



Raising Readers Newsletter October, 2013

Check out this newsletter for some great reading tips and resources!

Starrmatica: An Outstanding Resource



*Is your child bored by traditional homework?
Does your child need some extra practice or a greater challenge?*

Hoosier Academy students now have free access to engaging content at home! A teacher can suggest activities through our individual progress accounts, or you can personally choose from StarrMatica's entire library of content to take your child beyond classroom instruction with challenging activities. With so many easily searchable choices, the assistance you are seeking is always right at your fingertips.

A few notes:

1. The website is www.starrmatica.com
2. Hoosier's User Code is 0183. This is for all Hoosier accounts.
3. Your username is your student ID number.
4. Your password is: Password1

Here is a link that explains more about what Starrmatica is and what you can find on this site. <http://www.starrmatica.com/what> On this site it states that there is content for grades 3-6, but there is also content being added for grades K-2!

Take advantage of this outstanding resource!



Focus on the Super 7: Mental Images

A different comprehension strategy will be focused upon each month. This month the focus will be on Visualizing/Creating Mental Images. Here is a link to an overview of all of the Super 7 Comprehension Strategies that will be focused upon in the upcoming months.

https://docs.google.com/file/d/0B5fzT_9S7dvZWDhDhDVWIGY0YyWEU/edit

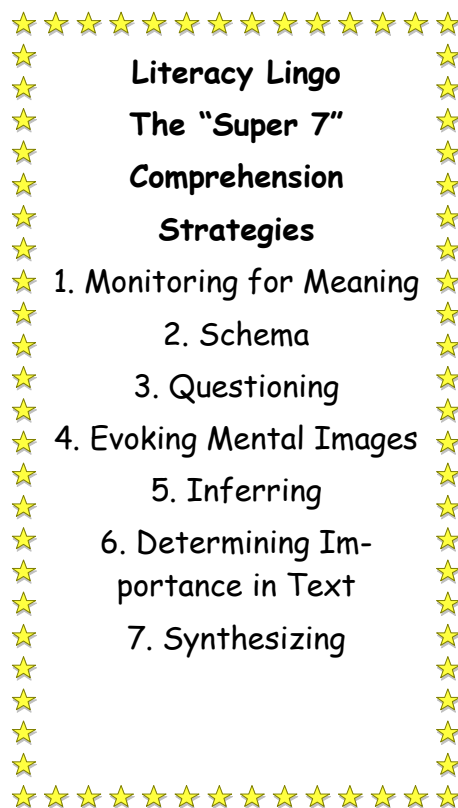
Good readers construct mental images as they read a text. By using prior knowledge and background experiences, readers connect the author's writing with a personal picture. Through guided visualization, students learn how to create mental pictures as they read.

How to Use Visual Imagery

- ⇒ Begin reading. Pause after a few sentences or paragraphs that contain good descriptive information.
- ⇒ Share the image you've created in your mind, and talk about which words from the book helped you "draw" your picture. Your picture can relate to the setting, the characters, or the actions. By doing this, you are modeling the kind of picture making you want your child to do.
- ⇒ Talk about how these pictures help you understand what's happening in the story.
- ⇒ Continue reading. Pause again and share the new image you created. Then ask your child to share what he sees, hears, tastes, smells and feels. Ask what words helped him create the mental image and emotions. By doing this, you are providing your child with practice with this new skill.
- ⇒ Are your images identical? Probably not! This is a great time to talk about why your images might be different. Perhaps your child went on a school field trip or had a school assembly that changed the way they created the picture in their mind. Perhaps experiences you've had as an adult influenced what you "drew." These differences are important to understand and respect.
- ⇒ Read a longer portion of text and continue the sharing process.

Once this is a familiar skill, encourage your child to use mental imagery when she is reading by herself. You can feel confident that these mental pictures will help your child understand the story in an important way.

www.readingrockets.org



Literacy Lingo

The "Super 7"

Comprehension

Strategies

1. Monitoring for Meaning

2. Schema

3. Questioning

4. Evoking Mental Images

5. Inferring

6. Determining Im-
portance in Text

7. Synthesizing

Focus on the Big 5: Phonemic Awareness

A different essential component of reading will be focused upon each month. This month will focus on phonemic awareness. Here is a link that includes an overview of the Big 5 essential components of reading instruction that will be focused upon in the upcoming months.

https://docs.google.com/file/d/0B5fzT_9S7dvZZ2l2V2R6Q1Z5c0E/edit

What is It?

Phonemic awareness refers to the specific ability to focus on and manipulate individual sounds (phonemes) in spoken words. Phonemes are the smallest units comprising spoken language. Phonemes combine to form syllables and words. For example, the word 'mat' has three phonemes: /m/ /a/ /t/. There are 44 phonemes in the English language, including sounds represented by letter combinations such as /th/. Acquiring phonemic awareness is important because it is the foundation for spelling and word recognition skills. Phonemic awareness is one of the best predictors of how well children will learn to read during the first two years of school instruction.

