**Introduction**

What is reading? Reading is about understanding written texts. It is a complex activity that involves both perception and thought. Reading consists of two related processes: word recognition and comprehension. Word recognition refers to the process of perceiving how written symbols correspond to one’s spoken language. Comprehension is the process of making sense of words, sentences and connected text. Readers typically make use of background knowledge, vocabulary, grammatical knowledge, experience with text and other strategies to help them understand written text.

Researchs and classroom practices support the use of a balanced approach in teaching reading comprehension. Because reading comprehension depends on efficient word recognition and comprehension, instruction should develop reading skills and strategies, as well as build on learners’ knowledge through the use of authentic texts.

The theme of the research work consists in the new way of looking at the problem of teaching reading. Since teaching reading comprehension was always underestimated in teaching English as a second language, nonetheless it plays a great role in second language acquisition.

**The aim** is to analyze the existent problems in teaching reading comprehension and find the ways out of this problem by suggesting a series of exercises that can be useful in classroom activities.

Thus, according to the set aim we are to solve the following **tasks**:

* to determine the aim and nature of teaching reading comprehension;
* to open the essence of
* to describe the reading skills and teaching technics;
* to describe different approaches to teaching reading;
* to work out new technologies in teaching reading;

**The scientific novelty**: few would dispute the claim that comprehension is necessary in order for language acquisition to occur. In order to communicate effectively, learners must understand what is being said. To function successfully with a target language, learners depend upon their ability to comprehend the spoken and written word. Empirical studies have identified a positive relationship between listening ability and language acquisition as well as between reading ability and language acquisition.

**The theoretical and practical value** of the research work consist in the material that was used during the investigation work which may be used in further researches and be helpful in lectures on methodology of the English language as well as to teachers and students in their practical lessons.

Material under analysis is the literature on the theme of the work.

teaching reading exercise

**1. The General Characteristics of Teaching Reading Comprehension**

### 1.1 Reading Purpose and Reading Comprehension

Traditionally, the purpose of learning to read in a language has been to have access to the literature written in that language. In language instruction, reading materials have traditionally been chosen from literary texts that represent «higher» forms of culture.

This approach assumes that students learn to read a language by studying its vocabulary, grammar, and sentence structure, not by actually reading it. In this approach, lower level learners read only sentences and paragraphs generated by textbook writers and instructors. The reading of authentic materials is limited to the works of great authors and reserved for upper level students who have developed the language skills needed to read them.

The communicative approach to language teaching has given instructors a different understanding of the role of reading in the language classroom and the types of texts that can be used in instruction. When the goal of instruction is communicative competence, everyday materials such as train schedules, newspaper articles, and travel and tourism Web sites become appropriate classroom materials, because reading them is one way communicative competence is developed. Instruction in reading and reading practice thus become essential parts of language teaching at every level.

Reading is an activity with a purpose. A person may read in order to gain information or verify existing knowledge, or in order to critique a writer's ideas or writing style. A person may also read for enjoyment, or to enhance knowledge of the language being read. The purpose(s) for reading guide the reader's selection of texts.

The purpose for reading also determines the appropriate approach to reading comprehension. A person who needs to know whether she can afford to eat at a particular restaurant needs to comprehend the pricing information provided on the menu, but does not need to recognize the name of every appetizer listed. A person reading poetry for enjoyment needs to recognize the words the poet uses and the ways they are put together, but does not need to identify main idea and supporting details. However, a person using a scientific article to support an opinion needs to know the vocabulary that is used, understand the facts and cause-effect sequences that are presented, and recognize ideas that are presented as hypotheses and givens.

Reading research shows that good readers

* Read extensively
* Integrate information in the text with existing knowledge
* Have a flexible reading style, depending on what they are reading
* Are motivated
* Rely on different skills interacting: perceptual processing, phonemic processing, recall
* Read for a purpose; reading serves a function

### Reading as a Process

### Historically, listening and reading skills have received less attention in language teaching than have the productive skills of speaking and writing. Die in part to a lack of knowledge about receptive skills, teachers often failed to devote explicit attention to devoting reading abilities, assuming that comprehension would occur on its own. More recently, however, the profession has recognized that merely exposing learners to oral or written input is not sufficient and that explicit teaching of comprehension strategies is needed.

Reading is an interactive process that goes on between the reader and the text, resulting in comprehension. The text presents letters, words, sentences, and paragraphs that encode meaning. The reader uses knowledge, skills, and strategies to determine what that meaning is.

