

Effective Reading Strategies to Enhance Students' Cognitive Abilities

Introduction

Reading is one of the biggest and most important subjects in any school or university curriculum. Students are encouraged to read as much as they can, but many people still find it hard to read a book, and some even find reading boring. However, reading is one of the critical factors to succeed in academia because good readers are also good writers.

Reading strategies help students understand what they read in terms that are easy for them to understand. They also help students find new ways to make reading more fun and more accessible to comprehend what they just read.

Read with Expression

The first strategy to implement is teaching students to use their voices when reading. If they read a sentence with an exclamation point at the end, they should read it in an excited voice. If they read a sentence with a question mark at the end, they should use an interrogative voice. This takes very little instruction and practice, but it helps the students understand what they are reading better by engaging in the text. This can drastically improve their comprehension skills and help them build fluency skills.

Set a Purpose for Reading Strategies

Setting a purpose for reading is another effective strategy for teaching reading comprehension. When students are assigned a novel or short story to read, have them write out their purpose beforehand.

Schema

One of the most effective strategies for teaching reading is called Schema. This strategy asks students to connect what they already know with new concepts presented within the text. The idea is that when you can associate further information with what you already know, you will learn it faster and retain it longer.

Make Reading Fun

One of the most important strategies is to make reading fun. You can do this by playing games, doing crafts, and getting the children involved in other activities that include reading. They will be more likely to participate in activities that involve reading when they are having fun at the same time.

Reading Skills

A reading skill or ability is, in simple terms, the ability for someone to interact with a text and take in the words. If you can read, you can do this.

These skills can be placed into four main categories: ***decoding, fluency, vocabulary, and understanding sentences.***

Decoding is the ability to apply knowledge of letter-sound relationships, including knowledge of letter patterns, to correctly pronounce written words. Understanding these relationships gives children the ability to recognize familiar words quickly and to figure out words they haven't seen before.

Fluency is defined as the ability to read with speed, accuracy, and proper expression. To understand what they read, children must be able to read fluently whether they are reading aloud or silently. When reading aloud, fluent readers read in phrases and add intonation appropriately.

Reading vocabulary refers to the words we need to know to understand what we read. Writing vocabulary consists of the words we use in writing. Vocabulary plays a fundamental role in the reading process and contributes greatly to a reader's comprehension.

Understanding Sentences - Being able to connect the sentences easily to understand their meaning increases reading fluency. This skill is called cohesion and it can help with coherence further down the line. (Coherence is the ability to connect ideas to other ideas across a large piece of writing).

Different Types of Reading Skills

Skimming

Skimming, sometimes referred to as gist reading, means going through the text to grasp the main idea. Here, the reader doesn't pronounce 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.

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.

Intensive Reading

Intensive reading is far more time-consuming than skimming and scanning as it needs the reader's attention to detail. It involves close reading that aims at the accuracy of comprehension. Here, the reader has to understand the meaning of every word.

Extensive Reading

Extensive reading lays more emphasis on fluency and less on accuracy. It usually involves reading for pleasure and is more of an out-of-classroom activity. It is highly unlikely for readers to take up the extensive reading of text they do not like.

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