Reading Comprehension: Monitoring Meaning

DOMAIN: Language Development and Communication

CLAIM: Students can acquire the foundational skills for reading and integrate these skills for comprehending increasingly complex texts.

RATIONALE

The ability to comprehend a wide range of increasingly complex texts is central to acquiring the capacities of a literate individual. According to Torgesen (1998), “adequate reading comprehension is the most important ultimate outcome of effective instructions in reading” (p.33). Learning to read is a complex process that requires young children to acquire and continue to develop automaticity with foundational skills as well as language processes that together build their capacity to comprehend a variety of written texts (National Early Literacy Panel, 2009; National Reading Panel, 2000). Successful readers can integrate the sound, visual, and meaning systems of language to monitor comprehension, repair misunderstandings and apply their understandings to a range of increasingly complex texts in a variety of settings.

According to Marie Clay (1991), children should be responsible for monitoring their own reading so that it makes sense. Teachers must allow children time to think and problem solve before prompting. “Proficient readers monitor their comprehension during reading – they know when the text they are reading or listening to makes sense, when it does not, what does not make sense, and whether the unclear portions are critical to overall understanding of the piece” (Keene, 2008, p.246). This monitoring for meaning allows for understanding to occur. Children need to be taught to be flexible and adaptable in using strategies independently to improve and maintain understanding.

ALIGNMENT TO NC STANDARDS

NC Foundations for Early Learning and Development
- APL-2 Children actively seek to understand the world around them.
- APL-9 Children persist at challenging activities.
- LDC-3 Children ask and answer questions in order to seek help, get information, or clarify something that is not understood.
- LDC-9 Children comprehend and use information presented in books and other print media.
- CD-1 Children use their senses to construct knowledge about the world around them.
- CD-2 Children recall information and use it for new situations and problems.
- CD-3 Children demonstrate the ability to think about their own thinking: reasoning, taking perspectives, and making decisions.

NC Standard Course of Study (Common Core State Standards & Essential Standards)

KINDERGARTEN
- RL.K.1 With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about key details in a text.
- RL.K.2 With prompting and support, retell familiar stories, including key details.
- RL.K.4 Ask and answer questions about unknown words in a text.
- RL.K.10 Actively engage in group reading activities with purpose and understanding.
- RI.K.4 With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about unknown words in a text.
- RF.K.4 Read emergent-reader texts with purpose and understanding.
- SL.K.2 Confirm understanding of a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media by asking and answering questions about key details and requesting clarification if something is not understood.

GRADE 1
- RL.1.2 Retell stories, including key details, and demonstrate understanding of their central message or lesson.
- RI.1.3 Describe the connection between two individual events, ideas, or pieces of information in a text.
- RI.1.4 Ask and answer questions to help determine or clarify the meaning of words and phrases in a text.
- RI.1.7 Use the illustrations and details in a text to describe its key ideas.
- RF.1.4 Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension.
- SL.1.2 Ask and answer questions about key details in a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media.
GRADE 2
RL.2.1 Ask and answer such questions as who, what, where, when, why, and how to demonstrate understanding of key details in a text.
RL.2.7 Use information gained from the illustrations and words in a print or digital text to demonstrate understanding of its characters, setting, or plot.
RI.2.1 Ask and answer such questions as who, what, where, when, why, and how to demonstrate understanding of key details in a text.
RI.2.5 Know and use various text features (e.g., captions, bold print, subheadings, glossaries, indexes, electronic menus, icons) to locate key facts or information in a text efficiently.
RI.2.7 Explain how specific images (e.g., a diagram showing how a machine works) contribute to and clarify a text.
RF.2.4 Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension.
SL.2.2 Recount or describe key ideas or details from a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media.

