READING COMPREHENSION IN THE LIBRARY MEDIA CENTER

By

Laura A. Hensley

An Abstract
of a research paper submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Science in Library Science and Information Services
in the Department of Educational Leadership and Human Development
University of Central Missouri

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ABSTRACT

by

Laura A. Hensley

This study reviews previously published literature that relates to strategies for building reading comprehension in the library. The benefit of teachers and librarians partnering and collaborating together to model and demonstrate strategies was also explored.

After evaluating the literature the benefits of teaching reading comprehension strategies in the library were exposed. Students who were exposed to the reading comprehension strategies in their regular classrooms and the library were able to comprehend more texts independently and in a way that lead to a deeper level of comprehension.
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The importance of reading comprehension skills is becoming more and more relevant in today’s schools. A big part of a student’s success in school is centered on their ability to comprehend what is being read to them and what they read to themselves.

“Effective reading is a foundational skill for 21st century learners. In the library program, reading comprehension strategies are used for higher-order-thinking – for developing questions, making inferences, synthesizing, and evaluating ideas and information. In this learning environment, students and educators are actively engaged in making meaning from texts to build knowledge and foster understanding. Using texts in multiple formats, educators can model reading comprehension strategies in all content areas as well as monitor learners’ use, mastery, and transfer of these strategies to form investigative questions that matter” (Moreillon, “Reading for Life” 20).

School librarians are not just in the school setting to catalog books or to check books out to students. Their are involved in the reading and comprehension success of the students they serve. Librarians are moving from teaching a love of reading and supporting reading and literacy initiatives to supporting the learning process of reading and the comprehension strategies behind becoming a good reader.

Educators are asked to show student progress. Librarians are educators and are also being asked to show their value in a society that is cutting more and more school
positions. The best way to show student progress is for students to be successful on state mandated communication arts tests, which emphasize reading comprehension. Therefore, librarians can bring value to their jobs by collaborating and working with teachers to teach students how to complete the tasks that the state feels are a good indicator of a student’s reading success and ability. By creating an environment that promotes reading comprehension in schools, librarians are working towards student achievement that fellow educators, parents, and administrators cannot ignore.

**Statement of the Problem**

Today more and more is expected from educators, librarians, and students. Curriculum and pacing guides are becoming bigger and bigger and students are expected to master everything during a school year. However, many of them do not have the reading comprehension skills that help them understand and remember all that is taught. An educator has until March to teach everything on the state mandated tests and then the student must demonstrate all that has been learned. Something is missing. Students are given all the information but don’t have the skills to understand it and use it in a meaningful way. This is when the teacher and the librarian come together to promote the reading comprehension strategies that will give students the tools they need to perform on the state mandated assessments and be successful in their educational goals.

This study shows the importance of teaching reading comprehension strategies in the library. The study recommends that the strategies be modeled in every area of a learner’s education, including the library media center. The more times the reading comprehension strategies are demonstrated and modeled in a student’s education the
more likely that student is to remember and use the strategies in a meaningful way (Moreillon, “Position Yourself” 74).

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to review the literature to investigate the use of reading comprehension strategies in the library. Literature was reviewed that discussed schools which had incorporated reading comprehension strategies. The benefits of the reading comprehension strategies being modeled and taught in the school libraries were closely explored. The results of this study demonstrate the need to expand the role of the school librarian to not only teach a love of reading but to model and demonstrate reading comprehension strategies. By doing this, librarians validate the role they play in a student’s success and achievement. It also brings an additional purpose to the library. The library is no longer looked at by fellow educators and administration as a room full of untouched books, but a place full of potential that can transform the way a student finds information and understands the information found. Modeling and teaching reading comprehension strategies benefits all readers.

**Research Questions**

The following research answers the questions regarding reading comprehension in the library media center. The specific questions answered are as follows.

1. What is the benefit of teaching reading comprehension skills?
2. How does teaching the reading comprehension skills in the library benefit the library and the students that the library services?

