

DIRECT TEACHING METHODS

Oral reading for direct teaching is an excellent component for every type and age of student in learning and reading development. [See Reading Skills and Critical Thinking Skills in PDF / Home page.](#)

Direct teaching methods have been used successfully by the author working with students from Kindergarten to college, involving every type of student ability and disability.

Teacher Strategy: For rapid reading improvement and mastery, the following questioning strategies should be a daily function by teacher or tutor. Students should be questioned about:

- the application of the 3 steps
- how a word is marked
- text content
- vocabulary
- punctuation
- grammar

Including the comprehension and thinking skills as described in the Reading and Critical Thinking guides.

Important: When an answer is given, even on the 3 steps, student should defend their response with a plausible answer to eliminate random guessing and force the student to focus on the lesson.

Teachers must “ask” for the answer, don’t “tell” the answer. Student must be given ample time to reply when questioned by teacher. Do not allow another student to “call” out the answer.

It is important for teachers, at every level of instruction, to forget the word “TELL” and concentrate only on the word “MODEL” when giving verbal help to students regarding any sound in the 3 steps. To “Tell” is demeaning to the student.

Students utilizing the software program for both initial and reinforcement practice will generally have a usable mastery of the system. However, the Combination chart should be available to all students during the school day and for homework. It is to be used as a reference when reading any material silently or orally, in completing the spelling exercises, if used, and in **marking** any words encountered.

Teaching the importance of knowing every word is invaluable for all students, including above average and gifted readers.

During application of the 3-Step system, teacher should encourage group responses to questions, calling for identification, marking, and pronunciation of Combinations, Borrowers, and Vowels. This allows students having processing difficulties to participate in the complete analysis and use of the 3-Step system while reinforcing individual sounds and their application for decoding.

Once students have demonstrated a reasonable understanding and mastery of the 3-Step system, author suggests the classroom reading game “**Gotcha**,” explained in the Teacher’s Guide. This is an excellent method for maintaining students’ focus and memory application of the 3-Step system. It also allows teacher to probe for clarification questions that may otherwise be overlooked in the general comprehension program.

ORAL READING

- **Direct instruction is the most successful method in teaching the system for decoding, as well as developing critical thinking skills in literature and all academic areas.**
- Academic teachers may reinforce vocabulary in their discipline by asking challenging questions about application of the 3 steps, text content, and developing interaction between teacher and student and student to student. All classes may use a variety of materials based on subject objectives because Read Quick is flexible, appropriate for decoding any text in English.

For many reasons, oral reading is generally not practiced beyond grade 3. Traditional reasoning that students beyond grades 3 or 4 no longer need to read orally include:

- ***Special needs, ESL, and remedial students don’t read well enough to read orally;***
- ***Older students (grades 5-12) are too embarrassed to read orally;***
- ***Students don’t like to read orally because of their past experiences.***

These are not reasons to eliminate oral reading with any group of students. The author has not found these issues to be true in actual practice.

Author used this exact approach teaching prisoners in a federal prison to read. It was a voluntary class conducted 1 ½ hour before regular college class. Started with 30 students and increased to over 80 in first week. Too old?

The Read Quick 3-Step system provides a solid, fail-safe program for developing confidence in all students of all ages. It rapidly addresses any student’s reading needs, especially when using direct teaching.

Oral reading in a structured group is probably the most important and significant strategy available to educators for comprehensive development of productive reading skills. **This process provides the implementation of virtually every known language skill, from the identification or sounds of single letters to divergent and critical thinking, using direct instruction and challenging questions.**

Students trained in the 3-Step system are not embarrassed to read orally because each member of the group is instructed in how to mark and pronounce difficult words. To do this, group will orally read challenging material. Mispronouncing words is to be expected from every participant. **For this type of reading instruction, teachers should**

select materials that are 2, 3, or 4 years above groups reading ability but never below their grade level.

Students soon learn their peers have certain words needing analysis that may be different from their own. This levels the academic playing field. Everybody is the same relating to occasional reading help and students of all ability levels develop an attitude of “I can”. **The most gifted reader in a classroom will benefit from the requirement that each word must be correctly pronounced, and/or the 3-Step system applied to achieve that result.**

To gain maximum development, students must be trained and guided in providing thoughtful answers that are properly defended as to their reasonableness and accuracy.

While reading orally or silently, words must not be skipped or slurred over. The reader must stop, apply all or part of the 3-Step word attack system, “close” on the word, and continue reading.

The basic purpose and reading advantage of the 3-Step system is to provide a method where readers rapidly decode unknown words to develop comprehension and understanding of any type of printed material and analyze words in context in the act of reading.

Reasons for Direct Teaching & Reading Orally

- **IMPORTANT - The teacher’s time may be more productive by spending 30-45 minutes a day academically pulling and stretching the student’s learning curve to more rapidly advance the development of reading and thinking skills.**
- Students will more rapidly master the 3-Step system reading orally, as the teacher stops the reading progress to mark and pronounce unknown words. This process also demonstrates to the student that knowing each word is critical for fluency and comprehension and **“controlling” the words encountered can actually be a very rapid process while members in the group may also need to know how to mark and pronounce the word.**
- **Texts should visually come alive for the reader. Students should be able to form a mental picture about the story while processing the text language. Oral reading should be conducted in such a way that the text content becomes a foundation for developing the intellect. This requires the instructor to ask specific questions regarding the attributes of the topic or product under discussion. Students must visualize and verbalize the content.**
- Students develop comprehension of the text through the interpretation of the material and in comprehensive analysis developed from discussion. **How much discussion and the direction depends on the age and maturity of the students and the nature of the text. Some text has challenging language and content; others have less content to maintain a challenging discussion.** These are decisions that should be made by a classroom teacher.

