-DECODABLE WORDS

For words that are not decodable or are very challenging, or when there are several difficult words on a page, tell the word, using this routine:

- **That word is ____.**
- **What's the word? Student repeats the word.**
- **Read the sentence again.**

Idea Detectives Comprehension Strategy Lesson Planning

Book Title: _____ Author: _____

COMPREHENSION STRATEGY FOCUS:

Create a Mental Picture Strategy

1. Read.
2. Picture.
3. Think: How has my picture changed?

LESSON PREPARATION

DETERMINE WHETHER THE BOOK WILL BE USED AS A READ-ALoud OR AS STUDENT-READ TEXT. Follow the same preparation for both. If the text is student-read, refer to the back of the card for text-reading strategies.

READ the book you plan to use for your strategy lesson. Be aware of how you visualize the text as you read. Look for points in the text where you will stop and think aloud about the mental pictures you are creating as you read, and how your mental pictures are changing throughout the text. Think about how your pictures help you comprehend the text.

Guiding Question:
Describe your mental picture.
How does your mental picture change throughout the text?

DEVELOP a **Guiding Question** for the text that will guide students to focus on the text. The question should require students to discuss the mental pictures they create about the text. For example, if students read an explanatory text about butterflies, a good guiding question would be *How did your mental picture of the butterfly change from the time it was an egg to the time it was a butterfly?* Write your Guiding Question on each of three sticky notes. Place one in the front of the book, one near the middle, and one at the end.

SELECT 2-3 places to model the comprehension strategy through a teacher think-aloud. The think-aloud should orally describe the mental picture you have about the text at different points. Indicate each time how your mental picture has changed. Write each think-aloud on a sticky and put it on the appropriate page of the book.

Think-Alouds:
Describe your mental picture.
How has your picture changed?

Vocabulary

CHOOSE several excellent vocabulary words in the text. Using sticky notes, write a kid-friendly definition for each. Place each one in the text where the word is introduced.

PLAN multiple places to stop and ask students about their mental picture and how it is changing throughout the text. Use these stems: *Describe your mental picture. How has your mental picture changed?* Write the stems on sticky notes and place them at various points in the text. **NOTE: Use cardstock to cover illustrations in the text in order to allow students to create their own mental pictures without bias.**

Questions Targeting Comprehension Strategy:
What is your mental picture now?
How has it changed?

DURING THE LESSON

At the beginning of the activity, **pose the Guiding Question** (in the front of the book). Use the sticky notes to prompt you to remind students of the Guiding Question, model the comprehension strategy through **think-alouds**, **teach vocabulary words** in context, and allow students to **respond to the text** by providing opportunities for them to share in response to a planned question. At the end of the book, **pose the Guiding Question** (in the back of the book) again, and allow students to discuss. When possible, go back to the text to validate their responses.

Idea Detectives Comprehension Strategy Lesson Planning

USING STUDENT-READ TEXT

DECODABLE AND NON-DECODABLE TEXT:

Decodable text refers to text in which the words are restricted to spelling patterns that the reader can decode based on his/her existing knowledge of letter-sound correspondences, plus a limited number of high-frequency words.

Non-decodable text refers to text which contains some words which are not decodable based on a reader's existing knowledge of letter-sound correspondences. Leveled texts are often considered non-decodable.

TEXT READING STRATEGIES IN READING RULES:

The **Reading RULES!** and **Read Big Words** strategies can be used to figure out both decodable and non-decodable words. Using the strategies with non-decodable words require students to generalize the strategies to support decoding challenging words which contain one or more spelling patterns which are not decodable based on the student's existing letter-sound knowledge. Prompt students to read unfamiliar words using these strategies.

READING RULES! STRATEGY (for use with single-syllable words):

1. **Look for parts you know.** (These may include letter-sounds, special endings, or chunks within a word.)
2. **Sound it out.** (Sound out and blend the word from left to right, connecting the sounds as much as possible.)
3. **Check it.** (Put the word back in the sentence and read the whole sentence to see if it makes sense.)

