



METHODS TO IMPROVE READING SKILLS

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ABSTRACT: *Reading proficiency is fundamental to academic success and lifelong learning. This article examines evidence-based methods to enhance reading skills, focusing on explicit instruction, strategic approaches, and the integration of technology. By implementing these methods, educators can significantly improve students' reading comprehension and overall literacy.*

INTRODUCTION

Reading is a complex cognitive process that involves decoding symbols to derive meaning. Proficient reading is essential for academic achievement and personal development. However, many learners encounter challenges in developing effective reading skills. This article explores scientifically supported methods to improve reading proficiency, emphasizing explicit instruction, strategic reading approaches, and technological interventions.

Explicit instruction is a structured, systematic, and effective methodology for teaching academic skills. It involves direct teaching through clear and unambiguous explanations and demonstrations of concepts. Research indicates that explicit instruction is particularly beneficial for reading comprehension. For instance, modeling how to reread a section to understand an unknown word can help students develop self-monitoring strategies. A teacher might say, “Because I didn’t understand “mitosis”, I needed to reread these two sentences where “mitosis is explained”. Implementing specific reading strategies can significantly enhance comprehension. Effective strategies include:



Predicting anticipating what will happen next in a text.

Questioning: Generating questions about the text to deepen understanding.

Clarifying resolving confusion about words or concepts.

Summarizing: Condensing the main ideas of the text.

These strategies encourage active engagement with the text and promote deeper comprehension. Studies have shown that teaching these strategies explicitly can lead to significant improvements in students' reading abilities.

Advancements in technology have introduced innovative tools to support reading development. For example, attention-driven read-aloud technology, which integrates eye-tracking to regulate the speed of reading, has been shown to improve comprehension in children with reading disabilities. In a controlled experiment, children with reading difficulties improved their comprehension scores by 24% when using this technology.

Reading skills are crucial for academic and personal development. Here are several effective methods to improve reading skills: Key Reading Strategies

1. Making Connections and Prior Knowledge, Students can improve comprehension by:

- Connecting new words to their prior knowledge
- Relating texts to their favorite hobbies, or places they have visited
- Using texts that connect to world issues to deepen understanding

2. Active Reading Techniques, visualization and Engagement

To help students build mental images while reading:

- Use visual aids and visualization techniques
- Read aloud and ask students to picture the story in their minds
- Encourage students to:
 - Describe colors they imagine
 - Visualize the story's setting
 - Describe characters
 - Imagine sounds in the story's world

Students can also:



- Draw scenes from the text
- Create character family trees
- Make notes to remember key points

3. Questioning and Critical Thinking, questioning helps students:

- Examine texts from different perspectives
- Find new ways of interpreting information
- Develop critical thinking skills

Encourage students to:

- Find answers in different parts of the text
- Use their background knowledge
- Form their own opinions
- Understand the author's intent

4. Reciprocal Teaching Strategies, reciprocal teaching involves four key strategies:

- Predicting: Asking questions about potential story outcomes
- Questioning: Exploring who, what, when, where, how, and why
- Clarifying: Recognizing and addressing confusion
- Summarizing: Condensing text to its most important ideas

5. Reading Speed and Comprehension Techniques, improve reading speed with these methods:

- Finger tracking: Follow text with a finger or pointer, moving forward without looking back

- Reduce sub vocalization: Minimize “saying” words in your head
- Chunking: Read 3-5 words at a time for faster comprehension

6. Additional Practical Approaches, to enhance reading skills:

- Promote frequent reading to improve fluency
- Encourage active engagement through:
 - Note-taking
 - Summarizing



- Visualizing
- Teach context clues to help understand word meanings
- Pay attention to details and examine surrounding text.

Benefits of Improved Reading Skills, developing strong reading comprehension abilities is crucial because it:

- Supports academic performance
- Increases vocabulary
- Enhances linguistic fluency
- Develops critical thinking skills
- Provides a foundation for learning across various subjects like science, technology, history, and current events.

CONCLUSION. Enhancing reading skills requires a multifaceted approach that includes explicit instruction, the application of strategic reading methods, and the integration of supportive technologies. By adopting these evidence-based practices, educators can effectively improve students' reading comprehension and foster a lifelong love of reading.

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