Reader knowledge, skills, and strategies include

* Linguistic competence: the ability to recognize the elements of the writing system; knowledge of vocabulary; knowledge of how words are structured into sentences
* Discourse competence: knowledge of discourse markers and how they connect parts of the text to one another
* Sociolinguistic competence: knowledge about different types of texts and their usual structure and content
* Strategic competence: the ability to use top-down strategies, as well as knowledge of the language (a bottom-up strategy)

The purpose(s) for reading and the type of text determine the specific knowledge, skills, and strategies that readers need to apply to achieve comprehension. Reading comprehension is thus much more than decoding. Reading comprehension results when the reader knows which skills and strategies are appropriate for the type of text, and understands how to apply them to accomplish the reading purpose.

# **1.2 Goals and Techniques for Teaching Reading Comprehension**

Instructors want to produce students who, even if they do not have complete control of the grammar or an extensive lexicon, can fend for themselves in communication situations. In the case of reading, this means producing students who can use reading strategies to maximize their comprehension of text, identify relevant and non-relevant information, and tolerate less than word-by-word comprehension.

### The Reading Process

To accomplish this goal, instructors focus on the process of reading rather than on its product.

* They develop students' awareness of the reading process and reading strategies by asking students to think and talk about how they read in their native language.
* They allow students to practice the full repertoire of reading strategies by using authentic reading tasks. They encourage students to read to learn (and have an authentic purpose for reading) by giving students some choice of reading material.
* When working with reading tasks in class, they show students the strategies that will work best for the reading purpose and the type of text. They explain how and why students should use the strategies.
* They have students practice reading strategies in class and ask them to practice outside of class in their reading assignments. They encourage students to be conscious of what they're doing while they complete reading assignments.
* They encourage students to evaluate their comprehension and self-report their use of strategies. They build comprehension checks into in-class and out-of-class reading assignments, and periodically review how and when to use particular strategies.
* They encourage the development of reading skills and the use of reading strategies by using the target language to convey instructions and course-related information in written form: office hours, homework assignments, test content.
* They do not assume that students will transfer strategy use from one task to another. They explicitly mention how a particular strategy can be used in a different type of reading task or with another skill.

By raising students' awareness of reading as a skill that requires active engagement, and by explicitly teaching reading strategies, instructors help their students develop both the ability and the confidence to handle communication situations they may encounter beyond the classroom. In this way they give their students the foundation for communicative competence in the new language.

### Integrating Reading Comprehension Strategies

Instruction in reading comprehension strategies is not an add-on, but rather an integral part of the use of reading activities in the language classroom. Instructors can help their students become effective readers by teaching them how to use strategies before, during, and after reading.

Before reading: Plan for the reading task

* Set a purpose or decide in advance what to read for
* Decide if more linguistic or background knowledge is needed
* Determine whether to enter the text from the top down (attend to the overall meaning) or from the bottom up (focus on the words and phrases)

During and after reading: Monitor comprehension

* Verify predictions and check for inaccurate guesses
* Decide what is and is not important to understand
* Reread to check comprehension
* Ask for help

After reading: Evaluate comprehension and strategy use

* Evaluate comprehension in a particular task or area
* Evaluate overall progress in reading and in particular types of reading tasks
* Decide if the strategies used were appropriate for the purpose and for the task
* Modify strategies if necessary

### Using Authentic Materials and Approaches

For students to develop communicative competence in reading, classroom and homework reading activities must resemble (or be) real-life reading tasks that involve meaningful communication. They must therefore be authentic in three ways.

1. The reading material must be authentic: It must be the kind of material that students will need and want to be able to read when traveling, studying abroad, or using the language in other contexts outside the classroom.

When selecting texts for student assignments, remember that the difficulty of a reading text is less a function of the language, and more a function of the conceptual difficulty and the task(s) that students are expected to complete. Simplifying a text by changing the language often removes natural redundancy and makes the organization somewhat difficult for students to predict. This actually makes a text more difficult to read than if the original were used.

Rather than simplifying a text by changing its language, make it more approachable by eliciting students' existing knowledge in pre-reading discussion, reviewing new vocabulary before reading, and asking students to perform tasks that are within their competence, such as skimming to get the main idea or scanning for specific information, before they begin intensive reading.

2. The reading purpose must be authentic: Students must be reading for reasons that make sense and have relevance to them. «Because the teacher assigned it» is not an authentic reason for reading a text.

To identify relevant reading purposes, ask students how they plan to use the language they are learning and what topics they are interested in reading and learning about. Give them opportunities to choose their reading assignments, and encourage them to use the library, the Internet, and foreign language newsstands and bookstores to find other things they would like to read.