READ BIG WORDS STRATEGY (for use with multi-syllable words):

1. **Find the vowels.** (Identifying the vowels helps students identify the syllables.)
2. **Look for parts you know.** (These may include letter-sounds, special endings, or chunks within a word.)
3. **Read the first chunk. Read the next chunk. Sound out if needed.** (Look around each vowel to find chunks/ syllables. Read each chunk from left to right. Sound out and blend chunks when needed, connecting the sounds as much as possible.)
4. **Put the chunks together.** (Read the whole word.)
5. **Make it sound like a real word.** (If there is a syllable that doesn't sound quite right, change the vowel sound in it to the lazy schwa sound. Then read the word again to see if it makes sense.)

SCAFFOLDING WORD READING IN NON-DECODABLE TEXT

For words that contain letters or letter combinations that have not yet been taught:

1. Before students look for parts they know, **point out any letter combinations** (such as vowel teams, digraphs, etc.) in the word that have not yet been taught. Tell students that those letters work together as a team to make one sound. Tell the sound the letter combination makes.
2. Students **look for parts they know**. If they try to give separate sounds for the letters in a combination, tell them again that those letters work together to make just one sound.
3. Students **sound out the word**, including the new sounds. Sound out part of the word for them, if needed.
 - Point to the letters or letter combinations students do not know. (You may give a key word to help students remember the pattern.)
 - Tell their sounds.
 - Students repeat.
4. Students **reread the sentence** with the word in it.

ROUTINE FOR TELLING NON-DECODABLE WORDS

For words that are not decodable or are very challenging, or when there are several difficult words on a page, tell the word, using this routine:

- **That word is ____.**
- **What's the word? Student repeats the word.**
- **Read the sentence again.**

Idea Detectives Comprehension Strategy Lesson Planning

Book Title: _____ Author: _____

COMPREHENSION STRATEGY FOCUS:

Link What You Read Strategy

1. Read.
2. Link it! Link the new ideas from this part of the book with the ideas in the rest of the book!
3. Think: How does this help me understand the text?

LESSON PREPARATION

DETERMINE WHETHER THE BOOK WILL BE USED AS A READ-ALoud OR AS STUDENT-READ TEXT. Follow the same preparation for both. If the text is student-read, refer to the back of the card for text-reading strategies.

READ the book you plan to use for your strategy lesson. Be aware of your own thinking as you read. Look for points in the text where you will stop and do two things: Link new ideas back to things you learned earlier in the text; and Think how linking the information helps you understand the text.

Guiding Question:

Link back to an earlier passage in the text to figure out why something occurred on this page.

DEVELOP a Guiding Question for the text that will guide students to focus on the text. The question should require students to link new ideas in the text back to things they learned earlier in the text. For example, if students read a narrative about a superhero, they may need to link how he was able to capture a criminal back to an earlier passage that described his superpowers in order to understand the text. Write your Guiding Question on each of three sticky notes. Place one in the front of the book, one near the middle, and one at the end.

Vocabulary

SELECT 2-3 places to model the comprehension strategy through a teacher think-aloud. The think-aloud should link new information back to something previously-read in the text in order to help you understand the new information. Write each think-aloud on a sticky and put it on the appropriate page of the book.

CHOOSE several excellent vocabulary words in the text. Using sticky notes, write a kid-friendly definition for each. Place each one in the text where the word is introduced.

Think-Alouds:

Link new information back to something learned earlier in the text.

PLAN multiple places to stop and ask students about how they are linking information within the book. Use this: Link a new idea from this part of the text with something you learned previously in the text. Write the statement on sticky notes and place them at various points in the text.¹⁴

Questions Targeting Comprehension Strategy:

Link a new idea from this part of the text with something you learned previously in the text.

DURING THE LESSON

At the beginning of the activity, **pose the Guiding Question** (in the front of the book). Use the sticky notes to prompt you to remind students of the Guiding Question, model the comprehension strategy through **think-alouds**, **teach vocabulary words** in context, and allow students to **respond to the text** by providing opportunities for them to share in response to a planned question. At the end of the book, **pose the Guiding Question** (in the back of the book) again, and allow students to discuss. When possible, go back to the text to validate their responses.