3. What is the importance of collaboration between the librarian and the classroom teacher?

4. What are some of the best ways to teach the reading comprehension strategies in the library?

**Limitations of the Study**

The limitations of this study include the limited timeframe for this study. In addition, this study is based upon existing literature and research. Therefore, the lack of journal articles on the subject of teaching reading comprehension strategies in the library was a major limitation. Many journals and articles have been published concerning the benefits of teaching reading comprehension strategies in the regular classroom but not a lot of information has been published about the library.

**Definition of Terms**

- *Determining importance* – When a reader sorts through information in a text to prioritize the information.

- *Guided reading* - A reading strategy where the teacher meets with a small group of students to provide reading instruction to students who have similar instructional needs and are reading on the same reading level.

- *Inferring* - Readers use their prior knowledge about a topic and the information they are reading to make predictions about what might happen next in the text.
• **Making connections** - Readers relate what they read to personal experiences (text – to- self), to information from other text (text-to-text), and to information about the world (text-to-world), in order to enhance understanding of self, text and life.

• **Questioning the text** - When students stop, mark text, and note questions as they read.

• **Read alouds** - An oral reading of a text.

• **Reading comprehension strategies** – Strategies developed to assist a reader in comprehending and thinking about text that is being read.

• **Synthesizing** - Students move from making meaning from the text, to integrating their new understanding into their lives and world view.

• **Visualizing** - Readers are constantly creating mind pictures as they read, creating mental images of action, characters, or themes.

**Research Design**

This study was completed with a review of existing literature and research on the topic of reading comprehension in the library media center. Literature and research was collected from previously published information pertaining to reading comprehension in the library. The literature and research collected was then reviewed for the purpose of this study. No actual research was conducted. At no time was there an effort to create new research or to examine existing data, privately or publicly held that would necessitate any type of permission.

Articles were retrieved from to databases, *Academic Search Complete*; and *Library and Information Science & Technology Abstracts*. Search terms included,
“reading comprehension,” “reading comprehension in the library,” “reading comprehension strategies,” and “reading comprehension strategies in the library.”

Conclusion

This study consists of three chapters that relate to the importance of reading comprehension strategies in the library. The second chapter contains a review of previously published literature and research pertaining to reading comprehension in the library. The third chapter includes answers to the research questions posed in chapter one and a discussion that includes conclusions and recommendations pertaining to reading comprehension in the library.
CHAPTER 2: 
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The research that has been compiled for this paper investigates the use of reading comprehension strategies in the library and its benefits to young students. This will be discussed in three parts. First discussed will be the importance of reading comprehension skills for young students and the benefits of teaching these strategies in the library. The second section presents ways collaboration between the librarian and the classroom teacher ensures success when teaching the reading strategies. Lastly, the best practices for implementing these reading comprehension strategies in the library are explored.

**Importance of Reading Comprehension Skills**

In a school centered on the success of students, every educator, parent, and administrator is invested in students’ learning and improving academically and socially. A big part of a student’s success in school is based on the reading comprehension skills that a student possesses. Reading comprehension skills are made up of six strategies; making connections, questioning the text, drawing inferences, determining importance, visualizing, and synthesizing. As students start to develop early reading strategies, it is beneficial if comprehension is not ignored (Dooley 120). Caitlin McMunn Dooley and Mona Matthews completed a three year longitudinal study of emergent comprehension with young readers. Data was collected through observational field notes and parent and teacher interviews. The research concluded the importance of comprehension skills being taught at a young age (Dooley 129).
Librarians are educators. According to the research presented in this section, most librarians feel that they play a part in the educational process of the students they work with. School librarians are not just in the school setting to catalog books or to check books out to students. They are involved in the reading and comprehension success of the students they serve. Librarians teach students how to find information in various ways, such as, in online catalogs, using databases, and evaluating reliable web sites. They teach students how to search inside a book for the tables of contents, indices, headings, and other text elements. They also teach students how to find primary sources versus secondary sources (Hudak 11). The question in this study is whether or not librarians see enough benefits to expand from teaching a love of reading and supporting reading to supporting the learning process of reading and the comprehension strategies behind becoming a good reader.

