

## Laying a Foundation for Reading Comprehension in the Preschool Years (Above and Beyond Bedtime Stories)

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Did you know....???

- Research has shown that comprehension can be enhanced before the first word is ever read or heard read!
- *Activating and stirring up background knowledge regarding a topic before reading or listening to a story can enhance comprehension!*

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## ABC Brainstorm

### **HOMESCHOOLING**

A-adventure  
B-blessing  
C-curriculum  
D-develops leaders  
E-enthusiasm  
F-fun

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## THINK-PAIR-SHARE

- *What are some things you do at home that you think may help develop your child's comprehension skills?*

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## Easy & Fun Ways to Develop Comprehension:

- Bedtime stories
- Family read aloud
- Visit the library for story time and book check-out
- Books on audio
- Some type of book "response" or activity
- Dramatic/Creative play
- Making Lapbooks




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## Learning to Read Through Creative Play:

- Experiences—Build Background Knowledge and Comprehension
- Sensory Exploration and Concept Building (sand, water, paint, etc.)
- Developing Critical Thinking Skills (classifying, sequencing, predicting)
- Visual Awareness (differences, similarities, visual discrimination)
- Auditory Awareness and Auditory Skills

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### Other Ideas:

- Acting out
- Puppet shows
- Character masks and puppets
- Chart paper summaries
- Flow charts and other graphic organizers
- Dioramas, trioramas
- Story wheels
- Oral retelling
- Beach Ball toss game or comprehension cube




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### 5 Things to Do Every Day:

- READ, READ, READ
- Sing (when you sing hymns and praise choruses—many of which are straight scripture, you are laying a foundation which later will help them comprehend theology)
- Poetry
- TALK, TALK, TALK
- Wonder aloud, think aloud, and model your thinking

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### Reading Comprehension:

Ultimate goal of reading instruction is reading comprehension—making meaning

- The roots of reading comprehension develop from birth
- Oral language comprehension is not enough
- Reading comprehension is not automatic given good word recognition and fluency
- We cannot neglect reading comprehension “instruction” from ages birth to five

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### Some Keys to Comprehension:

- Self-talk (inner speech)
- Dialogue
- Questioning
- Visualization skills

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### (Theoretical Foundation—Vygotsky Thought and Language)

- Typically, teaching skills in isolation and filling in blanks/workbook pages on comprehension does not transfer to text.
- (Baker, 1996) *"Social interaction is an important mediator of metacognitive development."*
- (Rogoff, 1990; Wertsch, 1978)—Many theorists believe that the origins of metacognitive skills lie in adult-child (or expert-novice) interactions.

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### Developing Reading Comprehension in the Early Years:

- Parent-teachers can provide compelling reasons/motivation and books/texts to comprehend
- In the home education setting, rich conversation and reading aloud can develop word knowledge
- Develop vocabulary
- Model and cultivate habits of mind of a good thinker and reader

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**Strategies:**

- Popcorn, picnics, and tea time with picture books (spreading activation)
- Picture Walks and Talks—teach kids to “mine the graphics” (Come Look with Me/picture study)
- Text Talk and Think Alouds
- Link movement with books
- Make Mind Pictures or the “movie in your mind”
- Painting and Drawing—Activate background knowledge and make connections
- Anchor charts and Sticky Notes

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**Provide Compelling Reasons/Motivation and Texts to Comprehend:**

- Different children are compelled/motivated by different reasons and texts
- Some situations make books/texts more worth comprehending
- There are some books/texts that require little comprehension (text matters)
- There are some books/texts that are more worthy of comprehending than others (“twaddle” vs. “living books”)

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**Possible Reasons and Texts to Comprehend:**

- Books that connect to experiences children have had or are having (ex. Let's Read About Ice Cream or from Grape to Jelly)
- Books/text that help children prepare for upcoming events (holidays, experience, field trip, visitor, etc.)
- Books/texts about topics and/or with illustrations of great interest
- How-to texts (experiments, crafts, cooking, building, etc.)
- Letters, cards, and emails
- Funny or zany texts and stories
- Maps and guides
- Books/texts with characters of great interest
- Texts with high interest and FUN formats (example Tomorrow's Alphabet)
- Books with surprise endings
- Books that create suspense

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### Developing World/Background Knowledge:

- There is a strong correlation to between world/background knowledge and success in reading comprehension.
- Many books/texts assume such knowledge.
- Books/texts can be a wonderful tool for developing world/background knowledge.
- And so can many other things!

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### Some Ways to Develop World/Background Knowledge:

- Use "realia"/real objects and experiences.
- Connect books/text to field trips and outings.
- Bridge or branch out from known topics or experiences to new.
- Use carefully selected videos/DVD's and other media.
- Pictures, picture study, labeling and describing, etc.
- Oral traditions, family stories, scrapbooks and photo albums.

