Making Sense of It: A program to improve text comprehension in the first years of secondary school.

Authors: Anne O’Donoghue, BA (Hons), MSc. MIASLT & Siobhan Mitchell BSc (Hons), MSc. MIASLT
Making Sense of It

This program was devised and executed by Anne O’Donohue and Siobhan Mitchell, Final Year Students of the MSc Speech & Language Therapy (Professional Qualification) at the University of Limerick.

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## Overview of Intervention Programme

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Intervention Approach

Instructional/Reciprocal Teaching

The well-known study by Palincsar and Brown (1984) on reciprocal teaching of comprehension-fostering and comprehension-monitoring strategies may be regarded as a seminal study in the field of reading comprehension research. Seventh grade (12-13 year old) pupils were taught to use four strategies to comprehend expository texts. Reciprocal teaching involves students acquiring strategies during teacher-guided practice in small groups. Instruction takes the form of a dialogue, wherein the teacher and the students take turns leading the discussion, whilst applying comprehension strategies to pertinent features of a text. There have been a number of follow-up investigations to support the efficacy of this instructional approach (De Corte et al. 2001; Brown et al. 1996). These studies support the general hypothesis that pupils can learn to apply reading comprehension strategies through such an instructional approach.

It is recommended that, before you begin the program, you read further about reciprocal teaching, especially the first article listed below.


Williams, J. A. (2010), Taking on the Role of Questioner: Revisiting Reciprocal Teaching. The Reading Teacher, 64: 278–281. doi: 10.1598/RT.64.4.6

Motivational element

Reading comprehension strategies may be applied non-curriculum texts of interest such as novels, magazines etc in the same way as the curriculum texts. Research indicates that motivation and engagement in reading correlate highly with reading comprehension Guthrie (2004). Both motivation and engagement are required for strategy development.
Homework

A text should be supplied to all students at the end of each session. Strategies modelled and discussed in the session, and previous sessions, may then be carried out as homework activities. Suggestions are provided after each Session Plan.

Symbols

Visual symbols are used to support each of the taught strategies. The symbols are presented at the start of each lesson and their meanings revised. The symbols learned so far are hung on the board throughout each lesson. Each student receives a symbol bookmark (available to cut out and laminate in the resources section).
Session Plans
Strategy One: Activating Prior Knowledge:

“What do I already know?”

Activity One

- Introduction of the strategy and strategy symbol
- Modeling of the strategy; instructors model the use of the strategy using a motivational text. e.g. a news article from bbc/rte children’s news regarding a topic of interest. They write down on the board all that they already know about the topic.

Activity Two (See Resource Documents)
Students are each given an article (e.g. “RMS Titanic”) and a “Text and Me” page.

Text & Me:
Prior to reading the article students write down a list of everything they already know about the topic. Having read the article students can write down the new information that they learned from the text.

Coding Strategy: As students read, they indicate their reactions to their reading by using symbol codes represented by coloured post-its.
- I already knew this  GREEN
- This is new information  ORANGE
- I don’t understand this  RED

After coding, students discuss as a group to share and compare codes and justify their codes. Students also discuss their responses to the “Text and Me” activity.

Homework
Students are provided with an article (e.g. “Pancake Tuesday”) and a “Text and Me” page and are instructed to carry out the same activity for homework.
Strategy Two: Generating Questions & Making Predictions

Activity One

- Introduction of the strategy and strategy symbol.
- Modeling of the strategy
- Students are shown a clip of a passage of a sporting event and are each asked to make a prediction of what happens next.

Activity Two (See Resource Documents)

- Students read the first paragraph of a story (e.g. “Anne-Marie’s Homecoming”) and generate questions based upon their reading. Each student writes down their questions.
- Students relay to the group the questions they have derived.
- Students guess the answers to the questions and make predictions.
- Students read the further paragraphs of the story.
- The group comes together and discusses what answers they have found from the extract. They discuss how closely their predictions matched the answers.

Generating Questions Game “Famous People”

Individual students (i.e. the player) are given a piece of paper with a limited amount of information about a famous person. The name of the famous person in question is written on the board without the player seeing. The player has to ask yes/no questions in order to figure out who they are. E.g.: You are an Irish sportsperson. You are married to an actress. What other questions do you have to ask to figure out who you are?