As lovers and promoters of literacy, educators want to find the most effective and efficient ways to encourage reading and the comprehension of what is being read. According to Krashen, the best way to improve reading ability is by allowing students to engage in a great deal of interesting and comprehensible reading opportunities (Krashen 19). With these reading opportunities, students are given more experiences that allow them to practice their reading and comprehension strategies. Krashen goes on to say that with these experiences students tend to become better readers, writers, spellers, and have a wider vocabulary (20). With these reading opportunities, school librarians can ensure that the students they serve not only have access to great books that will encourage reading, but also have skills that will help them comprehend the books they are reading.
Reading comprehension is what is asked of the students taking state mandated assessments. They must read a passage, whether they are interested in it or not and whether they have any background knowledge surrounding the topic, and then focus on it long enough to comprehend what they are reading and answer questions about what they just read. Unfortunately, their “love of reading” and reading ability don’t always help them when completing the tasks that the state feels are a good indicator of a student’s reading success and ability. However, the best way to demonstrate students’ achievement is with test scores. Administrators, classroom teachers, and parents get more and more concerned each year with the success of their students on the statewide standardized tests. Research shows that the biggest indicator of whether a student will do well on this test is based on that student’s reading and comprehension ability.

Reading comprehension strategies will prove to be even more important with the adoption of the common core. The common core is a new direction 48 states have adopted as they revisit their state standards and state mandated assessments. The common core was developed with three critical principles. First, the standards that are created must start in kindergarten and go through 12th grade creating a staircase of learning that will prepare students for college or for their career. Next, the core standards must be based on ethics. This means educators could not just rely on what they piously thought students should know, but must support their declarations with evidence that demonstrates the core knowledge and skills that are critical to predicting students’ effectiveness in college and career settings. Third, there must be a level of honesty when discussing the time needed to teach each standard (Coleman “Bringing the Common Core
to Life”). These standards will lead to students needing to be more and more aware of how to read and take information from complex texts. Students will be asked to learn about the world through reading and gathering information.

According to Moreillon, librarians collaborate with classroom teachers to bring together lifelong learning skills and curriculum objectives in reading comprehension. Reading comprehension strategies include using background knowledge, asking and answering questions, making predictions and inferences, determining main ideas of importance, monitoring for meaning, and synthesizing from multiple sources (“Reading and the Library Program” 28). Moreillon finds that current reading research promotes teaching and modeling of these strategies. She recommends they be modeled in every area of a young learner’s education, including and not limited to the regular classroom and the library. School librarians can be at the center and heart of their school’s literacy programs (Moreillon, “Position Yourself” 27). The school librarian is a vital participant of the school literacy team in promoting reading comprehension.

Educators, including librarians, may be the only people in a young person’s life who model and demonstrate strong reading and comprehension skills. This points to the need to engage students in listening to educators read and model powerful, strategic, and meaningful reading experiences not just in the classroom but in the library as well. The more times this is incorporated in a student’s education the more likely that student is to remember and use it in a meaningful way (McPherson “Reading lifelong literacy links” 74).
The library budget continues to be cut and school districts are starting to degrade the use of the library and the purpose of the librarian. School librarians can show their administrators, fellow educators, and the community that they are worth saving. Student achievement is what all educators are looking and striving for. A qualified library media specialist can have a positive impact in creating a strong school library media program that promotes student achievement (Hudak 10). Student achievement is made clear with test scores. Librarians can bring value back into the library by helping students be successful on these tests. A student’s reading and comprehension ability are strong indicators of how well a student will perform on these tests. As information specialists, it makes sense to build on this by teaching students how to read and find meaning from information. Librarians can be an important part of this learning process for their students. Reading comprehension is taught and used in all content areas, within all grade levels, and librarians are in a position to be teachers of reading comprehension which will positively impact all content areas (Hudak 12). Librarians can be at the heart of the reading program promoting reading comprehension and working hand in hand with other educators striving for student success!

By creating an environment that promotes reading comprehension in schools, librarians are working towards student achievement that fellow educators, parents, and administrators cannot ignore. If librarians want their library programs to function as the hub of learning in schools, then helping classroom teachers teach reading comprehension strategies and helping principals reach school goals for reading achievement can be at the center of their work (Moreillon, “Position Yourself” 27). When administrators are asked
who the literacy leaders are in their school, the librarians will want their names at the top of the list.

