

Reading Kit: Teacher Instructions

Kit Should Contain:

- Reading Kit Tutor Log
- Activity instruction cards
- 12 laminated index cards
- 6 mini-whiteboards
- 6 dry erase markers
- 2 whiteboard erasers
- 6 highlighters
- 6 laminated K-W-L charts

Kit Assembly Instructions:

- 1) Print off and laminate activity instruction cards. It works best if each section (Pre-Reading, Reading Fluency, and Post-Reading) is printed on a different color of paper.
- 2) Make six copies of the K-W-L charts and laminate them.
- 3) Punch a hole in the corner of the activity instruction cards and hold together with a binder ring.
- 4) Laminate index cards.
- 5) Collect highlighters, dry erase markers, mini-whiteboards, and erasers.
- 6) Place all items in a small box.

Kit Use Suggestions:

- 1) Provide tutor with a reading text that you would like them to use with the reading activities. It may be a text that the learners have already read in class, or it may be a brand new text, depending on the needs and levels of the learners.
- 2) Mark 2-3 specific activities that you would like the tutor to work on with the learners.
- 3) Check in briefly with the tutor before and after the pull-out sessions to respond to questions and comments.
- 4) If it is difficult to do in-person check-ins each time, use the Reading Kit Tutor Log to share the names of learners for pull-outs, selected activities, and to give special instructions and receive feedback from the tutors.
- 5) Add new activities to the instruction cards if you have other reading activities you would like the tutors to work on with your learners.

Reading Kit Tutor Log

Date: _____

Learner/s: _____

Reading Text/Vocabulary Words:

Today's Activities:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Teacher Comments: _____

Tutor Comments: _____

Thank you so much!

Overview of Pre-Reading Activities

Why do pre-reading activities?

English language learners can struggle with new texts if they do not have background support before they begin reading. For this reason, pre-reading activities are used to assist learners when they read new texts in a variety of ways, including pre-teaching vocabulary, activating prior knowledge, and making predictions about the text.

Learners should know at least something about a topic before reading about it, so pre-reading activities are used to activate the learners' prior knowledge of a topic so that they can consciously draw on that knowledge as they read the text. Pre-reading activities serve to get the learners thinking and talking about the content of what they are about to read, and may expose them to specific vocabulary and potentially important grammar structures in the text. This enables them to anticipate content and facilitate comprehension of the text.

Pre-reading activities also are used to get the learners interested in the content of the reading by connecting it with their own lives and experiences. This increases reading motivation for the learners.

Predictions from Sentences

An important reading skill that fluent readers possess is the ability to make predictions about the text. Predictions may be based on prior knowledge and experience around the topic, information from the unit content or established learning structure, or clues from the text itself.

Materials Needed: A reading text with 3 sentences from different parts of the text selected

- 1) Dictate the first sentence to the learner/s. Repeat several times if necessary.
- 2) If working with a small group, have learners compare their sentences with a partner's and make adjustments as necessary. If working with one learner, have them check their sentence as you read it to them again.
- 3) Repeat steps 1 and 2 with the remaining two sentences.
- 4) If you notice that there are errors in any of the sentences that impact their meaning, write them on the mini-whiteboard so that learners can make necessary corrections (the focus of this activity is on making predictions, not on grammar or spelling).
- 5) Ask the learner/s how these three sentences are connected. What do they think the reading text will be about? Discuss together, asking learner/s to explain why they made the predictions that they did.
- 6) As they move into reading the text, revisit their predictions and discuss whether or not they were accurate.

Expansion: Have the learners write down their predictions in their notebooks. After they finish reading the text, have the learners read their predictions aloud, and decide as a group whose predictions were the closest.

Predictions from Words

An important reading skill that fluent readers possess is the ability to make predictions about the text. Predictions may be based on prior knowledge and experience around the topic, information from the unit content or established learning structure, or clues from the text itself, such as the title, subtitles, graphics, and/or highlighted key words.

Materials Needed: A reading text with 5-6 words from the text selected, mini-whiteboard, marker

- 1) Write the selected words from the text on the mini-whiteboard.
- 2) Have the learner/s read the words out loud and check to make sure that they understand all of the words.
- 3) Invite the learner/s to guess how these 5-6 words are connected, and predict what the text will be about. Ask them to explain why they made the predictions that they did.
- 4) As they move into reading the text, revisit their predictions and discuss whether or not they were accurate.