3. The reading approach must be authentic: Students should read the text in a way that matches the reading purpose, the type of text, and the way people normally read. This means that reading aloud will take place only in situations where it would take place outside the classroom, such as reading for pleasure. The majority of students' reading should be done silently.

Students do not learn to read by reading aloud. A person who reads aloud and comprehends the meaning of the text is coordinating word recognition with comprehension and speaking and pronunciation ability in highly complex ways. Students whose language skills are limited are not able to process at this level, and end up having to drop one or more of the elements. Usually the dropped element is comprehension, and reading aloud becomes word calling: simply pronouncing a series of words without regard for the meaning they carry individually and together. Word calling is not productive for the student who is doing it, and it is boring for other students to listen to.

* There are two ways to use reading aloud productively in the language classroom. Read aloud to your students as they follow along silently. You have the ability to use inflection and tone to help them hear what the text is saying. Following along as you read will help students move from word-by-word reading to reading in phrases and thought units, as they do in their first language.
* Use the «read and look up» technique. With this technique, a student reads a phrase or sentence silently as many times as necessary, then looks up (away from the text) and tells you what the phrase or sentence says. This encourages students to read for ideas, rather than for word recognition.

**1.3 Reading Comprehension Strategies**

Reading comprehension is defined as the level of understanding of a passage or text. Reading at the rate of 200 to 220 words per minute is considered as a normal speed of reading. For normal reading rates 75% is an acceptable level of comprehension. That means if a student can understand the meaning of at least 75% of the total text given then it is regarded as acceptable limits for reading comprehension.

Reading is an active process that require an interplay between various types of knowledge.

According to Canale and Swain’s model of communicative competence, listeners and readers draw upon four types of competencies as they attempt to comprehend an oral or written message.

* 1. grammatical competence: knowledge of morphology, syntax, vocabulary, and mechanics;
  2. sociolinguistic competence: knowing what is expected socially and culturally by native speakers of the target language;
  3. discourse competence: the ability to use cohesive devices such as pronouns, conjunctions, and transitional phrases to link meaning across sentences, as well as the ability to recognize how coherence is used to maintain the message’s input;
  4. strategic competence: the ability to use a number of guessing strategies to compensate for missing knowledge.

Readers rely upon the types of knowledge described above as they perform a variety of tasks in the comprehension process.

Various methods are used to improve Reading comprehension that include Training the ability to self assess comprehension, actively test comprehension using a set of questions, and by improving metacognition. Practice plays more pivotal part in development and honing the skills of reading comprehension. Self assessment with help of elaborative interrogation and summarizing helps.

Effective reading comprehension is the culmination of mastering vocabulary, phonics, fluency, and reading comprehension skills. Person having good comprehension skills is considered as active reader, with an ability to interact with the words by understanding its complete meaning and the concept behind it. Thus skill of reading comprehension distinguishes an active reader from a passive reader who just read the text without getting its meaning.

Reading comprehension teaching aims at-

1. To let better grasping of the context, sequence and the characters narrated in text.

2. Certain parts of the text can confuse readers. Reading comprehension skills works on this aspect to get the clear idea of the meaning of the text.

3. Helps to create the questionnaire based on the text about its theme or idea. It often helps in better understanding of the said paragraph.

4. It helps to link the event of narration with our previous experiences and predict the next probable event in the course based on the information given in the narration.

Testing

Testing Comprehension reading has always proved a great tool in the assessment of the student’ ability as it provides a feedback on the progress of student. It also enhances the self ability to judge ourselves, provided such tests are carefully designed. The carefully designed comprehension test is a cleverly constructed set of questions targeted at the summery, overall meaning of text including most important meanings of words. The questionnaire can be of different types like open ended question, closed formats or multiple choice questions.

Thus introduced the Informal Reading Inventories (IRI), which is a classroom based lesson directing and monitoring the progress system. However, because of its laborious construction, another format is constructed known as criterion based Informal Reading Inventory.

Informal Reading Inventory

An IRI provides a good description of three levels of comprehension reading progress of immense importance.

1. Frustration Level or Inability Level where word decoding accuracy is just below 90% with comprehension accuracy below 70%.

2. Instructional Level or ability supported with guidance where word decoding accuracy is around 90% with comprehension accuracy around 75%.

3. Independent Level where student doesn’t require the assistance anymore having word decoding accuracy is well above 97% with comprehension accuracy below 90%.