GRADE 3
RL.3.1 Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.
RI.3.1 Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.
RI.3.2 Determine the main idea of a text; recount the key details and explain how they support the main idea.
RF.3.4 Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension.
RESOURCES USED


# READING COMPREHENSION: MONITORING MEANING

**UNDERSTANDING:** Children understand that text (pictures and print) makes sense.

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<th>SKILLS</th>
<th>PERFORMANCE DESCRIPTORS</th>
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<td>A. Listens to a story or informational text and monitors for meaning.</td>
<td>After hearing <em>There's a Monster Under My Bed</em> [by James Howe] read aloud, Barbara Ann says, “I don’t think there’s really a monster under there.” When discussing the book that Mrs. Murray read about water, Allen describes water, ice, and water vapor as states of matter. Ms. Richardson reads an informational text about adaptation, and Kirk describes the example of how amphibians adapt to winter weather. Yolanda checks the learning stations board to see what activities are available. She reads the picture of letters and words to mean that the word study station is “open”. During a math lesson, Denise learns about bar graphs. As part of the class study of pets, the students make a bar graph of their favorite pets. Denise describes how the graph shows the popularity of different kinds of pets. Billy’s interest in monarch butterflies leads him to look at an informational text about them. Without reading the text, he shows that he understands the maps showing the migration paths, since he can locate his home state.</td>
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<td>B. Uses a picture or image to monitor for meaning.</td>
<td>Ralph is reading aloud his take-home reader to his teacher, Ms. Byrd. As he reads, he encounters several unfamiliar words. He invents text and continues to read, even though what he is reading does not make sense. As Kent is reading aloud to his teacher, Ms. Poulin, he skips two lines of text. He continues reading, not noticing that the reading does not make sense. Cassie reads aloud a story that includes dialogue but does not attend to any of the punctuation, sometimes decoding words incorrectly, and continues to read without noticing errors that affect meaning.</td>
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<td>C. Pretends to read a familiar book; retells following the story line.</td>
<td>Sally is reading a book during silent reading. She says out loud, “I don’t get this!” She stops reading, without attempting to repair meaning. Remy knows a lot of facts and vocabulary about the Egyptian pyramids. When he is reading aloud a text about the pyramids, he reads that the pyramids “had many chimneys.” He pauses in his reading and says, “Huh. Pyramids don’t have chimneys.” He continues reading without self-correcting. While reading aloud an informational text about the natural environment, Ben reads “population” instead of the word “pollution” and says, “Wait a minute; that doesn’t make sense.” However, he carries on reading without self-correcting.</td>
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<td>D. Reads without monitoring or noticing when the reading does not make sense.</td>
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<td>E. Monitors reading, recognizing that the reading does not make sense without attempting to repair meaning.</td>
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* Because children monitor meaning and learn to self-correct to repair comprehension in a variety of ways, the performance descriptors illustrate some of these ways, including: Cross-Checking Cueing Systems, Phrasing and Punctuation, Making Connections, Visualizing, Predicting, Questioning, Inferring, Context Clues, Determining Importance, Summarizing, Adjusting Rate.
**READING COMPREHENSION: MONITORING MEANING**

**UNDERSTANDING:** Children understand that text (pictures and print) makes sense.

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<th>F. Monitors reading, noticing that the reading does not make sense, and attempts to repair and preserve meaning.</th>
<th>G. Monitors reading, using strategies for self-correction when suggested by the teacher.</th>
<th>H. Monitors reading, using self-correction strategies independently, but does not select the optimal strategy.</th>
<th>I. Monitors reading, using optimal self-correction strategies independently to improve and maintain meaning.</th>
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During guided reading, Brad is whisper reading as Ms. Collins listens in. As he reads, he makes several errors and realizes that what he is reading does not make sense. He rereads the passage in an attempt to make the text make sense; however, he is unsuccessful and looks at Ms. Collins for help.

Alphonse is reading aloud *The Blind Men and the Elephant* [by Karen Backstein]. The text is: “Although these men could not see,” Alphonse reads, “All the these men could not see.” Noticing that the reading does not make sense, he rereads the sentence as, “Because these men could not see.” He preserves meaning without reading it accurately.

While reading a chapter book that has several characters in the story, Malik becomes confused about which character is doing what. He rereads for clarification, asking himself who is doing what. After using this strategy, he is able to continue reading without his previous confusion.

