

*Teaching Children to Read
and Comprehend Nonfiction*



Presented By Tony Stead

Learning to Read

(print concepts, working with words, letters and sounds, text features)

Pre Emergent Readers

- Early print concepts (Front and back of book, Book is the right way up, left to right, top to bottom, knows the print is the part to be read)
- Using pictures to make own meaning
- Recognizing letters of the alphabet
- Recognizing some words including high frequency words
- Extending phonemic awareness
- Early letter sound correspondence

Emergent Readers

- Developing print concepts such as One to one correspondence,
- Knowledge of beginning sounds
- Recognized more letters of the alphabet
- Recognize more words
- Recognizes more high frequency words
- Uses knowledge of language patterns
- Early text structures

Developing Readers

- Uses beginning, middle and final letters to identify words
- Uses spelling patterns and word endings
- Uses text features such as table of contents, headings and visual literacy
- Does not need to rely on pictures
- Text structures such as chapters

Fluent Readers

- Uses strategies such as skimming
- Root words
- Similes, antonyms, prefixes, etc
- Visual literacies such as graphs, tables, cycles, etc
- Text structures such as glossaries

Comprehension : What Readers Need To Know

LITERAL UNDERSTANDINGS.

These require the student to recall or recognize ideas and facts that are explicitly stated in the material.

Some specific strategies include :

How to:

Retell/synthesize information

Visualize Information

Summarize

Locate specific information and use specific text features such as a table of contents, headings and index to achieve this.

Gain information from visual sources.

Find supportive details

Locate cause and effect

Understand problem/solution

Compare and contrast

Understand a sequence of events or instructions

Recognize main Idea/s

Solve unknown vocabulary. Note : Even though this a strategy that is part of all three branches of understandings, I have placed it under literal understandings. If a reader is unable to solve the meaning of unknown words in the body of the text then it is their literal comprehension that is first compromised. This in turn will have an impact on their abilities to interpret and evaluate.

INTERPRETIVE UNDERSTANDINGS

These require the student to make inferences from the information stated. It calls upon the reader to use not only the information presented in the text but personal knowledge, connections and experiences to make meaning.

Some specific strategies include:

Inferring:

- what will happen (predicting)
- cause and effect
- problem/solution
- main Idea/s
- sequences/events
- comparisons
- information from visual sources

Making Connections

- text to self
- text to text

- text to world

You will note that strategies such as cause and effect, problem /solution, sequence of events, comparisons and main idea are both literal and interpretive. When they are explicitly stated in the text they are literal. When they are not stated in the body of the text and require the reader to infer and make connections, they are interpretive.

EVALUATIVE UNDERSTANDINGS

These are understandings where the reader makes judgments as to the content of the material read. As with interpretive meanings, it calls upon the reader to utilize information both explicitly and implicitly stated in the text as well as personal knowledge and experiences. In essence it calls upon the reader to use both literal and interpretive understandings to encourage more complex thinking. Many of these understandings are tied in with area of critical literacy (Luke and Freebody 1997).

Some specific strategies include :

Fact verses opinion

Reality verses fantasy

Validity of a piece

Adequacy of a piece

Relevance of a piece

Author bias

Author intent

Point of view

Tools/Craft used by the author to affect thinking

Making overall judgments on a piece

Comparison of the KWL with the Reading and Analyzing Nonfiction Strategy (RAN Strategy)

KWL Strategy		
What I know	What I want to Know	What I found out
Children state information they know about the topic	Children come up with questions they want answered	Children research to specifically answers questions raised

Reading and Analyzing Nonfiction Strategy (RAN Strategy)				
What I think I know	Confirmed	Misconceptions	New Learning	Wonderings
Children state information they think to be correct about the topic	Children research to confirm prior knowledge	Children research to discard prior knowledge	Children research to locate additional information not stated in prior knowledge	Children raise questions based on the new information gathered

Forms and Sources of Visual Literacy

Forms/types of visual literacy	Mediums/sources where these can be found
Pictures Photographs Paintings Sketches Drawings Diagrams (web, tree, flow, scale, Venn, flow) Figures Legends Chain sequences Menus Webs Maps Bird's eye view Enlargements Tables Scales Keys Labels/Tags Captions Cycles Charts Schedules Clocks Glossaries Speech Balloons Cross Sections Cutaways Graphs (bar, column, line, pie) Time Lines Picture glossaries	Books Magazines The internet Newspapers Advertisements Billboards Food containers Clothing Television /Videos/DVDs Movies Articles Pamphlets Posters Atlases Cards E-mails Letters Calendars Catalogues Notice boards Signs Journals Directories Headlines Storyboards Surveys Galleries

Questions To Assess/Monitor Comprehension

Nonfiction piece

The cheetah is a member of the cat family. It shares this membership with such animals as the lion, panther, tiger and leopard. Although the cheetah is the fastest running mammal, it is not the most powerful. This privilege belongs to the lion.