Expansion 1: As the learners read through the text, have them highlight the words that were used in the pre-reading activity.

Expansion 2: Have the learners write down their predictions in their notebooks. After they finish reading the text, have the learners read their predictions aloud, and decide as a group whose predictions were the closest.

Predictions from Titles

An important reading skill that fluent readers possess is the ability to make predictions about the text. Predictions may be based on prior knowledge and experience around the topic, information from the unit content or established learning structure, or clues from the text itself. In this activity, learners make predictions about the reading text based on looking on the title, subtitles, picture captions, and pictures from the text.

Materials Needed: A reading text, mini-whiteboard, marker

- 1) Have the learner/s read the title of the reading text aloud. Check to make sure that they understand all of the words in the title.
- 2) Give the learner/s a minute to reflect on what they think the text will be about. Remind them to base their predictions on the words that they read in the title.
- 3) If working with a single learner, have them say their predictions out loud. If working with a small group, go around the group and have everyone share their predictions. After everyone has shared, ask the group if they noticed similarities among the predictions.
- 4) Write the predictions down on a mini-whiteboard.
- 5) Continue steps 1-4 with any subtitles, pictures, and/or picture captions.
- 6) After the learners read the text, revisit the predictions from the mini-whiteboard to see how accurate they were.

Predictions from Pictures

An important reading skill that fluent readers possess is the ability to make predictions about the text. Predictions may be based on prior knowledge and experience around the topic, information from the unit content or established learning structure, or clues from the text itself, such as the title, subtitles, graphics, and/or highlighted key words.

Materials Needed: A reading text with 3 pictures or objects which are connected to the text

- 1) Show the learner/s the 3 pictures or objects.
- 2) Ask the learner/s to guess how the pictures or objects are connected.
- 3) Invite them to predict what they will read about in the text. Ask the learner/s to explain why they made the predictions that they did.
- 4) As the learner/s move into reading the text, revisit their predictions and discuss whether or not they were accurate.

Expansion 1: Show the learner/s the pictures from the story. Have them guess words that they think they will read in the story. Write down the words on a mini-whiteboard. After the learners read the story, revisit the mini-whiteboard. Circle the words that appeared in the story, and cross off the words that didn't.

Expansion 2: Follow the instructions from Expansion 1, but have the learner/s predict five nouns, five verbs, and five adjectives that they believe will be in the story.

Expansion suggestions created by Sheri Lear, Minnesota Literacy Council

Idea Web

Brainstorming gives learners the opportunity to pool what they know about the topic of a text and share their knowledge. The goal is to activate the learner/s' prior knowledge so that they can make connections to what they already know about a topic as they read the text, and to help the learner/s identify what the text is about.

Materials Needed: Reading text, mini-whiteboards, markers

- 1) Give everyone a mini-whiteboard and a marker.
- 2) Tell the learners the title or the topic of the reading text.
- 3) Give the learners 2-3 minutes to write down as many words and ideas as they can think of that are related to the title or topic.
- 4) When the time is up, have the learners display their boards for the group to read. Have the learners read the words and look for similarities and connections. Allow the learners to ask each other questions if they are unsure about words or how they relate to the topic.

Variation 1: For a single learner, ask them to read through their words and to explain why they decided to write each one.

Variation 2: For lower level learners, have them respond to the prompt verbally. Use a mini-whiteboard to record their answers, then discuss them as a group.

Pre-Teaching Vocabulary

Understanding vocabulary words is essential to reading comprehension. Pre-teaching vocabulary gives learners the opportunity to identify key words, and then encounter them in the context of the text, which builds memory. When pre-teaching vocabulary, select words that the learners will need to know to understand the overall message of the text, rather than all of the words that they don't know. Also, select words that are directly related to the topic, so that the pre-reading activity helps activate prior knowledge before the learners read the text.

Materials Needed: Reading text, laminated index cards, markers, highlighters

- 1) Look through the text and select vocabulary words from the reading that will be challenging to the learner/s.
- 2) Write the first word on a laminated index card. Have the learner/s read it out loud, prompting as needed.
- 3) Ask the learner/s to guess what the word means.
- 4) Explain the meaning using learner-friendly definitions (if needed, use the online version of the Cambridge Learner's Dictionary to find simple definitions of words).
- 5) If the learner/s are unsure of the meaning of the word, use other means to explain it, such as:
 - Act it out through gestures or pantomiming
 - Show a picture
 - Give concrete examples
 - Use synonyms or antonyms
- 6) Once the learner/s seem to understand the word, ask them to explain it back to you, or give an example sentence using the word so that you can check their comprehension.
- 7) Have the learner/s scan through the text until they find the word, then highlight it.
- 8) Repeat steps 2-7 with the remaining vocabulary words.