Homework

Students are given an article and carry out a similar activity in which they have to make predictions (e.g. “Late to Class”).
Strategy Three: Summarising

Activity One

- Introduction of strategy and symbol.
- Modeling of the strategy. The instructor models the strategy using a short news video clip of a topic of interest to the students

Activity Two (Students are spilt into two groups. Each student is partnered with a student from the opposite group)

Group One: A selection of news articles from bbc.co.uk ("e.g. “Rugby-mad fox invades Twickenham”) without headlines is spread on a table in one corner of the room. Each student in turn has to go over to the table read an article and then summarise what was contained within the text, in written form.

Group Two: The students play a summarization game using a bean-bag. The student holding the bean-bag (the player) holds the floor. The player has to summarise a story, tv programme etc. whilst the other students in the group have to guess what the player is talking about.

Groups Join Together:
The students from group one has to present their summary to their opposite number in group two. Each student from group two has to go to the table and find the correct article that the other student has summarized.

Homework:

Students are given an article (E.g. “April Fools”) They have to use the strategies of “Activating Prior Knowledge” and “Summarising”
Midway Revision Session

Activity One:
A revision of each of the symbols and strategies introduced thus far is undertaken.

Activity Two: Envelope Activity (See Resource Documents: “The Closet Creature”)

- Students are presented with the activity sheet, four envelopes, and a template to the filled with each of their answer sheets. Within each envelope is a question prompting the student to use one of the taught strategies. Students fill out the answer sheets and complete the template.

Game: “Taboo”
Students are divided into two groups. Players are given the name of an object and the name of an additional related word e.g. Crown; King. The player is required to explain to her group what the first word is without saying the second. e.g. it is worn on someone’s head; you would wear it on a throne etc.

Homework:
Students are presented with a similar activity for homework in which each of the strategies are recruited.
Strategy Four: Organising Information Graphically

Activity One
- Introduction of the strategy and symbol.
- Modeling of the strategy. The instructor models the use of the strategy using a motivational topic of the students’ interest (e.g. the life of a celebrity)

Activity Two
- Students are presented with a template of a mind map. They are instructed to create a mind map about the life of a band/ singer/ actor/ actress that they are familiar with.
- They are told not to tell any other members of the group who their mind map is about.

Activity Three
- A curriculum-based article (e.g. “Galileo”) and mind map template is presented to the students.
- The titles of the branches of the mind map are provided for the students.
- The students are required to complete the mind map.

Game
The students are instructed to return to their celebrity mind-map from activity two; without naming the individual or group. Each student reads off the branches of their mind map. The students are required to read the whole mind map. When they have read the mind map the other students can guess who they are talking about.

Homework
Students are given a curriculum-based exercise page (e.g. “Medieval Castles”) and a mind-map template. They are instructed to complete the mind-map.
Strategy Five: Attending to Contextual Clues

Activity One
- Introduction of the strategy and symbol.
- Revision of word types: nouns, verbs and adjectives.

Activity Two (See Resource Document: “Contextual Clues”)
- Modeling of the strategy
- A selection of sentence examples, are worked through on the board
e.g.: “The school was in Nicholas Street and the children with their satchels were passing.”

Activity Three
- Students are provided with an exercise sheet (e.g. “Biology: Plant Responses”)
- Students are divided into pairs. Each pair must determine the meaning of the listed words based on how they are used in context.
- Students can only use each other and the literary work in which the word appears to deduce meaning.
- The pairs must attempt to define the words and to highlight the ‘clue’ words in the text to justify their answers. They also need to identify what type of words they are eg nouns, verbs, adjectives etc.
- Each pair will feed back their definitions to the rest of the group. Correct definitions are discussed after the feedback.

Homework
Students are given an extract from an English textbook e.g. “The Boa” and are asked to complete the contextual clue activity sheet.
End Revision Session One

Activity One
All of the strategies and symbols are revised

Activity Two: “Summarising”
- Students are given stories which they have to summarise (e.g. “Diary of a Dancer”). Every second girl gets the same story. The students are required to summarise their stories. The students then get into two groups depending upon the story they were given.
- Students read their summaries to one another and discuss the similarities and differences between them.

