



For Real

High Tech Early College  
Career and Technical Education  
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Are you looking for ways to help your child improve reading comprehension? Here are 8 key reading strategies used by elementary school teachers nationwide for improving reading comprehension. You can support your child's learning by practicing these comprehension activities at home.

Encourage your child to:

- Ask questions about the text. Provide opportunities for them to research unanswered questions online or at the library.
- Make predictions about the text based on prior knowledge and by looking at the pictures. Make sure your child checks to see if his/her predictions were correct.
- Make connections: Does the book remind your child about something he/she has personally experienced or read about before?
- Compare and contrast characters in the book. Encourage your child to think beyond surface-level observations and compare the actions and motivations of different characters.
- Summarize what happens in the beginning, middle, and end of the story. This is a key comprehension skill that will later allow your child to organize thoughts into paragraphs and essays. Children as young as preschool can practice this by drawing pictures of different parts of the story.
- Visualize what is happening in the story. Find descriptive words in the text to help your child "make a mental picture." This can also become a drawing activity, if your child illustrates scenes from the story.
- Reread difficult passages to clarify ideas. Your child will need help learning to do this. You can model this by thinking aloud while reading to your child: "That part was confusing for me. I should go back and read that again to help me understand."
- Think about how the text makes him/her feel: Did your child enjoy the story? Why or why not? If your child could rewrite the story, what would he/she do differently than the author? Why did the character behave a certain way? Would your child have done the same thing or made different choices? These are higher level, analytical questions that promote a deeper understanding of the story.

Good readers use these reading strategies without thinking about them, but young children who are just beginning to read need to be explicitly taught how to understand what they read. Use these strategies with your child for reading comprehension practice at home.