- The instructor should utilize opportunities during oral reading **to monitor and/or clarify every significant word, sentence, and paragraph**. This is accomplished by asking questions relating to grammar, vocabulary, sequence, plot, main ideas in a paragraph, punctuation, pronoun referent, author's intent, and any other clarification activity relating to the English language and the construction of printed ideas and concepts. Understanding everything about the printed text leads to comprehension and a foundation for dialoging higher level concepts. [See Reading and Critical Thinking outlines in this website.](#)
- Teacher should develop a list of non-phonetic sight words that can be discussed, memorized, and maintained for student growth discovered in the text.
- **Vocabulary development is probably the single most important step in providing basic reading skills to develop adequate comprehension and understanding of any printed material. Vocabulary elaboration is routinely available during oral reading when an unknown word is identified and a definition is discussed with the group. The teacher elaborates by asking "What is it like?" or "Give some examples." or "Name other things that are similar." or "Can you use it in your own sentence?"** There are numerous other examples that may be explored by the teacher. **Selected dictionary people should look up unknown words as described later.**
- Oral reading is important for developing comprehension skills because the best opportunity for teaching/learning is revealed through a teacher's questions and the student's responses. **This "optimum moment" is provided in the quickest response possible by the instructor at the time the student needs help during any point in the reading process. This instant "moment of need" is long-past when a student reads and responds to questions silently.**

Strategies for Mastery

- When an unknown word is identified and printed, the teacher asks the group to identify Combinations, Borrowers, and vowels. **Any student in the group may raise their hand to apply the rules. Only one student is called upon to respond. It does not need to be the reader that responds.**
- **The teacher instructs the reader, and only the reader, to pronounce the word.** If the reader has any trouble at this point, then the teacher models the sounds and has the reader repeat them. After students exhibit reasonable mastery of the system, the instructor may allow students to model a specific sound **but not say the word.**

Action research was conducted with students regarding their attitudes towards reading and their self-concept about the process. One group of students was allowed to "call out" words when another student was reading and unable to pronounce them, giving the reader no opportunity to use the system and "close" on the words. Two important results were identified in the mastery and application of the 3-Step system:

- 1) The groups that allowed other students to “call out” the words showed a significant difference between them and the control group that was not allowed to “call out” words. It is obvious this single interference denied students their rightful learning opportunity available to them during their turn at reading.
- 2) The most crucial factor was **the extreme negative attitude developed by the students in groups allowing words to be “called out”**. This negative attitude resulted in those students not wanting to read or discuss information; while the students that did not call out words and used the system, developed favorable attitudes about the system and oral reading.

In a reading group, 3 or more students may be designated as the **dictionary people**. They should each have a quality, adult dictionary at their desk. If the group does not know an encountered word, the dictionary people race to find it in the dictionary. The first person to locate the word raises their hand and reads the definition. **If more than one definition is read, the class should discuss the definition that best fits the sentence and paragraph. Oral reading may continue while searching for the word.**

- One or two students in a group may be designated as a secretary to write encountered vocabulary words and sight words discussed during the reading. Words may be used in later studies for review and use in writing.

WARM UP - Words are selected from the story to be read, copied by the students, marked and pronounced prior to oral reading. Any other unusual topic or story content may be discussed at this time. Part of the “Warm-up” should include having the group pronounce long and short vowels in isolation, repeat the rules for the C, G, & Y Borrowers, and review Combination sounds and their location on the Combination chart; this usually takes 6-15 minutes.

- **Before reading, teacher asks for details of the story content that were read in previous lessons.** Emphasis might be on sequence of story and significant details regarding characters and plot; or significant topics and their academic application when reading subject matter textbooks. This brings all students current for starting a new lesson.
- Both fiction and non-fiction writings refer to items or objects not found in the current student’s culture. Visual examples to bring into the classroom might include; calico material, western range barbed wire, videos, photographs, and other items that may be of interest to students. This is motivational for many groups.
- **Many stories lend themselves to a visual image that may be captured by stopping the oral reading process and having students create their own picture of the image in crayon or pencil. The stick drawings in Mind Mapping provide excellent models for students.**

- **Ask questions frequently to elicit both specific and critical thinking responses from students. In turn, students should, in some way, defend all responses. Encourage other students to participate in elaboration questions to get the dialog going from student to student by asking, “Do you agree with John? Why or why not?” or “What can you add to Mary’s statement?”**
- **An excellent beginning for any discussion is for the teacher to ask the “newspaper” questions: Who? What? When? Where? Why? How? Student answers to this strategy will bring to the forefront other areas that are obvious to pursue with clarification questions, having students defend their answers.**
- See sample questions in this PDF and in [Reading Skills, Critical Thinking Skills and Socratic Dialoging](#)

Questioning, Discussion, Dialog Time, and Background Information

- **Oral reading concepts in this guide may be developed for use in reading, literature, science, history, geography, and even mathematics.**

The following methods are some, but not all, that have been implemented successfully during which time average students achieved reading abilities that were tested at the 96-98% of the state requirements on a standardized reading test. The methods were used with Kindergarten through grade 12 students, Title I, ESL and special education. All participants were provided the same opportunities to develop skills and their intellect for critical thinking.

Two types of questions are basic for success: the first and most frequent questions cover the need for understanding everything about the printed text; grammar, vocabulary, author’s purpose, main ideas, inference skills, pronoun referent, antagonist, protagonist, etc.

A second cluster of questions involves critical and creative thinking abilities applied to the text. [Reading and Critical Thinking Skills as downloads in PDF](#)

- *What is too much? Too little? Just right!* The teacher needs to be *as creative as possible when an opportunity arises* and not dwell on what is too much, too little, or just right.
- **Example:** As an elementary school principal, the author implemented a comprehensive reading program where every student in school read classical novels orally for 45 minutes a day.
- **Groups were organized by ability level, with students placed for upward mobility across grade levels. No student reading below grade level read with a younger student. The school’s success attracted 400-500 visitors a year from throughout the United States and 14 foreign countries.**

During a group visitation, the author escorted a small group of teachers and administrators to observe a variety of reading groups. One of the first reading groups was instructed by a 4th grade teacher with a group of 5th grade students.