Variation 1: Using the context of the text to help familiarize the learner/s with the text further, and to help the learner/s develop skills looking for context clues. Pull out some sentences which contain the words you want to pre-teach and put them up on the board with gaps where the words should go. Have the learner/s to decide which words go in which gaps.

Variation 2: Categorizing the words encourages learners to engage with the meaning of the words. The learners can categorize the words by meaning, parts of speech (noun, verb, adjective, etc.), or concepts. If the words aren't related in terms of meaning, have the learners categorize them into 'words I know', 'words I am not sure about' and 'words I don't know'. Have the learners compare their categories, and encourage them to teach each other the words that they already know.

Variation 3: Divide students into pairs. Assign each pair of students one or two of the new vocabulary words. Pass out one English to English dictionary to each student pair and have the pair look up and write down the definition of the word/s they were assigned. Then have the pair mingle with other pairs and teach their word. Continue the mingle until each pair has a definition for all the vocabulary words.

K-W-L Chart

K-W-L is an instructional strategy that helps guide learners through a reading text. This activity helps to activate prior knowledge, sets a purpose for reading, and helps learners to monitor their reading comprehension.

Materials Needed: KWL charts, markers

- 1) Give each learner a copy of the K-W-L chart. Have the learners write the title of the reading text and the topic on the top of the chart.
- 2) Have the learners brainstorm a list of words, terms, or phrases that they associate with the topic. The learners record these associations in the **Know** (K) section of the chart. This brainstorming can be done individually, in partners, or as a small group. If the brainstorming is done individually or in partners, have everyone share their associations with the entire group after they are finished.
- 3) Ask the learners to think about what they want to know about the topic. As they generate questions, the questions are recorded in the **Want to know** (W) section of the chart. The questions can be composed individually, in partners, or as a small group. If the questions are written individually or in partners, have everyone share their questions with the entire group after they are finished. If learners are struggling to come up with questions, the teacher may prompt by asking *“What do you think you will learn about this topic from the text you’ll be reading?”* or choose an idea from the Know column and ask, *“What else would you like to learn about this idea?”* The teacher may also want to have a few questions prepared to add to the Want to know column.
- 4) Have the learners read through the entire text.
- 5) Ask the learners to go back to the chart and review their **Want to know** questions. Then, have them re-read the text, writing out the answers to the questions as they come across them in the **Learned** (L) column. Learners can also record anything that they find particularly interesting from the text in this column.
- 6) When all of the learners have finished reading and recording answers and observations, ask them to share what they learned with the group.

Variation: For beginning level learners, have them complete only the **Want to know** (W) section of the chart. Show the learner/s pictures from the story, and have them generate a list of questions that they want to have answered (example: What is her name? Why is she sad? Where is he going?). After the learner/s finish reading the text, go back to the questions and have the learners answer them orally, crossing out any questions that were not answered by the story.

Variation suggestion provided by Sheri Lear, Minnesota Literacy Council

Overview of Reading Fluency Activities

Reading fluency refers to the speed, accuracy, and expression with which people read. People who are not fluent readers or who are reading a new text for the first time may read very slowly, focusing on one word at a time. Often, a learner may understand the meaning of the individual words, but may read too slowly to connect their meaning together.

Developing reading fluency will improve learners' ability to comprehend the text and to enjoy reading. The best strategy for improving reading fluency is for learners to have multiple opportunities to listen to and/or read the text out loud. Repeated readings of the same text improves learners' confidence, builds up sight word recognition, and offers learners the opportunity to improve upon their reading skills each time they read the text aloud. It is helpful for learners to interact with the text in a variety of ways: listening to it, reading it as a group, reading it to a partner, reading silently, etc.

Modeled Reading

Modeled reading gives learners a chance to hear fluent reading and helps them understand the components of fluent reading.

Materials Needed: Reading text

- 1) Read through the text before beginning the activity so that it is familiar.
- 2) Pass out copies of the reading text.
- 3) Explain that being able to read fluently is important because it leads to greater comprehension. Explain that the learner/s are going to hear what fluent readers do when they read. Encourage the learner/s to pay attention to what they hear as the text is read out loud.
- 4) Read aloud to the learner/s. They may choose to follow along or just listen.
- 5) About halfway through the text, stop and ask learner/s what they heard as they were listening to the text.