Although, initially IRI provided the frame for recording responses to the posed questions, to be analyzed later to find out the strong and gray areas of student, nowadays it also offers many add-ons to get a much elaborative picture of its progress.

Informal Reading-Thinking Inventory (IR-TI)

In addition, in 1995, Manzo and McKenna developed an innovation as Informal Reading-Thinking Inventory, which is aimed at other related areas like thinking development of student besides his word decoding and comprehension accuracy power. It is format which facilitates additional measuring tool of higher cognitive progress and comprehension. It measures the progress on three levels – how good the student in reading lines, reading between lines and reading beyond the lines (recognition, inference and its interpretation and application). The most significant aspect of the IR-TI is the separate judgment it makes of basic comprehension and separately of critical-constructive comprehension.

Informal Reading and Thinking Inventory (IR-TI) provides a set of graded word lists where each list is constructed at a given difficulty of specific grade. These lists are given to the students which mark the first stage in testing to measure his independence level. It is always recommended to give the student the easier step first and then moving gradually to the more difficult ones to boost his confidence. Graded lists are found as quick and effective tool in assessment of student’s levels.

After graded lists, graded passages are given to the student. The student is asked to read the passage aloud, and then answer the questions. While reading, the teacher records any «unexpected response» like omission, substitution, insertion, self correction, repetition and hesitation. Once the student finishes with his reading, the book is kept shut and the related questions will be asked. Scoring is done on the basis of answers given and the accuracy of reading and its fluency.

Efforts are put continuously to enhance this format even more precise and are focused at developing one’s worldview, regarded as the highest stage of comprehension reading.

**2. Problems in Reading Comprehension**

Proficient reading depends on the ability to recognize words quickly and effortlessly. If word recognition is difficult, students use too much of their processing capacity to read individual words, which interferes with their ability to comprehend what is read.

Few would dispute the claim that comprehension is necessary in order for language acquisition to occur. In order to communicate effectively, learners must understand what is being said. To function successfully with a target language, learners depend upon their ability to comprehend the spoken and written word. Empirical studies have identified a positive relationship between listening ability and language acquisition as well as between reading ability and language acquisition.

During the last century comprehension lessons usually comprised students answering teachers' questions, writing responses to questions on their own, or both. The whole group version of this practice also often included «round robin reading,» wherein teachers called on individual students to read a portion of the text (and sometimes following a set order). In the last quarter of the 20th century, evidence accumulated that the read-test methods assessed comprehension more than they taught it. The associated practice of «round robin» reading has also been questioned and eliminated by many educators.

Instead of using the prior read-test method, research studies have concluded that there are much more effective ways to teach comprehension. Much work has been done in the area of teaching novice readers a bank of «reading strategies,» or tools to interpret and analyze text. [2] There is not a definitive set of strategies, but common ones include summarizing what you have read, monitoring your reading to make sure it is still making sense, and analyzing the structure of the text (e.g., the use of headings in science text). Some programs teach students how to self monitor whether they are understanding and provide students with tools for fixing comprehension problems.

Instruction in comprehension strategy use often involves the gradual release of responsibility, wherein teachers initially explain and model strategies. Over time, they give students more and more responsibility for using the strategies until they can use them independently. This technique is generally associated with the idea of self-regulation and reflects social cognitive theory, originally conceptualized by Albert Bandura

Comprehension is the ultimate goal of reading. However, there are a number of factors which may interfere with an individual's ability to comprehend text material.

The most common single obstacle to text comprehension is decoding insufficiency. Simply put, if the student cannot decode accurately and automatically, comprehension will be compromised.

– When the student cannot «apprehend» or decode the word, meaning cannot be extracted.

– When the student cannot decode fluently and automatically, reading is slow and laborious and memory for read material is poor.

– When the student cannot decode and is taught to rely on «context cues» or to «guess» at words, comprehension is compromised.

A more subtle interference is an underlying problem with language comprehension or inferential thinking. Those with right-hemispheric or non-verbal learning disorders are typically proficient decoders or «word callers» who have little to no difficulty remembering the specific details of what they have read.

In this second category, the student typically does well in the early grades but begins to struggle academically in the higher grades when the demand for comprehension increases. Such students often begin to experience difficulty with test taking and lecture learning due to underlying deficits in complex comprehension of novel material and inferential thinking.

It is not until late elementary or middle school when the curriculum demands shift and the demand for complex comprehension increases. Students who start out strong but begin to experience learning difficulty in the higher grades should be evaluated for underlying deficits in comprehension.

