

# PETAA Resources

## Pathway (PRP)

### Reading comprehension and text fluency

This series of reading comprehension and text fluency staff meeting professional learning sessions guides school leaders in leading teams through supporting teachers in confidently teaching comprehension strategies and text fluency.

#### AC v.9 related content descriptions

AC9E1LY04, AC9E2LY04, AC9EFLY05, AC9E1LY05, AC9E2LY05, AC93FLY05, AC9E4LY05, AC9E5LY05, AC9E6LY05

#### NSW Syllabus outcomes

ENE-REFLU-01, EN1-REFLU-01, EN2-REFLU-01, ENE-RECOM-01, EN1-RECOM-01, EN2-RECOM-01, EN3-RECOM-01

#### Professional teaching standards

2.1.1, 2.1.2, 2.2.1, 2.5.1, 3.1.1, 3.2.1, 3.3.1, 3.3.2, 3.5.1

#### Learning goals

- Understand the role of reading comprehension and text fluency in the broader English literacy context, as described in the Australian Curriculum V.9. (NSW version New NSW syllabus K – 6).
- Understand the value of explicit teaching of reading comprehension strategies.
- Become familiar with research of some experts in the field.
- Understand the different approaches to formative assessment you can employ in regards to reading comprehension.
- Learn a range of teaching strategies for the primary classroom, to support students in their reading comprehension and text fluency.
- Understand how to plan for a comprehension lesson using a rich, quality text.

#### A note before you begin:

If this PETAA Resource Pathway is being conducted as a standalone succession of staff trainings, we strongly recommend any staff who are not up to date with the latest evidence-informed reading models, information around how students learn to read and how we can

teach them to learn to read, either undertake some [additional professional learning](#), or at the minimum, read [PETAA Paper 221: Reading models. Putting the jigsaw](#) together by Dr. Bronwyn Parkin. Reading comprehension and text fluency are only part of the overall picture with regards to teaching reading.

## Staff Meeting 1: Reading comprehension: skills and strategies

### Requirements:

- Teachers should pre-read [PETAA Paper 230: Making sense of the models: Teaching reading knowledge, skills and dispositions](#) by Jennifer Asha. The paper is an excellent summary of all required reading knowledge and skills, as well as some key reading models and helps to contextualise comprehension in the overall reading process.
- Teachers should pre-select a picture book they use for teaching and learning in the classroom to bring along with them.

**Activity 1:** Watch [this very short video together](#) (50 seconds). Discuss as a group:

- Are you clear on the difference between comprehension strategies and skills? What are the key differences? (You could write these up on the whiteboard to reinforce. Timothy Shanahan states skills are: automatic, immediate, simple/single step, have a certainty of success and rely on accuracy. Strategies are: intentional, metacognitive, reflective, complex/multi-step and can involve approximation, rather than accuracy.)

**Activity 2:** Watch [this video together](#) as a group. For this session you will only be watching the first 20 minutes. (*Note - this video uses The Very Cranky Bear by Nick Bland as a repeat example. If teachers are not familiar with it, read it out loud to them before watching this video.*)

- From 4.12 - 20.32, pause at the end of each slide when Jennifer discusses a comprehension strategy, and then presents questions for thought. Have a different teacher respond to the questions each time, in relation to the picture book they chose to bring along today. We suggest alternating between early career teachers and more experienced, to help with modelling depth of response.
- **Stop the video at 20.32.** Which of these strategies outlined in the video and paper (page 10 of PP230 linked above in pre-reading) are you already **confidently** using in your classroom?
- Which have you never used? Why? Which are you most interested to implement or trial on your current or next unit of work with your class?

### Follow up:

Have each teacher commit to modeling and having students use one or more comprehension strategy **that they do not regularly use** in a lesson in the next fortnight. Ensure it is directly linked to the learning intention for that lesson or unit.

