

## SESSION 5 LANGUAGE PROCESSES 3 - FOCUS ON READING

### GROUP REFLECTIONS ON SESSION 4

**Purpose**        The purpose of this time is:  
¥        to share participants' experiences of the Between Session Instructional Strategy and the insights they gained from the Between Session Reading.

groups 3-4

Ask participants to share their experiences using the Instructional Strategy in their classrooms. Encourage participants to show any samples of work from their students and if possible display these for all to view.

After 15 minutes remind participants that they need to discuss the Between Session Reading. Use OH2:2 as a discussion starter if necessary

### INTRODUCTION

whole group    In the last two sessions we focused on the processes of writing and spelling. We examined the processes we go through as writers and spellers as we compose meaning into text. We discussed the skills, knowledge and attitudes we needed in order to choose the appropriate linguistic options to compose the appropriate genre. We examined the roles that purpose and audience play in the way we shape our writing. We also discussed the variety of genres students need to gain control of in order to succeed at school and in the broader context. We discussed the important role reading plays in the writing process and in particular in the learning of spelling. We observed that being able to spell required knowledge of a variety of strategies and that as writers and spellers we used our semantic knowledge, our syntactic knowledge and our graphophonic knowledge in order to compose meaning into text for others to read.

In this session we will focus on the reading process and the skills, knowledge and attitudes we need to be proficient readers. We will demonstrate through workshop activities that as fluent readers we use our semantic, syntactic and graphophonic knowledge as we compose meaning from the text on the page. We will examine the demands that different genres make on us as readers.

### INPUT AND WORKSHOPS

**NOTE:** If you decide not to use the audiotape you will have to get control of its message by putting it into your own words. It may help to do a little rewriting so that it sounds like you are giving this part of the input, 'In this input session we will complete a number of small workshops. I intend to ... etc.'

**Purpose**        The purposes of these Workshops are:

- ¥ to explore our own reading processes
- ¥ to examine a meaning-based theory of reading
- ¥ to consider how we can use this understanding in the classroom.

**Introduction** This Input section will also include a series of small workshops. The authors have written a script which has been read onto an audiotape by a professional actor. Thus this part of the Session is implemented via the medium of audiotape. We will listen to the authors' message on the tape, stopping to carry out the workshop activities when directed. We will focus on how reading 'works' and examine just what the basic knowledge and skills of reading are. In order to do this we will focus on our own reading process and consider the knowledge and skills we as proficient readers use. Finally we will examine how various genres place different demands on readers.

**Procedure** Start the tape and follow the script which follows.

**Script:**

"Reading is fundamental to all learning. All teachers need to have sufficient knowledge of the processes involved in reading, and the underlying principles of reading so that they are able to take some responsibility for helping students handle the reading demands of the various grade levels and content areas. In order to help you develop some sensitivity to and knowledge of these processes and principles we are going to focus on the three broad aspects of reading shown on this overhead."

Show OH 5.1 Three Aspects of Reading while tape continues.

OH 5:1

Three Aspects of Reading

1. What is reading?
2. How does reading work?
3. What are the 'basics' of reading?

tape continues

1. What is reading? When people talk about reading they often mean different things. We need to have a common working definition so that we are all talking about the same thing.
2. How does reading work? We need to address this question so that we are in a position to be able to devise ways of helping our students deal with the reading demands of the various grade levels and genres found in the content areas of school. We are going to explore this question by examining and reflecting upon our own reading processes. We can assume that all of you are fluent and effective readers in those fields which interest you or in which you have specialized.
3. What are the basics of reading? After exploring and examining some of the things that we've learned to do as fluent, effective readers we should be in a position to make some informed decisions about how we can best teach the basics of reading as they apply to the grade level and content area which we teach.

Let us address each of these questions in turn.

## WHAT IS READING?

It is necessary for us to have a simple, unambiguous, answer to this question. For purposes of this session it will be necessary to accept a fairly broad, functional definition. Here's the working definition we can begin with.