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### Developing Vocabulary:

- There is a strong relationship between vocabulary and reading comprehension. (According to a study done in 2006 by researchers Senechal, Quillete, and Rodney, kindergarten vocabulary helps to predict grade 4 reading comprehension even when controlling for many other factors.)
- In oral language, how we use new words affects whether and how well children learn them (Tabors, Beals, and Weizman 2001)
- Books and many other texts are wonderful tools for building vocabulary (Beck and McKeown, 2001; Whitehurst and Lonigan, 2001)

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### Ways to Develop Vocabulary:

- Use rich vocabulary (rich, but not too rich—"just right")
- Use vocabulary in supportive contexts
  - Use fitting words
  - Provide language based clues and visual clues for teaching new words
  - Help promote curiosity about words




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### Strong, literacy-rich curricula:

- Strong, literacy-rich curricula:
- SonLight
- My Father's World
- Five In A Row (and Before and Beyond Five In A Row)
- KONOS
- The Weaver, Alpha Omega

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### Comprehension Strategies to Model & Teach:

- Making Connections
- Picturing/Making a Movie in the Mind
- Asking Questions/Wondering
- Activating Background Knowledge
- Drawing Conclusions
- Inferring
- Drawing Conclusions




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## TEXT TALK—Developing Vocabulary

### Before Read Aloud:

- Preview the book
- Identify vocabulary that may be unfamiliar to the child

### During Read Aloud:

- Provide brief explanations of the vocabulary (Example: "When someone is annoying means they are bothering you.")

### After Read Aloud:

- Revisit place where the unfamiliar word was used

Have child repeat the word

Provide or repeat the explanation

Ask the child for his further thoughts or ideas about the word

Use the word in some examples and sentences and have child do the same (orally)

Use visual props and pictures

Have child use the word again (possibly you write it in a sentence that he dictates)

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## Develop Habits of the Mind of A Good Comprehender

- Good/efficient readers do certain things as they read
- We want to develop these kinds of thinking strategies in young children
  - As they listen to text
  - As they look at text
- Modeling our own thinking aloud is powerful. (ex. I wonder, I think/guess, I predict....)
- Asking certain kinds of questions and making certain comments

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## Develop Habits of the Mind

### Aiming/Setting a Purpose:

- Why do you think we are reading this?
- What do you think makes this a good book for us to read?
- How did you choose this book?

### Previewing:

- Let's look through this first.
- What do you notice about...?

### Predicting:

- What do you think will happen next?
- I wonder or I bet the author will write.....

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### Developing Habits of the Mind:

- Tailor:
  - What should we take a look at here?
  - What part should I read?
- Connecting:
  - Did something like this ever happen to you?
  - Does this remind you of another book, movie, experience....?
- Constructing:
  - What has happened so far?
  - What have we discovered/learned so far?

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### Develop Habits of the Mind

- Inferring:
  - Why did...?
  - How come?
- Questioning:
  - Do you have any questions?
  - What do you want to know about now?
- Monitoring:
  - Does this make sense to you?
  - Is there something confusing to you here?

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### Developing Habits of the Mind:

- Clarifying:
  - Do you want/need me to explain anything?
  - Are there any parts you would like me to read again?
- Revising:
  - Let's think about this again.
  - What is different here?
- Evaluating:
  - Did you like this book/story/text?
  - What are some good words to describe this book?

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### Types of Books to Comprehend from A-Z:

ABC	Kitchen Magnets and Kitchen snacks
Boardbooks	Lapbooks
Computer	Magazines, Menus
Directions (How To books)	Novelty books
Email and Electronic texts	Out and About books
Flannel boards	
Guides	Poetry
Humorous books	Quiz books
Informational text	Recipes
Junk Mail	Storybooks

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### Types of Books to Comprehend from A-Z:

- T-Touch and Feel books
- U-Use-Up books (consumable, sticker books)
- V-Vinyl books
- W-Website books and text
- X—marks the spot! Maps and reference books
- Y-You Make It books
- Z-Zany books

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### Writing—Communicating Ideas through Print

- Provide ample writing opportunities
- Provide the “write” stuff—crayons, large paint brushes, thick pencils, water pens, magna doodle
- Encourage drawing and scribbling
- Make writing an integral part of your life style of learning
- Act as scribe
- Shared writing—sharing the pen
- Stock an office or writing/art station
- Create home-made books; “We are authors.”

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## Resources:

- *Honey for the Child's Heart* by Gladys Hunt
- *Read for the Heart* (Apologia)
- *Read Aloud Handbook* by Jim Trelease
- *The Three R's* by Ruth Beechick
- *Mommy Teach Me to Read* by Barbara Curtis
- *Building the Reading Brain, Pre-K-3* by Patricia Wolfe and Pamela Nevills
- *7 Keys to Comprehension* by Susan Zimmerman & Chryse Hutchins

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- *Beyond Bedtime Stories: A Parent's Guide to Promoting Reading, Writing, and Other Literacy Skills from Birth to 5* by V. Susan Bennett-Armistead, Nell Duke, and Annie Moses
- *Growing Up Reading: Learning to Read Through Creative Play* by Jill Frankel Hauser
- *Starting with Comprehension: Reading Strategies for the Youngest Readers* by Andie Cunningham and Ruth Shagoury
- *Slow and Steady, Get Me Ready* by June Oberlander
- *Reading Comprehension Instructional Activities* by Kristen and William Eckenwiler

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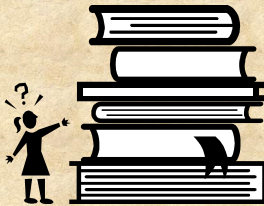
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## Questions?




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