**Collaboration with Classroom Teachers on Reading Strategies**

A vital part in teaching reading strategies in the library setting is the collaboration that can take place between the classroom teacher and the librarian. Collaboration is a key ingredient to the success of teaching reading strategies in the library. The research in this section shows it is desirable and feasible for collaboration to take place between classroom teachers and teacher librarians in teaching reading comprehension (Rosenfeld 45). To further illustrate this, research done in a poor community that faced a huge challenge when it came to their students learning to read is discussed. Collaboration played a major role in overcoming the challenge. When teachers and librarians work together in teaching the reading strategies, young children learn to read and comprehend what they read (Moreillion, “Position Yourself” 27).

The best way to become leaders in a school’s reading program is to learn from, collaborate with, and support the classroom teachers. Moreillion feels that teachers and librarians can best learn from each other when librarians become the center of the school’s literacy program by offering reading resources in all formats, co-planning and co-teaching (“Reading and the Library Program” 28). By achieving the above the librarian is demonstrating a commitment to all students, teachers, and administrators that they want to empower and encourage all students to become successful learners.

According to Mcpherson, the librarian can do a great deal when it comes to supporting and collaborating with the classroom teacher in his or her quest to help all
students become readers who understand and comprehend what they are reading. He lists four things that the teacher librarian can do to support and collaborate with the classroom teacher. The first thing is to provide teachers with the numerous reading materials required to teach reading. The librarian can also collaborate with teachers to find out the reading levels of the students in order to meet the reading needs of each individual child. As Mcpherson pointed out, the librarian can be available to assist in the assessment piece. Frequent reading assessments are effective in finding out a student’s reading ability and can be very time consuming for teachers to conduct (McPherson, “Teacher-Librarians as reading guides” 72). Therefore, teachers and librarians can partner together to conduct these reading assessments. This can benefit the librarian for the reason that they will become more aware of the reading levels of students. Therefore, when a student comes into the library, the librarian will be better able to help find the resources needed for that student’s independent reading level. Third, teacher librarians can be knowledgeable in the area of guided reading, making themselves leaders in the field and making themselves available to share and teach other staff members as needed. Guided reading is a strategy that provides students with reading support in a small group setting with other readers that are reading at the same level. Lastly, during the students’ time in the library, librarians and teachers can plan together to model and reinforce students’ newly learned reading skills and strategies.

Teacher librarians and teachers can collaborate and do the above steps while the teacher librarian is teaching information literacy skills or working with students who are conducting research. The research shows that schools that have a teacher librarian who
works alongside teachers when teaching reading comprehension strategies have schools that have a lower illiteracy rate. In addition, the students from these schools can communicate their understanding in several print formats (Teacher librarians as reading guides 74). This is the desire of every librarian in the quest for higher student achievement rates.

A research study done in Baltimore demonstrates the effectiveness of having school librarian’s work with teachers to improve reading comprehension. In a poor part of Baltimore, in a school that faced many socio-economic issues, a study was done to see the impact on teaching reading comprehension strategies as a school wide program. Only 50% of their students passed the tests provided by the Houghton Mifflin reading series *A Legacy of Literacy* that measure students’ comprehension of various reading passages. The school was determined to see their students succeed, and they knew that the teachers and staff needed to put reading comprehension first. All the teachers in the building, including the librarian, came together and built a learning community for students and staff that centered on the reading comprehension strategies. They have seen positive results. About 90% of participants now pass the Houghton Mifflin unit tests. In addition, the library’s book circulation has climbed 62%, and many kids choose to read during their free time (Grimes 51). These readers are being positively influenced by not only their classroom teacher but also by the support that they received from the librarian due to the collaboration that is taking place between the classroom teacher and the librarian. The positive results are made evident by the progress in achievement the students demonstrated.
Best Practices for Teaching Reading Comprehension Strategies

It is documented that most students do not have the skills needed in inquiry and metacognition, particularly at levels of comprehension that require explanatory reasoning where students must explain why things happened or the cause that made an event occur (Graesser, McNamara, and VanLehn 225). Many librarians are searching for strategies to use to improve and promote reading comprehension among their students. These librarians are looking for the best practices to use according to what the research says works best.