Physiological vision problems, such as deficits in tracking and scanning, also interfere with comprehension of text. For example, if one were asked to read Gone with the Wind through a straw, the physical energy to perform the task would result in extreme fatigue, diminished attention and poor comprehension. Comprehension problems in this case would not be due to specific learning disability but to a sensory-based (and likely correctable) vision problem.

Lastly, psychological problems can also impair comprehension. Therefore, a comprehensive psychoeducational evaluation should be performed whenever a person experiences problems with text comprehension. Only through evaluation can one determine the root cause of difficulty and design appropriate intervention strategies.

Developing reading comprehension activities involves more than identifying a text that is «at the right level,» writing a set of comprehension questions for students to answer after reading, handing out the assignment and sending students away to do it. A fully-developed reading activity supports students as readers through prereading, while-reading, and post-reading activities.

As you design reading tasks, keep in mind that complete recall of all the information in a text is an unrealistic expectation even for native speakers. Reading activities that are meant to increase communicative competence should be success oriented and build up students' confidence in their reading ability.

Construct the reading activity around a purpose that has significance for the students

Make sure students understand what the purpose for reading is: to get the main idea, obtain specific information, understand most or all of the message, enjoy a story, or decide whether or not to read more. Recognizing the purpose for reading will help students select appropriate reading strategies.

Define the activity's instructional goal and the appropriate type of response

In addition to the main purpose for reading, an activity can also have one or more instructional purposes, such as practicing or reviewing specific grammatical constructions, introducing new vocabulary, or familiarizing students with the typical structure of a certain type of text.

Check the level of difficulty of the text

The factors listed below can help you judge the relative ease or difficulty of a reading text for a particular purpose and a particular group of students.

• How is the information organized? Does the story line, narrative, or instruction conform to familiar expectations? Texts in which the events are presented in natural chronological order, which have an informative title, and which present the information following an obvious organization (main ideas first, details and examples second) are easier to follow.

• How familiar are the students with the topic? Remember that misapplication of background knowledge due to cultural differences can create major comprehension difficulties.

• Does the text contain redundancy? At the lower levels of proficiency, listeners may find short, simple messages easier to process, but students with higher proficiency benefit from the natural redundancy of authentic language.

• Does the text offer visual support to aid in reading comprehension? Visual aids such as photographs, maps, and diagrams help students preview the content of the text, guess the meanings of unknown words, and check comprehension while reading.

Remember that the level of difficulty of a text is not the same as the level of difficulty of a reading task. Students who lack the vocabulary to identify all of the items on a menu can still determine whether the restaurant serves steak and whether they can afford to order one.

Use pre-reading activities to prepare students for reading

The activities you use during pre-reading may serve as preparation in several ways. During pre-reading you may:

• Assess students' background knowledge of the topic and linguistic content of the text

• Give students the background knowledge necessary for comprehension of the text, or activate the existing knowledge that the students possess

• Clarify any cultural information which may be necessary to comprehend the passage

• Make students aware of the type of text they will be reading and the purpose(s) for reading

• Provide opportunities for group or collaborative work and for class discussion activities

Sample pre-reading activities:

• Using the title, subtitles, and divisions within the text to predict content and organization or sequence of information

• Looking at pictures, maps, diagrams, or graphs and their captions

• Talking about the author's background, writing style, and usual topics

• Skimming to find the theme or main idea and eliciting related prior knowledge

• Reviewing vocabulary or grammatical structures

• Reading over the comprehension questions to focus attention on finding that information while reading

• Constructing semantic webs (a graphic arrangement of concepts or words showing how they are related)

• Doing guided practice with guessing meaning from context or checking comprehension while reading

Pre-reading activities are most important at lower levels of language proficiency and at earlier stages of reading instruction. As students become more proficient at using reading strategies, you will be able to reduce the amount of guided pre-reading and allow students to do these activities themselves.

Match while-reading activities to the purpose for reading

In while-reading activities, students check their comprehension as they read. The purpose for reading determines the appropriate type and level of comprehension.

• When reading for specific information, students need to ask themselves, have I obtained the information I was looking for?

• When reading for pleasure, students need to ask themselves, Do I understand the story line/sequence of ideas well enough to enjoy reading this?