When the visitors entered the class, the teacher was asking questions about a quality word he had written on the chalkboard. The visitors observed several students with their hands raised, anxious to participate in the discussion regarding the word.

The visitors then moved on to observe several other reading groups and, after 25 minutes, returned to this class. The class was still discussing the same single word on the board and a number of students were eagerly raising their hands to participate. During this time, the teacher asked probing and clarifying questions and interactive student-to-student dialog took place. Fifth grade students, arguably academically immature, conducted a lively educational discussion, developing in-depth understanding, not possible by simply defining the word. In continuing to ask questions, the teacher maintained student interest and enthusiasm for over 25 minutes on one word developing a higher level of thinking and discussion skills.

Was this oral reading educational? Was it proper use of class time or age appropriate? Did students learn anything? Only the teacher and individual students in the group can evaluate these questions. This incident highlights the flexibility of the total program to develop concepts and knowledge. Oral reading anchors word attack control and provides practice in discussion skills and reading for a purpose.

Teachers who practice direct teaching and the 3-Step System develop evaluation and remedial skills that are accurate, positive and immediate.

Remember: Selecting difficult reading materials for oral reading and direct teaching for discussion, and finding words with which to practice the 3-Step System, are the ideal processes for raising the level of reading expectations and elevating students to a higher achievement level. **This challenging process is the essence of excellent teaching.**

Finally, oral reading may result in a few sentences or paragraphs read in a class session or many pages may be read based on content, purpose and application of the text. (One word lasted for most of a class period as previously described.)

Writing Activities

After thoroughly investigating part or all of a reading selection, students should have enough materials and ideas to respond in writing to a variety of topics for a variety of purposes. The teacher should seize every opportunity to have a quick or prolonged writing activity with accompanying art work if appropriate.

Oral reading results in observable growth based on student responses to the text and questions directed by the teacher. **However, these skills must be transferred to independent reading and responding. Without this transfer, academic growth can not**

be demonstrated on achievement tests or subject reports. Two approaches, oral and silent reading, are combined to produce the most rapid and permanent results.

While many left brain logic students learn and develop adequate reading skills using the basic silent reading approach; many right brain (Gestalt, Kinesthetic, and ESL) students are left behind, bewildered, frustrated, and turned off to the reading/learning process.

Comprehensive Reading Program Requires Two Broad Goals

- **Oral reading** - The educational significance for using Read Quick for decoding permits the instructor to academically elevate instructional materials and methods to intellectually pull the student for more rapid reading achievement. This occurs when selected materials for oral reading are advanced 2-4 years beyond the learner's normal reading comprehension ability. Challenging materials produce words that require their immediate decoding in context. This provides practice and reinforcement for the system.

Quality vocabulary will allow students to be exposed to words and language structure not found in easier text.

Mature language patterns are part of advanced reading material. This provides the basis for teaching grammar, sentence structure and paragraph components.

Finally, the advanced text provides topics that allow students and teacher to interact in constructive dialog with purpose from the content.

- **Silent reading** - or traditional seat-work is a necessary component for a variety of purposes. Students need independent practice in reading and interpreting printed material that is presented at their reading comprehension level. Such lessons should include short stories and questions; vocabulary practice with word definition and their use in sentences; students written responses to short story analysis; practice in responding to "test type" questions; and all other appropriate reading/seat-work activities.

Teachers using this dual reading approach will provide the broadest reading opportunities for student growth, not possible by using one approach without the other. Extend the reading period 15-20 minutes and practice both approaches daily.

Novels and Reference Materials

"If a library is the basic storehouse of man's knowledge, then the Read Quick system opens the door to that room of knowledge."

To provide an opportunity for students to read and process more printed text with understanding and memory requires a program that will increase their reading speed. This is a strategy that can be implemented, at no cost, to provide life-long results. Instructions for improving reading speed and memory are in Teacher's Guide.

Summary of Classroom Tips – A Review

1. Every student in a group or class must have the same material for oral reading. The content must be 2-4 years above the normal reading ability of the group in order to challenge their thinking and create the necessity to practice the 3-Step system on unknown words. However, this is not required for implementing this program.
2. Students are not allowed to “call out” unknown or mispronounced word. This is a “PUT DOWN” for the reader and ruins an opportunity to practice part or all of the 3-Step system.
3. **Only the reader may say the word during their turn at oral reading.** However, when the word has 2 or more phonetic exceptions to the 3-Step system, the teacher makes it a **sight word**. Then the word may be “modeled” by the teacher and repeated by the reader.
4. Once the word is printed in order to apply the system, any student may assist in answering any part of the 3-Step questions – **ONLY THE READER MAY SAY THE WORD.**
5. If the reader does not know how to say a Combination, Blend, or Vowel sound correctly, the teacher may say that one sound - only, or have another student model the one sound, only.
6. When modeling a sound for the reader, the teacher MUST say, “I will **model** the sound for you.” Do not say, “I’ll tell you the sound.”
7. If the teacher calls on another student to help the reader correctly say a sound, the teacher should say, “Would you please **model** the sound for (reader)?”
8. When asking questions about the reading content or the application of the system, call on students who are not responding and **have them agree or disagree on the answer given by another student and have them defend their answer. This encourages everyone to pay attention, to participate and develop a mature and courteous group environment.**
9. While reading orally, always attempt to make the reading “Come Alive” or be intellectually exciting. Stop to discuss or research ideas/concepts raised or developed during the dialog. Provide pictures or other visual representations relating to topics in the text.
10. Be open to student interest toward any idea or concept that may be used as an individual or class research/report activity.
11. If you are reading literature or textbooks that deal with specialties, i.e., police, medical, navigation, computer, or other type of specialty, invite a person with those skills to read and dialog with the class for a day or so.
12. While questioning, hold the group accountable for parts of speech, punctuation, word meaning, sentence and paragraph meaning, sequence, story plot, and specific visualization questions. See sample questions.