Sue is reading aloud “I like to go to the . . .” and stops when she comes to a word she does not know. Mr. Kissel asks Sue to look at the picture for what would make sense. Sue looks at the picture and says, “Oh, they are at the zoo.” Her cross-checking of cueing systems works, and Sue rereads the sentence as “I like to go to the zoo.”

Before Cora begins reading aloud, Mrs. Huerta asks Cora to retell what she has already read independently. Cora’s retell is inaccurate, so the teacher suggests that she reread a small chunk of text and put it into her own words. Cora rereads the small chunk, retells again, and repairs the inaccuracies.

Sam is reading aloud instructions for a new board game he wants to play with his friends. When he becomes confused about what he is reading, Ms. Mbalia suggests that he look at the illustrations. By rereading and looking at the illustrations, Sam figures it out.

Harriet is reading aloud and comes to a word for which she does not know the meaning. She checks the classroom word wall, but the word she is looking for is not on the wall. She then continues to read.

Sandy is reading a chapter book and states he is having difficulty determining which character is the hero. He uses the strategy of looking at the illustration for help, but the illustration is a simple line drawing, which does not clarify meaning. He then continues to read.

Cameron is reading a text about the planets. He uses his knowledge of the order of the planets to infer their names when he encounters the name of a planet that he finds challenging to decode. However, the list of planets in the book is not in the order of the planets from the Sun (they are in alphabetical order), so his strategy does not work.

Jonny is reading to the teacher. He comes to a word and pauses. Jonny says, “‘Dog’ would make sense, but the word starts with the letter p. ‘Puppy’ would make sense, and it looks right.”

During guided reading, Ms. Romance is listening to Jamie read. Jamie reads a sentence, “When the old woman saw the quilt, she got a smell on her face and tears in her eyes.” She immediately rereads the sentence as, “When the old woman saw the quilt, she got a smell on her face and tears in her eyes.” Ms. Romance says to Jamie, “I like how you fixed that error. How did you know what to do?” Jamie says, “I checked the picture and the old lady was smiling; plus it made no sense for her to have a smell on her face.”

While reading an informational text about dolphins, Erik doesn’t know the meaning of the word “mammals”. He keeps reading further and is able to connect the description of the characteristics of mammals to what he knows about farm animals and then remembers that they are called mammals.

* Because children monitor meaning and learn to self-correct to repair comprehension in a variety of ways, the performance descriptors illustrate some of these ways, including: Cross-Checking Cueing Systems, Phrasing and Punctuation, Making Connections, Visualizing, Predicting, Questioning, Inferring, Context Clues, Determining Importance, Summarizing, Adjusting Rate.
### SITUATION: Reading for Meaning

**Understanding:** Children understand that text (pictures and print) makes sense.

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**Preparation**
- Time during the day, such as Reader’s Workshop or Literature Circles, when the teacher uses modeling, group discussion, and student practice to help students learn about the multiple strategies readers use for self-monitoring and self-correcting meaning during reading
- Daily opportunities for students to read texts at their independent levels
- Collection of a variety of books for each child at his/her independent reading level (e.g., Book Box, Independent Reading Folder)
- Individual reading spaces that support students’ best independent reading (e.g., away from distractions, lying on the floor, sitting in a chair)
- Opportunities for one-on-one teacher-child conferences as students read independently

**General Description**

The teacher provides a lesson that includes teacher demonstration and student practice or group discussion about the multiple strategies readers can use to 1) monitor their reading for meaning and 2) self-correct their reading when meaning breaks down. This is followed by time for students to read from their collection of independent-leveled books and teacher conferencing.

**Generating Evidence of Learning**

The teacher begins by providing a lesson focused on a particular concept(s) and/or incorporating strategies that help the students 1) monitor their reading for meaning and 2) self-correct their reading when meaning breaks down. The lesson includes a demonstration of the skill(s)/strategy(s) discussed and opportunities for students to discuss and practice the strategies that help to monitor meaning.

Then, the teacher provides time for students to read from their collection of independent-level books and meets individually and/or with small groups to instruct, ask probing questions to determine the edge of their understanding, and support the students based on their individual needs and learning targets. During this time, the teacher listens to the child reading aloud, observes the child’s reading behaviors, and notices how and/or if the child demonstrates self-monitoring for meaning.