### Reading is Composing Meaning from Written Text

Now some of you may be thinking that such a working definition is too simplistic to be of much use. Those of you who have done a Masters in Reading are probably thinking, What do you mean by composing meaning? Do you mean any kind of meaning? Meaning at the literal level? The inferential level? Or meaning at much deeper levels? Or should readers compose meanings that enable them to understand the author's intent well enough to pass a standardized test?

Those of you who teach very young children are probably asking, 'What do you mean by text? Textbooks? Print? Print and Illustrations?'

These are legitimate questions to ask and we need to deal with them now. What we want at this point in the Course are shared meanings of the terms 'Reading as composing meaning' and 'text.' We prefer to stay with common sense definitions rather than technical definitions. By 'common sense' definitions we mean ones that reflect what happens in the real world of reading and learning to read. Let us deal with the concept of 'Reading is composing meaning' first. We'll come back to the notion of 'text' later.

When reading is looked at this way, the effectiveness of any act of reading depends on the degree to which the meanings the author intended when writing the text can be constructed by the reader. The higher the degree of similarity between the meanings intended by the writer and those composed by the reader, the better the understanding.

In a classroom context an example of a common sense definition of understanding written text would be this: If readers can retell a text in ways that capture the relevant gist, and appropriate details, then we would concede that they have read it in terms of our common sense definition.

Now let us deal with the notion of 'text.' Many of think of 'text' as an abbreviation for 'textbook.' We tend to associate it only with printed words on a page. For purposes of this Course we are going to use the linguistic definition of text that you were introduced to you in session 2, that is *Text is any set of signs that come together to make a coherent unit of meaning*. Thus the pictures and illustrations in a book are a form of text. An emergent reader who uses picture clues to get at the meanings in a book is reading by our definition because he/she is 'composing meaning from text.' By the same token a timeline flow chart of the events in the civil war is also a text. Thus a high school student who uses a timeline flow chart in a social studies text book to understand the sequence of events in the Civil War can also be said to be reading because he/she is composing meaning from text.

Another common sense example of understanding written text could be the ability to paraphrase text, that is, put it into one's own words without seriously distorting the intended meaning. This

is not to deny that some readers will be able to retell and/or paraphrase texts with which they've interacted, with more detail, or with more style and/or panache than others, for reasons which will become obvious when we deal with the second question which we saw on the last overhead.

To sum up. By defining reading and text in this way, we simply mean that effective reading should be understanding of the main messages which the author of the text intended. For such understanding to occur readers must first compose a meaningful message inside their heads. Without such understanding it is difficult to argue that reading has actually occurred.

Let's do an activity which illustrates what we mean by our working definition."

Show OH 5:2 Purposes of the Po Kare Kare Workshop.

OH 5:2

The purposes of the Po Kare Kare Workshop are:

- 1 to demonstrate that it is possible to pronounce words without necessarily understanding them
- 2 to sensitize participants to the link between graphophonic analysis and reading
- 3 to demonstrate that there is more to reading than being able to sound out and pronounce words.

tape continues "The overall purpose of this workshop is to put you in a situation where you can examine your own reading behavior in ways that will help clarify some of the issues involved in the common sense definition of reading we've just been hearing about, that is, 'reading is composing meaning from written text'. As well as this global purpose there are several specific purposes.

These are:

- to demonstrate that it is possible to pronounce words without necessarily understanding them
- to sensitize you to the realization that simply knowing how to work out how to pronounce words by using phonic knowledge does not result in reading as we have defined it, i.e. 'composing meaning from written text'
- to point out that even though you pronounced all the words you hadn't performed an act of reading as we defined it.

When the facilitator switches this tape off you should all read this piece of text through aloud, as if you were in a 'choral reading' lesson. Switch the tape player off now. Stop the tape" \*

Stop the tape.

Procedure Show OH 5:3 Po Kare Kare.

