

Shared Reading Strategies

Strategic Reading and Language Comprehension

The goal of shared strategic reading, or context based language comprehension intervention, is not to teach students how to decode. The principal goal of shared strategic reading is to target students' language and meta-linguistic awareness skills. The ultimate goal is for students with language and comprehension difficulty to independently recognize and repair their own comprehension breakdowns.

Scaffolding through Linguistic Facilitation

Scaffolding is a term borrowed from the construction industry. In the construction industry, scaffolding is used to provide a temporary support structure for workers and tools as the building is being constructed or repaired. As the building takes shape, it eventually reaches a stage where it can stand unaided. The scaffolding is then gradually removed. Similarly, instructional scaffolding, as used with linguistic facilitation, is a series of structured oral language strategies and tools that teachers and clinicians use to support students' language and reading comprehension. The goal is for instructional scaffolding to be gradually removed as students attain a level of competence and mastery in identifying their own comprehension breakdowns.

Skilled readers are actively involved in the understanding of difficult text. When proficient readers read a passage that they have not understood, they may reread the passage - sometimes several times - to ensure they have understood the meaning. This is especially true of highly complex text. In contrast, readers with poor comprehension skills often don't recognize when they have not clearly understood a passage. Such readers will simply continue reading not realizing they have missed a large chunk of meaning that may be essential to understanding a book or story as a whole. Students who do not or cannot repair their comprehension failure will need to be explicitly taught language comprehension repair skills. One of the most effective means of teaching comprehension repair strategies is to scaffold comprehension breakdown using a variety of linguistic facilitation techniques.

Linguistic Facilitation Techniques

Effective language intervention are structured and prompt students to think about difficult text in a reflective way. As teachers of oral language, educators and speech clinicians support students' understanding of difficult text through a range of scaffolded facilitation techniques. This section features effective oral and written language techniques in the form of graphic organizers that are used to scaffold targeted language behaviour to improve students' reading and language comprehension.

Preparatory Sets

Building background knowledge prior to reading a text is achieved using preparatory sets. These are used to trigger students' background knowledge about a particular topic. Students with reading comprehension problems have difficulty understanding text, often because of poor vocabularies and impoverished semantic word knowledge. Preparatory sets focus students' attention on target words or themes. This extra focus creates an expectation of the text passage's probable meaning.

Semantic Map

Semantic maps are tools that are often used in conjunction with preparatory sets. Semantic maps are used to brainstorm information about a particular word or topic. They are useful in building a detailed amount of background knowledge.

Extensions

The clinician or teacher comments about a selected passage to expand on a target or specific aspect of the text. The teacher's role is to model insights about the text and invite students to add their own interpretation. Extensions are a vital and important tool that can greatly expand a student's understanding of a particular passage. Extensions work by adding *meaning* to unfamiliar words and phrases.

Expansions

When we expand a student's utterance, we provide grammatical and syntactical details to it that supports the student's words so that they more resemble adult language forms. For example, if a child says, *'bike go fast,'* we can expand the utterance with, *'Yes, the bike goes fast. The bike is going fast,'* etc.

Imitations

Imitations are a valuable tool that involve the clinician simply repeating what the student has said. By repeating the student's utterances, we increase the amount of times the student produces lexical, syntax and morphological forms.

Immersion

Immersion provides a high number of the target concept in different but related forms while interacting in a game, reading a book or any other language activity. By the clinician immersing students in language where the target form is repeatedly provided, students will be prompted to attempt the new form in their own communication. For example, the clinician wishes to teach the concepts of *harmony* while focusing on the target text passage. **Clinician:** *'Let's have a look at the word harmony. Harmony is something which is consistent and pleasing. Like a harmony in a song, or a harmony in an orchestra. People can also be in harmony if they work well together in a consistent way. So they work harmoniously'* etc.

Cloze Procedures

Cloze procedures use the context of a situation to assist students to identify a word they find difficult to say, or have yet to attempt. Students are prompted to fill in the blank or gap in a sentence or phrase. For instance, **Clinician:** *'Another word for feline is c.....'* The clinician produces only the first phoneme. The student is prompted to say *'cat.'*

Paraphrasing

Paraphrasing is used to define a difficult word or reword a complex sentence into shorter simpler sentences. In doing this you effectively help to reduce the complexity of a passage and increase students' understanding of a section of text. The following example illustrates this point. The clinician reads from the text, 'As Guff scanned the immense scene, he felt small, like an ant standing upon a seemingly infinite, newly cured and stretched skin of a great mammoth.' Clinician: *'That's a long sentence. Let's see if we can break the down a little. Guff is looking at large mountains that stretch to the horizon. We can imagine how it might feel to be a tiny ant standing on an immense rug. It might look like the rug would never end. The sentence features the word, **infinite**, which means to go on forever. So we can imagine that Guff is surrounded by big mountains, and he feels very small'* etc.