A school in Vermont wanted to measure the effectiveness of their school’s K-2 literacy program. In Vermont, at the end of Grade 2, all students are given the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA). The test measures reading accuracy and reading comprehension. Only 70 to 80 percent of their students met the standard given by the state test in three consecutive years. To help improve their literacy and comprehension scores, students were given books to take home and read with parents. The students also read with volunteers in the classroom. The teacher librarian volunteered along with parents. She felt that it was imperative that she be involved in this process (Remsen 63). Repeated reading took place at home with parents and in the library with the librarian as students re-read texts until they became more fluent in their reading. Repeated reading proves to be beneficial in that it allows students to re-read a text becoming more and more comfortable with the text and the words the students has a hard time reading. This then allows students to better understand what they are reading. The student no longer has to stop at every word to sound it out and read it correctly. The
student can fluently read the text, allowing them to not focus on how to read but what is being read. Repeated reading did prove beneficial because it promotes both reading fluency and reading comprehension (Sopia, et al. 93).

While volunteering to read with students, the teacher-librarian also used her budget to order more books at a lower reading level for the library. The librarian felt it was essential that students be able to find books that were “just right” for their reading ability (Remsen 63). After these practices from the teacher librarian, teachers, and parents, 90 percent of the students met the reading and comprehension standards as measured by the DRA. Teachers and students felt that the one on one effort of the teacher librarian to not only read students with but to offer books at those students’ reading levels gave them the encouragement and support needed to increase and enhance reading achievement (63).

Another strategy that is being used in many schools is the Five Pillars of Reading instruction from the National Reading Panel. The five pillars presented by the National Reading Panel include; phonics, phonological awareness, comprehension, fluency, and vocabulary. The teachers that are using the Five Pillars of Reading can work together with their school librarians to combine efforts to teach all students to read and comprehend what they read. The program offers comprehension lessons that could be used when implementing the Five Pillars of Reading in the library. The schools that have implemented this program have seen the librarians being empowered to play a bigger role in their schools literacy programs (Anderson 24). Many of the strategies that teacher librarians typically use while teaching information literacy skills are ideal for teaching
Reading Comprehension

reading. Matching those teaching strategies to the Five Pillars of Reading makes the start of a meaningful library lesson.

More research done on reading comprehension compared the scores of children who were taught specific strategies with those who were not taught. Strategies that worked included activating a student’s prior knowledge by asking questions before, during, and after reading. Constructing images during reading helped students visualize mental pictures that gave them a better understand the text. The use of visualizing helps students practice seeing a picture in their minds’ eye of the story and predicting what may happen next. Summarizing the text and analyzing stories to uncover grammar or structural components and to analyze relevant structures of nonfiction, such as in descriptive, cause-effect, and problem and solution encouraged deeper comprehension of the text read (Asselin 55).

Researchers found that allowing student’s free time to read is not enough when wanting them to draw a deeper meaning from their reading. The researchers encourage classroom teachers as well as the librarian to regularly incorporate mental modeling, where the teachers share their thoughts while reading. This can be accomplished by providing formal and informal instructional opportunities such as read alouds led by the teacher in a whole group setting or a book talk presented by the librarian in small groups during information literacy instruction. A read aloud is a planned oral reading of a book or print excerpt. During a read aloud or book talk the teacher can guide students to identify strategies by modeling his or her thinking while reading the text. These strategies can then be posted somewhere for frequent reference by the students. Teachers
and librarians can listen to students read to determine if they are monitoring for meaning. They can talk to students about what they are reading in order to help them construct meaning, (Asselin 55).