Literal			
Types of learning experiences and questions	Explanation	Example Fiction	Example Nonfiction
Memory	Asks the reader to recognize and recall specific facts and ideas	What are the names of the main characters in the story?	What is the cheetah a member of?
Translation	Asks the reader to restate information in their own words	Tell me what happened in your own words?	Tell me about the cheetah in your own words?
Interpretive			
Types of Questions	Explanation	Example Fiction	Example Nonfiction
Interpretive	Asks the reader to make connections and inferences from the information provided	What lesson, if any, is to be learned from this story?	Why do you think the cheetah and the lion belong to the same group of animals?
Application	Asks the reader to solve problems from the information given in the text	Have you ever had a problem like that of the person in the story? How did you solve the problem?	If a cheetah met a lion in the wild, What might it do?
Prediction	Asks the reader to think beyond the body of the text	What do you think happened to the main character after the story ended?	What other information do you think the author will tell us as we read through this book?
Evaluative			
Types of Questions	Explanation	Example Fiction	Example Nonfiction
Evaluation	Asks the reader to make judgments about what they have read	Do you think you would enjoy being like the main character. Explain why or why not?	Do you think the author has included enough information about the cheetahs' ability

			to run fast? Is there other information that you may have included if you had written this piece?
Analysis	Asks the reader to analysis the way the text has been constructed	How has the writer made this story Humorous?	How has the author organized the information in this text? Does this help the reader gather important facts? Explain why you think this?

Based on work by McInnes and Smith (1992)

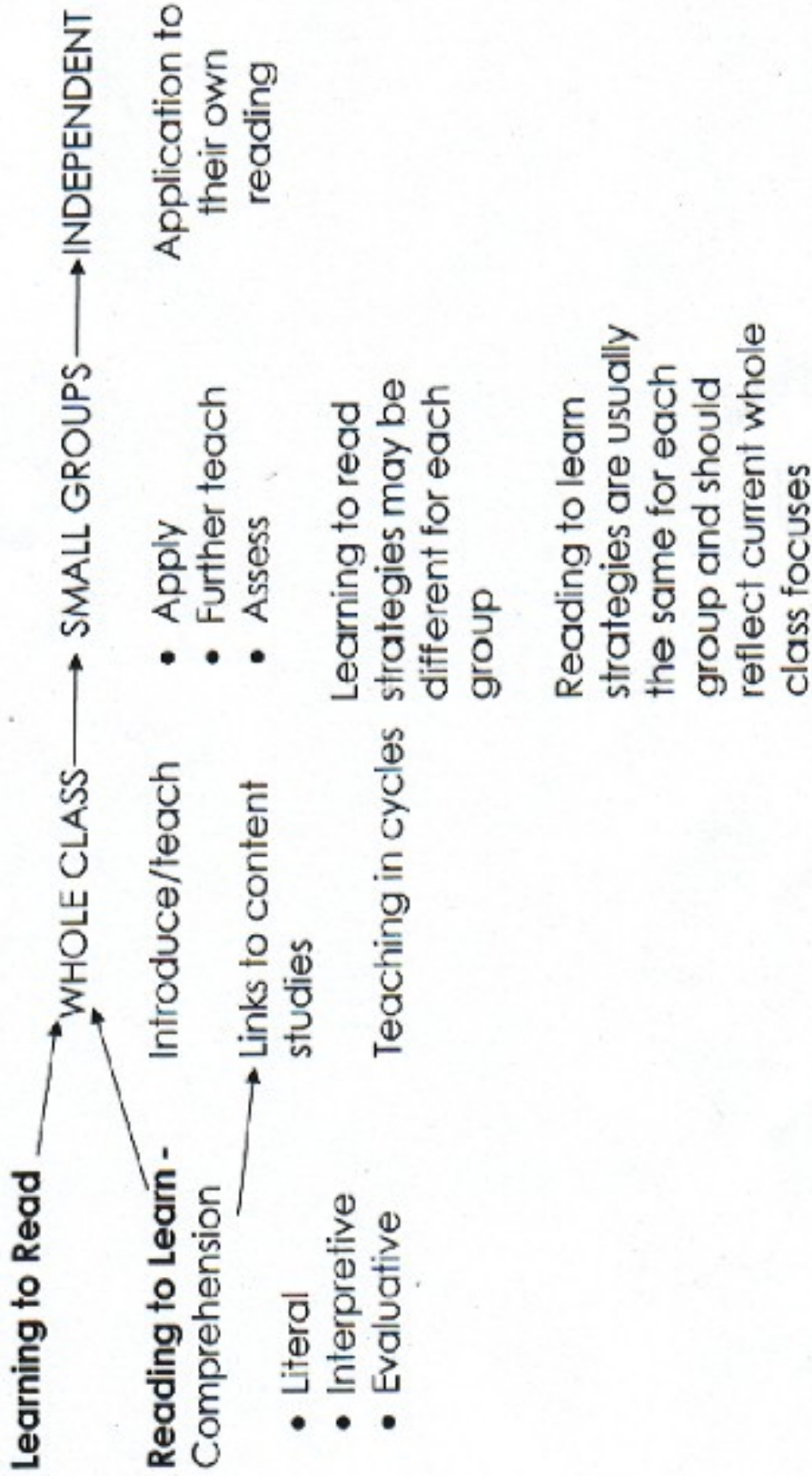
Assessment Rubric for Nonfiction Comprehension Strategies :