## Staff Meeting 2: Reading comprehension: Teaching strategies and assessment

### Requirements:

- Teachers should pre-read [PETAA Paper 182: Metacognition matters: Raising reading comprehension achievement](#) by Alison Davis.
- The video for this session includes an example of a pedagogical sequence using *Where the wild things are* by Maurice Sendak. Suggest teachers re-familiarise themselves briefly with the text beforehand.
- Teachers should once again bring the picture book they use in the classroom from Session 1 with them.

**Activity 1:** Select 2 teachers to feedback to the group on how the modeling and use of a new or rarely used comprehension strategy went during their lesson in the previous fortnight. We recommend you picking one more experienced teacher and one early career teacher.

**Activity 2:** Watch together [the remainder of this video](#) (start at 20.48), moving into the pedagogical underpinnings and teaching strategies for reading comprehension.

- *Pause at 25.00.* Check for understanding and any questions on the recommended teaching strategies.
- *Pause at 28.32* What were your thoughts on this particular guided reading pedagogical sequence? Did you feel it used appropriate teaching strategies, and encouraged relevant comprehension strategies in the students? What other teaching strategies could have been utilised?
- *Stop video at 30.36.* Give teachers 10 minutes on their own. During this time, ask them to each write down a literal, inferential and interpretive question for their own picture books they brought along. Thinking about the types of formative assessment covered in the pre-reading PETAA Paper 182 (peer assessment, self-assessment, sharing of learning goals, teacher observations, learning logs), have them identify 1 or 2 methods they would use to assess comprehension when teaching with this book. After 10 minutes, ask every teacher to each share **one** of their comprehension questions with the group, with a short explanation for why they chose that question. Ask them to share which formative assessment method(s) they chose, and why.

**Activity 3:** (*Optional - reinforcing the learning*) Select as many of the below PETAA teaching units (scroll to the bottom of each unit webpage if you'd like to PDF and print them off) as you would like and have teachers in pairs or small groups review them and identify the utilised teaching strategies in relation to comprehension, as well as the explicit or implied reading comprehension strategies that students would need to draw on. If teachers are familiar with the featured texts (or you at least have them in your school library to bring along), consider asking teachers to additionally discuss:

If you were teaching this text with your students, are these the comprehension strategies you would employ? Why/why not? What other strategies do you feel lend themselves to this text? What formative assessment approaches would you utilise in the context of this book and unit?

- [Where the Lyrebird Lives](#) by Vikki Conley and Max Hamilton (Foundation)
- [Jetty Jumping](#) by Andrea Rowe and Hannah Sommerville (Years 1 - 2)
- [Iceberg](#) by Claire Saxby and Jess Racklyeft (Year 3)

- [Just One Bee](#) by Margrete Lamond, Anthony Bertini and Christopher Nielsen (Year 4)
- [Runt](#) by Craig Silvey (Years 5 - 6)
- [Raven Song](#) by Zana Fraillon and Bren MacDibble (Year 6)

### Extension activities:

- Those wanting to understand more about oral language's critical role in comprehension can read [Chapter 8 from Talking the talk. Snapshots from Australian Classrooms](#) edited by Pauline Jones, Alyson Simpson and Anne Thwaite, which focuses on Dialogic talk in relation to children's literature, including several considerations of comprehension.
- The resources in this session both feature Guided reading. Develop your staff's skills in this area by enrolling in our new [Guided reading course!](#) Remember - [PETAA PL subscription schools](#) all have [free access to this course!](#) (Make sure you're logged in to self-enrol.)
- A great teaching strategy to improve comprehension that's not covered above, is Readers' Theatre. Those who are interested can [read more about it in PETAA PEN 171](#) by Margery Hertzberg. This paper is also very relevant for Staff Meeting 4 on Text Fluency.

### Staff Meeting 3: The reading/writing connection: Using writing to improve reading comprehension

**Activity 1:** Video (34 minutes): [Prompting writing through literary experience to improve comprehension](#) - Dr Alyson Simpson. Watch the video as a group. There will be numerous tasks for completion during this video, so ensure all teachers have paper and pens handy.