Generalization

Generalization is an effective language arts tool that links events and themes from a story passage to events or situations that the student may have experienced in their own life. Generalizations increase a student's understanding and comprehension of new information by making an association with information they already know. For example, Clinician: *'Have you ever been to the mountains or gone skiing? You have? That's great. Well think about how large and scary those mountains are. How do you think it would feel to be lost, alone in the mountains?'*

Summarization

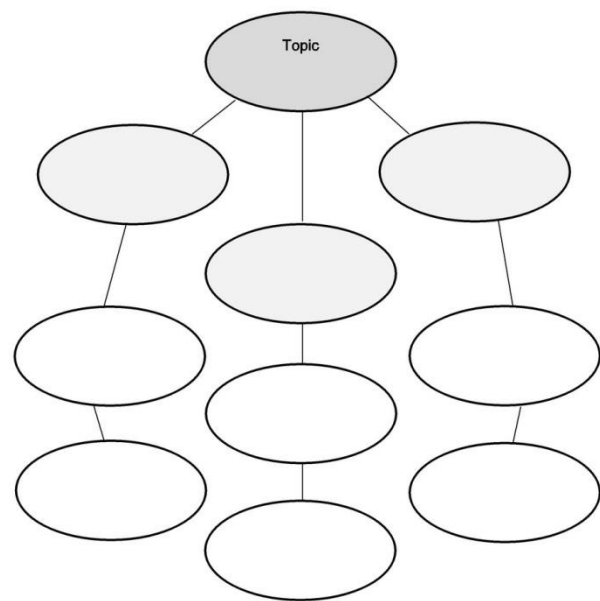
Summarization is an essential component of language arts. In summarization, the clinician restates the ideas discussed during the session and the information learnt just before the session ends. All sessions should be summarized to help students with language comprehension difficulties remember complex information.

Graphic Organizers

A graphic organizer is defined as a graphic representation of all or part of the elements of a particular concept you wish to teach. Graphic organizers are a popular technique to facilitate comprehension because they encourage organized thought and are an excellent *visual aid* when learning complex information. This book uses a number of graphic organizers which are central to a shared strategic reading when teaching language concepts. The graphic featured in this chapter organizers can be found in **Appendix C**.

The **pre-story background** graphic organizer is used by the clinician to high-light features of a story so as to provide appropriate back-ground knowledge for students. Students will also be able link any new information encountered in the story to ideas previously explored in the pre-story back-ground graphic organizer.