Important points to highlight include:

- reading at an appropriate rate (not too fast or too slow)
 - chunking words together into phrases
 - paying attention to the punctuation
 - reading with expression
- 6) After bringing up these points, ask the learner/s to pay attention to how those areas are addressed as the rest of the text is read.
 - 7) Read the remainder of the text out loud. Ask for any additional observations.

Variation: If working with low level learners, simply model the reading of the text and do not to discuss the fluency components.

Following Along with Fingers

Learners of all levels benefit from listening to a fluent reader model the reading of a text. For beginning level learners, having the opportunity to listen to the text before they are asked to read it is critical. As the learners practice following along with their fingers, they become accustomed to the direction of the text and the speed of a fluent reader.

Materials Needed: Reading text

- 1) Read through the text before beginning the activity so that it is familiar.
- 2) Pass out copies of the reading text.
- 3) Have the learner/s locate the title of the text with their finger. Read the title of the text while they follow along with their finger.
- 4) Have the learner/s locate the first line of the text with their finger. Read the text as the learner/s follow along with their finger. As the learner/s are following along, note if they are moving at the same speed as the reading.
- 5) Repeat steps 2 and 3 if the learner/s seem to have trouble following along, or if they request to hear the text again.

Duet Reading

This activity gives learners the opportunity to practice reading aloud with a fluent reader and builds their fluency and confidence, without the learner feeling like they are being put on the spot by being asked to read aloud alone.

Materials Needed: Reading text

- 1) Read through the text before beginning the activity so that it is familiar.
- 2) Sit next to the learner/s and begin reading the text together. Read at a normal speed, using expression and observing phrasing and punctuation. The learner/s read along, working on keeping up and imitating as well as they are able.
- 3) Continue reading at a normal rate even if the learner/s hesitate or fall behind. If the learner/s stop, pause until they are ready to begin again.
- 4) When the reading is finished, ask the learner/s if they would like to read the text again.

Variations: For beginning level learners, it may be necessary to slow down your reading speed so that the learners are able to keep up. Make sure to maintain expression and observe phrasing and punctuation, even if reading at a slower speed. Also, move a finger under the text while reading so that the learner/s can use that as a visual to keep up.

Collaborative Oral Reading

Reading small chunks of a text out loud to a tutor or a small group is a good way for learners to develop their reading fluency and confidence.

Materials Needed: Reading text

- 1) Explain to the learner/s that they are going to read out loud to practice becoming stronger readers. Tell them that they will only read a small part of text at a time.
- 2) Model the process by reading the title and then a couple sentences aloud.
- 3) Call on a learner and have them read 1, 2 or 3 sentences out loud. They can choose how much they read, or you can select how long they read based on their skill level.
- 4) When finished reading, the learner passes the turn to another learner who reads 1, 2 or 3 sentences out loud. When they are finished, they then pass it to another learner. Encourage them to pass to someone random, not just the person next to them.
- 5) Continue until the entire text has been read.

Variation 1: If working with one learner, pass the turns between the learner and tutor.

Variation 2: With lower-level learners it is often a good idea to have every other turn come back to the tutor (e.g. tutor reads, a learner reads, tutor read, another learner reads, etc.).

Variation 3: If random turn taking is too complicated, have the learners go in order.

Echo Reading

This teacher-led reading strategy helps ESL learners with fluency, pronunciation, intonation, vocabulary, and reading comprehension. The learners have the opportunity to listen to a fluent reader, and then “echo” back exactly what they hear as they move through the text.

Materials Needed: Reading text

- 1) Explain that being able to read fluently is important because it leads to greater comprehension. Note that it is especially important to read in phrases or chunks, rather than word-by-word. For lower-level learners, it is helpful to model the difference between doing a reading one word at a time, and reading naturally with pauses and intonation.
- 2) Explain that the learners will listen to a sentence (or part of a sentence) being read out loud. The learner/s then repeat what was read.
- 3) Read the first sentence of the text out loud. Have the learner/s repeat what they just heard. If they aren't able to handle a whole sentence, break the sentence into phrases or chunks and have them repeat those rather than the entire sentence.
- 4) Continue this pattern through the entire text.
- 5) For additional fluency practice, go back and repeat the activity, giving the learner/s larger chunks to repeat. For higher level learners, they will ideally build up to echoing back multiple sentences or full paragraphs.

