**Raising Readers Newsletter**
**January, 2014**
**Check out this newsletter for some great reading tips and resources!**

# DIBELS 101

All students in grades K-6 will be given the middle of the year DIBELS Benchmark Assessment. All families should have received a k-mail explaining the DIBELS Assessment and a time when your student will need to attend a Class Connect session to be tested. If your child attends Lynn Black Elementary School, they will be tested at school. Please read below for additional information!

## What are DIBELS?

DIBELS are measures that help teachers and schools determine how students are performing on important reading skills. DIBELS stands for Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills. These measures are designed for students in grades K-6.

## What skills are measured by DIBELS and why are they important?

The critical skills necessary for successful beginning reading include: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. The DIBELS measures assess students on four of these five critical skills, which are often referred to as the "Big Ideas" of reading.

## How will the results be used?

A student's scores on the DIBELS measures give the school information about whether or not a student is on track for grade-level reading success. A school can quickly identify students who do not meet the goals on each DIBELS measure and provide extra help.

## Which tests will be given to my son or daughter during middle of the year testing?

| DIBELS Measure | K | Grade 1 | Grade 2 | Grades 3 - 6 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| First Sound Fluency | X | | | |
| Letter Naming Fluency | X | | | |
| Phoneme Segmentation Fluency | X | | | |
| Nonsense Word Fluency | X | X | | |
| Oral Reading Fluency + Retell Fluency | | X | X | X |
| Daze | | | | X |

Please check out my Weebly page to learn more about DIBELS!

http://mrsdanasmith.weebly.com/dibels.html

# Focus on the Super 7: Determining Importance

A different comprehension strategy will be focused upon each month. This month the focus will be on Determining Importance. 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_9S7dvZWDhDVWlGY0YyWEU/edit

## What is Determining Importance?

Proficient readers make purposeful and spontaneous decisions about what is important in text at the:
1. word level- finding the words that carry the meaning
2. sentence level- key sentences that carry the weight of the meaning for a paragraph or passage
3. whole text level- final conclusions about what is most important after reading

They make decisions based on:
1. Reader's purpose
2. Reader's schema (background knowledge)
3. Reader's schema for text format (How much experience do they have with the way the text is formatted?)
4. Conversations with other readers about the text

## What does it look like?

When readers determine importance, proficient readers:

1. Distinguish the differences between fiction and nonfiction

2. Build background knowledge of non-fiction conventions

3. Become familiar with the characteristics of non-fiction trade books, such as, titles, bold headings, pictures with captions, quotations, timelines, graphs, and maps

4. Notice and select new information on familiar and unfamiliar topics

5. Understand that there are often several important ideas in a piece of text rather than a single main idea

6. Read to find specific information

7. Determine key topics and important information

8. Use questioning and inferring to get the gist of the text

9. Find information based on questions they want to pursue

> **Literacy Lingo**
> **The "Super 7"**
> **Comprehension**
> **Strategies**
> 1. Monitoring for Meaning
> 2. Schema
> 3. Questioning
> 4. Evoking Mental Images
> 5. Inferring
> 6. Determining Importance in Text
> 7. Synthesizing

## Activities that Support this Strategy

- Encourage your child to look at the illustrations to foster understanding of the text.

- When reading non-fiction, be sure to point out conventions such as graphics, charts, and bold, italicized, or underlined words. These are often clues to the main ideas.

- Support your child with sentence starters and questions. Model what it means to determine importance while reading FICTION texts: What is the author's message? What is the problem in the story? How would you solve the problem? The big idea is…

- Support your child with sentence starters and questions. Model what it means to determine importance while reading NON-FICTION texts: What is important to remember? What is the author's message? What is important to the author? So far I've learned…