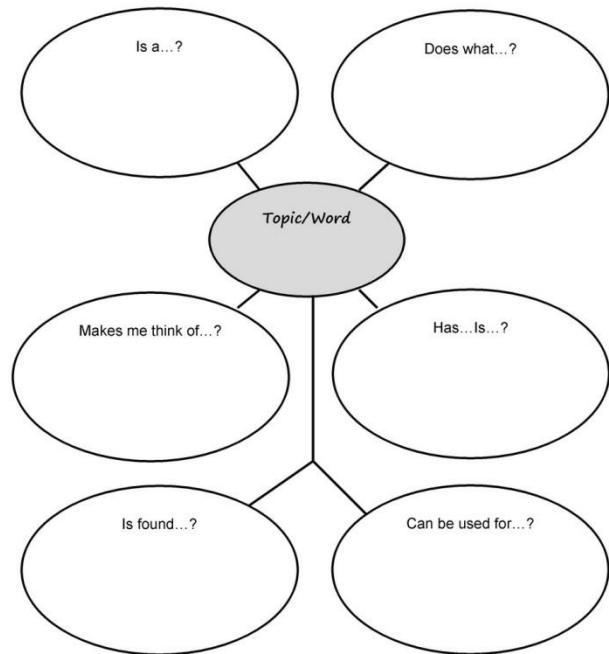
Pre-Story Background Map



Graphic Organizers

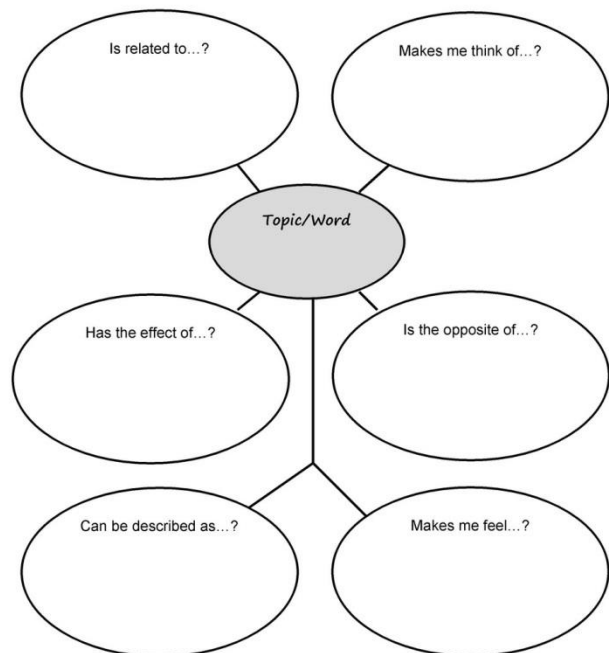
The **semantic map – nouns** graphic organizer is effective at exploring the different aspects of a noun whether it be an object or animal or a proper noun such as a person or a specific place.

Semantic Map for Nouns



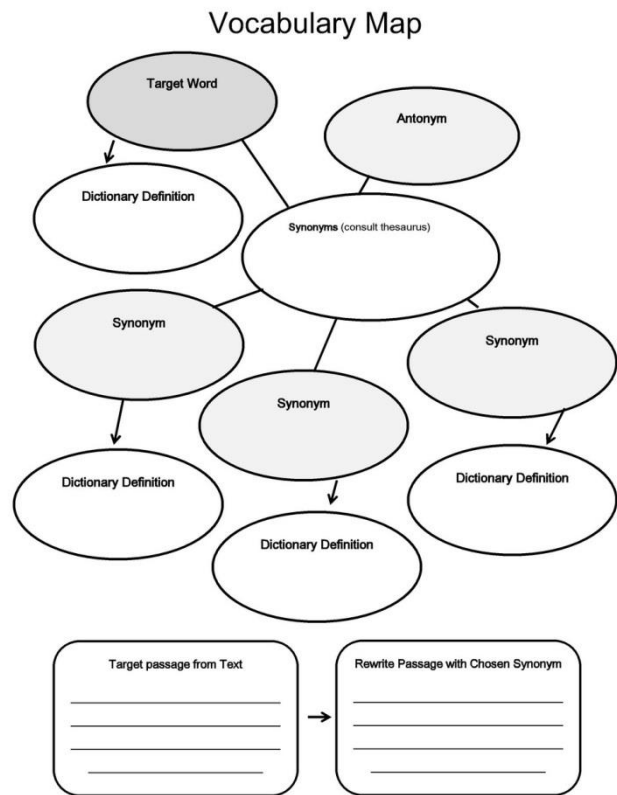
Similarly to the **semantic map – nouns** graphic organizer, the adjectives map helps explore multiple characteristics of adjectives, including possible synonyms and antonyms.

Semantic Map for Adjectives



Graphic Organizers

The **vocabulary map** graphic organizer is great for exploring synonyms and antonyms of a target word or words. A feature of this graphic organizer is replacing a word or phrase from the author's original text to discuss the author's choice of a particular word or phrase.



Graphic Organizers

The **story grammar map** graphic organizer explores the fundamental structure of a story and the sequence of events within the story structure.

Story Grammar Map

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graph TD
    A[Story Start: What problem sets the story in motion?] --> B[Setting: Where is the story set?]
    A --> C[Internal response: What does the character feel?]
    B --> D[Internal response: What does the character feel?]
    C --> D
    C --> E[Plan: What does the character plan to do?]
    D --> F[Attempts: What does the character do about the problem?]
    E --> F
    F --> G[Consequences: What happens when the character attempts to carry out the plan?]
    G --> H[Resolution: What happens at the end? How does the character feel at the end of the story?]
  
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The Story Grammar Map is a flowchart that outlines the structure of a story. It begins with a box labeled "Story Start: What problem sets the story in motion?". This box branches into two paths: "Setting: Where is the story set?" and "Internal response: What does the character feel?". The "Setting" box then leads to another "Internal response: What does the character feel?" box. From this second "Internal response" box, the flow continues to a "Plan: What does the character plan to do?" box. Both the "Internal response" and "Plan" boxes lead into a large box labeled "Attempts: What does the character do about the problem?". This box contains a numbered list from 1 to 4 for recording specific attempts. The "Attempts" box leads to a "Consequences: What happens when the character attempts to carry out the plan?" box, which finally leads to the "Resolution: What happens at the end? How does the character feel at the end of the story?" box.

The **story grammar character map** graphic organizer explores the myriad details that make up a character in a storybook. Several characters can be explored at once with the story grammar character map.