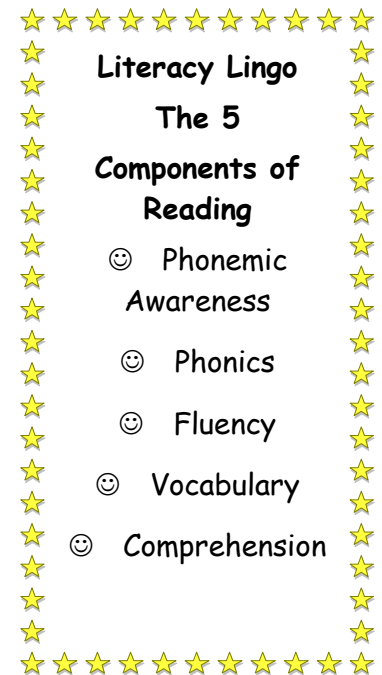
What Kids Can Do to Help Themselves:

- * Be willing to play word and sounds games with parents or teachers.
- * Be patient with learning new information related to words and sounds. Giving the ears a workout is difficult!
- * Practice hearing the individual sounds in words. It may help to use a plastic chip as a counter for each sound you hear in a word.
- * Be willing to practice writing. This will give you a chance to match sounds with letters.

What Parents Can Do At Home to Help:

- * Do activities to help your child build sound skills (make sure they are short and fun; avoid allowing your child to get frustrated):
- * Help your child think of a number of words that start with the /m/ or /ch/ sound, or other beginning sounds.
- * Make up silly sentences with words that begin with the same sound, such as "Nobody was nice to Nancy's neighbor".
- * Play simple rhyming or blending games with your child, such as taking turns coming up with words that rhyme (go - no) or blending simple words (/d/, /o/, /g/ = dog).
- * Read books with rhymes. Teach your child rhymes, short poems, and songs.
- * Practice the alphabet by pointing out letters wherever you see them and by reading alphabet books.
- * Consider using computer software that focuses on developing phonological and phonemic awareness skills. Many of these programs use colorful graphics and animation that keep young children engaged and motivated.

www.readingrockets.org



Literacy Lingo

The 5

Components of
Reading

☺ Phonemic
Awareness

☺ Phonics

☺ Fluency

☺ Vocabulary

☺ Comprehension

8 Ways Parents Can Promote Reading at Home

As a parent, you are your child's first - and most important - teacher. Here are eight ways you can help your child become a better reader.

1. Read yourself. Your actions really do speak louder than your words. When your kids see you reading the newspaper or curling up with a book, they will want to follow your example.

2. Make sure your children read every day. Reading - like shooting baskets and playing the piano - is a skill. Like other skills, it gets better with practice. Researchers have found that children who spend at least 20 minutes a day reading for fun - whether they read books, newspapers, or magazines - develop the skills to be better readers at school.

3. Get the library habit. Make sure everyone in your family has a library card. Schedule regular trips to the library. While you are there, check out a book yourself!

4. Read aloud to the children. In **The Read Aloud Handbook**, Jim Trelease reports on research showing that this is the most important thing parents can do to help their children become better readers. Here are some tips from the book:

- Start reading to your children when they are young. It is never too early to begin reading to your children, according to Trelease.
- Don't stop reading to your children as they grow older. You will both enjoy the chance to do something together.
- Set aside some time each day for reading aloud. Even 10 minutes a day can have a big impact. Bedtime is a natural reading aloud time. Other busy families read aloud at breakfast or just after dinner.
- Read books you enjoy. Your kids will know if you are faking it.

5. Here is a way to use your newspaper to encourage reading: a scavenger hunt. Give your child a list of things to find in today's newspaper. Here are some ideas:

A map of the United States.

- A picture of your child's favorite athlete.
- The temperature in the city where a family member lives.
- Three words that begin with "w".
- A movie that is playing at a nearby theater.

6. Give books as gifts. Then find a special place for your children to keep their own library.

7. Make reading a privilege. Say, "You can stay up 15 minutes later tonight if you read in bed." Or you might say, "Because you helped with the dishes, I have time to read you an extra story."

8. If you are not a good reader, you can still encourage your children. As your children learn to read, ask them to read to you. Talk about the books your children have read. Ask a friend or relative to read aloud to your children.

<http://www.ncc.org/Parent/8ways.read.html>



Resources Galore

Looking for engaging ways to introduce your child to reading or to encourage your teen to write? Need some age-appropriate book suggestions or rainy day activities? The materials here are your answer—all of them created by experts to be fun, educational, and easy to use outside of school.

<http://www.readwritethink.org/parent-afterschool-resources/>

"To read is to fly: it is to soar to a point of vantage which gives a view over wide terrains of history, human variety, ideas, shared experience and the fruits of many inquiries."

-A.C. Grayling

Parents can trust Funbrain to deliver a fun and safe experience for even the youngest children. Selected by FamilyFun magazine in its September 2010 issue as one of the top ten websites for kids, Funbrain is committed to providing a safe gaming environment that bridges learning and entertainment.

<http://www.funbrain.com/parents/index.html>



Created by:

Dana Smith

Title 1 Teacher

dasmith@hoosieracademy.org

<http://mrsdanasmith.weebly.com/>