OH 5:3

PO KARE KARE

PO KARE KARE A NA  
NGA WAI O RO TO RU A  
WHI TI A TU KOE E HINE  
MA RINO A NA E  
E HINE E  
HOKI MAI RA  
KA MATE AH AU I  
TE AROHA E

Turn tape on.

tape continues "We're sure all of you read that beautifully. We're willing to bet that anyone who happened to be passing the room as you pronounced the words of the song in unison would have assumed that you were all very fluent and effective readers. But how many of you could have convinced that person that you had read Po Kare Kare in the sense implied by our definition? Unless you happen to speak the Maori language, you wouldn't have been able to compose sufficient meaning to understand this text, even if you're a fluent reader of English. So, according to our working definition of reading, you really didn't read that song.

People who can say and/or sing the words without understanding them cannot be said to have read them. They have not committed the act of reading. While it can be said that they've mouthed the words, or perhaps performed an act of pronunciation, or even that they've decoded the words into sound, it can not be said that they have read. Why not? Simply because commonsense everyday understanding of what the author of the words of the song intended has not occurred.

There are many students sitting in school classrooms today who read the texts that they have to read in much the same way that you read this one; that is, they use their knowledge of word shapes and the sound-symbol system of English (i.e. their graphophonic knowledge) to pronounce silently, or orally, the words of a piece of written text and still don't understand it. According to our working definition they have not therefore read it.

Spend the next five minutes discussing our definition of reading with the person sitting nearest to you. In your Notebook list the main points of your discussion. Stop the tape." \*

Procedure      Stop the tape and allow five minutes to share what they wrote.  
5 minutes

Say to participants: Discuss our working definition. Share the notes you wrote as the basis of your discussion.

Pull the groups together.

Ask participants to briefly share their responses.

Highlight that participants should continue to consider the definition as the session continues. At the end of the session they should see if their increased understanding of reading and reading processes has changed their understanding of the working definition.

Show OH2:5 The Three Cueing Systems.

Ask, When you were trying to compose meaning for Po Kare Kare which of these three systems did you use?

Listen to responses.

Point out that they were able to make most use of the graphophonic cues. Unless they knew the Maori language they were not able to use any semantic or syntactic cues. All that they could draw on was their past experience of the letter-sound relationships in their linguistic data pools after years of reading and writing experiences.

Ask the rhetorical question What does this mean for your classroom?

Accept one or two responses only.

Show again OH 5:2 Three Aspects of Reading.

OH 5:2

Three Aspects of Reading

- 1 What is reading?
- 2 How does reading work?
- 3 What are the 'basics' of reading?

Turn on tape.

"We will now consider the second question.

HOW DOES READING WORK?

If we can agree that the end result of a reader interacting with written text should be understanding of that text, then teachers of all students need to know something about how such understanding occurs, that is, how meaning is composed from written text by effective readers. This is particularly true for teachers who have a responsibility for teaching the language of specific content areas. Because they have usually majored in their content field they have had a deeper and longer immersion in the language of that content area. They have had the opportunity to build up their linguistic data pools with the genres which are important for controlling and understanding the knowledge of that content area. The next activity is designed to sensitize you to some of these issues. Take a look at the text on the overhead entitled Dire Straits. This text is also found in your notebook.

Show OH 5:4 Dire Straits.

OH 5:4

Dire Straits

Richmond was in dire straits against St Kilda. The opening pair who had been stroking the ball with beautiful fluency on past occasions were both out for ducks. Once again the new ball pair had broken through. Then Smith turned on surprising pace and moving the ball off the seam, beat Mazaz twice in one over. Inverarity viciously pulled Brown into the gully but was sent retiring to the pavilion by a shooter from Cox.

Jones in the slips and Chappell at silly mid-on, were superb and Daniel bowled a maiden over in his first spell. Yallop took his toll with three towering sixes but Thompson had little to do in the covers.