Story Grammar Character Map

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graph TD
    A[Character's name] --> B[Age and Gender]
    A --> C[Character Traits]
    A --> D[Character's Lifestyle]
    C --> E[Where the Character Lives]
    D --> E
    E --> F[Description of the Character]
  
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The Story Grammar Character Map is a flowchart designed to explore the details of a character. It starts with a box for "Character's name", which branches into "Age and Gender", "Character Traits", and "Character's Lifestyle". Both the "Character Traits" and "Character's Lifestyle" boxes lead to a box labeled "Where the Character Lives". Finally, the "Where the Character Lives" box leads to the "Description of the Character" box. Each of the boxes for "Character Traits", "Character's Lifestyle", "Where the Character Lives", and "Description of the Character" contains several horizontal lines for writing details.

Communicative Reading Strategies Guide 1

Passage from Text: 'The storm tossed the tiny boat on the seas as if it were a matchstick. The sun shone for a moment, but its warming rays were quickly engulfed by the angry and bruised sky.'

Preparatory Set (Background knowledge)

Assists the reader to recall background knowledge about the text passage.

Example: "What usually happens in a storm? A storm affects the sea by making the waves get bigger. etc... (Use a **semantic map** to explore different aspects of 'storm'.)"

Semantic Map

Graphic organizers provide a visual representation of linguistic concepts and the relationship between different aspects of language.

Paraphrasing

Paraphrasing is used to reword text. It can be used to define a difficult word or reword a complex sentence into shorter simpler sentences.

Example: Text – 'The sun shone for a moment, but its warming rays were quickly engulfed by the angry and bruised sky.' **Clinician:** 'It sounds like the sun shone through the clouds. So while it was able to shine it provided some warmth. It didn't last very long though. The angry and stormy sky enveloped the sun's rays again.'

Questioning

Fact Based Question: A question that has a specific answer. 'What did the sun do?'

Surface level Inference Question: Questions that asks about something that is hinted at in the text. 'What would a bruised and angry sky look like?'

Deep level Inference Question: Questions which do not rely on textual information. 'Will the boat and its crew survive? How do you know?'

Parsing

Parsing comes from the Latin word meaning *part*. When parsing, you **chunk** something into separate parts. Parsing helps students to understand that a sentence is made up of **separate** units.

Example from text: 'The storm tossed the tiny boat...' 'Find out what the storm did.' (**Point to word 'tossed'**) 'Tossed' is a past tense verb.

Generalization

Link the events from the story to real life events from the student's own experiences.

Example: 'Have you ever been on a boat in rough seas, or got caught in a storm?'

Summarization

The student, guided by the clinician, recounts the events in the story passage they have discussed. The clinician provides a summary of the session and the themes discussed during the session.

Communicative Reading Strategies Guide 2

Passage from Text: 'The storm tossed the tiny boat on the seas as if it were a matchstick. The sun shone for a moment, but its warming rays were quickly engulfed by the angry and bruised sky.'

Association

This technique creates links between an idea and/or sentence currently being read and information that has previously been read. Association helps the reader make links between different passages, which helps in understanding story cohesion and sequence.

Example: Clinician: 'The sky was **angry and bruised**, which is perhaps what the sky might look like in a **storm**.' (Links to first sentence in passage)

Choice or Contrast Questions

Provide choice and contrast questions if a student has difficulty understanding the meaning of a particular word or passage. Give the student some choices to think with and some contrast within those choices.

Example: Clinician: 'The waves made the boat seem as if it were the size of a matchstick. Were the waves very large or quite small?'

Cloze Procedure

Cloze procedures are a highly useful tool that uses story context to assist a student to identify a word they find difficult to decode. The student is required to fill in the blank or gap in a sentence.

Example: Clinician: 'The sun...(pause) for a moment.'

Student: 'The sun...**shone**...for a moment.'

Cloze Procedure with Gesture

Example: Clinician: 'The sun... (*Gesture as if sun's rays are spreading out* - 'shine-shone')...for a moment.'

Cloze Procedure with Phonemic Cue

Example: Clinician: 'The sun /sh/ ... for a moment.'

Student: 'The sun **shone**...'

Acknowledgement

Acknowledgement is a technique that the clinician uses to confirm to the reader that what they have read has been understood by both reader and facilitator. It is used to demonstrate that reading is a natural part of communication

Example: (Student reads text) 'The storm tossed the tiny boat on the seas as if it were a matchstick.'
Clinician: 'Wow, the storm must have been fierce if the boat seemed to be as little as a matchstick.'

Semantic Cue

A semantic cue is useful when a student has difficulty recognizing a word or is confronted with a new word they find difficult to decode. Use a dictionary to find the word's meaning and a thesaurus to find the synonym.

Example: Clinician: 'The word "**engulf**" means to be swallowed up or overwhelmed.' I think that's a clever way of describing the scene.' Let's have a look at the dictionary...'

