

Dear Parents and Educators,

As you establish home reading routines with your child while sheltering in place for COVID 19, are you discovering that your child struggles with reading comprehension? Many students at all grade levels experience difficulty understanding what they've read.

Students often...

- read the text fluently but then can't remember what they've read.*
- can't answer questions about the story or nonfiction piece.*
- are unable to figure out challenging words*
- read so slowly they lose meaning or forget what they've read.*

In this letter to parents and educators we will share proven and practical ways to strengthen comprehension and fluency. When you consistently use these strategies daily, or at least several times per week, your child's overall reading will improve in a few months or sooner. Plus, these are fun ways to read together! In our roles as teacher educators we've successfully implemented these techniques with tens of thousands of students. Please refer to the enclosed lessons and bookmark when you discuss texts with your child.

Happy Reading!

Lori Oczkus, M.A. *Author and National Literacy Consultant*

Timothy Rasinski, Ph.D. *Professor Kent State University and Author*

*Ideas from: Close Reading with Paired Texts by Lori Oczkus & Timothy Rasinski
Shell Education.*

<https://go.tcmpub.com/close-reading-4>

Close Reading with the Fab Four

How to Quickly Improve Your Child's Comprehension & Fluency!

Why is it important to teach children to reread? What is "close reading"?

Good readers often reread challenging or interesting texts several times to gain better understanding. This is called "close reading". When we teach children to read the same text over again for different purposes their comprehension deepens. As adults we reread daily to grasp understanding of texts such as news articles, documents, recipes, or even driving directions. Rereading with children offers added benefits and they begin to read with ease, expression, confidence, and fluency. They also learn to recognize more vocabulary words which contributes to improved comprehension. (Rasinski, 2010)

What are the "Fab Four" comprehension strategies that students should know?

The "Fab Four" are four strategies that good readers employ to comprehend texts and include-predict, question, clarify, and summarize. (Oczkus, 2018) Reciprocal teaching, the research name for this set of tools, yields reading gains within just few months. (Palinscar & Brown, 1986; Hattie, 2008). Be sure to not turn reading into a boring test but rather an enjoyable experience! Take turns sharing your ideas with your student in a discussion. Use these four strategies as tools when talking with your student about any reading materials and you should see improved comprehension. The Fab Four, or reciprocal teaching works with students of all ages.

What is reading fluency? How does it help my student read?

Fluency involves the ability to read and understand the words encountered in texts effortlessly, automatically, and with expression. (Rasinski, 2010). Rereading texts helps students at all grade levels to move from reading word by word to reading with ease, expression and improved comprehension.

What if my student doesn't want to reread a text?

When using the enclosed Fab Four lesson plans your child will reread the same text multiple times for different purposes. Make it fun by participating and sharing your ideas too! You can also try rereading together in unison, or echo reading, where you read a line and the child repeats it. For fun try silly voices such as a monster voice or mouse voice when you reread. Try recording your child reading.

Where can I find short articles, poems, and stories for my student to read closely?

- *Any assigned text* from your child's school can be reread using the Fab Four strategies.
- Close Reading with Paired Texts: by Oczkus/Rasinski Workbooks K-5, also secondary

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Close Reading Lesson
with Nonfiction Articles

Take turns sharing your ideas with the Fab Four!

Predict

Discuss and look over the title, author, pictures, headings. Skim the text. Share predictions.

“My prediction is that I think we will learn.... because _____”

Read!

Choose or let the student decide how to read.

- Student reads silently.
- Read in unison, together.
- Echo read. Adult read a line child repeats it.
- Adult reads and the child follows along.
- Child reads again alone or in unison with adult.

Reread to Clarify

Student marks or identifies 2-3 challenging or interesting words. Even if the student knows all the words, student chooses/marks one- two to discuss!

“A tricky word or interesting word to clarify is _____ we can figure it out by _____”

- sounding it out
- looking for smaller parts
- reading on
- rereading for clues
- thinking what it means

Reread to Question

Take turns asking questions to quiz or discuss.