Idea Detectives Comprehension Strategy Lesson Planning

USING STUDENT-READ TEXT

DECODABLE AND NON-DECODABLE TEXT:

Decodable text refers to text in which the words are restricted to spelling patterns that the reader can decode based on his/her existing knowledge of letter-sound correspondences, plus a limited number of high-frequency words.

Non-decodable text refers to text which contains some words which are not decodable based on a reader's existing knowledge of letter-sound correspondences. Leveled texts are often considered non-decodable.

TEXT READING STRATEGIES IN READING RULES:

The **Reading RULES!** and **Read Big Words** strategies can be used to figure out both decodable and non-decodable words. Using the strategies with non-decodable words require students to generalize the strategies to support decoding challenging words which contain one or more spelling patterns which are not decodable based on the student's existing letter-sound knowledge. Prompt students to read unfamiliar words using these strategies.

READING RULES! STRATEGY (for use with single-syllable words):

1. **Look for parts you know.** (These may include letter-sounds, special endings, or chunks within a word.)
2. **Sound it out.** (Sound out and blend the word from left to right, connecting the sounds as much as possible.)
3. **Check it.** (Put the word back in the sentence and read the whole sentence to see if it makes sense.)

READ BIG WORDS STRATEGY (for use with multi-syllable words):

1. **Find the vowels.** (Identifying the vowels helps students identify the syllables.)
2. **Look for parts you know.** (These may include letter-sounds, special endings, or chunks within a word.)
3. **Read the first chunk. Read the next chunk. Sound out if needed.** (Look around each vowel to find chunks/syllables. Read each chunk from left to right. Sound out and blend chunks when needed, connecting the sounds as much as possible.)
4. **Put the chunks together.** (Read the whole word.)
5. **Make it sound like a real word.** (If there is a syllable that doesn't sound quite right, change the vowel sound in it to the lazy schwa sound. Then read the word again to see if it makes sense.)

SCAFFOLDING WORD READING IN NON-DECODABLE TEXT

For words that contain letters or letter combinations that have not yet been taught:

1. Before students look for parts they know, **point out any letter combinations** (such as vowel teams, digraphs, etc.) in the word that have not yet been taught. Tell students that those letters work together as a team to make one sound. Tell the sound the letter combination makes.
2. Students **look for parts they know**. If they try to give separate sounds for the letters in a combination, tell them again that those letters work together to make just one sound.
3. Students **sound out the word**, including the new sounds. Sound out part of the word for them, if needed.
 - Point to the letters or letter combinations students do not know. (You may give a key word to help students remember the pattern.)
 - Tell their sounds.
 - Students repeat.
4. Students **reread the sentence** with the word in it.

ROUTINE FOR TELLING NON-DECODABLE WORDS

For words that are not decodable or are very challenging, or when there are several difficult words on a page, tell the word, using this routine:

- **That word is ____.**
- **What's the word? Student repeats the word.**
- **Read the sentence again.**

Infer a Character's Feelings

Please note that the lesson planning card is missing for this strategy. Please use the same routine that is contained in the cards for the other strategies.

The steps of the strategy are:

1. Think: What is the character doing?
2. Think: What is the character saying?
3. How does the character feel?

These can be used as the Guiding Questions. Simply insert the character's name.

Think-Aloud:

Model using clues from the character's actions and words, along with your own background knowledge about how you might feel in the character's situation to answer the question about character feelings.

Idea Detectives Comprehension Strategy Lesson Planning

Book Title: _____ Author: _____

COMPREHENSION STRATEGY FOCUS:

Infer the Answer Strategy

1. Look for the clues in the text.
2. Think about what you already know.
3. Come up with an answer that makes sense.
4. Read a little more. Check to see if your answer is correct.

LESSON PREPARATION

DETERMINE WHETHER THE BOOK WILL BE USED AS A READ-ALoud OR AS STUDENT-READ TEXT. Follow the same preparation for both. If the text is student-read, refer to the back of the card for text-reading strategies.

READ the book you plan to use for your strategy lesson. Be aware of your own thinking as you read, especially questions you may have about the text. Look for points in the text where you will stop and do two things: Answer questions by using clues from the text plus background knowledge; and check to see if your answer makes sense.

Guiding Question:

Use clues from the text plus your background knowledge to answer this question: _____?