- *Pause at 12.00.* Read aloud and share the poem [Picture puzzle piece](#) with your teachers (either printed out, or displayed for them to see). In small groups, over 5 - 10 minutes, have them:
  - Think of a literary character you want to refer to.
  - Think of the small part of an image of your character that would show on a jigsaw puzzle piece – draw or name it (individually or as a group).
  - Write out one rhyming couplet for a poem about your character, using the starter “It might be...” (as exists in *Picture puzzle piece*)

Have each group share back their creations. Once all have done so, ask them what reading comprehension strategies this task required them to use.

- *Skip video ahead to 13.26 and continue watching.* Work through the second writing task and comprehension example with Alyson, pausing the video as needed after each task (*recommended pause times are: Word bank 21.15; Prediction 22.28; Front cover 23.07; Back cover 23.10; Map/drawing features of farm 25.23; Written group description; 27.56*).
- At the end of the video, have the group self-reflect on both activities: how useful did you find them? Did you see the value in connecting writing outcomes and tasks with the reading comprehension strategies? If you were to identify the learning goals of either sequence, what do you think they were?

### Extension activities:

- [Chapter 8, \*Making a classic text accessible to marginalised early readers\*](#) from *An EAL/D Handbook* edited by Susan Feez and Helen Harper is an excellent case study example of connecting text comprehension and text creation (with potential assessment) within a marginalised demographic.

## Staff Meeting 4: Reading fluency: the latest research and applying it in the classroom

### Requirements:

- Teachers should pre-read [this Tim Rasinski article on \*Why reading fluency should be hot!\*](#) (It informs the video presentation used in the session and provides an excellent coverage of the topic.)
- PD leader may want to have the [Fluency Literacy Learning Progressions](#) to hand for this session.

**Activity 1:** As explored in detail in the Rasinski pre-reading, fluency is a critical bridge in students learning to read, and has two essential components: automaticity and prosody. Conduct an initial exploration of this with your teachers and their understanding of the relationship. You could consider using the [Active View of Reading model](#) to help shape the discussion.

**Activity 2:** Video (35 minutes) – [Why teaching reading fluency is hot!](#) by Dr. Lorri Beveridge. Watch the video as a group, pausing to discuss the following questions:

- *Pause at 4.52:* Did you notice anything further about Thomas' oral reading fluency? Was this a good text to assess Thomas on? Why/why not? If you were Thomas' teacher, how would you look to extend and develop his fluency?
- *Pause at 17.26:* How do you currently assess fluency in your classroom? Do you consider rate; accuracy; expression (prosody); all 3? How long do you have your students read for, in order to assess their fluency? 1 minute or 3 minutes? (See this [Shanahan blog](#).)
- *Pause at 21.32:* On this slide we can see Teacher modelling prosodic oral reading and repeated reading - individual, peer and choral. These are both evidence-based fluency teaching strategies. How do you use them in your classroom? What other strategies do you employ? (Examples could include: Readers' Theatre; paired or partner reading; Neurological Impress Method; guidance on how to group words within sentences).

**Activity 3:** Professor Timothy Shanahan talks about 2 critical factors that need to be considered when planning a fluency lesson: text selection and purpose. Break teachers into two groups. Have Group A identify the types of texts they feel early readers should be using to practise fluency, vs. more competent readers. Have Group B discuss different ways the teacher can set up and clarify the purpose of a fluency lesson for students (e.g. modelling reading, deliberately making mistakes in an oral reading). Bring the groups back together and share the findings.

### Extension activities:

- Have your team take PETAA's [Text fluency](#) online course by Professor Tim Shanahan to take their understanding and knowledge to the next level. Remember - [PETAA PL subscription schools](#) all have free access to [this course](#)! (Make sure you're logged in to self-enrol.)

### **Where to next?**

Dive into year level focused PL courses examining a range of strategies to assist student inferential comprehension:

- [Reading comprehension for Years F - 2](#) (PL subscription schools [access your version here](#))
- [Reading comprehension for Years 3 - 4](#) (PL subscription schools [access your version here](#))
- [Reading comprehension for years 5 - 6](#) (PL subscription schools [access your version here](#))