Repeated Reading with Feedback

With any skill, it is important to practice doing the same thing more than once. Reading is no different. This one-on-one repeated reading activity provides learners with the opportunity to interact out loud multiple times with a text so that they become more fluent and comfortable with each repetition.

Materials Needed: Reading text

- 1) Explain that the learner is going to read a text several times. Explain that they will receive feedback each time, and that this will help them to become a stronger reader.
- 2) Preview the content and vocabulary orally to make sure they understand what they are going to read.
- 3) Read the text out loud for the learner, modelling appropriate rate and expression.
- 4) Have the learner read the text out loud.
- 5) Provide feedback about learner's fluency and make one or two suggestions for improvement (e.g. read faster, slower, stop at periods, chunk phrases together more, etc.).
- 6) Allow learner to practice reading the text aloud independently.
- 7) When they feel they are ready, have the learner read the text aloud again. Comment on any improvements that were noticed.

Variations: If working with a small group of learners, have the other learners help provide feedback to one another. Learners can also practice reading out loud with a partner during Step 6.

Partner Reading

Partner reading is a cooperative learning strategy where two learners work together to read a text. This activity allows learners to read out loud and receive feedback from a peer in a low pressure environment. This activity works best with a text that learners are already familiar with from class, or that they have heard the tutor read out loud prior to reading with a partner.

Materials Needed: Reading text

- 1) Pass out copies of the reading text.
- 2) Put the learners into partners.
- 3) Have the learners take turns reading a sentence or a paragraph of the text out loud to their partner while their partner follows along and prompts as needed.
- 4) Once the learners reach the end of the text, they should go back to the beginning and start over, changing the order that they read in so that both partners get a chance to read the entire text.
- 5) During the activity, the tutor monitors and assists as necessary.

Variations: If a higher-level learner is paired up with a lower-level learner, ask the higher-level learner to read the entire text out loud while their partner follows along. This will give the lower-level learner another chance to hear the text read out loud before they are asked to read.

Mark the Margins

This activity helps learners to focus on and analyze their reactions to a text as they read it, and lays the foundation for a post-reading discussion.

Materials Needed: Reading text, mini-whiteboard, marker

- 1) Before beginning this activity, read the text and decide on the purpose for reading the text, such as finding key details, summarizing, or building background knowledge about a topic.
- 2) Based on the purpose for reading, choose one to three marks for learners to use while they read.
- 3) Write the marks on a mini-whiteboard board and explain what they mean.
- 4) Choose an example from the text and direct all of the learners to look at it. Write the mark next to the text and explain why you made that mark.
- 5) Have the learners read the text and use the marks.
- 6) As the learners finish, have them pair up and share what they marked or go through as a small group.

Possible Marks

? I don't understand

→ I understand

! surprising

I interesting

I important

F fact

O opinion

D most difficult sentence

A I already knew this

M I want to know more

A I agree

D I disagree

N I have no opinion

Mark the New Words

This activity gives learners a chance to identify unfamiliar words in the reading text that are interfering with their comprehension of the meaning, and helps them to develop strategies to approach new vocabulary.

Materials Needed: Reading text, highlighters

- 1) Give the learner/s a highlighter, and explain that they will use the highlighter to mark words in the text that they don't recognize or understand.
- 2) Have the learner/s read quickly through the text, highlighting the unfamiliar words.
- 3) After they have finished highlighting the text, go back to the beginning and ask them to read the words that they highlighted out loud. If the learner/s have a large number of words highlighted, ask them to go through the words and select the 8-12 most important words.
- 4) If the sentence that the unfamiliar word is in has clear context clues, ask the learner/s to read the entire sentence aloud and then prompt them to think about how the sentence helps describe the meaning of the new word. If the word does not have clear context clues, or if the learner is unable to figure out the meaning from looking at the entire sentence, provide the learner/s with direct instruction of the words following these three steps:
 - 1) Explain the meaning using learner-friendly definitions (if needed, use the online version of the Cambridge Learner's Dictionary to find simple definitions of words). If the word has more than one meaning, only explain the meaning that is relevant to the context of the reading.
 - 2) Give an example of the word in a full sentence.
 - 3) Help the learner/s to attach a personal experience to the word.
- 5) After all of the words are defined, have the learner/s go back and re-read the entire text. Ask if it was easier for them to understand the overall meaning of the text after learning the unfamiliar words.