13. **Once a basic question is answered, continue to probe with that student and others. Listen carefully for ways to continue the dialog on a higher level. Always have answers justified, explained, or defended.**
14. If you call on a student that answers, "I do not know." Or, may be obvious in their lack of attention; tell the student, "John, I will call on others for their opinion or answer. You must pay attention because I will come back and call on you again."
15. If the student is still unresponsive say, "The question is...., you can find it on page__, second paragraph. Please read the paragraph and answer the question."
16. When selecting reading material for oral reading and dialoging, **choose a topic or concept in which you, the teacher, are interested.** This helps to motivate you and the student because of your enthusiasm and interest.
17. One or two students in a group may be designated as a secretary to write vocabulary words and sight words discussed during the reading.
18. Select 2-3 students to act as dictionary people; change this assignment for each new session.
19. **WARM-UP** – Words are selected from the story, copied by the student, marked and pronounced prior to oral reading. Any other unusual topic or story content may be discussed at this time.
20. A daily, oral response warm-up, saying all Combinations, rules for Borrowers, and the vowel sounds may be followed by marking a few words and moving on to the oral or silent reading.
21. Before reading, teacher asks for details of the story content that were read in previous lessons. This emphasizes the importance for students to stay focused during the reading period and offers an opportunity for students to develop memory for content, allowing teacher to quickly fill in important information about the text.
22. Many stories lend themselves to a visual image, allowing students to create their own picture that may be captured by stopping the oral reading and having discussion using crayon and/or pencil. Stick drawings and *Mind Mapping* provide excellent models for students making this process rapid and useful in other subjects and lessons.
23. **Visualizing** – Extremely important in all reading topics and should be practiced at every opportunity. Students may try to recall vivid images of an actual personal incident or describe a scene from reading, adding their own personal images. Establishing a mental picture of the topic or events in a sentence, paragraph or story, helps develop comprehension and memory for the text. Read Quick allows for a wide range of reading materials and teaching tactics.

Excellent references: Visualizing and Verbalizing for Language Comprehension and Thinking, by Nanci Bell; and Visualizing and Verbalizing Stories, by Nanci Bell.

About 40% of student population CAN NOT visualize; this significantly lowers their opportunity to learning reading at an expected level while also impacting their academic achievement and adult income potential.

24. Oral reading may be stopped at a strategic point and students may quickly conduct a summary writing, using only 4 sentences:

1 st Sentence	Characters – very briefly described
2 nd Sentence	Setting – briefly and clearly described
3 rd Sentence	Problem – briefly explained
4 th Sentence	Resolution – briefly explained

25. Pair 2 students and have them do the above task which results in a different outcome than when completed by individuals.

All Appendix items in the Teacher’s Guide may be reproduced for school, student or parent use without charge.

Speed reading methods in the Teacher’s Guide Appendix have several benefits to ALL readers. The purpose for using speed reading techniques is not to produce students reading at excessive speeds. There are 3 specific objectives: 1) Provide reinforcement for binocular vision tracking left to right; 2) Encourage the brain to tell the eyes to read faster as this system provides a more rapid decoding system than syllables developing reading fluency; 3) The memory techniques using the memory tree apply to all school subjects and other life skills requiring efficient memory.

Certified Learning Systems has wall charts available, size 12” x 18”, with black or red lettering, lower or upper case print. A larger wall chart, size 24” x 28”, is also available in red, upper case print only. Wall charts are excellent as a constant visual awareness for the student doing seat work or oral reading. (For charts or other information, contact Certified Learning Systems: www.readquick.org)

Comprehension

Comprehension is the ability of the reader to understand the intent of the author through the printed word. There are several types of comprehension and a very large number of verbs that, when used in the form of a question, are intended to elicit a response from the reader regarding the type of comprehension.

Important - To properly read text, **students must pronounce each word accurately** to have an awareness of the meaning. When students have fluency, they must read with enough speed that content is cohesive and comprehension is developed. See speed reading and memory processes in Teacher’s Guide.

The intellectual discussion between the **teacher** and **student**, based on the text, provides opportunities to explore a multitude of topics, all of which contribute to improving comprehension skills. They are a basis for future growth as a result of the background knowledge gained by the reader.

Properly pronouncing words assist in understanding the author's intent whether reading a novel, short story, textbook, a technical manual, the newspaper, or taking a test. In the broadest sense, comprehension involves a great many thinking abilities (ways to perceive and use information). There is often a fine line between a question that elicits the reader's understanding of the text and a question that extends understanding through discussion and further clarification, which leads to advanced thinking abilities.

Oral reading may result in a few sentences or paragraphs in a class period covered, or many pages may be read based on content, purpose and application of the text. In oral reading, it isn't the amount of text read in a class period; it is the quality of how that text was analyzed. One word lasted for most of a class period, 25 minutes, in a 5th grade reading group. Such probing leads to Socratic dialog. This requires a thoughtful and creative teacher. However, enough text should be read to provide student interest and enough text information for dialoging. Silent reading should address the amount of text read.

Background knowledge is identified by "Experts" as a pre-requisite for comprehension of fiction or nonfiction genres. This is a "misleading" statement, consistently repeated in reading documents. **This has a tendency to discourage the use of more challenging material** which ultimately results in an achievement discrepancy starting in grade 4 and continuing through high school. **Oral reading provides the teacher an opportunity to stop reading and to begin the process of providing proper background information, based on the age and maturity levels of the student and the topic requiring clarification.** This may be accomplished by several methods, with teacher clarification, library research, or other procedures. This practice is the essence of developing competent, fluent and intelligent readers. The difficulty of the reading text should be a challenge for creative teaching and a process to motivate students to achieve critical thinking abilities. Examples that trigger this approach is: World War I and II, Civil War, War for Independence, methods of travel, historical events, scientific topics, social movements, etc., that may be significant for understanding the text. **There are literally hundreds of examples that require this stop and teach method plus thousands of concepts that would benefit all students.**

Silent Reading

While many students learn and develop adequate reading skills using the basic silent reading approach, many are left behind, bewildered, frustrated, and turned off to the reading/learning process. This group is usually the 'right brain', Kinesthetic, and ESL students.

