

1. Skimming

Skimming, sometimes referred to as gist reading, means going through the text to grasp the main idea. Here, the reader doesn't pronounce each and every word of the text but focuses their attention on the main theme or the core of the text. Examples of skimming are reading magazines or newspapers and searching for a name in a telephone directory.

2. Scanning

Here, the reader quickly scuttles across sentences to get to a particular piece of information. Scanning involves the technique of rejecting or ignoring irrelevant information from the text to locate a specific piece of information.

3. Predicting

Predicting is an important reading strategy. It allows students to use information from the text, such as titles, headings, pictures and diagrams to anticipate what will happen in the story (Bailey, 2015). When making predictions, students envision what will come next in the text, based on their prior knowledge. Predicting encourages children to actively think ahead and ask questions. It also allows students to understand the story better, make connections to what they are reading, and interact with the text.

Making predictions is also a valuable strategy to improve reading comprehension. Students are able to make predictions about a story, based on what they have already heard, read, or seen. This in turn, will allow students to become actively involved in the reading process. To determine if their predictions are correct, students should be required to reread portions of the text to recall facts about the characters or events within the story. Picture walks can serve as a tool to organize information within a story, which can also increase a child's comprehension. During a picture walk, students are able to activate their prior knowledge and connect the visual images in the story to their own personal experiences.

Students can also use a graphic organizer to predict the outcome of a story. They can do this by identifying clues within the text to predict how characters will behave and how significant problems in the story will be

solved. When using a graphic organizer, students are able to stay fully engaged in the story as they capture their thoughts in a logical way. It is important for teachers to encourage children to record clues that either support or deny their predictions. Teachers can also allow students to revise their predictions in order to reflect on the clues that are found within the text.

Making predictions encourages readers to use critical thinking and problem solving skills. Readers are given the opportunity to reflect and evaluate the text, thus extracting deeper meaning and comprehension skills. Students will also be more interested in the reading material when they connect their prior knowledge with the new information that is being learned.

4. Inferring

Inferring means figuring out something that the author doesn't actually say. You can use clues that are in the text, and things from your own mind. Sometimes it's called "reading between the lines," and it adds a lot more meaning to the story. When students infer, they find clues in the text and use what they already know from personal experience or past knowledge to fully understand what the text is about.

Making an inference involves using what you know to make a guess about what you don't know or reading between the lines. Readers who make inferences use the clues in the text along with their own experiences to help them figure out what is not directly said, making the text personal and memorable.

Skills Required to Make Inferences

Have background knowledge of the words and concepts in the text. Attend to relevant information. Hold information from earlier parts of the text in memory to be connected with related information that appears later in the text. Monitor for inconsistencies in information.

5. Guessing the meaning

Guessing from context refers to the ability to infer the meaning of an expression using contextual clues. These clues may be purely linguistic or situational.

A guess (or an act of guessing) is a swift conclusion drawn from data directly at hand, and held as probable or tentative, while the person making the guess (the guesser) admittedly lacks material for a greater degree of certainty.

Guessing meaning from context

Guessing from context refers to the ability to infer the meaning of an expression using contextual clues. These clues may be purely linguistic or situational:

- **Linguistic context: the linguistic environment in which a word is used within a text**
- **Situational context: extra-linguistic elements that contribute to the construction of meaning may involve background knowledge of the subject.**

What this amounts to is that learners should be able to infer the meaning of an unknown word using:

- 1. The meaning of vocabulary items that surround it;**
- 2. The way the word is formed;**
- 3. Background knowledge of the subject and the situation.**

Techniques for guessing

Texts are often full of redundancy and consequently, students can use the relation between different items within a text to get the meaning. Our prior knowledge of the world may also contribute to understanding what an expression means.

- **Synonyms and definitions:**

- Kingfishers are a group of small to medium-sized brightly colored birds
- When he made insolent remarks towards his teacher they sent him to the principal for being disrespectful
- **Antonym and contrast**
 - He loved her so much for being so kind to him. By contrast, he abhorred her mother
- **Cause and effect**
 - He was disrespectful towards other members. That's why he was sent off and penalized.
- **Parts of speech**
 - Whether the word is a noun, a verb, an adjective, or an adverb, functioning as a subject, a predicate, or an object.
- **Examples**
 - A trojan is an example of a computer virus
- **Word forms (the morphological properties of the word)**
 - Getting information from affixes (prefixes and suffixes) to understand a word. Examples: *dis-* (meaning not), *-less* (meaning without)...
- **General knowledge**
 - The French constitution establishes *laïcité* as a system of government where there is a strict separation of church and state.

These techniques help students get the meaning of words or at least narrow the possibilities. If need be using the dictionary should be the last resort to fine-tune the understanding of a vocabulary item