Activity Three: Envelope Activity (See Resource Documents: “A Team for Trish”)
- Students are presented with the activity sheet, four envelopes, and a template to be filled with each of their answer sheets. Within each envelope is a question prompting the student to use one of the taught strategies. Students fill out the answer sheets and complete the template.

Games
Students are given a choice of which of the games they would like to play from previous sessions.

Homework
Students are given an activity for homework in which each of the strategies are recruited as outlined in previous examples.
End Revision Session Two

Activity One
All of the strategies and symbols are revised.

Activity Two
Students are divided into two groups.

Group One: ‘Activating Prior Knowledge’
- Students are given printed cards with a topic name (e.g. Easter, America, Dublin etc.). A bean-bag indicates that the player is holding the floor. Students are encouraged to activate all their prior knowledge in relation to that topic. The listening students then supplement any information that the player omitted.

Group Two: ‘Contextual Clues’
- Students are given sample sentences containing a difficult word and clue words. (e.g. “The team scored a goal and the spectators jumped to their feet.”). The students are also given a replica magnifying glass and three cards with noun, verb and adjective written on the cards. Players are required to
  a) define the word
  b) identify which type of word it is
  c) use the magnifying glass to pick out the clue words that helped them to decipher the meaning

Games
Students are given a choice of which of the games they would like to play from previous sessions.
Additional Strategy for Decoding (Cowhey & Kearney 2012)
(substitute for one revision session)

1) Activity One: Syllables
   Introduction:
   - What a syllable is (i.e. there is one vowel in each syllable)
   - Introducing students to recognising previously known words within new words. e.g. ‘at’ is part of ‘cat’

   Activity:
   - How to divide & blend multisyllabic words
   - Student SLTs will model how to segment the word by clapping or beating out the number of syllables
   - Group segments a word together by beating the syllables out together
   - Each individual is given their own word to segment into syllables

2) Activity Two: 3 Critical Questions:
   Students are introduced to 3 “handy questions” they can use when they are stuck on a word. SLT’s put a difficult word on the board and model the use of the 3 questions.
   - Do I know any other words that look & sounds like this word?
   - Are any of these look-alike/sound-alike words related to each other? (word families)
   - What do the words I already know tell me about this words? (antibiotic→antifreeze, biology, prehistoric)

Follow on game: “Spot the Small Word” (Students are put in 2 teams. They must spot as many small words within a given big word as quickly as possible e.g.

Homework: 20 words; write down how many syllables are in the word; write down the answer to the 3 “handy questions”.
Resource Documents
The Titanic was built at a cost of around £1.5 million, in Belfast, for the White Star shipping line. She was the largest passenger steamer of her day, at over 46,000 tons, and supposedly the most up to date. Special watertight compartments made her 'practically unsinkable', claimed the owners. They also advertised First Class rooms, a Parisian café, a swimming pool and a restaurant.

The Titanic set sail from Southampton on her maiden voyage on Wednesday 10 April, 1912, calling at Cherbourg in France and Queenstown in southern Ireland, now known as Cork, before heading out across the Atlantic, on course for New York City.

Late on the night of Sunday 14 April she struck an iceberg. Less than three hours later she sank. Only 705 people were rescued from over 2,200 on board. There were not enough lifeboats for the number of passengers onboard. Not all the lifeboats that were on board could be launched in the time it took to sink. Many passengers refused to get into the lifeboats. Some of the lifeboats left the ship only half full.

The sinking of the Titanic, with the loss of 1,500, lives caused uproar on both sides of the Atlantic. Newspapers blamed the owners for poor safety. Others blamed the captain for going too fast and too carelessly in waters known to contain icebergs.
## TEXT & ME

**Activity Page: What do I already know?**

### Before Reading
Draw a line down the middle of the page
Write down everything you already know about the topic in the **ME** column.

### Now read the text

### After Reading
Write down all the new information you learned in the **TEXT** column

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ME</th>
<th>TEXT</th>
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Pancake Tuesday

Shrove Tuesday, the annual pancake feast, takes place this year on the 08th of March. This is the day before the start of the Lenten fast and it is commonly known as "Pancake Tuesday." It is a time when many people still make and eat mountains of pancakes. Children will come into school on Ash Wednesday boasting of their pancake-eating achievements. These pancakes are usually sprinkled with lemon juice and sugar, rolled into a cigar shape and eaten as a dessert.