Grant was dismissed with a beautiful yorker and Jones went from a brute of a ball. Wood was disappointing, the way he hung his bat out to the lean-gutted Croft was a nasty shock. The rout ended when McArdle dived at silly leg and the cry 'Ow's That!' echoed across the pitch.

tape continues "We are now going to participate in another mini-workshop. As with the Po Kare Kare workshop I am going to make explicit the purposes for doing this workshop. You can refer to these purposes on the OH your Facilitator will display or read them in your notebook."

Show OH 5.5 Purposes of Dire Straits Workshop.

OH 5:5

Purposes of the Dire Straits Workshop are:

- to demonstrate that successful reading is more than being able to recognize individual words
- to demonstrate that effective reading needs more than the ability to use phonic knowledge to decode words to sound
- to demonstrate that the dictionary definitions of words are of little use when trying to understand a difficult text
- to identify the roles that background knowledge (semantic knowledge), familiarity with the style of language used (syntactic knowledge) and letter-sound relationships (graphophonic knowledge) play in the process of reading.

"As with Po Kare Kare there is a global purpose and several specific purposes. The global purpose is by examining your own reading behavior, you gain some insights into some of the factors which affect your ability to understand a written text.

The specific purposes are:

- to demonstrate that successful reading is more than being able to recognize individual words
- to demonstrate that effective reading needs more than the ability to use phonic knowledge to decode words to sound
- to demonstrate that the dictionary definitions of words are of little use when trying to understand a difficult text
- to identify the roles that background knowledge (semantic knowledge), familiarity with the style of language used (syntactic knowledge) and letter-sound relationships (graphophonic knowledge) play in the process of reading.

Let's examine this written text. It has been taken, with some modifications, from an evening newspaper of some years ago. The readability difficulty of such a newspaper is somewhere

between Grades 5 to 8. It is written in the genre of a newspaper report. Read this piece of written text through silently as if you really need to read it and understand it. Stop tape." \*

Stop the tape.

5 minutes Draw the participants' attention to the three questions shown on OH 5:7

Show OH 5:6 Reflections on Dire Straits.

OH 5:6

1. Apart from names, how many of the words of this text are totally new print items? That is, you have never seen them in print before.
2. Apart from names, how many words do you need help with pronouncing?
3. How many words couldn't you use in a sentence of some kind or other? For example 'yorker': 'He's a New Yorker.'

Leave OH 5:6 in view and ask participants to read Dire Straits through silently keeping these three questions in mind.

Turn on the tape after five minutes.

"As you considered these questions most of you would have agreed that:

- You had all seen the overwhelming majority of words in print at some time in your reading careers.
- You could pronounce all of the words excluding perhaps the names of people.
- You could use all of the words in a sentence of some kind.
- You were familiar with the journalistic genre being used.

Consider a fourth question. How many of you can honestly claim to be able to understand and explain the meanings in this piece of written text in ways that show that you have actually read it according to our definition? We don't mean to retell it from memory, but to be able to visualize what was going on and then explain what it means while you still have access to the text and can re-read as often as you like.

It is highly likely that there are many of you who would be hard pressed to show that you've read this piece of text. That is, read it in terms of how we defined reading. Does this mean that you have a reading problem? If you were to be given some intensive flash card drill on each of the words in the text until you could recognize every word in isolation instantly, would that help you understand it? Of course it wouldn't, because all of you can already recognize the majority of words in the text. What if you were given some intensive phonic drill? Would that help? Most of you previously admitted that you were able to pronounce all the words, so why would you need to be given any phonic drill? Nor would dictionaries be much help. How can we help people who can say the words, but still not understand the text? If we could imagine that this text about cricket really had to be known and understood for an important test or assignment, what kind of assistance would be needed for those of you who can't compose much meaning from it? How could an effective teacher help students deal with this piece of text?

During the next five minutes make a list of things which you think you would need to help you understand this text. When your list is completed share it with the person sitting next to you. Stop the tape." \*

Stop the tape.

