Comprehension Strategies – Reading Equals Thinking

Last week many of our Year 3, 5 and 7 students showed a great attitude in participating in the NAPLAN tests, doing their personal best and persisting even when parts of the test became difficult. In order to do well, the tests required our students to be able to read and predict, make connections and inferences, interpret the texts and questions and be able to summarise and put different pieces of information together (synthesising) in order to make sense of the texts. These comprehension strategies are a big part of the school reading curriculum and are important strategies for parents to understand in order to have conversations with your child about reading at home. Below are some tips and strategies to try at home.

Making Connections
Good readers make connections when they read. It might sound like, “Oh that’s happened to me before…” or “I felt the same exact way when…” It is important that young readers not only make connections, but that the connections they make are meaningful. Meaningful connections are those that connect to the bigger ideas (the main idea, the lesson being taught, the plot) in the story. For example, the fact that the main character in the book has her/his bedroom walls painted the same colour as your child’s does not make for a meaningful connection. But if the character in the book is disappointed about something, your child could think back to a time when he/she was disappointed. By doing this, they can relate how the character feels as well as predict what they think the character might do about it.

There are three different kinds of meaningful connections kids can make:

1. Text-to-Self Connections
When your child reads, you want him/her to think about how it reminds them of something they have done or something they know. A good connection will help him/her understand the text better. As he/she is reading, help him/her share those connections out loud and be willing to share your own connections as you read together.

A good text-to-self connection might sound like…
- This reminds me of the time that I…
- I know exactly how the character feels because when that happened to me…
- Remember when…
- Because I know about ______, I can understand ______.

2. Text-to-Text
Sometimes we are able to use knowledge about another book to help us understand another text. We might notice this especially when we read book series or books by the same author. The style or the story line makes the book more predictable and easier to comprehend.

A good text-to-text connection might sound like…
- This character reminds me of the character in this book because…
- This part reminds me of the book I read yesterday…
- I think the book will end this way because in this other book…

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3. Text-to-World
Things we read can remind us of events happening in our world. It might be something from history or something currently happening in our community. Children can use that knowledge and apply it to help them comprehend the texts they read.

A good text-to-world connection might sound like:
- This reminds me of something I heard on the news...
- I think this has happened in history before...
- It seems like this book happened a long time ago because...
- This is the same problem we're facing right now in Australia...

Making Predictions
Predicting is probably the most familiar of all the comprehension strategies, but it can be a tricky strategy. It requires readers to use the clues the author gives them, tap into their own prior knowledge (making connections), and make an educated guess as to what might happen next. Many times our predictions are not correct and we are constantly monitoring and modifying our predictions as we read on. When kids make predictions, probing with further questions is a great idea. “Why did you predict that?” or “What’s the thinking behind your prediction?” This helps you to see their thinking and label their strategy for predicting.

You could then reinforce what they have done as a reader, eg. “So you just made a text-to-self connection. You thought about a time when it happened to you and you used that prior knowledge to predict. That’s exactly what good readers do.

Asking Questions
One of the things that good readers do is ask themselves questions as they read. This makes them want to keep reading to find the answer. When modelling this comprehension strategy, I explicitly talk about what makes a good question.
- You don’t already know the answer
- You really do wonder about it
- The answer might require further research because it may not be answered in the text
- Make us want to keep reading to find the answer

Good Questions:
When talking about reading with your child ask, “What are you wondering? What questions do you have? Have you had any of your questions answered? What do you think the answer to your question could be?”

Visualising
I’ve heard so many people say, “I’m a visual learner.” The fact is, many people are including our own kids. Visualising makes the text come to life. Visualising helps students to experience the text in ways that make it personal to them. No two people will hear the same text and envision it the same way. Visualising also helps readers remember what they’ve read because it attaches a vivid picture to the written word.

Mental images can change as we read through the text (much like our predictions can change), creating a “movie in the mind.”

When talking with children about visualising, tell them it’s how an author uses words or phrases to help us see what we are reading, but also to hear, feel, taste, or smell it. Imagery is accomplished best when an author shows instead of tells the reader something. For example, “the rain played a song on the roof” helps the reader to hear the rain falling. The author could have told the reader by saying, “the rain fell on the roof”, but chose to show it by appealing to our sense of hearing.

Summarising What Is Important
It is vital for readers to be able to decipher important information from the not-so-important information when reading a text. Have you ever asked a child to tell you about the story and they begin to tell you every single detail. Instead you could, ask your child to tell you what happened in the beginning, middle and end. Have them talk about the main characters, the problem and how the problem was solved.

With non-fiction texts, ask your child to summarise a section of the text or tell 5 important facts they learned from that page of reading. You can also ask, “What do you think the author wanted you to learn?”

Synthesising
When good readers read, their thinking grows as they progress through the text. They might initially think one thing as they begin reading and their initial thoughts are sometimes challenged or added to later in the text. Debbie Miller compares it to throwing a rock into a pond: “First there's the splash, and then the water ripples out, making little waves, they get bigger and bigger...as you read, your thinking evolves and the meaning gets bigger and bigger...” (Reading with Meaning, pg. 159) Talking to your child about how their thinking has changed and why, is one way to support them to synthesise what they have read.