Although any people no longer fast for Lent, Pancake Tuesday is still as popular as ever. The ritual is linked to the great European carnival tradition of Mardi Gras ("Fat Tuesday") when people ate as much fat and meat as possible, knowing that these were forbidden for the next forty days during Lent.

Many years ago, marriage was forbidden during Lent. Matchmakers tried very hard to find suitable couples for marriage before Ash Wednesday. Families left with unmarried daughters on Pancake Tuesday allowed their daughters to toss the first pancake. They believed if their pancake-making skills were good, they would have good luck finding a husband in the coming year.
“Anne Marie’s Homecoming”

Anne Marie stopped, suddenly, and stood still on the path. There was a corner immediately ahead. Beyond it, she knew, as soon as she rounded the corner she would see the horizon and the sea. The woods would be behind her there, and ahead of her would be the harbour, the docks and the countless fishing boats. She knew her dad would be there gutting the fish for that morning’s market. She thought about how long she had been away from home and how tired and hungry she felt.

Very soon it would be noisy there, with engines starting, fishermen calling to one another, and gulls crying. But she heard something else. She heard bushes rustling ahead. She heard footsteps. And – she was certain that it was not her imagination—she heard a low growl…….

Questions:

Predictions:
Questions & Predictions Part 2

“Anne Marie’s Homecoming”

Cautiously, she took a step forward. And another. She approached the turn in the path, and the noises continued.

Then they were there in front of her. Two smiling policemen. With them, straining at leashes, were two large dogs, sniffing at the ground. “Where have you been Anne Marie? The whole town has been worried sick about you!”

Anne Marie’s eyes filled with tears as she knew she had been found. The woods had been so dark and every time she thought she had found the path home, it led her deeper into its heart. Her dad had warned her to stay on the path while collecting berries for her mother’s famous blackberry jam. As the two policemen walked her home, she vowed she would never visit the woods alone again.

Try to answer your questions now

How many predictions did you get right?
“Late to Class” - Part 1

“I did not say you could sit down!” Mr Reynolds boomed.
“I have not yet decided whether you are to remain in this class after slithering in late. Get up young man!”

Sam rose slowly. His head aimed at Mr Reynolds, his lower lip stuck out.
“I’m sorry Mr Reynolds, I can explain. I was just….”
“I’m not listening, boy” Mr Reynolds replied.
“But I can explain Sir, it’s just that I had to go….”
“I’m sorry Sam, but I won’t listen to a boy who slithers in late” Mr Reynolds yelled.
Sam half shouted, “I said I was sorry, and I didn’t slither.”
“Boys that come in the back door after the class has already started” Mr Reynolds said firmly, “are known as slithering boys. It is a well known term in the history of teaching. Sit down slitherer!”

For a moment, Sam seemed suspended in mid air, torn between obeying and storming out of the room…..

Think of two questions about the story

1).

2).

What do think could happen next? Think of two predictions

1).

2).
“Late to Class”-Part 2

“I did not say you could sit down!” Mr Reynolds boomed.
“I have not yet decided whether you are to remain in this class after slithering in late. Get up young man!”. 

Sam rose slowly. His head aimed at Mr Reynolds, his lower lip stuck out.
“I’m sorry Mr Reynolds, I can explain. I was just…."
“I’m not listening, boy” Mr Reynolds replied.
“But I can explain Sir, it’s just that I had to go…."
“I’m sorry Sam, but I won’t listen to a boy who slithers in late” Mr Reynolds yelled.
Sam half shouted, “I said I was sorry, and I didn’t slither.”
“Boys that come in the back door after the class has already started” Mr Reynolds said firmly, “are known as slithering boys. It is a well known term in the history of teaching. Sit down slitherer!”

For a moment, Sam seemed suspended in mid air, torn between obeying and storming out of the room…..