- Have your child draw a picture to show the main idea (or one of several main ideas or events) of a non-fiction or fiction text.
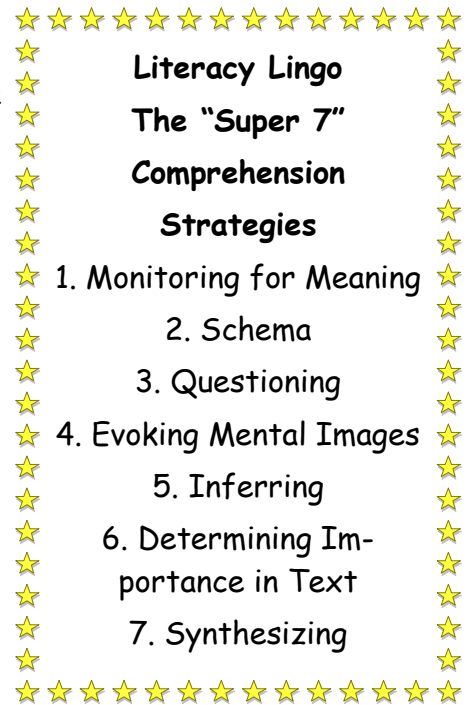
# Focus on the Big 5: Comprehension

A different essential component of reading will be focused upon each month. This month will focus on comprehension. 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.

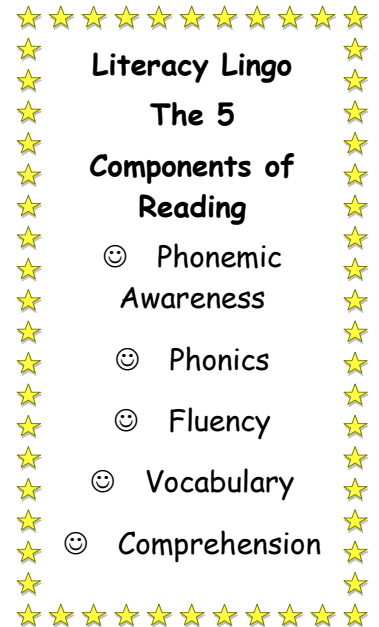https://docs.google.com/file/d/0B5fzT_9S7dvZZ2l2V2R6Q1Z5c0E/edit

### What is Reading Comprehension?

Reading comprehension is the ability to understand what is being read. Children must be able to read the words in the text and combine it with what they already know to "think" about what the author is trying to say. Reading comprehension is NOT just finding answers in the text. Children must be able to interact with the text, think deeper, analyze, predict and be able to summarize what is written.

### How can I help my child with reading comprehension?

- Before reading, look through the book and find words that your child may not know the meaning. Talk about the words with your child– discuss the meaning of the word and give examples. For example, "I was looking through the book and found this word, 'ecstatic'. Ecstatic means very, very happy and excited. I was ecstatic on the day you were born. Can you think of a time when you were ecstatic?"

- Before reading a story with your child, look at the cover. Read the title and look at the picture if there is one. Talk about what you already know about the topic and try to make a connection with what your child already knows. For example, before reading a book on "Desert Animals", you can talk about what your child already knows about the desert and animals that live in different areas. Activating this "prior knowledge" helps with reading comprehension.

- While reading, help your child make connections with the text. When you ask your child a questions such as "how would you feel if that happened to you?" or "does this part of the story remind you of our vacation on the beach?" you are having your child make a "text-to-self" connection".

- Encourage your child to make predictions while reading. ("What do you think will happen next?" "Let's keep reading and see").

- Model thoughtful question asking while reading. Stay away from yes/no questions. Questions such as "Why do you think the boy was afraid?" is preferable to "Was the boy afraid?"

- Model what good readers do when they don't understand what they are reading. "Think-aloud", or verbalize, what you are doing. For example, "I'm not quite sure I what this means, I'm going to go back and re-read this part."

- During and after reading, have your child retell or summarize the text.

- Encourage your child to "make a movie in his/her head" while reading. This strategy is known as mental imagery and helps with reading comprehension. If reading a chapter book with limited pictures on the pages, stop periodically in the story and share with your child how you are picturing the scene and ask him/her to share with you.

- Read aloud to your child and read with your child everyday!

-www.readingrockets.org

> **Literacy Lingo**
> **The 5**
> **Components of Reading**
> ☺ Phonemic Awareness
> ☺ Phonics
> ☺ Fluency
> ☺ Vocabulary
> ☺ Comprehension

# Strategy Focus: Coding the Text

Text coding is a strategy used to help students keep track of thinking while they are reading. Students use a simple coding system to mark the text and record what they are thinking either in the margins or on post-it notes. As students make connections, self-question, and respond to what they are reading, they are self-monitoring their comprehension and enhancing long term understanding. The codes help students name and remember a particular thinking strategy and track the thinking throughout the text.