Variation: If working with a small group, put learners into pairs or small groups after Step 2. Have the pairs or small groups compare their lists of unfamiliar words to see which ones they have in common. Encourage the learners to help one another by explaining the highlighted vocabulary that they are familiar with.

Overview of Post-Reading

Why do post-reading activities?

Comprehension is “the process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning through interaction and involvement with written language” (Snow, 2002). Comprehension is always the overall goal of reading, however, adult learners can struggle with comprehending reading texts for a variety of reasons. These reasons include a lack of vocabulary or background knowledge, or because they have not yet developed strategies for checking and supporting their comprehension. A learner may understand all of the words in the reading text that they just read, but they may not comprehend the overall idea or be able to understand how the information within the reading fits together.

Post-reading activities help learners to develop overall reading comprehension, and to gain a deeper understanding of what they have just read. Post-reading activities also help learners to think critically about a text and to connect their own knowledge and experiences to the information within the reading.

Retell the Reading

Retelling a story or an article helps the learners to recall what they read, develop a sense for the structure of the reading, and facilitates the learners' ability to monitor their comprehension of what they read.

Materials Needed: Reading text

- 1) After the learner/s finish reading the text, ask them to take a few moments and reflect on the most important information that they read. Allow them to look back at the text if needed.
- 2) If working with a small group, put the learners into pairs. If working with one learner, have them talk to you. Have the learner/s take turns retelling the story or article including as much information as they can remember.
- 3) Once they have finished, have the learner/s look back at the reading to identify any important information that they missed in the first retelling.
- 4) Ask the learner/s to retell the story or article again, integrating the information that they forgot in the first telling.

Detail Chain

Reviewing a text in a small group setting can prompt learners to recall a greater amount of points and details than they would if they reviewed it independently. Additionally, turning the review into a fun and challenging game helps to engage learners in the reviewing process.

Materials Needed: Reading text

- 1) After the learners finish reading the text, have them briefly review it and try to remember some key points and details.
- 2) Ask the learners to sit in a circle. Choose a learner to begin the chain. The learner shares one piece of information that they remember about the text out loud with the whole group.
- 3) The next learner repeats the information from the first learner, then adds a new point or detail that they remember from the text.
- 4) The third learner repeats the information from the first and second learners, then adds something new.
- 5) The chain continues until the group runs out of ideas and details.

Variation: If you are working with a single learner, take turns sharing information and repeating the points and details that came before.

Where's the Evidence?

Being able to cite evidence when responding to text-based questions is a critical reading skill that leads to being able to defend claims, provide details, and present careful analysis of a reading text. Even at very low levels, learners can develop evidence citation skills that will support their future academic skills.

Materials Needed: Reading text

- 1) As the learners read the text, write up 6-10 text dependent questions (questions which can only be answered by referring back to the reading text; generally what, why, where, when, how, who questions).
- 2) After the learner/s finish reading the text, have them go back and number the lines in the text. This will enable them to refer to line numbers when citing evidence.
- 3) Ask the learner/s the first question. Once they give the answer to the question, ask them which sentence gave them the answer. The learner/s say the number of the line where they found the answer to the question.
- 4) Repeat step 3 with the remaining questions.

Variation: If working with a small group and one learner is responding to all of the questions, have the learners take turns answering the questions and sharing where they found the evidence.

Find the Word

Returning to a text and searching for particular words or phrases helps learners to build skimming skills and develops their reading fluency.

Materials Needed: Reading text, highlighters

- 1) As the learners read the text, identify some key vocabulary words from the reading.
- 2) After the learner/s finish reading the text, say the first word (do not say the words in the order that they appear in the text; mix up the order to make it more challenging and to encourage more skimming).
- 3) Have the learners look through the text until they find the word, and highlight it. If the word appears more than once, have the learners highlight all of the instances where the word appears.
- 4) Repeat steps 3 and 4 until the learners have highlighted all of the key vocabulary words.

Variation 1: Substitute phrases for words and have the learners highlight the phrases.

Variation 2: Have the learners number the lines in the text (from step 2 of **Where's the Evidence?**). Say a word or phrase, and have the learners tell you the number of the line where the word or phrase appears in the reading text.

Vocabulary Review

This small group activity helps learners develop their skimming skills as they search for a particular word in the text. It also gives learners the opportunity to apply their knowledge of new vocabulary beyond understanding how it functions in the text.