We are partners in your child’s learning. We can only do so much at school, the conversations and support you can give at home with reading does matter and has a significant impact on your child’s attitude towards reading and their ongoing development. Make the discussion about reading a conversation, not an interrogation so that your child looks forward to sharing their thinking about reading with you.

Sally Slattery
Deputy Principal
Student Free Day  
Friday 22 May 2015

The school will be closed as staff will be off site undertaking professional development in digital learning on this day.

OSHC will be available - please contact Jacky Smith to arrange care for your child/children.

SWIMMING TERM 2
Students in Reception to Yr 5 will participate in the water safety program at Noarlunga Leisure Centre each day from 25/5-29/5. This program is part of the education curriculum and all students are expected to attend.

Please ensure all notes are signed and returned to your child’s class teacher and that money has been paid to Tracy Rowley, Finance Officer by Thursday 21 May 2015. If you are unable to pay by this time please speak with Tracy Rowley.

BOOK FAIR
A Book Fair will be held in the Library from Wednesday 27/5 to Tuesday 2/6 (8:30-8:45am and 2:45-3:15pm) thanks to Scholastic Books.

Parents/caregivers and friends are welcome to visit to see the various books and novelty items available. Students will have the opportunity to purchase items when they visit with their class during school hours.

Thank you for supporting this event with the school receiving new books for our Library/Classroom Libraries based on the total sales.

EFTPOS will be available.

Deb Scarff, Library SSO

STUDENT MEDICAL INFORMATION

If your child/children have a medical condition a medical plan needs to be completed and given to staff at the Front Office.

Medical plans for updating will be sent home to families this week. Please complete the form, have your family GP authorise it, if the form states, and return to the Front Office as soon as possible.

Medical plans can also be obtained from your local GP. Please see Lee at the Front Office if you need assistance.

SCHOOL SORES
A case of School Sores has been reported in the Castle Unit. School Sores appear as flat, yellow, crusty or moist patches on the skin, usually on exposed parts of the body such as the face and legs. The sores are often greater than 1cm in diameter. The bacteria can easily spread to other people directly by contact with sores or indirectly by contact with contaminated clothes. Diagnosis is based on clinical examination.

The incubation period (time between becoming infected and developing symptoms) is 4-10 days. The infectious period (time during which an infected person can affect others) is as long as there is discharge from the sores.

School sores are extremely contagious. Children with School Sores should be excluded from school until appropriate treatment has commenced. Any sores on exposed surfaces should be completely covered with a dressing. Good hand washing procedures should be encouraged.

Bob Thiele
Principal

SCHOOL BANKING ACCOUNT OPENING DAY

The Commonwealth Bank will be holding an account opening session at our school on Tuesday 2/6 from 8:30am. They will be located in the foyer area outside Castle Unit.

The School Banking program provides children with an opportunity to make deposits into their personal Youthsaver account. To encourage regular saving behaviour the program offers an exciting Rewards Program.

YEAR 7/8 TRANSITION FOR 2016

Parents of Year 7 students have received an Enrolment in Secondary School for 2016 pack, with brochures, an ED176 form and Registration of Interest for the Australian Science and Mathematics School.

When you have decided on the choice of school for your child please complete the ED176 and return with all relevant forms to Lee Clements at the Front Office before Thursday 21 May, 2015, Term 2, Week 4, to process.

Please note:

- Sibling Rights Rule- A photocopy of the ID card is required of the student/sibling currently attending the out of zone school (see page 6 in the Starting Secondary School Brochure)
- Students applying for enrolment in out of zone schools will need to pay particular attention to page 4 of the “Starting Secondary School” brochure-out of zone enrolments. Parents are asked to complete the form enclosed in the Enrolment package stating why they have chosen that particular out of zone school (see Criterion for Allocation of Points in the package) and attach this to your ED176 and return to Lee.

Lee Clements
**CANTENE NEWS**

Swimming R-5 (25/5 to 29/5)  
Parents/caregivers are advised that students can order lunches if they are attending swimming in Week 5. We will ensure that lunches are available to students either before they leave or on their return.

Volunteers are always welcome. If you have any time during the week to assist in the Canteen please speak with Coralie Goodman, Canteen Manager.

The valuable help by our volunteers ensures the Canteen can provide a wide variety of healthy food for our students and staff.

Thank you for supporting the Canteen.

