

**FOCUS
ON** **Reading
Strategies****Teacher Guide**

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All About Reading

Reading research clearly indicates that reading and learning are active processes (Vacca & Vacca, 1996; Barton & Billmeyer, 1998). The eight *Focus on Reading Strategies* workbooks, Levels A–H for students in grades 1–8, offer direct instruction and practice in essential active reading strategies. Students need to be taught and have the opportunities to practice active reading strategies, which are the tools needed for comprehension. Competent readers use active reading strategies to seek meaning (Palincsar & Klenk, 1991).

What Is Strategic Reading?

Strategic reading is thinking about and interacting with text—a conversation, either out loud with others or to oneself, between the author and the reader. Strategic readers are active thinkers when they read, not just passive receivers of information (Duke & Pearson, 2002; Irvin, et al., 1995; Vacca & Vacca, 1993).

What Are Active Reading Strategies?

A strategy is defined as “skillful planning and management.” Therefore, think of a reading strategy as a conscious plan that helps readers manage the comprehension skills they have. Reading strategies are about connecting, questioning, visualizing, determining importance, inferring, synthesizing, monitoring, and repairing—not as isolated processes, but as interrelated processes—working together simultaneously during reading. Strategies are plans that require the reader to be an active participant in what is read. Research supports the benefits of using strategies (Pressley, 2000; Barton & Billmeyer, 1998; cf. Barton, 1997; Palincsar & Brown, 1984).

What About Reading Skills?

Skills are the cognitive processes that make up the act of reading. Skills are essential. Good readers must be both skillful and strategic. Anyone who has been involved in sports can recall long practice sessions, drilling on skills until they became automatic. So it is with reading. As students progress beyond “learning to read” and into “reading to learn,” early reading skills, such as decoding, become automatic. At this point, students focus on more advanced comprehension skills. Strategies are the reading tools or behaviors that help readers take their literacy comprehension skills to the next level.

All About the *Focus on Reading Strategies* Workbooks

How Can *Focus on Reading Strategies* Help?

Each *Focus on Reading Strategies* workbook offers direct instruction in using essential active reading strategies to master standards-based skills critical to reading and reading comprehension. The high-interest fiction and nonfiction selections span a wide range of genres and topics.

How Are the *Focus on Reading Strategies* Workbooks Organized?

Each workbook has six units with two related lessons. Each lesson, featuring a fiction or nonfiction selection, offers direct instruction and practice in before-, during-, and after-reading strategies to help students develop and manage comprehension skills.

What Skills Are Covered in *Focus on Reading Strategies*?

The following standards-based literacy skills are covered in the eight workbooks for students in grades 1-8.

Focus on Reading Strategies	Grade 1 Level A	Grade 2 Level B	Grade 3 Level C	Grade 4 Level D	Grade 5 Level E	Grade 6 Level F	Grade 7 Level G	Grade 8 Level H
Reading								
Analyze Plot Structure			✓	✓	✓		✓	
Analyze Tone								✓
Articulate Author's Perspective							✓	
Compare and Contrast		✓	✓	✓			✓	
Describe Mood								✓
Determine Main Idea	✓				✓		✓	
Distinguish Fact and Opinion			✓					
Distinguish Point of View							✓	
Draw Conclusions	✓	✓	✓			✓		✓
Examine Theme			✓	✓	✓	✓		
Find Relevant Details	✓		✓			✓		✓
Interpret Symbolism								✓
Make Connections	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Make Inferences	✓		✓			✓		
Practice Active Questioning	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Predict	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Recall Facts	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Recognize Cause and Effect					✓		✓	
Recognize Persuasive Techniques						✓		✓
Sequence Events	✓	✓	✓	✓				
Summarize	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓
Understand Characterization	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Use Prereading Strategies	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Use Visual Mapping	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Writing								
Write a Friendly Letter		✓	✓		✓		✓	✓
Write a Prediction	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
Write an Interview			✓	✓	✓	✓		
Write to Describe	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Write to Entertain		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Write to Explain	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Write to Inform	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓
Write to Persuade			✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Write to Summarize	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓
Vocabulary								
Analyze Multiple Meanings		✓		✓	✓	✓		
Build Vocabulary	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Classify Words		✓		✓		✓	✓	
Identify Parts of Speech		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Recognize Base Words			✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Understand Prefixes & Suffixes		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Understand Synonyms & Antonyms	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Use Context Clues	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Use a Dictionary		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

The following strategies are covered in the eight workbooks for students in grades 1–8.