5 minutes

pairs Ask participant to make a list of things they would need to help them to understand the text.

10 minutes

Ask pairs to share their lists.

Start the tape again.

"By now you will have realized that if readers are to understand texts like this they must be able to go beyond the words on the page; that there is much more to reading as we have defined it than merely being able to recognize the words and say them. A reader must also have a great deal of background knowledge about the content of the text being read and must also have control of the jargon, or the specialist language used in the text.

With respect to the text we've just been working with, you needed to know at least that Richmond and St Kilda are cricket teams, that cricket is played in a certain way with particular objectives, rituals, rules, conventions, and that certain words and phrases have quite unique meanings in the context of cricket. If you have such knowledge you know what an opening pair is, what a new ball pair is, you know what bowling a maiden over means, and you would also realize that what Thompson was doing in the covers was quite legitimate. Now stop the tape and consider the three cueing systems overhead again. Stop the tape." \*

Stop the tape.

Show again OH 2:5 The Three Cueing Systems.

Ask, When you were trying to compose meaning for Dire Straits which of these three systems of language cues did you use?

Listen to responses.

Point out that most of them would have made most use of the graphophonic cues and to a limited extent the syntactic cues, but virtually little use of the semantic information in the text. Their ability to tap into the syntactic cueing system would have been limited by their lack of familiarity with the jargon of that type of cricket journalese. Their inability to tap into the semantic cues in the text would have been caused by their lack of familiarity with the game of cricket.

Ask the rhetorical question, What does this mean for your classroom?

Accept one or two responses only.

Re-start the tape.

tape continues "Just in case any of you think that Dire Straits is a text that Aussies like the authors have specially chosen to trick American teachers it is important that you look at the next text. It's one that one of their colleagues brought back to Australia from America some years ago. It has been given to Australian teachers under the same conditions that you were asked to read Dire Straits. They had exactly the same experiences as you. Stop the tape." \*

Stop the tape.

Show OH 5:7 An Incredible Scene.

OH 5:7

An Incredible Scene

What an incredible scene. The tide turned after Jones' illegal use of hands. Now it was third and eight from their own forty-seven. Danielson went back, looked over the middle and popped it. It was another first down. Shortly afterwards Brown was caught in traffic as they tried to jam the play. The rookie out of Springfield dived over the middle to no avail. In quick succession Danielson was sacked and King was hit at the line. It was fourth and short and they were chewing up the time. But finally the offensive linemen did their job and Smith broke off. The silver rush was ineffective and Danielson ran out of the pocket and completed the play to Smith in the end zone. The crowd went berserk.

tape continues "For someone who is unfamiliar with American football this piece of text is almost nonsensical. For example, the sentence, 'Now it was third and eight from their own forty seven', is syntactic nonsense to the average Aussie. Most would argue that it's not even a legitimate sentence of English. It seriously violates some rules of English grammar. It's also semantic nonsense. Despite this it makes perfect sense to most ten year old American girls and boys who are football fans."

"But what about those students who do know about cricket/football but who still wouldn't be able to read the text? We've all met the older student who is the cricket and/or football expert in the sense that he or she plays the game, uses the language of cricket/football in the same way that an expert does, yet who, when confronted with a text like either of these would find it impossible to compose any meaning. Similarly, very young children who may understand and even enjoy football and cricket in the sense that they watch it on TV do not have the control over some of the strategies and knowledge involved in processing print. All potential readers, whether older or emergent readers, must be able to draw semantic cues (that is, background knowledge), syntactic cues, (that is the 'flow of language,' 'patterns of discourse', or genre of the text), and graphophonic cues, (that is the letter sound correspondences, orthographic cues, punctuation and other conventions) if they are ultimately going to be able to compose meaning from text. If it's not lack of background knowledge, specialist language or control of the graphophonic system which is preventing the understanding of the text, then what can it be? We favor this explanation: As well as needing prior knowledge, specialist language, and graphophonic control,

potential readers must also be in control of the strategies which make it possible for readers to compose meaningful text in their heads. We teachers should be aware of and be sensitive to these strategies and knowledge so that we can help our students apply them to the reading which we expect them to do. This is what the next activity is all about.