A growing body of research points to the importance of background knowledge in teaching beginning literacy and reading comprehension to young students (Coatney 60). The library is filled with tools that can be used to build background knowledge. This can be done by allowing students to share past experiences, by doing a quick search on the internet, or by previewing the vocabulary from the text that is going to be read. By providing background knowledge, the librarian can provide the hook that may allow students a better understanding of what is being taught. Librarians have access to any and all information needed to build a student’s background knowledge, which can prepare students for upcoming units of study (60). To build background knowledge, a librarian can demonstrate and model this by gathering a non-fiction text to accompany a fiction read-aloud. As a librarian co-planning lessons with teachers, it would be possible to volunteer and co-teach the background knowledge lessons. The librarian could do a preview of important vocabulary words or organize and model a search on the Internet over the upcoming topic. Librarians know their collection and can help teachers and students find the materials needed, it is all at their fingertips.

Other strategies for modeling reading comprehension in the library are questioning strategies. Questions can help students build a framework to help them develop higher level thinking. Through questions students are encouraged to make connections and explore their background knowledge. This enables them to develop a
Reading Comprehension

higher level of understanding (Boulware and Monroe 101). Boulware refers to SMA – SAY/MEAN/APPLY. Students are asked three questions when comprehending a text. What does it say? What does it mean? And, how can I apply it? These questions provide an organizational structure that can be used in any content area, with fiction or nonfiction print materials at all levels, preschool through higher education, for developing meaning from text (102). The SMA questions could be incorporated in many different read-alouds or research projects that librarians conduct with students. Passages from textbooks, picture books, dictionaries, poems, and Internet sites are examples of materials that can be used to give students the opportunity to use the SMA questions during reading or after reading (102). Librarians could model this process while reading aloud and then allow students to do the same while guiding them in the process.

Another strategy that can be reinforced in the library media center is determining the main idea; this can be done by having students discuss a read aloud with a partner sharing what the story is mostly about. Sequencing the events of a story and the parts of the story during a read aloud in the library media center is also an example of a reading strategy that builds reading comprehension. Other strategies that librarians could reinforce are comparing and contrasting several versions of the same story. These are all reading comprehension strategies that classroom teachers have used for many years and can be incorporated and modeled by school librarians (Barringer 35).

An additional way to incorporate the reading comprehension strategies is through drama. A study done with first graders demonstrated how, by weaving drama into literacy activities, researchers found that struggling readers could create and express rich
understandings of text through modalities that are not usually emphasized in literacy instruction (Adomat 629). In the study ten first graders qualified for additional reading support. These first graders met with the librarian every day for one hour. Drama was incorporated for their additional reading support. By the end of the year, nine students out of the ten tested out of the reading support program. The researchers felt this was a result of the drama infused reading instruction that they implemented. Through the use of the drama techniques, the children were able to use and develop comprehension strategies and to take on the kinds of understandings that more proficient readers were using (Adomat 635). This study points out that the educators in the classroom and in the library need to sometimes think outside the box when finding ways to approach students who are struggling readers.

Researchers have looked into and explored the topic of how to evaluate reading comprehension. One study looked into three evaluation methods using verbal self-reports. The research compared: think aloud reader protocols, the plus-minus method, and Focus. The first method is when the reader reads a text aloud and immediately expresses any thoughts about what was just read. The evaluator keeps detailed notes and discusses and points out any unclear remarks during the reading process. The plus-minus method has the reader evaluating what is read by placing pluses and minus in the margin of what they are reading. After the reading the reasons behind the pluses and minus are explored and discussed with the evaluator. Lastly, the Focus method is a software tool designed to collect reader responses on documents. The reader reads a document and is able to mark passages on the screen on which they want to comment. This allows the
reader the ability to type the comment in a separate box beside the text on the screen. The program allows the evaluator to collect reader comments more effectively and efficiently. The results of this research indicated that think aloud reader protocols produce better feedback on comprehension problems than the other two methods (Lentz and Maat 68). The ability to give students immediate feedback as they read instead of at the end appeared to be the most beneficial. This also often leads to more discussion on the text’s topic, which then leads to a deeper understanding of the document that was just read.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, when deciding what strategies and ways of incorporating instruction on reading comprehension work best, the following is recommended. Developing lifelong readers is vital to the role of the librarian. Consider the role librarians play in developing readers in schools. Librarians are the information specialists in schools, it is possible to build on this by teaching students how to read and find meaning from the information using the comprehension strategies.
CHAPTER 3:
CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Librarians who incorporate and teach reading comprehension strategies alongside information literacy skills are empowering students to become better readers and understanders of what they read. Librarians are the information specialists in schools; it makes sense to build on this by having them teach students how to read and find meaning from the information using reading comprehension strategies. As librarians are trying to find the significance of moving from teaching a love of reading to teaching reading comprehension strategies they are asking what the importance of teaching reading comprehension skills really are. In addition, they want to know how teaching these strategies will benefit the library and the students they serve.