DEVELOP a Guiding Question for the text that will guide students to focus on the text. The question should require students to make inferences to determine the answer to a question that the author doesn't specifically answer in the text. For example, if students read an informational text about dinosaurs, ask how their lives might be different today if dinosaurs were still alive. Students would have to use information from the text, plus their background knowledge, to answer. Write your Guiding Question on each of three sticky notes. Place one in the front of the book, one near the middle, and one at the end.

SELECT 2-3 places to model the comprehension strategy through a teacher think-aloud. The think-aloud should model using clues from the text from your own background knowledge to answer a question. Write each think-aloud on a sticky and put it on the appropriate page of the book.

Think-Alouds:

Model using clues from the text plus your own background knowledge to answer a question.

Vocabulary

CHOOSE several excellent vocabulary words in the text. Using sticky notes, write a kid-friendly definition for each. Place each one in the text where the word is introduced.

PLAN multiple places to stop and ask students about how they are linking information within the book. Use this: Answer this question using clues from the text plus your background knowledge: _____? Write the questions on sticky notes and place them at various points in the text.

Questions Targeting Comprehension Strategy:

Answer this question using clues from the text plus your background knowledge: _____?

DURING THE LESSON

At the beginning of the activity, **pose the Guiding Question** (in the front of the book). Use the sticky notes to prompt you to remind students of the Guiding Question, model the comprehension strategy through **think-alouds**, **teach vocabulary words** in context, and allow students to **respond to the text** by providing opportunities for them to share in response to a planned question. At the end of the book, **pose the Guiding Question** (in the back of the book) again, and allow students to discuss. When possible, go back to the text to validate their responses.

Idea Detectives Comprehension Strategy Lesson Planning

USING STUDENT-READ TEXT

DECODABLE AND NON-DECODABLE TEXT:

Decodable text refers to text in which the words are restricted to spelling patterns that the reader can decode based on his/her existing knowledge of letter-sound correspondences, plus a limited number of high-frequency words.

Non-decodable text refers to text which contains some words which are not decodable based on a reader's existing knowledge of letter-sound correspondences. Leveled texts are often considered non-decodable.

TEXT READING STRATEGIES IN READING RULES:

The **Reading RULES!** and **Read Big Words** strategies can be used to figure out both decodable and non-decodable words. Using the strategies with non-decodable words require students to generalize the strategies to support decoding challenging words which contain one or more spelling patterns which are not decodable based on the student's existing letter-sound knowledge. Prompt students to read unfamiliar words using these strategies.

READING RULES! STRATEGY (for use with single-syllable words):

1. **Look for parts you know.** (These may include letter-sounds, special endings, or chunks within a word.)
2. **Sound it out.** (Sound out and blend the word from left to right, connecting the sounds as much as possible.)
3. **Check it.** (Put the word back in the sentence and read the whole sentence to see if it makes sense.)

READ BIG WORDS STRATEGY (for use with multi-syllable words):

1. **Find the vowels.** (Identifying the vowels helps students identify the syllables.)
2. **Look for parts you know.** (These may include letter-sounds, special endings, or chunks within a word.)
3. **Read the first chunk. Read the next chunk. Sound out if needed.** (Look around each vowel to find chunks/syllables. Read each chunk from left to right. Sound out and blend chunks when needed, connecting the sounds as much as possible.)
4. **Put the chunks together.** (Read the whole word.)
5. **Make it sound like a real word.** (If there is a syllable that doesn't sound quite right, change the vowel sound in it to the lazy schwa sound. Then read the word again to see if it makes sense.)

SCAFFOLDING WORD READING IN NON-DECODABLE TEXT

For words that contain letters or letter combinations that have not yet been taught:

1. Before students look for parts they know, **point out any letter combinations** (such as vowel teams, digraphs, etc.) in the word that have not yet been taught. Tell students that those letters work together as a team to make one sound. Tell the sound the letter combination makes.
2. Students **look for parts they know**. If they try to give separate sounds for the letters in a combination, tell them again that those letters work together to make just one sound.
3. Students **sound out the word**, including the new sounds. Sound out part of the word for them, if needed.
 - Point to the letters or letter combinations students do not know. (You may give a key word to help students remember the pattern.)
 - Tell their sounds.
 - Students repeat.
4. Students **reread the sentence** with the word in it.