Comprehensive reading programs require two broad goals; each student is involved simultaneously in 2 reading programs.

Oral reading, using text 2-4 years above student reading ability and generating more advanced words for decoding and vocabulary; providing material with significant content for

critical and creative thinking, clarified and expanded during oral discussion, leading to Socratic dialog.

Silent reading fiction or non-fiction text provides a variety of comprehensive questions to be answered by the individual student and usually more aligned with questions found on reading tests. However, the actual practice of reading silently and responding is a specific skill different than just knowing the answers. This is the time for thoughtful processing by students.

Exception – If a student is reading below grade level, regardless of the deficiency, student must read a text at their grade level for oral reading and their actual reading level for silent reading.

Basic Language

Students are held accountable for every language skill in the story. These questions are developed and asked during oral reading. They serve to reinforce all basic language skills and develop a more profound understanding and knowledge of basic reading comprehension and English.

During oral reading, every language component must be questioned by the teacher.

This focuses student's attention to every detail of the text which helps develop the same skills needed for understanding language. If grammar or a punctuation mark is unknown by the group then teacher stops and proceeds to clarify the topic. **All parts of speech and punctuation rules are to be questioned and if needed, an immediate clarification lesson is developed.** This inquiry may take several forms for student closure.

During oral reading, it is important for the **teacher** to constantly monitor the reader's understanding of the text. At this level we are concerned with questions that ask:

- for the meaning of a word or words
- for the meaning of a sentence
- for the meaning of a paragraph
- for the sequence of events in the story
- for identification of who, what, when, where, why, and how
- for identification of a pronoun referent
- for identification and use of punctuation marks
- for identifying parts of speech.
- for visualizing and/or imaging people, places, objects, events

This basic list of questions should almost be automatic during any reading process.

Vocabulary development - words in context: Before looking up a word to verify meaning, the **instructor** may direct the reader to apply one of the following vocabulary hints imbedded in the sentence structure. This should be the **first step practiced by the reader**, especially when reading silently.

- Meaning separated in the sentence by punctuation marks.

- Meaning stated in the sentence structure but not separated by punctuation marks.
- Meaning given by comparing and contrasting that is a clue.
- Meaning that is implied by the structure of the sentence; a word, idea or type of event contained therein giving a clue to the word.

Reading is a process whereby all of the skills suggested in this program are brought together into a logical whole.

Establishing purpose and monitoring progress is similar but not exact for fiction and nonfiction work. It is not necessary to use a structured lesson approach every time as this would be too routine and boring to the reader. A flexible approach is preferred and simply following the suggestions contained in the Question Section will provide a quality lesson.

Fluent readers interact with the text by constructing meaning in their minds as reading progresses. They are always filling in the blanks and inferences are constantly made.

STUDENTS must **actively be involved in thinking and constructing text materials** during reading in order to think effectively after reading. This is the purpose for dialoging and the sample questions.

When an unknown word is met in oral reading, the teacher starts a decoding episode.

The following example is a probing sequence that is used during initial stages to master the 3-Step system and to begin the process for critical thinking. Once students become familiar with the 3 steps, this type of analysis is not needed for a word but is needed for reading and critical thinking skills.

Decoding & Word Episode - Teacher questions reader:

- Any Combinations?
- How do you know it is a Combination? Or, where is the Combination on the chart?
- How do you say (_____)?
- Let me model it for you?
- Are there any Borrowers?
- What is the rule for saying the y?
- Yes, y says i in the middle of a word.
- Can you give me other words that require that rule?
- Are there any vowels not part of a Combination?
- What is the rule for the A?
- Yes, when a final E has a vowel followed by a consonant before the final E, that vowel is long.
- Jane do you agree with (student)? Why? Please explain.
- What does the word mean as it is used in that sentence?
- Can you use other words in the sentence to help with the meaning?
- Billy, do you know what the word means?
- Mary, do you know?

- Dictionary people, find the word and raise your hand when you locate it.
- There were three meanings. What meaning fits our sentence?
- John, why did you say (_____) was the meaning to use?
- Have you read this word before?
- What hint did you get from the meaning that Jill read from the Dictionary?
- Ron, do you agree with John? Why? What evidence do you have?
- Reader, reread that sentence and let's try to reach an understanding.

Using **clarifying and defending questions to decode a word is critical during initial stages** implementing the system. **Dialoging would then be directed toward reading and critical thinking skills using the same questioning strategies.**

Most words requiring a decoding episode are usually words requiring a vocabulary episode.

Want to develop a simple method about thinking during a dialog or while reading a text? Ask true and false questions.

- After the student responds, ask, "Tell me what you found or didn't find in the dialog (or text) that made you believe it was (true or false)?"
- "What words led you to think that?"
- "Can you find other words or reasons that support your answer?"
- Continue until you call on another student, "Do you agree or disagree with (_____) answer? Why or why not."
- This procedure is very effective and completely by-passes structured sequences questions and helps the teacher refine his/hers questioning strategies. It all started with "lowly" true-false questions.

Select the direction to focus follow-up questions and continue with the dialog. This is an excellent procedure when reading a novel, short story or non-fiction. Again, in-depth and probing questions develop from a very common, initial question. This is also excellent for analyzing a sentence and other topics.

Critical thinking requires teacher and student to use precise language when analyzing the text or responding to a question.

Refer to Reading Skills, Critical Thinking, and Socratic Dialog sections for content and questioning strategies in this website.

FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES / Seatwork

- Nearly every question from the sample questions may be used individually or combined as a written follow-up activity, making the possibilities almost limitless.
- Practice spelling and saying sight words from that day's lesson.
- As a warm up the next day, have the previous sight words reviewed orally by the reader or group.

