**Examples of Reading Comprehension Strategies**

Practice the following skills to improve reading comprehension.

      Skills that are important for comprehension\*\*:

 1.    Understand the words -- comprehend what the words mean
  2.    Find facts and details -- seek one or more pieces of information in the text
  3.    Find main ideas -- from the whole content, prioritize
             the overriding (primary) theme or idea
  4.    Figure out the sequence -- tell the order of events
  5.    Find cause-effect -- see how one person, action, or event triggers another; also, identify the "who" or "what" that occurs
  6.    Make inferences -- develop ideas or images based on what is read in the text but not stated
  7.    Generalize -- discern the relationship between single events and the larger situation or other events
  8.    Identify tone/mood -- sense how the author was feeling and how he wanted the reader to feel while reading
  9.    Identify "theme" -- see the "big picture" moral or abstract idea
10.    Identify characterization -- comprehend what motivates characters to act a certain way
11.    Distinguish fact from fiction -- sort out what is real and what is part of the imaginary world created by the author
12.    Find bias or propaganda -- notice obvious or hidden bias

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| \*\*Adapted from The Reading Process *(author unknown)* |

### A kid's perspective: What this feels like to me to struggle understanding:

Children will usually express their frustration and difficulties in a general way, with statements like "I hate reading!" or "This is stupid!". But if they could, this is how kids might describe how comprehension difficulties in particular affect their reading:

* It takes me so long to read something. It's hard to follow along with everything going on.
* I didn't really get what that book was about.
* Why did that character do that? I just don't get it!
* I'm not sure what the most important parts of the book were.
* I couldn't really create an image in my head of what was going on.

**How to help Comprehension at home**

With the help of parents and teachers, kids can learn strategies to cope with comprehension problems that affect his or her reading. Below are some tips and specific things to do.

**What kids can do to help themselves**

* Use outlines, maps, and notes when you read.
* Make flash cards of key terms you might want to remember.
* Read stories or passages in short sections and make sure you know what happened before you continue reading.
* Ask yourself, "Does this make sense?" If it doesn't, reread the part that didn't make sense.
* Read with a buddy. Stop every page or so and take turns summarizing what you've read.
* Ask a parent or teacher to preview a book with you before you read it on your own.
* As you read, try to form mental pictures or images that match the story.

**What parents can do to help at home**

* Hold a conversation and discuss what your child has read. Ask your child probing questions about the book and connect the events to his or her own life. For example, say "I wonder why that girl did that?" or "How do you think he felt? Why?" and "So, what lesson can we learn here?".
* Help your child make connections between what he or she reads and similar experiences he has felt, saw in a movie, or read in another book.
* Help your child monitor his or her understanding. Teach her to continually ask herself whether she understands what she's reading.
* Help your child go back to the text to support his or her answers.
* Discuss the meanings of unknown words, both those he reads and those he hears.
* Read material in short sections, making sure your child understands each step of the way.
* Discuss what your child has learned from reading informational text such as a science or social studies book.

\*\*\*Source: Readingrockets.org