You have probably realized by now that we believe very strongly that the purposes for asking learners to engage in activities should be made explicit before they do them. This is why we want your Facilitator to display the next overhead transparency which summarizes these purposes for you. If you prefer you can read them on the appropriate page in your Notebook

Show OH 5:8 Purposes of Shipwreck Activity.

Refer to page \*\* in their Notebook.

OH 5:8

Purposes of the Shipwreck Activity are:

- to create a situation which will enable fluent readers to reflect upon the way they go about reading a difficult text
- to identify the range of specific processing strategies fluent readers bring into play when blocked by a piece of text
- to identify the range of skills, knowledge and attitudes that fluent readers need to make the processing strategies they bring to bear 'work'.

tape continues "The overall purpose of this workshop is to force you to reflect upon the processes that you use when trying to read a difficult text. In particular we want you to discover what processing strategies you use when you are blocked and don't know the next word or phrase. We also want you to focus on the kinds of skills, knowledge, attitudes towards reading and yourself as a reader you had to have in order to bring these processing strategies into play. Stop the tape." \*

Stop the tape.

Refer participants to page \*\* of their Notebook, the Shipwreck Activity.

Show OH 5:9 Shipwreck Activity.

OH 5:9

SHIPWRECK

How wretched and grim is the sight of a sea-shore when a ship has been wrecked upon it! All across the flat white sand are strewn ragged portions of \_\_\_\_\_, wrenched and smashed by the \_\_\_\_\_ with splinters and pegs p\_\_\_\_\_ like broken fingers; snapped m\_\_\_\_\_ and torn sails lie \_\_\_\_\_ here and there, barrels and chests bob \_\_\_\_\_ the rolling surf; all \_\_\_\_\_ careful craft and handiwork that go to \_\_\_\_\_ and furnish a vessel have been \_\_\_\_\_ and destroyed with a fearful speed, \_\_\_\_\_ even as quickly as I can write \_\_\_\_\_ words.

Such were my thoughts while I dragged myself, wet and shivering, up the slope toward some strand - I knew not whether French or Spanish, for our hooker had been blown far to the east from its intended port of San Sebastian, which lies close to the frontier.

5 minutes      Ask participants to work in pairs and complete the first paragraph of the Shipwreck text.

Remind participants that there are no right or wrong answers. They should try to find the best possible word for each deletion.

Ask participants to consider the listed questions and write their responses in their Notebook when they have completed the first paragraph.

Show OH 5:10 Reflections on Shipwreck Activity.  
OH 5:10

- What did I do when I was blocked or looking for a word?
- What strategies did I use?

5 minutes      Discuss the lists drawn up as part of the task.

Start the tape again.

"When readers complete activities like this they usually discover similar kinds of things about reading. Things that they've never consciously thought about before. What they discover can be expressed in the form of four principles shown in the following overhead."

Show OH 5:11 Four Principles of Reading.  
OH 5:11

#### Four Principles of Reading

1. Effective readers draw heavily on their background knowledge (semantic system) as well as their knowledge of the language (syntactic system) and their knowledge of the graphics and sounds these represent on the page (graphophonic system).
2. Effective readers use certain strategies to help them over difficulties and blockages.
3. Effective readers do a lot of predicting.
4. Effective readers are typically confident enough to read difficult texts.

tape continues:

Effective readers carry around in their heads, a vast store of knowledge about language and how it works. We have referred earlier to this as the language user's linguistic data pool. From this store, comes background knowledge of a particular content area (semantic system), the different letters, letter combinations and pronunciations (graphophonic system) as well as the kinds of words, phrases and their order in sentences that are likely to occur in the text (syntactic

system). All three systems of knowledge interact to provide effective readers with a range of strategies to use as they seek meaning from text.