- Keep a list of "new" words and have the reader add synonyms or antonyms, expanding vocabulary.
- Keep a separate list of descriptive words and phrases of picturesque speech that may be used in a creative writing activity.
- Use a descriptive passage in a story to serve as a motive and model for creating a picture or mural-visualization practice.
- Have the reader make up an additional ending chapter to the short story or novel.
- Compile a list of descriptive character traits for each person in the story.
- Using the list of traits, compare the main characters as to how they are alike and how they are different.
- Have the reader write a play using the story as a basis.
- Have the reader write how he/she felt about the main characters and for what reason(s).
- Have the reader write their likes or dislikes about the story and give reasons to support their position using precise examples from the story.
- Have the reader write a descriptive paragraph using visualization to develop a mental "picture".
- Do any type of research or further reading on any topic or idea generated from the story. This could include minor as well as major features of the story. An example might be the history of barbed wire while reading a western theme; or the development of machines while reading about the Civil War; or the history of flight or of the materials that made modern flight possible, etc. The list is endless.
- Appropriate written assignments should be based on opportunities, research, the age and development of the **student**.
- Predict the outcome of a story and give reasons why. Compare the prediction with the story. How was it alike? Different?
- List the events in a story and locate the reasons those events happened. **STUDENT** writes a "because this occurred, that happened" newspaper account.
- Have the **student** write a newspaper account on any event or scene or plot that answers the questions who, what, why, when, where, and how?
- Discuss how feelings, moods, motives and intentions are surmised or inferred from the acts and words of the characters or the choice of words by the author.

- Have the reader determine what type of story it is: fable, fairy tale, science fiction, fantasy, historical fiction, biography, other lands and people, myth, animal, adventure, folk, fanciful, etc., and give reasons for the determination.
- Write an advertisement about the story or novel to interest others in reading it.
- Select one or more characters and write why they would be a good friend or NOT be a good friend. Give reasons and examples from the story.
- If the reader has had a similar past experience as related in the story or knows of someone who has, have a paper written describing the incident, emotions, problems, solutions, etc..
- Select any scene from the story and have the reader do a pantomime.
- Select certain passages using adjectives or adverbs, have the **student** rewrite the sentence inserting his/her own adjectives or adverbs replacing the original.
- Have the reader write questions about the story as if he/she were the teacher. After reading the entire story, have the reader answer the questions.
- Have the reader select an event or include the entire plot and prepare a news broadcast. The **student** should read and record on a cassette tape, the broadcast. Keep the tapes and compare the maturity of reporting over a period of time.
- When reading a fantasy, have the reader list factual and fanciful incidents with reasons for each category.
- Select situations in the story and have the reader create a comic strip version with line drawings and dialogue circles.
- On occasions after oral reading, have the **student** write precise details from that day's reading; a memory training technique.
- A method to make connections while doing the recall is to have the reader use a "Memory Tree" graph.

Start by having the reader write anything they can remember in one or two words in the middle of a blank piece of paper. Draw lines from the original word and add any connecting links. Do the same with the connecting links until a web is developed. See Memory Tree in Speed Reading. This activity has proven very productive for memory improvement and test taking. (See sample in index.)

- A powerful method is to have the student explain in writing, what he/she learned that day and in previous lessons with personal opinions about liking-disliking, enjoying-not enjoying text.

- Explain the 3-Step system by writing the explanation to teach another person.
- Define one, two, or all parts of speech and explain their use.
- Using any appropriate literary terms, have the reader locate that part of the story that conforms to the literary definition(s) and write a sentence or paragraph on why it conforms.
- Write a radio or TV skit that encompasses the main ideas of the story or the main idea of a chapter in a novel.

LITERATURE ACTIVITIES DURING SILENT OR ORAL READING

The following activities are designed to actively involve the reader in the theme. The author has used this information for his own use and teacher inservice.

First Reaction - What is your first reaction or response to the reading?
Describe or explain it briefly.

Feelings - What feelings did the reading awaken in you?
What emotions did you feel as you read?

Perceptions - What did you see happening in the reading?
Paraphrase it - retell the event briefly.

Visual Images - What image was called to mind by the reading?
Describe it briefly.

Associations - What memory does the reading call to mind - of people, places, events, sights, smells, or even something more ambiguous, such as feelings or attitudes?

Thoughts, Ideas - What idea or thought was suggested by the reading? Explain it briefly.

Selection - Upon what, in the text, did you focus most intently as you read; word, phrase, image, idea?

Importance - What is the most important word in the reading?
What is the most important phrase? Aspect?

Problems - What is the most difficult word in the reading?
What part do you have the most trouble understanding?

Author - What sort of person do you imagine the author to be?

Response - How did you respond to the reading, with how you felt or how you thought?
Did you feel involved with the reading or at a distance?

Evaluations - Do you think this is a good piece of writing? Why? Why not?

Literary Associations - Does this reading call to mind any other literary work?
If so, what is the work and the connection?

Writing - What would you focus on when writing about the story content?
Would you write about some association with the story or on something from your past memory? Or, on some aspect of the novel? Something about the author?

Visualization - This ability provides a person with visual power to mentally see a movie-picture type clip of a word, sentence, paragraph, or story. This is a trainable skill and 40-45% of the population requires this type of remedial reading skill.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS

The sample questions are presented here as possible ways the **teacher** might probe for clarification or to discuss in-depth, concepts, characters, language structure, vocabulary, story line, evaluation of the circumstances, understanding of technical text, and development of the **student's** thinking processes.

Remember - Whenever a question is asked of a **student** by the **teacher**, it is intellectually important for the **student** to be asked to "defend" the answer. This process of asking to "defend" or explain why an answer was given produces a "different kind of **student**", a more mature kind of thinker.

The first change in a **student** is the gradual elimination of thoughtless or flippant answers. If a **student** is made to pause and reflect on the reason for his/her answer, as well as the answer itself, then the mental process is set into motion that elevates the thinking abilities.

This process of "reason" is at the heart of all intellectual inquiries we call critical thinking, creative thinking, problem solving, scientific thinking, logic, philosophy, and sometimes, good common sense.