“My question is _____”

**“What? When? Where? Why? How?
I wonder.....”**

Reread to Summarize

Take turns sharing any of the following.

“This was about....”

“I learned....”

“_____ is important because _____”

“My favorite part was..”

“First... Next.... Then.... Finally....”

Close Reading Lesson
with Poetry/Songs/Stories

Take turns sharing your ideas with the Fab Four!

Predict

Discuss and look over the title, author, and art. Skim the poem or story. Share predictions.

“My prediction is that I think this (poem, story) is about _____ because _____”

Read!

Choose or let the student decide how to read.

- Adult reads and the child follows along.
- Read in unison, together.
- Echo read. Adult read a line child repeats it.
- Child reads again alone.
- Read poetry several times together for enjoyment!

Reread to Clarify

Student marks or identifies 2-3 challenging or interesting words. With poetry also discuss phrases. Even if the student knows all the words, student chooses one or two to discuss!

“A tricky word, interesting word to clarify is _____ we can figure it out by _____”

- sounding it out
- looking for smaller parts
- reading on
- rereading for clues
- thinking what it means

Reread to Question

Take turns asking questions to quiz or discuss.

“My question is _____”

**“What? When? Where? Why? How?
I wonder.....”**

Reread to Summarize

Take turns sharing any of the following.

“This (poem, story) was about....”

“My favorite part was..”

**“A funny part (or sad, or scary part)
was _____”**

Practice and read poem/story to 3 Lucky Listeners. (the dog, call grandma, the baby, etc.!)

Name: _____ Date: _____

Life in the Desert

Science Texts

Howard Rice

One of the most interesting biomes in the world is the desert. Deserts are dry areas of land that get less than 10 inches (25.4 centimeters) of water each year. Even though there is little water in a desert, there is plant and animal life there.

The seeds of desert plants may wait a long time underground. Once there is rain, they grow and bloom quickly. Other plants have long, deep roots that reach far below the ground for water. Some plants, such as cactuses, have spines useful for protection against animals trying to get water stored inside the leaves.

Animals in the desert have found ways to live with little water. Some sleep during the dry season. Some are able to live without water for a long time. Many sleep during the day and come out at night when it is cooler. Some even reuse the water that is already inside of them!

Desert life is not for everyone. The heat and lack of water make it difficult. But as the many plants and animals there show us, it can be done!



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Name: _____

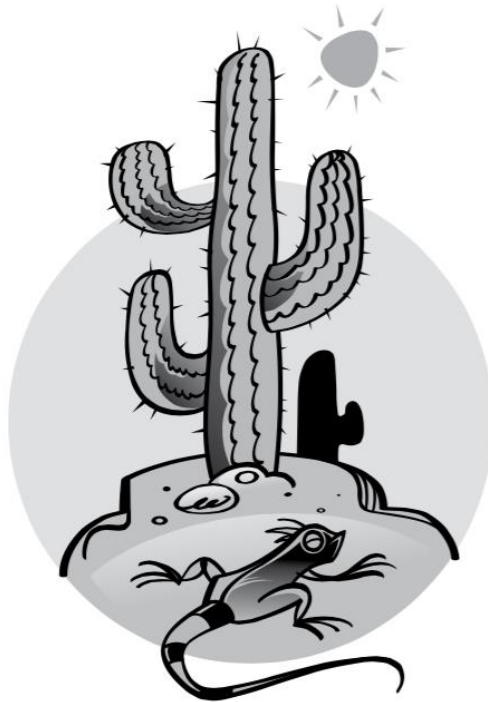
Date: _____

In the Desert

Sunlight sizzles all around.
Heated sand across the ground.
Prickled cactuses abound.
Where is water to be found?

Lizards darting in the sun.
Banded geckos on the run.
Find the shade 'til day is done.
Avoid the silent scorpion!

Moonbeams cast a hazy light.
Unseen rustles cause a fright.
Starry skies are quite a sight.
Scorching day turns frigid night.



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