Sam then decided it was best to sit back down. He shuffled towards his seat with his head lowered. Mr Reynolds turned back to the blackboard and continued the lesson.
The school’s intercom interrupted the lesson again. Mr Reynold’s sighed with frustration.
“Principal Murphy speaking, I am delighted to congratulate our winning basketball team on their great victory this morning. We are now in the final of the School’s Cup. I would like to mention one basketball star in particular, Sam Ryan, who scored the winning basket. Sam has just returned from receiving his ‘man of the match’ award.”
Mr Reynolds then realised the reason why Sam was last for class. His cheeks went red.
He congratulates Sam gruffly and continues on with the lesson.
Homework: “Late for Class”

- Try to answer your questions now.

- How many predictions did you get right?

- Summarise this story in your own words using 5 sentences.
“April Fools”

If you’ve ever been pranked on April Fools’ Day, you may wonder how this tradition started. Well, you’re not alone. No one knows for sure how April Fools’ Day began. But the most likely explanation has to do with the calendar.

People used to celebrate New Years Day on April 1st. Just like today, people would have big parties to celebrate. Over time, the calendar changed and so did the date for New Years.

In the 1500s, the new calendar marked New Years Day as January 1st. But because there was no Internet or other means to spread the word, the news travelled slowly by word of mouth. It took a while for everyone to hear about the change, and even then some people resisted it.

They continued to celebrate New Years on April 1st. These people were given the nickname “April fools”. People following the new calendar played tricks on the “April fools” by sending them on “fool’s errands”. They had the “April fools” deliver invitations to big New Year’s celebrations that weren’t really going to happen. In France, “April fools” were called “Poisson d'Avril”, which is French for “April Fish”. This began because people thought fish were easy to catch since they could be fooled into taking the bait on a hook. Children would tag a paper fish on a person’s back to mark them as an “April Fish”. When the person discovered the fish, the prankster would yell “Poisson d'Avril”.

Even though we aren’t sure how this tradition began, people still celebrate April Fools’ Day by playing tricks on each other. So the next time you prank someone and yell “April Fools!” remember that the day may actually be about the people who didn’t want to change their traditions when the new calendar was adopted. Or maybe it’s just a day to celebrate the joker in all of us.
BEFORE

Before you read the text, write down four things you already know about April Fools’ Day

1) 
2) 
3) 
4) 

AFTER

Having read the text, summarise the text in four sentences

1) 
2) 
3) 
4)
“The Closet Creature”

OPEN ENVELOPE NUMBER ONE

_Bump! Bump! Scratch!_

Lucy opened her eyes and pulled the covers up to her chin. She stared around her room, searching the darkness for the thing that was making those scary sounds. The closet door moved as something banged on it from the inside.

“Who’s there?” Lucy asked in a shaky voice.

The closet slowly began to open. Lucy jumped out of bed and ran to the closet door, slamming it shut with her palms. She grabbed her desk chair and propped it against the door handle. Then she ran out of her room and down the hall. Her sister’s door was wide open, and Lucy jumped onto Edel’s bed.

OPEN ENVELOPE NUMBER TWO

“Lucy?” Edel asked in a groggy voice. “What are you doing in here?” Lucy tugged on Edel’s arm. “There’s something in my closet!”

“You probably had a bad dream. Go back to bed.”

Lucy yanked the blankets off the bed. “It wasn’t a dream. I was awake, and the closet door starting opening by itself!”

Edel sighed. “Fine. But when we don’t find anything, you have to promise to leave me alone for the rest of the night.” Lucy nodded.

OPEN ENVELOPE NUMBER THREE
They headed to Lucy’s room. Edel walked over to Lucy’s bed and pulled the case off one of the pillows. She opened the pillowcase.

“You open the door very slowly, and I’ll grab whatever it is.” Lucy slid the chair to the side and pulled the closet door open a crack. Something banged against the door, trying to force it open. Lucy took a deep breath and opened the door a few more inches. A small furry creature ran right into the pillowcase.

“I got it!” Edel said, closing the pillowcase and holding it in the air. “What is it?” Lucy moved closer as Edel peeked inside. Edel put the pillowcase on the bed and an orange cat climbed out. Lucy scooped the cat up. “Apricot? How did you get trapped in my closet?” Edel laughed. “The poor cat. If I was locked in your closet with your stinky shoes, I’d be banging on the door to get out, too!”