Materials Needed: Reading text, laminated index cards, marker

- 1) As the learners read the text, select 6-12 key vocabulary words from the reading. Write one word on each card.
- 2) Turn the cards upside down and place them on the table. Have each learner select one card and look at the word (if needed, have learners work in pairs).
- 3) Give the learners a few minutes to locate the word in the story, think of how they would define the word, and come up with a new sentence that uses the word. The learners may need to take notes on mini-whiteboards or in their notebooks so that they are prepared for their turn.
- 4) Go around the group. Each learner will:
 - a. Read their word out loud to the group.
 - b. Read the sentence from the reading text where their word was found (if there are multiple sentences, have them select one).
 - c. Define the word using their own words.
 - d. Give an example of a new sentence that uses the word.
- 5) After all of the learners have finished talking about their word, repeat the process with the remaining word cards.

Variation: If working one-on-one with a learner, have the learner draw a card at a time, and talk through the steps for each word. Prompt as needed.

Yes/No Questions

This small-group activity gives learners the opportunity to practice yes/no question formation and encourages them to take an active role in their learning.

Materials Needed: Laminated Index cards, markers

- 1) After the learners finish reading the text, give each of them two laminated index cards and a marker.
- 2) Explain that they are going to each write two questions for the text. One of the questions will have the answer “no”, and the other question will have the answer “yes”.
- 3) Share one or two examples from the story (e.g. “Is Amina a woman?” (yes) “Does she have three children?” (no)).
- 4) Give the learners a few minutes to write their two questions.
- 5) Go around the group. Have each learner read both of their questions. After each question, the group answers “yes” or “no”.

Variation: For low level learners, use a mini-whiteboard to write question frames that they can use when writing their questions (e.g. “Does she _____?” “Did he _____?” “Is the family _____?” “Do they have _____?”).

Expansion: After each question is answered by the group, have the learners identify where in the story they found the answer. This will give the learners practice in providing evidence for their answers.

Learner Test

This small-group activity encourages learners to take an active role in their learning by giving them the opportunity to design comprehension questions in the text around the areas that they find to be the most important.

Materials Needed: Reading text, laminated index cards, dry erase markers

- 1) After learners have completed reading the text, ask each learner to think of two comprehension questions. If needed, give one or two examples of comprehension questions that would work with the text.
- 2) Give each learner two laminated index cards and have the learners write one comprehension question on each card. Collect the cards after all of the learners have written their questions.
- 3) Look briefly at the questions and remove any duplicates.
- 4) Read the questions out loud one at a time. After each question, give the learners time to write their answer down in their notebook.
- 5) Once all of the questions are completed, go back through them as a group to check the answers.

Variation 1: For longer texts, divide it up into sections and assign the different sections to learners so that they entire text is covered in the review.

Variation 2: Ask the learners to take turns reading their comprehension questions out loud, and discuss them as a group rather than writing the answers down in notebooks.

Key Word Based Summary Writing

Asking learners to summarize a story is a great way to check for comprehension. Good summary writing is challenging and requires practice. The following activity guides learners through the summarizing process.

Materials Needed: Reading text, highlighters, mini-whiteboards, markers

- 1) After the learner/s finish reading the text, ask them to read it again and highlight the key words in the story. If it is short, five words should be enough, and if it is longer, ask learners to highlight more words (no more than ten).
- 2) Give each learner a mini-whiteboard, and have them write their words on the board.
- 3) Once the words are written, tell the learners to hold their boards up for the group to see (if working with an individual learner, skip steps 3 and 4).
- 4) Have the learners look at the boards and see which words were selected, then have them vote on the five (or more) words which are the most important. Encourage learners with different opinions to give reasons for their opinions.
- 5) Write the list of words that the learners decide on down on a mini-whiteboard and place it where the learner/s can see it.
- 6) Have the learner/s use the list of important words to write summaries. Remind them not to use sentences directly from the original text, but to summarize the main ideas.
- 7) Have the learner/s read their summaries aloud.

Variation: For groups of lower level learners, have the learners brainstorm important words that they remember from the story. Write the words down on a mini-whiteboard and place it where everyone in the group can read it. Have the learners use the words to verbally retell the story to a partner, or work with a partner to rewrite the story, using the words as prompts.

Highlighting the Text

This activity helps learners practice identifying specific portions of a text. Strategic highlighting is a useful study skill that should be explicitly taught so that learners do not overuse highlighting.