When effective readers experience a reader's block or loss of meaning, they may employ any or all of the following strategies.

1. Leave the problem and read on, hoping to find more information and clues to meaning in the rest of the text.
2. Re-read the sentence in the hope that this will provide understanding once the words are more familiar.
3. Leave a problematic word out or substitute a word that will fit the patterns of the text, to see if meaning can be gained despite the word block.

Effective readers don't just read each word in the order it occurs in the text. Their eyes seek information ahead in the text; they look back over text. Readers are constantly anticipating or predicting what will be coming next. Predicting is just one of the strategies effective readers use all the time. Once a prediction has been made the reader reads on, reads back over the text to test out the prediction. If sense is maintained and confirmed the reader continues. This process of predicting, testing, confirming continues throughout the process of composing meaning from text and allows the reader to understand what has been written.

Such strategies only become possible because the effective reader is confident enough and willing to take risks, to have a go at reading something that is unfamiliar or apparently too difficult.

On the other hand, ineffective and emergent readers are unaware of, or unable for particular reasons, to use these strategies. They may experience difficulties in using these strategies because English is their second language and they therefore have a limited linguistic data pool of English on which they can draw. Ineffective readers remain reluctant to have a go, often because they lack relevant background knowledge about the content or relevant knowledge about the patterns of the language used in the text, or both. Some over-rely on the graphophonic system at the expense of using the other two systems (semantic and syntactic systems) to predict the unknown word. Because of these reasons, ineffective readers are not confident that they can make sense of written text.

Emergent readers may not yet understand how these processes all fit together so that they can be used to compose meaning from text. We need to consider therefore what kinds of skills, knowledge and understandings do emergent readers need to learn about and control if we want to start them successfully on the road to reading? What sorts of things can we do in class to give them the graphophonic know-how and skills they need? How can we develop the syntactic and semantic parts of their linguistic data pools so that they have the means of constructing the meanings that the author of a text intends them to construct? This is what the next workshop is designed to get us thinking about

You will recall that there was a third question raised earlier in this session.

## WHAT ARE THE BASICS OF READING?

There are many different versions of the "basics" of reading . Here is a summary of what has emerged from the research and experience of the last 50 years.

1. Sensible coherent meaning should be the end result of reading.
2. Effective reading necessitates being able to use semantic, syntactic and graphophonic knowledge in mutually supportive ways.
3. Effective reading necessitates readers understanding how to decode letters to sound.
4. Effective reading necessitates being able to predict on the basis of semantic and syntactic knowledge.
5. Effective reading necessitates the use of a wide range of processing strategies when dealing with reader's block.
6. Effective readers are confident, positive readers.

Now turn off the tape. Help your Facilitator generate a list of responses to the question, If these are the basics which effective readers have learned to control, what does it mean for classrooms?

The Between Session Reading will help to consolidate some of the key points raised in this Input/Workshop. Stop the tape." \*

Stop the tape.

Ask participants to form six groups and assign each group one of the six "basics". Provide each group with chart paper so they can list their responses for all to read.

Tell participants that they are to:

- develop a group consensus of what these "basics" mean
- generate a set of classroom "practices" that teachers might do to promote these basics.

Ask participants to study the Basics of Reading in their Notebook on page \*\* and respond to the questions on OH 5:12, with respect to their assigned "basic".

Show OH 5:12

OH 5:12

If these are the basics which effective readers have learned to control what does it mean for classrooms? What can we say/do that would result in our students acquiring these basics?

Model how you would apply the question to the first basic by thinking out loud as you begin the list. For example,

“Now, how do I think that this question could be applied to the first basic? Let me think, 'Sensible, coherent meaning should be the end result of reading' ... hm, one thing I could do is make sure that I don't use reading materials which are filled with language which is semantically empty and syntactically nonsensical, like 'Nan ran to the pan', so I'll write that on the list, 'Use reading material which provides good models of text structure and uses real language'.