• When reading for thorough understanding (intensive reading), students need to ask themselves, Do I understand each main idea and how the author supports it? Does what I'm reading agree with my predictions, and, if not, how does it differ? To check comprehension in this situation, students may

• Stop at the end of each section to review and check their predictions, restate the main idea and summarize the section

• Use the comprehension questions as guides to the text, stopping to answer them as they read

Using Textbook Reading Activities

Many language textbooks emphasize product (answers to comprehension questions) over process (using reading skills and strategies to understand the text), providing little or no contextual information about the reading selections or their authors, and few if any pre-reading activities. Newer textbooks may provide pre-reading activities and reading strategy guidance, but their one-size-fits-all approach may or may not be appropriate for your students.

You can use the guidelines for developing reading activities given here as starting points for evaluating and adapting textbook reading activities. Use existing, or add your own, pre-reading activities and reading strategy practice as appropriate for your students. Don't make students do exercises simply because they are in the book; this destroys motivation.

Another problem with textbook reading selections is that they have been adapted to a predetermined reading level through adjustment of vocabulary, grammar, and sentence length. This makes them more immediately approachable, but it also means that they are less authentic and do not encourage students to apply the reading strategies they will need to use outside of class. When this is the case, use the textbook reading selection as a starting point to introduce a writer or topic, and then give students choices of more challenging authentic texts to read as a follow up.

Assessing Reading Proficiency

Reading ability is very difficult to assess accurately. In the communicative competence model, a student's reading level is the level at which that student is able to use reading to accomplish communication goals. This means that assessment of reading ability needs to be correlated with purposes for reading.

Reading Aloud

A student's performance when reading aloud is not a reliable indicator of that student's reading ability. A student who is perfectly capable of understanding a given text when reading it silently may stumble when asked to combine comprehension with word recognition and speaking ability in the way that reading aloud requires.

In addition, reading aloud is a task that students will rarely, if ever, need to do outside of the classroom. As a method of assessment, therefore, it is not authentic: It does not test a student's ability to use reading to accomplish a purpose or goal.

However, reading aloud can help a teacher assess whether a student is «seeing» word endings and other grammatical features when reading. To use reading aloud for this purpose, adopt the «read and look up» approach: Ask the student to read a sentence silently one or more times, until comfortable with the content, then look up and tell you what it says. This procedure allows the student to process the text, and lets you see the results of that processing and know what elements, if any, the student is missing.

Comprehension Questions

Instructors often use comprehension questions to test whether students have understood what they have read. In order to test comprehension appropriately, these questions need to be coordinated with the purpose for reading. If the purpose is to find specific information, comprehension questions should focus on that information. If the purpose is to understand an opinion and the arguments that support it, comprehension questions should ask about those points.

In everyday reading situations, readers have a purpose for reading before they start. That is, they know what comprehension questions they are going to need to answer before they begin reading. To make reading assessment in the language classroom more like reading outside of the classroom, therefore, allow students to review the comprehension questions before they begin to read the test passage.

Finally, when the purpose for reading is enjoyment, comprehension questions are beside the point. As a more authentic form of assessment, have students talk or write about why they found the text enjoyable and interesting (or not).

Authentic Assessment

In order to provide authentic assessment of students' reading proficiency, a post-listening activity must reflect the real-life uses to which students might put information they have gained through reading.

• It must have a purpose other than assessment

• It must require students to demonstrate their level of reading comprehension by completing some task

To develop authentic assessment activities, consider the type of response that reading a particular selection would elicit in a non-classroom situation. For example, after reading a weather report, one might decide what to wear the next day; after reading a set of instructions, one might repeat them to someone else; after reading a short story, one might discuss the story line with friends.

Use this response type as a base for selecting appropriate post-reading tasks. You can then develop a checklist or rubric that will allow you to evaluate each student's comprehension of specific parts of the text. See Assessing Learning for more on checklists and rubrics.

Developing classroom activities a teacher should always remember:

* students’ comprehension may increase if they are trained to use strategies such as activation of background knowledge and guessing;
* students need pre-reading activities that prepare them for the comprehension tasks;
* text appropriateness should be judged on the basis of text quality, interest level, and learners’ needs;
* authentic materials provide an effective means for presenting real language integrating culture, and heightening comprehension;
* vocabulary must be connected to text structure, student interest, and background knowledge in order to aid retention and recall;
* comprehension assessment should engage the learner in a hierarchy of procedures through which he or she interacts with the text.

**Conclusion**

Reading is an activity with a purpose. A person may read in order to gain information or verify existing knowledge, or in order to critique a writer's ideas or writing style. The purpose for reading also determines the appropriate approach to reading comprehension. Reading is an interactive process that goes on between the reader and the text, resulting in comprehension. The reader uses knowledge, skills, and strategies to determine what that meaning is.

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