Assessment Rubric for Nonfiction Comprehension Skills and Strategies	Key : N : Not in evidence B: Beginning to show signs of S: Strengthening A : Nearly always N/A : Not applicable							
Name : _____ Date _____ →								
<u>Literal Understandings</u>								
Able to retell								
Can summarize information read								
Able to locate information using text features such as table of contents, index and headings								
Can locate cause and effect								
Recognizes main idea/s								
Understands problem /solution								
Locates comparisons and contrasts where explicitly stated.								
Able to gain information from visual sources								
Able to understand a sequence of events or instructions								
Can solve the meaning of unknown vocabulary								
<u>Interpretive Understandings</u>								
Able to make/change/confirm predictions based on events and facts presented								
Can synthesize information based on facts presented and interpretations.								
Able to visualize information read								
Able to infer cause and effect								
Able to infer main idea								
Able to infer comparisons and contrasts								
Able to infer problem and solution								
Can make inferences on events or sequences.								
Can make inferences from visual sources								
Makes text to self connections								

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Makes text to text connections								
Makes text to world connections								
<u>Evaluative Understandings</u>								
Aware of author intent/ purpose for a piece								
Knows the difference between reality and fantasy								
Knows the difference between fact and opinion								
Can locate the facts and opinions in a given piece								
Aware of point of view								
Able to compare own point of view with that of the author's								
Able to locate author bias								
Aware of own bias								
Can locate the tools the author has used to present point of view								
Can evaluate the adequacy of a piece								
Can evaluate the validity/relevance of a piece								
Can make overall judgments on a piece								

Reading Roadmap



Organizer For Inferring

Name _____

Fact	What does this make me think	Why I think this

Inferring

Rating Scale For Inferring
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Not Likely2. Possibly3. Very Likely4. Almost Certain

How to infer with nonfiction
<p>Think about the fact presented Come up with possible inferences. If you have problems, then think about questions the fact raises. Try to think of possible answers to your questions. These will be your inferences. Think about each inference Give each inference a rating Choose the inferences that have 3 or 4 rating.</p>

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Planner for Teaching Key Comprehension Focuses

Planner for Teaching of Key Comprehension Focuses	Teacher's Name								
	Grade								
	Year								
		Instructions: Place a P next to the comprehension focuses you plan to cover for each unit of study. Place a check mark next to the P once it has been covered.							
Comprehension Focuses	Units of Study Topics								
LITERAL UNDERSTANDINGS									
Retelling									
Summarizing									
Find Facts									
Supportive Details									
Cause and Effect									
Main idea/s									
Problem /Solution									
Compare and Contrast									
Inform from Visual Sources									
Sequencing									
Unknown Vocabulary									
Locate Info/Text Features									

Publications By Tony Stead

Magazines

- *Whole Math In Action.* Stead & Semple. Teaching Pre K-8 Magazine. Norwalk, CT. Edition: January 1992.
- *Setting the Scene as Head of the Family.* Teaching Pre K-8 Magazine. Norwalk, CT. Edition: September 1992.
- *The Art of Persuasion.* Teaching Pre K-8. Edition : November/December. Norwalk, CT. 2003.

Books

- *How Big Is The Moon? - Whole Math In Action.* Baker, Semple & Stead. Heinemann. Portsmouth, NH. (1991).
- *Children As Researchers In Math - Learning Language And Math Together.* Semple & Stead. Chapter 6 in *The Literacy Connection : Language and learning Across the Curriculum.* Eleanor Curtain Publishing, South Yarra. Australia. (1991)
- *Should There be Zoos? : A Persuasive Text .* Mondo Publishing. New York, NY. (2000).
- *Is That A Fact ? : Teaching Nonfiction Writing. K-3.* Stenhouse Publishers. Portland, ME. USA. Scholastic Canada. (2002).
- *Managing The Literacy Block In Grades 4, 5 &6.* Chapter 3 in *The Literacy Map* by Richard Gentry. Mondo. New York, NY. (2002).
- *Comprehending Nonfiction: Using Guided Reading to Deepen Understandings.* In L. Hoyt. *Spotlight On Comprehension: Building a Literacy of Thoughtfulness.* (pp. 264-274). Heinemann. Portsmouth, NH: (2005).
- *Reality Checks : Teaching Reading Comprehension With Nonfiction.* Stenhouse Publishers. Portland, ME. (2006).

Videos/DVD's

- *Time For Nonfiction. Video Series.* Stenhouse Publishers. Portland, ME. (2004).

- *Bridges to Independence: Guided Reading With Nonfiction.* Stenhouse Publishers. Portland, ME (2006).

Resources/Programs

- *Literacy Place for the Early Years.* Scholastic Canada (2006)
- *The Tony Stead Nonfiction Independent Reading Collection.* Rosen Classroom Books and Materials. New York, NY. (2006).