What else could I do? I know, when I'm helping a student read, if he or she gets blocked I won't start by saying 'sound it out', I'll ask, 'What would make sense there?' And if he/she makes a response which fits in with the storyline I'll then think about directing their attention to the graphophonics by making a comment like, 'That's a good attempt, it does make sense, it does fit in. What sound does it start with? What letter makes that sound? Does the meaningful word you thought of begin with that?'... and so on. So the second thing I can write on the list for this basic is, 'Continually focus them on going for sensible coherent meaning when blocked'... What else could I do?

10 minutes

Remind groups that they will have ten minutes to discuss their assigned basic and fill out their charts.

Recap by sharing and comparing charts.

Remind participants that the readings will extend these basics.

## MAKING CONNECTIONS

Although we would all perceive ourselves as proficient readers we are not always effective in our reading. There are various specialization areas which we may find difficult to read because, while we may have control over the graphophonic system, we may not have similar degrees of control over the semantic and syntactic systems as we saw in the Dire Straits workshop. In order for readers to be effective, all three systems need to be working in mutually supportive ways. An interesting point for us to consider is, does that make us literate in some areas and illiterate in others?

It is also interesting to recap on the similarities between the reading and writing processes. We need to bring sufficient knowledge about the semantic system, the syntactic system and the graphophonic system to get started in both the reading or writing act. When we begin to read, we 'draft read' just as we draft our writing. We skim across the page searching for a general sense of the intended meaning of the text and clarifying our purpose for reading it. Once we have decided we want to read the text, or can read the text, we usually return to the beginning and reread the text more carefully, engaging with the author's message more intently as we compose meaning from the text. The text on the page therefore is common to both reading and writing. Readers compose meaning from the text; writers compose meaning into text. That text can be both a bridge to meaning or a barrier as we discovered with Dire Straits.

## IMPLICATIONS FOR EVALUATION

Reading has been traditionally tested with standardized tests. But what do the results of such tests tell us about the strategies and skills the reader has under control? We need to ask ourselves, What makes an effective reader? What are the markers or indicators of a 'good reader'? The activities we have been involved in today would suggest that proficiency in reading has something to do with the degree to which the reader has control over a range of genres. We need to focus on the processes and strategies that the reader understands and uses to compose meaning from the text as well as skills and comprehension levels.

## PERSONAL REFLECTION

Ask participants to reflect in their journals. Remind them to focus their reflections on what they have learned in the session and how this might relate to their role as a teacher of writing.

Show OH1:8 to guide the reflections.

What do you think you learned in this session?

What might this mean for teaching in your classroom?

## INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGY FOR THE CLASSROOM: COOPERATIVE RETELLING

**Introduction** Cooperative Retelling involves the reader in reading, writing, talking and listening. It is an Instructional Strategy which helps to improve comprehension and increase understanding and control over written genre. It is also a useful strategy for evaluating students' comprehension.

## INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGY FOR THE CLASSROOM: GUIDED READING K-2

**Introduction** Guided Reading is an instructional strategy which allows beginning or emergent readers to attempt independent reading. It provides an opportunity for teachers to teach students to become skilled in the complex dynamics of reading by actually reading. It allows teachers to reinforce, talk about, model or remodel whatever reading strategies students need. It also gives the teacher the opportunity to monitor carefully the child's progress and needs for future teaching.

## FOR THE NEXT SESSION

Between Session Instructional Strategies

BSIA 5:1 Instructional Strategy: Cooperative Retelling

Ask participants to read and the Instructional Strategy, Cooperative Retelling, with a group of students. See Theory into Practice, pages ##

OR

BSIR 5:2 Instructional Strategy: Guided Reading K-2  
See Theory into Practice, pages 64-74

Ask participants to try the Instructional Strategy Guided Reading K-2 with a group of their students.

Between Session Readings

BSR 5:1  
Cambourne, B.L.,

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