ROUTINE FOR TELLING NON-DECODABLE WORDS

For words that are not decodable or are very challenging, or when there are several difficult words on a page, tell the word, using this routine:

- **That word is ____.**
- **What's the word? Student repeats the word.**
- **Read the sentence again.**

Idea Detectives Comprehension Strategy Lesson Planning

Book Title: _____ Author: _____

COMPREHENSION STRATEGY FOCUS:

Tell Why Strategy

1. Look for the clues in the text.
2. Link back to what you previously read in the text.
3. Think about what you already know.
4. Tell why. Make sure your answer makes sense.
5. Read a little more. Check to see if your answer is correct.

LESSON PREPARATION

DETERMINE WHETHER THE BOOK WILL BE USED AS A READ-ALoud OR AS STUDENT-READ TEXT. Follow the same preparation for both. If the text is student-read, refer to the back of the card for text-reading strategies.

READ the book you plan to use for your strategy lesson. Be aware of your own thinking as you read, especially any cause-and-effect relationships you find. Look for points in the text where you can tell *why* by looking for clues in the text, linking back to other information in the text, and using your background knowledge.

Guiding Question:
Use clues from the text plus your background knowledge to answer this question: _____?

DEVELOP a Guiding Question for the text that will guide students to focus on the text. The question should require students to answer a *Why?* question not explicitly answered in the text. For example, if students read a narrative about a student detective who solves a theft at her school, ask a question about the motive behind the theft (provided the text did not explain it). Students would have to use clues from the text, including linking back to previously-read information, plus their background knowledge, to tell *why*. Write your Guiding Question on each of three sticky notes. Place one in the front of the book, one near the middle, and one at the end.

SELECT 2-3 places to model the comprehension strategy through a teacher think-aloud. The think-aloud should model using clues from the text from your own background knowledge to answer a question. Write each think-aloud on a sticky and put it on the appropriate page of the book.

Think-Alouds:
Model telling "why" using clues and links from the text plus your own background knowledge.

Vocabulary

CHOOSE several excellent vocabulary words in the text. Using sticky notes, write a kid-friendly definition for each. Place each one in the text where the word is introduced.

PLAN multiple places to stop and ask students about how they are linking information within the book. Use this: Answer this question using clues from the text plus your background knowledge: *Why* _____? Write the questions on sticky notes and place them at various points in the text.

Questions Targeting Comprehension Strategy:
Answer a "why" question using clues and links from the text plus your background knowledge.

DURING THE LESSON

At the beginning of the activity, **pose the Guiding Question** (in the front of the book). Use the sticky notes to prompt you to remind students of the Guiding Question, model the comprehension strategy through **think-alouds**, **teach vocabulary words** in context, and allow students to **respond to the text** by providing opportunities for them to share in response to a planned question. At the end of the book, **pose the Guiding Question** (in the back of the book) again, and allow students to discuss. When possible, go back to the text to validate their responses.

Idea Detectives Comprehension Strategy Lesson Planning

USING STUDENT-READ TEXT

DECODABLE AND NON-DECODABLE TEXT:

Decodable text refers to text in which the words are restricted to spelling patterns that the reader can decode based on his/her existing knowledge of letter-sound correspondences, plus a limited number of high-frequency words.

Non-decodable text refers to text which contains some words which are not decodable based on a reader's existing knowledge of letter-sound correspondences. Leveled texts are often considered non-decodable.

TEXT READING STRATEGIES IN READING RULES:

The **Reading RULES!** and **Read Big Words** strategies can be used to figure out both decodable and non-decodable words. Using the strategies with non-decodable words require students to generalize the strategies to support decoding challenging words which contain one or more spelling patterns which are not decodable based on the student's existing letter-sound knowledge. Prompt students to read unfamiliar words using these strategies.

READING RULES! STRATEGY (for use with single-syllable words):

1. **Look for parts you know.** (These may include letter-sounds, special endings, or chunks within a word.)
2. **Sound it out.** (Sound out and blend the word from left to right, connecting the sounds as much as possible.)
3. **Check it.** (Put the word back in the sentence and read the whole sentence to see if it makes sense.)