-http://toolsfordifferentiation.pbworks.com/w/page/22360123/Text%20Coding

**Materials**:

2 post-it-notes, cut into 4 pieces, with sticky on the end.
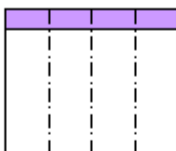
**Coding Key**:

**VIP**    Very important information, key concepts
  **?**    Information you are confused about or doesn't make sense
  **!**    Wow or Aha, things you find interesting, hard to believe, or
         was surprising

**As you read the text...**
Use your 8 post-it-note "**markers**" to mark sections of your text with the Coding Key symbols from above.

**When you finish reading . . .**
Go back to each marker and describe the codes with the following:

**For every VIP** summarize the information in your own words...
**For every ?** write a question to express what confuses you or
    doesn't make sense...
**For every !** summarize what/why you found this interesting. . .

One modification for utilizing this strategy would be for your child to verbally describe why they coded certain parts versus writing why they coded a certain part of the text. There are many different codes that can be used to code the text. Just make sure your child has a list of the codes and focuses just on 2-3 codes while reading.

This website includes some links to various codes that can be used:
http://toolsfordifferentiation.pbworks.com/w/page/22360123/Text%20Coding

# Resources Galore!

"There is more treasure in books than in all the pirate's loot on Treasure Island." — Walt Disney

## Target the Problem!

Check out this outstanding resource!  Target the Problem is a a tool to help parents and classroom teachers understand the specific problems a child may be having with reading. You'll find practical suggestions on what you (and kids themselves) can do to help students overcome or deal with their reading difficulties.  Visit the website listed below and click on "Start on the Target the Problem! Activity.

http://www.readingrockets.org/helping/target/

"To learn to read is to light a fire; every syllable that is spelled out is a spark." — Victor Hugo, *Les Miserables*

## E-Cards for Readers

Motivate the special children in your life to read and read some more! Send one of the free e-cards below to a child, student, grandchild, colleague, or friend. The e-cards were created for Reading Rockets by award-winning children's book illustrators Bruce Degen, Betsy Lewin, Peter Sís, Marc Brown, and many others.

http://www.readingrockets.org/books/fun/ecards/

"The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more you learn, the more places you'll go." — Dr. Seuss

## Video Interviews with Top Children's Books Authors and Illustrators

Watch Reading Rockets' exclusive video interviews with top children's book authors and illustrators. You'll discover if Chris Van Allsburg is really as spooky as his books, where Jon Scieszka gets his wacky ideas, and why Patricia Polacco's warm family tales seem so real.

http://www.readingrockets.org/books/interviews/

## Reading Tip of the Day Widget

Check out my  Reading Resources Weebly page and view the Reading Rockets Reading Tip of the Day!

http://mrsdanasmith.weebly.com/reading-resources.html

# Reading Tips Sent to Your Phone or E-mail!

**WHAT IS REMIND101 AND WHY IS IT SAFE?**

Remind101 is a one-way text messaging and email system. With Remind101, all personal information remains completely confidential. Teachers will never see your phone number, nor will you ever see theirs.

**Visit www.remind101.com to learn more.**

To receive messages via text, text **@6cdb08** to **(317) 456-7266**. You can opt-out of messages at anytime by replying, 'unsubscribe @6cdb08'.

To:

(317) 456-7266    Enter this number

Message:

@6cdb08    Text this message

*Standard text message rates apply.

Or to receive messages via email, send an email to **6cdb08@mail.remind101.com**. To unsubscribe, reply with 'unsubscribe' in the subject line.

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|---|---|
| Recipients | 6cdb08@mail.remind101.com |
| Subject | *(You can leave the subject blank)* |
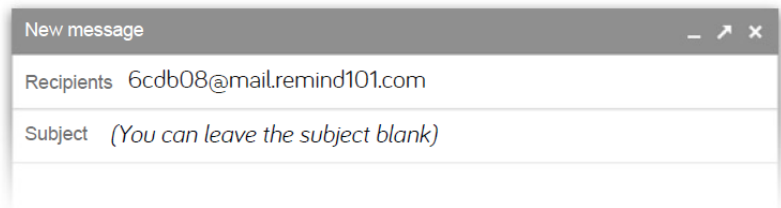
**Notes:** 2-3 reading tips will be sent out each week. If you ever want to unsubscribe, follow the instructions listed in the pictures above. **Standard text message rates apply!**

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