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**CROSSING MONITORS**

Term 2, Week 5 (25/5-29/5)  
**Morning:**  
- Ajay Harris  
- Ashlei Crawford  
- Cameron Wilson  
**Afternoon:**  
- Nikita Broadbent  
- Rachael Grant  
- Willow Ralston

Term 2, Week 6 (1/6-5/6)  
**Morning:**  
- Gabrielle Connolly  
- Grace Connolly  
- Jo Coole  
**Afternoon:**  
- Georgia Davey  
- Mihaela Parry  
- Jade Bowman

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**COMMUNITY NEWS**

- **Guidelines for Good Gaming** Guidelines for parents on the physical and psychological effects of electronic gaming. Chaired by Amanda Blair at Mercedes College, Springfield on Thursday 19/5 from 7:30-9:30pm with guest speakers. Cost $25.00. To book visit www.trybooking.com/GVCW.
- **Child & Adolescent Sleep Clinic** The Sleep Clinic in the School of Psychology at Flinders University provides treatment for children and adolescents of all ages. Email casc.enquiries@flinders.edu.au or Ph 82017587 for more information.
- **South Adelaide Panthers** Players wanted for U9 & U10 boys team and girls aged 15yrs and over. For more information visit www.sapantersfc.com.
- **Pregnancy and Birth Q&A Sessions** Have you left your antenatal education until the last minute, attended classes but wanted to know more or if there is something you don’t understand and would like more information come and talk about birth with other parents. Held at GP Plus Superclinic, Noarlunga on 20/5, 3/6, 17/6, 1/7 from 1:00-3:00pm. Ph 81649111 or 83849262 for more information.
- **Access Program** Do you struggle with your budget and need some assistance, or have you felt overwhelmed when navigating the school system? Want some recipe tips or menu ideas? If you are unsure of the local community help available to you join the Free You Access Program at Hackham West Children’s Centre, Yellow Unit on Fridays from 10:45-12:30. Ph Hayley 0430810615 for more information.
- **Dads 4 Kids Garden Adventure** Have fun exploring Aldinga’s Community Garden designed for children. Held on Sunday 24/5 from 9:30am-12:00pm at Aldinga Community Centre, Symonds Reserve, Stewart Ave, Aldinga Beach. Ph Malcolm 0437232124 to register. Light refreshment and snacks included.
- **Woodcroft Technology Exhibition** Hands on workshops, activities and stalls with a FREE barbecue. Dan McGuiness at 2:00pm. Held on Saturday 30/5 from 10:00am-4:00pm at Woodcroft Library, 175 Bains Rd, Morphett Vale. Ph 83840500 for more information.
- **Whale Time Playtime Festival** A celebration of the start of the whale season with a focus on interactive and educational activities on whales and marine animals. The festival includes Face Painting (free), SeaStar Rock, Free Rides, Balloon Artist, Daniel Larcombe and Amazing Drumming Monkeys. Held at the Whale Centre, Victor Harbor on Sunday 31/5 from 10:00am. Entry $5.00 per person.
- **Southern Reconciliation Event** Free Event with food, entertainment, variety stalls, culture and family activities. Held at Ramsay Place, Noarlunga on Wednesday 27/5 from 11:00am-2:30pm. Ph Chris Martin 0404819853 for more information.
- **Grandparents & Relative Carer Group** If you are a grandparent or a relative carer of a child full time join us on 25/5, 8/6 & 22/6 at Aldinga Beach Children’s Centre, Evans St, Aldinga Beach from 9:30-11:30am. An opportunity to socialise, share information and connect with services that can help your family. Free, including food and coffee/tea.
- **Dad’s Make A Difference Barossa Bowland** Fun for you and your child to participate in together - Ten-pin Bowling and Mini Golf. Held on Saturday 23/5 from 9:15am-3:30pm. FREE including bus transport. Ph Kathy or Sam 81866944 to register. Meet at Family Connections, 72 Collins Pde, Hackham.
- **SpikeZone Volleyball SA** and the SA Volleyball Club have joined forces to bring a great new SpikeZone Mini Volleyball program to Woodcroft for students aged 4-7 yrs. Held at Woodcroft College Gym, Bains Rd, Morphett Vale each Wednesday from 4:30-6:00pm. Cost $5.00 per player. Email steven@volleyballsa.com.au for more information.
- **Raising Boys, Raising Girls** Fun for you and your child to participate in together - Inflatable World at 2015 Main South Rd, Morphett Vale. Held on Saturday 6/6 from 10:00am-12:00pm. Ph Kathy or Sam on 81866944 to register. Limited places.
- **Be Kind & Unwind Personal Wellbeing** Held on Friday 5/6 from 9:30am-2:30pm at Woodcroft-Morphett Vale Neighbourhood Centre, 175 Bains Rd, Morphett Vale. Gold coin donation, lunch provided. Ph Alison or Leanne 81868900 to book.
- **Madhavi Nawana Parker Behaviour Consultant** Madhavi is a behaviour consultant who offers sessions for parents that encourages cooperative behaviour and social and emotional skills in young people. Held at O’Sullivan Beach Children’s Centre, 51a Galloway Rd, O’Sullivan Beach on Wednesday 24/6 from 6:00-7:30pm and Wednesday 1/7 from 1:00-2:30pm. Ph 83822850 to register.
- **Guidelines for parents on the physical and psychological effects of electronic gaming.** Chaired by Amanda Blair at Mercedes College, Springfield on Thursday 19/5 from 7:30-9:30pm with guest speakers. Cost $25.00. To book visit www.trybooking.com/GVCW.

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**Flyers with further information relating to the above events are available either on display at the front of the School or at the Front Office.**