READ BIG WORDS STRATEGY (for use with multi-syllable words):

1. **Find the vowels.** (Identifying the vowels helps students identify the syllables.)
2. **Look for parts you know.** (These may include letter-sounds, special endings, or chunks within a word.)
3. **Read the first chunk. Read the next chunk. Sound out if needed.** (Look around each vowel to find chunks/syllables. Read each chunk from left to right. Sound out and blend chunks when needed, connecting the sounds as much as possible.)
4. **Put the chunks together.** (Read the whole word.)
5. **Make it sound like a real word.** (If there is a syllable that doesn't sound quite right, change the vowel sound in it to the lazy schwa sound. Then read the word again to see if it makes sense.)

SCAFFOLDING WORD READING IN NON-DECODABLE TEXT

For words that contain letters or letter combinations that have not yet been taught:

1. Before students look for parts they know, **point out any letter combinations** (such as vowel teams, digraphs, etc.) in the word that have not yet been taught. Tell students that those letters work together as a team to make one sound. Tell the sound the letter combination makes.
2. Students **look for parts they know**. If they try to give separate sounds for the letters in a combination, tell them again that those letters work together to make just one sound.
3. Students **sound out the word**, including the new sounds. Sound out part of the word for them, if needed.
 - Point to the letters or letter combinations students do not know. (You may give a key word to help students remember the pattern.)
 - Tell their sounds.
 - Students repeat.
4. Students **reread the sentence** with the word in it.

ROUTINE FOR TELLING NON-DECODABLE WORDS

For words that are not decodable or are very challenging, or when there are several difficult words on a page, tell the word, using this routine:

- **That word is ____.**
- **What's the word? Student repeats the word.**
- **Read the sentence again.**

Say It In Your Own Words



Read.



**Stop and ask:
What did I learn in this part?**



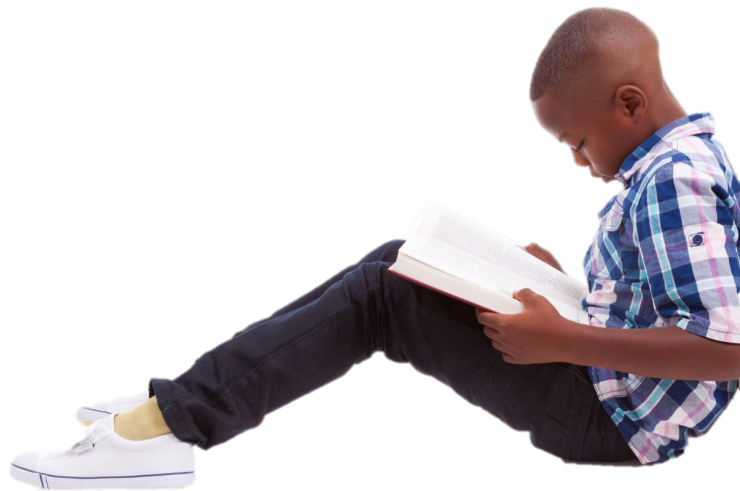
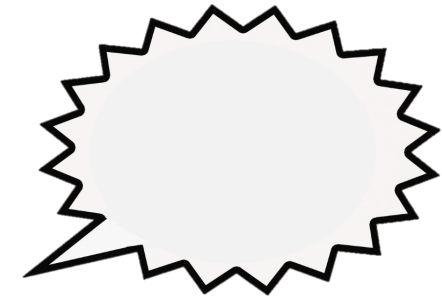
**Say it in your
own words.**

What Is Most Important?



Stop and ask:

- **Who or what is this about?**
- **What's the *most important* thing I learned about that?**



Read.

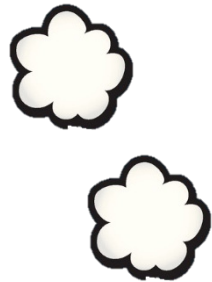


Say it in your own words.

Create a Mental Picture



Read.