Materials Needed: Reading text, highlighters

- 1) After the learner/s have finished reading the text, identify one aspect of the text to have them highlight.
- 2) Go through the first part of the text together, and have the learner/s highlight one or two examples to ensure that they understand what to highlight.
- 3) Let the learner/s finish going through the text, highlighting the relevant portions.
- 4) If working with a small group, have the learners compare their highlighted text with a partner. If working with an individual learner, have them go through the text and explain why they choose to highlight specific portions of it.

Possible Aspects to Highlight

Main ideas

Transitions

Phonetic patterns (words containing specific letters or letter patterns)

Vocabulary words

Specific verb tenses

Come to a Consensus

This small group reading comprehension activity gives learners the opportunity to develop their discussion and negotiation skills while they practice citing evidence from the reading text.

Materials Needed: Reading text, mini-whiteboards, markers, erasers

- 1) As the learners read the text, write up 6-10 text dependent questions (questions which can only be answered by referring back to the reading text). Make a copy for each learner in the group.
- 2) After the learners finish reading, pass out the reading question handouts. Have every learner complete the questions independently.
- 3) Explain that they are now going to compare their answers and come to an agreement about how to correctly answer the questions. If the group is large, into smaller groups of 3-4 learners. Have each group select a leader (or select the leader for them). Give the leader a mini-whiteboard, a marker, and an eraser.
- 4) The job of the leader is to poll the group and find out what everyone's answer for each question. They can ask "What did you get for question #1?" or "What was your answer for the second question?" If this is the first time that the learners have done this activity, model asking everyone their response for the first question, and prompt the leader as necessary.
- 5) If all of the learners in the group agree on the answer for a question, the leader writes it down on the whiteboard. If they do not agree, they must discuss the question and the answer until they come to a consensus. Remind the learners to cite evidence from the text.
- 6) After the group/s have completed the questions, go over the questions together. Ask the group/s to share evidence of where they found the answer in the text.

Activity provided by Sheri Lear of the Minnesota Literacy Council

Learner-Led Reading Discussion

The goal of this activity is to prepare learners for academic discussions in college or small group collaborations. This activity is designed to give learners a chance to facilitate and problem solve independently; the tutor is present to provide support and guidance when needed.

Materials Needed: Reading text, Reading Response Discussion Starters

- 1) Give the learners a copy of the reading. Tell them they will have about 10 minutes (adjust time as needed for levels or lengths of reading texts) to read the text.
- 2) After the time is up, set the Reading Response Discussion Starters in the center of the group. Encourage a learner to select a question from the Discussion Starters and ask it to the group. Tell learners that they might not understand the whole text completely at this point, but they will work together to understand it better.
- 3) Prompt learners as needed to take turns choosing a question from the list and asking each other, and remind learners to use the sentence starters below the questions if they are unsure of how to begin their response. Encourage learners to add to and challenge each other's ideas.
- 4) If learners are stuck or the conversation is faltering, ask questions and make suggestions such as...
 - Which part of the text helped you answer that question?
 - Does everyone agree with that answer?
 - Does anyone have a different idea?
 - Go back to the question. Is that what the question is asking?
 - Maybe someone should read that part of the text out loud.

Activity provided by Jessica Jones of the Minnesota Literacy Council

Reading Response Discussion Starters

1. What is this reading mostly about?
 - This reading is mostly about...
2. Which parts of the text helped you find the main idea?
 - I found the main idea in *this part* of the text.
3. Which parts of the text could you picture in your head?
 - I was able to visualize this part of the text. I pictured...
4. Are there any words in today's reading that you don't understand?
 - I don't know what _____ means.
5. Did you learn the meaning of any new words?
 - I learned that _____ means...
6. Did this remind you of anything in your life?
 - This reminded me of...
7. Had you ever learned about this topic before?
 - Yes, I learned about...
 - No, I had never studied this before.
8. What else would you like to know about this topic?
 - I would like to know more about...
9. What surprised you in the text?
 - I was surprised when I read that _____ because...
10. What is the purpose of this reading?
 - I think the purpose is to...
 - Entertain
 - Inform
 - Persuade
11. What is the topic of paragraph number ____?
 - I think the topic is _____ because the author writes about ...
12. In paragraph number ____, why do you think the author included the detail about...?
 - I think the author included this detail because...

Title: _____

Topic: _____

Know	Want to know	Learned