<p>Previewing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 most important words Analyze title Anticipation guide Brainstorm Framed sentence Knowledge chart KWL chart Make connections prompt Predict based on introduction Predict based on key words Prediction chart Prior knowledge prompt Probable passages 	<p>Knowing How Words Work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a scenario using target word Create sentences with target word Frayer model Identify synonyms Identify word parts Knowledge rating checklist Provide examples Rewrite definitions Student VOC strategy Use context clues Use dictionary Word parts chart
<p>Self-Questioning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Think-along questions 	<p>Monitoring</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check for understanding multiple-choice questions Review activities Think-along questions
<p>Making Connections</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make connections prompt Metacognitive statement Op-ed piece Persuasive essay Think-along questions Venn diagram 	<p>Summarizing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5 Ws organizer Plot chart Retelling chart Sequence chart Story frame Story string Think-along questions Write newspaper article Write summary
<p>Visualizing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cause-and-effect organizer Character map Comparative organizer Diagram Draw pictures to visualize Frayer model Hierarchical organizer Plot chart Problem/solution organizer Semantic map Sequential organizer Series of events chain Spider map Story frame Story string Venn diagram 	<p>Evaluating</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 most important words Characterization chart Character map Character sketch Think-along questions

How Is Each Lesson Organized?

Each lesson in *Focus on Reading Strategies* has six sections.* Students will use multiple strategies as they complete the activities in each section. The variety of activities addresses multiple learning styles.

Before Reading: Heads Up Direct instruction in this section accesses prior knowledge and builds background knowledge to provide a framework for deeper understanding of the reading selection in the lesson. Research shows that readers are in a better position to understand what they're reading if prior knowledge is activated (Vacca, 2002; Irvin, et al., 1995).

During Reading: Think-Along Questions In grades 2–8, specific questions are interjected throughout the selection to promote active reading. Readers will question what they read, make predictions, make connections, and practice the featured skill as they answer the questions and interact with the author's words. Research shows that proficient readers keep a constant check on their understanding as they read (Duke & Pearson, 2002; Irvin, et al., 1995).

After Reading: Read with Understanding This multiple-choice question offers practice in the featured skill. The format of this activity is similar to questions included in state, national, and standardized tests.

After Reading: Make Sense of Words A featured strategy will be applied to vocabulary bolded within the selection. Students are encouraged to use this vocabulary strategy with other words that they identify as difficult to read. Research substantiates vocabulary knowledge as an important factor in successful comprehension (Laflamme, 1997; Barton & Billmeyer, 1998). Building vocabulary will increase students' comprehension (Stahl, 1999).

After Reading: Understand by Seeing It Students use visual mapping strategies with a variety of graphic organizers to practice the skill featured in the lesson.

After Reading: Write to Learn Reading instruction should make connections between reading and writing (Duke & Pearson, 2002). Students connect reading and writing and demonstrate their understanding of the selection through this low-stakes writing activity. Research shows that low-stakes writing helps readers interact personally with the text without the pressure of completing a finished piece of writing (Vacca, 2002).

Will Students Have a Chance to Review?

Two Review lessons, one after the first three units and the second after the last three units, offer students an opportunity to make connections as they practice the skills and strategies from the previous three units on a new selection.

How Is Listening Comprehension Included?

A Listening Comprehension activity follows each review. The selections for each listening lesson and directions for presenting them are provided in this resource. These selections and the activities that follow help students learn to become attentive, active listeners. Students will make and confirm predictions as they complete the questions related to the listening selections.

**Think-Along Questions* are not included in *Focus on Reading Strategies*, Level A.

All About Using the *Focus on Reading Strategies* Workbooks

Which Students Should Use *Focus on Reading*?