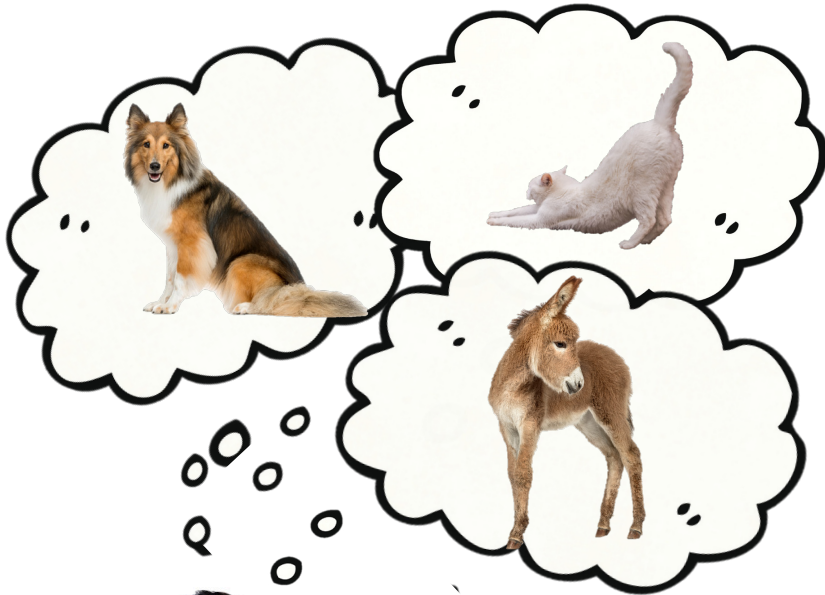


Picture.



Think.

Link What You Read



Read.

*Who or what is this about?
What's most important?*



Link it.

*Link new information to
previous information in the book.*



Think.

*How does this help me
understand the text?*

Infer a Character's Feelings

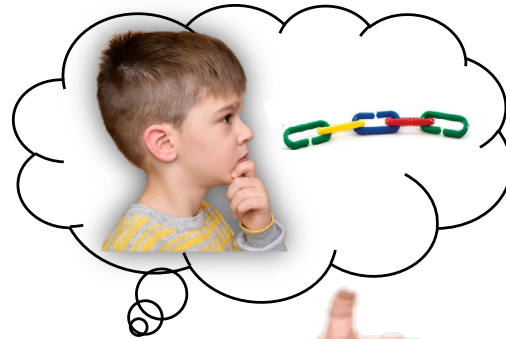


1. What is the character doing?
2. What is the character saying?
3. How does the character feel?

Tell Why



Idea Detectives
Poster 19



Read.



Think & Link

about your
background
knowledge.

to the
book.



Tell why.

Infer the Answer



Look for
clues in the
text.



Consider
background
knowledge.



Answer the
question.

Say It In Your Own Words



Read 1-2 pages of the text.



Ask yourself, "What did I learn in this part?"



Say it in your own words.

I learned that....

What Is Most Important?



Read 1-2 pages of the text.



Ask yourself two questions:
1. Who or what is this about?
2. What is most important?



Say it in your own words.

The most important thing I learned is....

Create a Mental Picture



Read 1-2 pages of the text.



Create a picture in your head about what you just read.



Think about your mental picture. How is it changing?

In my mind, I see

Link What You Read



Read 1-2 pages of the text.



Link what you just read back to what you already read.



Think. How does linking back help you understand the text?

**I learned that ____
AND
I learned that ____.
So now I know that ____.**

Infer a Character's Feelings



Read 1-2 pages of the text.



Ask yourself, "What is the character doing? What is the character saying?"



Think: How is the character feeling?

Say it in your own words.

I think (character's name) feels ____ because....

Infer the Answer



Read 1-2 pages of the text.

Look for clues in the text that help answer the question.



Think about your own background knowledge. What does it tell you that helps answer the question?



Answer the question in your own words.

I think the answer is ____ because....

Tell Why

*Why does a character feel that way?
Why did a character say that?
Why did a character do that?
Why did that happen?*



Read 1-2 pages of the text.



Think about your background knowledge. Link back to what you have already read in the book.



Tell why.

I understand why. It's because....