Extended list of sample questions are not generally organized by a topic because this often misleads the **teacher**. **Time is wasted when they search for the exact place in the reading where that precise question could be asked.** The **sample questions are to be used as a "guide" to formulate similar questions and follow a process of continuing to probe** the reader's evaluation of the text. Probing leads to Socratic Dialog.

To check for understanding of the reading, the following question types might be used.

- The letter 'F' before a sentence indicates the question is more appropriate for fiction. All other questions are appropriate for both fiction and nonfiction material.

- Most, if not all, questions, when initially implementing direct teaching, should be asked in such a way to elicit an answer as to who, what, why, when, where, and how, or the True/False approach.
- This is a random list of questions from different taxonomies and personal experience. The “Reading Skills” and “Critical Thinking Skills” found in the separate guide have specific questions for specific purposes.

REMEMBER:

Answers are to be defended, clarified, explained, elaborated, and personalized to develop thinking abilities in the reader.

- F What words make_____ come alive?
- F What are they saying?
- F What is the main idea of the story?
- F What details gives us the main idea of the story?
- F What was the first thing that happened in the story? The second? The third?
- F What was the last thing that happened?
- F What happened before_____?
- F What happened after_____?
- F What details tell us about the main character? About_____?
- F Which statements support the main idea?
- F Imagine yourself in the same situation, what would you do? Why?
- F Why do you think the author used this word (this setting), (this time frame),(this event)?
- F What is the conflict that _____has?
- F Are there other conflicts?
- F Can you identify the problem?
- F What words does the author use to describe the problem?
- F Can you recognize the author's purpose? Plan? Reason? Plot?

- F Evaluate the behavior (attitude, thoughts, conditions, etc.) before _____ and after_____.
- F What word (words, statement, actions) did the author use that gave you a clue that _____ would happen?
- F Who are the characters in the story?
- F Who is the main character?
- F Why do you think_____is the main character?
- F Why do you think _____ is the main character and not _____?
- F If_____ is not the main character, what does he/she have to do with the story?
- F Where does this story take place?
- F When does this story take place?
- F Can you give details that help to identify the location? The time?
- F What is it that the main character is trying to do? (plot)
- F What is stopping the main character from solving his problem or completing his task?
- F Yes,_____,(the other character), is in the way of the protagonist,(main character). What is he/she doing to get in the way of or to stop or prevent, (main character), from being successful.
- F Can you give some other specific examples to show how_____ is preventing _____from completing his efforts (or solving his problem).
- F What is the literary term for the main character? (Protagonist)
- F What is the literary term for_____who is stopping_____? (Antagonist)
- F Is nature, in any way a problem?
- F Is society, laws or social structure, interfering with the solution?
- F Does the main character have a problem with himself/herself, such as feeling lonely, or afraid, or over confident, or unable to get along with people ?
- F How does the protagonist solve the problem?
- F Is that the way you would solve the problem?

- F Have you ever had a problem similar to the protagonist?
- F Do you know of anyone or hear of anyone who had a similar problem?
- F Would the problem be solved better in a different way? How?
- F What part of the story tells you that the problem was resolved?
- F Is the climax what you expected? Why?
- F What information did you get from the beginning of the story?
- F What happened in the middle of the story that were actions around the stories problem?
- F Was the climax the ending the main character wanted?
- F How was it different?
- F Analyze the behavior of_____?
- F How would you evaluate the language of _____ with _____? (Or, any element of any story with any other story.)
- F Provide two or more endings to this story.
- F Provide two or more beginnings to the story.
- F How do you think ___ felt?
- ~ Tell me in your own words what is meant by, the sentence, the paragraph, the story line, the description, etc.
- ~ Give an example of_____.
- ~ What do you think about_____?
- ~ What did you learn from_____?
- ~ What did you discover from_____?
- ~ What words give us a clear picture about_____?
- ~ What words describe?
- ~ How would you feel if you were_____?
- ~ Condense this paragraph, (page), (section), (chapter).

- ~ What seems to be_____?
- ~ What seems likely regarding_____?
- ~ Which are facts? Opinions? What words or events demonstrate your answer?
- ~ What would happen if_____?
- ~ Explain what is happening.
- ~ What is the most important thought? Why do you think that?
- ~ Can you give a reason for your answer?
- ~ How does _____ differ from _____?
- ~ What do you think will happen next? Why?
- ~ Newspaper questions: who? what? when? where? why? how?
- ~ What conclusions can you make? How did you arrive at your answer?
- ~ What do you remember?
- ~ Where did_____ happen?
- ~ Why was_____?
- ~ How would you do_____?
- ~ How would you change_____?
- ~ Could you find the word (or words) that mean (or tell about) (or change) (or mislead)?
- ~ Can you explain why you believe_____?
- ~ Locate the section in the reading that best describes (tells, compares, concludes, etc.).
- ~ What is this punctuation mark? How is it used? (comma, period, colon, semi-colon, hyphen, quotation mark, exclamation mark, question mark, apostrophe, brackets)
- ~ What is the name of a person, place, thing or idea? (noun)
- ~ What words describe a person, place or thing? (adjective)
- ~ What words describe actions ? (verbs)
- ~ What words describe verbs? (adverbs)

- ~ What words take the place of a noun? (pronoun)
- ~ See this pronoun (he, she, it, they, them, etc.), who or what does it refer to?
- ~ See this word _____, it is a good example of a (part of speech).

When the teacher is monitoring for understanding after discussing a specific part of speech, the student should be asked to locate other samples of that part of speech in the story.

- ~ What did we read about yesterday?
- ~ Can you remember any specific details about the readings from the previous lessons?
- ~ What else can you remember about the reading?
- ~ What does _____ mean?
- ~ What meaning of that word best fits the sentence? Why?
- ~ What does _____ paragraph mean?
- ~ Have you ever (known, experienced, heard of,) that (idea, event, way of acting, etc.) before?
- ~ Could you give exact examples to explain your answer?
- ~ Can you locate any sentences that support your answer?
- ~ What reasons do you give for your answer?