**Examples**

- **Alphonse reads aloud The Blind Men and the Elephant [by Karen Backstein].** The text is: “Although these men could not see.” Alphonse reads, “All the these men could not see.” Noticing that the reading does not make sense, he rereads the sentence as “Because these men could not see.” He crosschecks using meaning, and preserves meaning, while ignoring visual cues. The teacher says, “Alphonse, you reread when you realized that your reading didn’t make sense. That’s what good readers do.”

- **Johnny reads to the teacher.** He comes to a word and pauses. Johnny says, “‘Dog’ would make sense, but the word starts with the letter p. ‘Puppy’ would make sense, and it looks right.” The teacher states, “Johnny, you thought about what would make sense, but when you checked the letters, you didn’t see D for dog. Then you used the letter p to get to puppy. That work made your reading make sense and look right.”

- **During Guided Reading the teacher listens to Jamie read.** Jamie reads a sentence, “When the old woman saw the quilt, she got a smile on her face and tears in her eyes.” She immediately rereads the sentence as, “When the old woman saw the quilt, she got a smile on her face and tears in her eyes.” The teacher says to Jamie, “I like how you fixed that error. How did you know what to do?” Jamie says, “I checked the picture, and the old lady was smiling; plus it made no sense for her to have a smell on her face.”

**Suggested Probes:**
- Did what you just read make sense?
- I noticed that you stopped reading. Can you tell me why you stopped?
- I noticed that you reread. Can you tell me why you reread that?
- Are there other strategies you could use to help your reading make sense?

**Probes to Avoid:**
- That doesn’t make sense.
- Reread it and make it make sense.
- Think about the picture when you are reading the story.
- Try that again.
- Are you thinking about the story?
| Interpreting the Evidence | Observation: Hank uses the pictures in a wordless book to tell a story. The story he tells makes sense.  
- **Identify Learning Status on Construct Progression:** B. Reads a picture or image to monitor for meaning.  
Observation: As Kent reads aloud to his teacher, he skips two lines of text. He continues reading, not noticing that the reading does not make sense.  
- **Identify Learning Status on Construct Progression:** D. Reads without monitoring or noticing when the reading does not make sense.  
Observation: Alphonse reads aloud *The Blind Men and the Elephant* [by Karen Backstein]. The text is: “Although these men could not see.” Alphonse reads, “All these men could not see.” Noticing that the reading does not make sense, he rereads the sentence as “Because these men could not see.”  
- **Identify Learning Status on Construct Progression:** F. Monitors reading, notices that the reading does not make sense, and attempts to repair and preserve meaning.  
Observation: Harriet reads aloud and comes to a word for which she does not know the meaning. She checks the classroom word wall, but the word is not on the wall. She then continues to read.  
- **Identify Learning Status on Construct Progression:** H. Uses self-correction strategies independently, but may not select the optimal strategy.  
Observation: While reading a nonfiction book about dolphins, Erik doesn’t know the meaning of the word “mammals.” He keeps reading further and is able to connect the description of the characteristics of mammals to what he knows about farm animals and then remembers that they are called mammals.  
- **Identify Learning Status on Construct Progression:** I. Uses optimal self-correction strategies independently to improve and maintain understanding. |

| Adaptive/Responding to Learning Needs | Once the evidence is interpreted and the learning status is identified on the construct progression, continue to adapt and respond to the learning needs of the student addressing the same learning target if the student hasn’t met it. If the student has met the learning target, work with the student to select a new learning target for teaching and learning. |

| Observational Opportunities | There are many opportunities throughout the day when children may be observed monitoring their reading for meaning and attempting to use self-correction strategies when meaning breaks down, such as: listening to a book being read aloud (Read Aloud); reading a text at the independent reading level (Reader’s Workshop); reading a text with teacher support during small group instruction (Guided Reading); or attempting to read a difficult book of interest. During these opportunities, the teacher observes students’ use of reading strategies to 1) monitor their reading for meaning and 2) self-correct their reading when meaning breaks down. |