Collaboration is a big part of having a successful library media center. Therefore, how does collaboration fit into the teaching of the reading comprehension strategies? Lastly, what are the best practices for the librarian to use when incorporating and teaching the reading comprehension strategies?

**Benefits of Teaching Reading Comprehension Strategies**

Reading comprehension strategies allow students to dive deeper in their understanding of a text and to build knowledge. With the help of reading comprehension strategies students can develop questions, make inferences, synthesize, and evaluate ideas and information from a variety of texts. As librarians teach the
Reading comprehension strategies they become promoters and encouragers of teaching students to be good readers.

When teaching reading comprehension strategies librarians are not only helping students become better readers, writers, spellers or have a wider vocabulary, they are providing students with the skills to be successful on state mandated assessments. The best way to demonstrate students’ achievement is with test scores. As information specialists, it makes sense to build on this by teaching students how to read and find meaning from information. Research indicates this will help students to perform well on the state mandated assessments they are asked to take.

**Teaching Reading Comprehension Strategies Benefits the Library**

Reading comprehension strategies are being taught in the regular education classes. Therefore, if the administration feels that teaching reading comprehension strategies is an important part of the literacy curriculum in the classroom, then it’s imperative that they also be taught in the library. By joining the administration and teachers in the building and teaching the reading comprehension skills, the librarian is building a community centered on student achievement through the use of reading comprehension strategies. By creating an environment that promotes reading comprehension in schools, librarians are working towards student achievement that fellow educators and principles cannot ignore.

**Collaboration between Classroom Teachers and Librarians when Teaching Reading Comprehension Strategies**
Collaboration with classroom teachers allows the librarian to learn from and support classroom teachers as they teach reading comprehension strategies. Librarians can provide teachers with numerous reading materials that connect to lessons. They can also assist with assessment. This allows the librarian to make a connection with students who will be coming to the library. After helping with assessments librarians will have a better understanding of the reading levels of students that the library serves and the reading comprehension strategies that students need more assistance with. Librarians can also model and reinforce what is already being taught in the classroom. This allows students to hear the same terminology in both the classroom and the library and allows for students to be a part of a learning community that is centered on reading comprehension strategies. If a student is using reading comprehension strategies in all areas of their learning, then they are more likely to see the importance of these strategies and use them in a meaningful way.

In addition, collaboration between the classroom teacher and the librarian builds a learning community that promotes reading and finding information in the texts that are read. The classroom teacher and the librarian want to see students succeed. Therefore, they can work together to help students become lifelong learners and readers who can read and gather information from texts.

**Best Practices for Teaching Reading Comprehension Strategies in the Library**

Research shows that there are several ways that reading comprehension strategies can be taught. One way the librarian can help students learn reading
comprehension strategies, is by reading aloud and modeling the strategies that students need to use when they read. During a read aloud or book talk the librarian can guide students to identify strategies that are being modeled while reading the text. This can be modeled and monitored as the librarian reads to students and listens to students read. The librarian can also use a reading program such as the Five Pillars of Reading to help guide them and give them lessons to follow when teaching reading comprehension strategies.

Just allowing students free time to read is not enough when wanting students to draw a deeper understanding from their reading. For that to be accomplished, students are taught how to determine the main idea, sequence the events of a story, compare and contrast texts, visualize the important events in the story, ask questions and predict what will happen next in the story. These are all reading comprehension strategies that have been taught in classrooms for many years and can be incorporated and modeled in the library media center. One school found it beneficial to teach reading comprehension strategies through drama. The use of modalities not usually emphasized in literacy instruction can motivate and encourage students to dig deeper in their understanding of what they read.
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Coleman, David. “Bringing the Common Core to Life.”


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