Focus on Reading workbooks, Levels B–H are designed for students in grades 2–8. By second grade, students are reading independently and are well on their way toward mastering the cognitive processes of reading. As developing readers work throughout the year fine-tuning their decoding skills and continuing to build their automatic recognition of high-frequency words, they should also be learning and using the active reading strategies necessary for future success in reading. By third grade and beyond, students have mastered the cognitive processes of reading. At this point, active reading strategies are the tools necessary to master the comprehension of increasingly difficult and diverse reading tasks.

The *Focus on Reading* workbooks are designed for students reading at or near grade level. The interest level and reading level of the selections as well as the standards-based skills featured in the *Focus on Reading* workbooks are grade-level appropriate.

Can Students Work Through the *Focus on Reading* Workbooks Independently?

The *Focus on Reading* workbooks, Levels B–H are self-contained and designed to be completed independently by students. The direct instruction and clear, detailed directions provide explanations and practice of important literacy skills and strategies. Response Keys are provided in the Teacher Guide and can be copied for self-correcting.

Although the *Focus on Reading* workbooks are designed to be used independently by students, learning will be enhanced through discussion. Talking about text, whether teacher-directed or student-to-student in partners or small groups, extends and deepens comprehension (Duke & Pearson, 2002).

All About *Focus on Reading Strategies*, Level B

The fiction and nonfiction selections represent a wide variety of interesting reading for students in grade 2.

Unit 1: Use Picture Clues

Lesson 1: Snakes! from *Schoolhouse on the Prairie*
Historical Fiction by Cynthia Mercati

Lesson 2: Cardboard Yo-Yo from *Tops (and Other Spinning Toys)*
Directions by Beth Dvergsten Stevens

Unit 2: Use Prior Knowledge

Lesson 3: from *Zelda: A Brown Bat*
Narrative Nonfiction by Bonnie Highsmith Taylor

Lesson 4: Nelson: George Washington's Horse from *Presidential Pet Tails*
Narrative Nonfiction by Kathleen M. Muldoon

Unit 3: Sequence Events

Lesson 5: The Hat from *Days with Frog and Toad*
Short Story by Arnold Lobel

Lesson 6: *Busy, Buzzy Bee*
Narrative Nonfiction by Karen Wallace

Review 1

from *Dinosaurs*
Narrative Nonfiction by Norman Bilbrough

Listening Comprehension 1

The Father and His Sons
Fable

continued

Unit 4: Make Predictions

Lesson 7: from *I Saw You in the Bathtub and Other Folk Rhymes*
Folk Rhyme by Alvin Schwartz

Lesson 8: from *Heroes of Beesville*
Chapter Book Excerpt by Coach John Wooden

Unit 5: Think About Characters

Lesson 9: from *The Grandma Mix-Up*
Chapter Book Excerpt by Emily Arnold McCully

Lesson 10: from *Sagebrush*
Historical Fiction by Bonnie Highsmith Taylor

Unit 6: Reread Passages

Lesson 11: Night Senses
Magazine Article from *Your Big Backyard*

Lesson 12: from *Mice at Bat*
Chapter Book Excerpt by Kelly Oechsli

Review 2

Baseball Dreams
Short Story

Listening Comprehension 2

The City Mouse and the Country Mouse
Aesop's Fable



Lesson 5

Make Sense of Words (page 42)

Synonyms:

giant
tall
high

Read with Understanding (page 43)

D. Frog gave Toad a hat for his birthday.

Understand by Seeing It (page 44)

1. The hat fell down over Toad's eyes.
2. Frog told Toad to think very big thoughts.
3. The hat began to shrink.
4. "Now I can wear your present!" Toad cried.
5. Toad did not fall in a hole.

Lesson 6

Make Sense of Words (page 51)

cells
grubs
hive
feelers
pollen
nectar

Read with Understanding (page 52)

1. The queen bee lays a thousand eggs.
2. The eggs hatch into bee grubs.
3. The bee grubs' cells are sealed with waxy covers.
4. The bees crawl out of the cells and wait for their wings to dry.

Understand by Seeing It (page 53)

Answers may vary.

continued