If answers are fairly complete and some mastery is demonstrated by students, teacher may decide to stop further probing and continue reading.

OR

If answers are incomplete, teacher must reword the oral question and continue probing. If answers are still unknown or incomplete, then teacher must reteach or explain the information needed by reader.

OR

Teacher may decide to continue to probe by asking more complex questions. Without knowing the exact material, it is nearly impossible to suggest precise questions, but the following types and general guidelines may be helpful. Teacher must formulate the exact question. Once a discussion is started, the following types of questions should be asked.

Remember:

Answers must be defended, clarified, explained, elaborated, and personalized to develop thinking abilities in the reader.

- ~ Why did you say _____?
- ~ What do you mean by _____?
- ~ Where did you get that idea? Information?
- ~ Is there any evidence to support your answer?
- ~ How does your answer relate to the question? The reading?
- ~ Can you say that in a different way?
- ~ Is there a passage that shows the reason for your answer?
- ~ Are you able to add more detail to your answer?
- ~ What other events you are aware of that is like _____?
- ~ What other details do you recall?
- ~ Is there any more evidence about _____?
- ~ Are you able to give other examples about _____?
- ~ If you were _____, how would you feel about _____? Why?
- ~ Have you had a similar experience?
- ~ How would you compare (contrast), _____ to _____?
- ~ Is there a social significance about _____?
- ~ How does _____ relate to our history?
- ~ Why is _____ an example of _____?
- ~ Does that behavior, (act, attitude, idea, item, location) relate to other behavior, etc., or is the same as?
- ~ What is the effect of?
- ~ What caused _____?
- ~ What do you think the author meant by _____?
- ~ What are the consequences of _____?
- ~ What evidence do you have to support your conclusion?
- ~ What would you do to change the results?
- ~ What would be the consequences of your method?
- ~ What else can you say?
- ~ Good! What else?
- ~ Any other possibilities?
- ~ Are there patterns or themes in your answer?
- ~ Can you make a broad general statement that explains _____?
- ~ What are some possible causes for?
- ~ Who was the _____?
- ~ When was the _____?
- ~ Where was the _____?
- ~ What did they _____?
- ~ How did they _____?
- ~ Describe the facts.
- ~ Describe the attributes (characteristics or properties) of the object (idea or event).
- ~ List the similarities and differences between _____.
- ~ Compare and contrast the following _____.

- ~ Contrast ___ with ___ .
- ~ What are the important parts that are alike between ___ and ___ ?
- ~ What are the main differences?
- ~ What belongs together? What are the reasons?
- ~ Group the following ___ on the basis of one or more common parts.
- ~ Describe the steps or procedures to ___ .
- ~ What are the essential factors involved in the problem (or experiment) ?
- ~ List the parts of ___ and describe how they are related.
- ~ In describing ___ problem, list the steps you would take.
- ~ Think about the given information and name the facts and fallacies. What causes you to arrive at your answer?
- ~ Think of an original or interesting solution to ___ .
- ~ List all of the ___ .
- ~ What ways can you ___ ? Different ways?
- ~ How does ___ relate to ___ ?
- ~ Could you put that another way?
- ~ What do you think is the main issue?
- ~ Is your basic point ___ or ___ ?
- ~ Let me see if I understand you; do you mean ___ or ___ ?
- ~ How does this relate to the problem/issue?
- ~ What are you assuming?
- ~ What could we assume instead?
- ~ What would be an example?
- ~ What are your reasons for saying that?
- ~ What other information do we need to know?
- ~ Could you explain your reason (s)?
- ~ Is that good evidence for believing that?
- ~ Are those reasons adequate?
- ~ Is there reason to doubt that evidence?
- ~ What would you say to someone who said ___ ?
- ~ What do you think the cause is?
- ~ By what reasoning did you come to that conclusion?
- ~ How could we go about finding out whether that is true?
- ~ How do you know?
- ~ Why did you say that?
- ~ Why do you think that is true?
- ~ What led you to that belief?
- ~ Do you have any evidence for that?
- ~ How does that apply to this case?
- ~ What difference does that make?
- ~ What accounts for that?
- ~ How did this come about?
- ~ What would someone who disagrees say?
- ~ What is an alternative?
- ~ What are you implying by that?
- ~ When you say ___, are you implying ___?
- ~ If that happened, what else would happen as a result? Why?
- ~ What effect would that have?

- ~ What would necessarily happen or only probably happen?
- ~ What is an alternative?
- ~ How can we find out?
- ~ How could we settle this question?
- ~ Is the question clear? Do you understand it?
- ~ Is this question easy or hard to answer? Why?
- ~ Does this question ask us to evaluate something?
- ~ To answer this question, what other questions would you need to answer first?
- ~ Can you break this question down at all?
- ~ Why is this question important?
- ~ Do you need facts to answer this?

The following questioning strategies are designed to provide the **teacher** with a mental roadmap to draft a question/questions that demand the reader **visualizes** specific parts of the printed word or is guided by the **teacher** to formulate a closure of the size, shape, color, location, purpose, movement, relationship, plot, scene, in short, the total mental picture as seen by the reader.

Each text contains a variety of words that act alone or interrelate with other words to create a **mental picture we call visualization**. This process requires a variety of questions designed to elicit from the reader a comprehensive analysis of his/her picture. Often times, students are able to visualize very elaborate and sophisticated images and only need an opportunity to verbalize their existence.

Refer to the two references by Nanci Bell.

- ~ What do you see from the printed words?
- ~ Describe any people, animals, physical location, trees, weather, and colors, etc.
- ~ Describe the shape that you see.
- ~ Is it more like a circle, oval, rectangle, or another shape?
- ~ How large is it?
- ~ Is it larger than a ____? Or smaller than ____?
- ~ What is it doing? Moving? Or not moving?
- ~ What is the color of the object? Is it lighter than or darker than ____?
- ~ Do you see other colors? Are they part of the main picture or the background?
- ~ What do the events or items have to do with each other?
- ~ What idea or function do you see from the text?