“Poor, Apricot,” Lucy said. “You were probably more scared than I was.”
ENVELOPE ONE

Think of all the words you that are the same as “closet”

Having read the title, what do you think the story might be about?

ENVELOPE TWO

Write down three questions that you can ask about the story so far

1) 

2) 

3)
ENVELOPE THREE

Make guesses about what is going to happen in the story

ENVELOPE FOUR

Summarise what happened in the story in four sentences.

1) 
2) 
3) 
4) 

How many predictions did you get right?
Write the number here ___
Galileo

Galileo was born in Pisa in 1564. He began studying medicine but his passion for maths and physics soon caused him to switch to them. He was also very interested in astronomy, the study of outer space.

In 1592 Galileo moved to Padua. There he learned about a new invention, the telescope. He designed and built one for himself so that he could study the stars. When he looked through the telescope he saw things that no human being had ever seen before. There were spots on the sun, rings around the planet Saturn and the planet Venus had several moons.

He also saw that the sun was the centre of the solar system and that the earth moved around it. Galileo published a book, saying that the earth was not at the centre of the solar system and that the earth moved around the sun. This was a dangerous view to hold.

The Catholic Church thought that the earth was at the centre of the solar system and that the earth did not move. The pope called him to Rome to answer a charge of heresy (teaching false ideas).

Galileo was found guilty and the pope ordered him to change his mind or face the death penalty. By then he was an old man and he agreed to give up his beliefs. He was sent to live in Florence where he died in 1642.

Galileo’s views spread quickly. Other scientists also used telescopes to look at the skies and they soon proved he was right. In the 1990s the pope finally admitted that the Church had made a mistake about Galileo.
Life in a Medieval Castle

To enter a medieval castle visitors had to cross a drawbridge over a moat in order to approach a narrow doorway. The door was protected by a tower on each side.

Inside the door was a courtyard with a great central tower, where the Lord and his family lived during war. The Great Hall was the home of the Lord and his family, during times of peace. Below, two stories underground, lay the dungeon, dark, damp, and dirty.

The medieval castle of the Middle Ages formed a good fortress, but a poor home. It had small rooms, lighted only by narrow windows. Only fireplaces heated the castle and they had little furniture. Later on, when life became more luxurious, the castle began to look less like a dungeon. Windows were widened and contained painted glass. Walls were hung with costly tapestries, and floors were covered with thick rugs from foreign lands.

Life within the castle was very dull, however there were some games, especially chess. Banqueting was the chief indoor amusement at the time. The Lord and his men sat down to a huge feast and, as they ate and drank they watched the pranks of a jester or listened to songs and music. Sometimes they heard the tales of far-off countries brought by a returning traveller. Outside the castle walls a common sport was hunting in the forests which were attached to every estate. Deer and other animals were hunted with dogs.
“Looking for Clues”

1) The school was in Nicholas Street and the children with their satchels were passing.

**Satchels**

What does this word mean? ____________________________________

What type of word is it? Tick the correct one

A noun _____ a verb _____ an adjective _____

What are the clue words that you used? ___________________________

2) An eagle flew down upon a snake and seized it in its talons.

**Seized**

What does this word mean? ____________________________________

What type of word is it? Tick the correct one

A noun _____ a verb _____ an adjective _____

What are the clue words that you used? ___________________________

**Talons**

What does this word mean? ____________________________________

What type of word is it? Tick the correct one

A noun _____ a verb _____ an adjective _____

What are the clue words that you used? ___________________________
3) Mary found her homework very difficult but she **endeavoured** to do her best.

**Endeavoured**

What does this word mean? ____________________________________________

What type of word is it? Tick the correct one

A noun _____ a verb _____ an adjective _____

What are the clue words that you used? ___________________________

4) When the teacher asked Johnny a question he **admitted** that he did not know the answer.

**Admitted**

What does this word mean? ____________________________________________

What type of word is it? Tick the correct one

A noun _____ a verb _____ an adjective _____

What are the clue words that you used? ___________________________

5) As the workers finished their overtime the boss thought she was very lucky to have such **dedicated** workers.

**Dedicated**

What does this word mean? ____________________________________________

What type of word is it? Tick the correct one

A noun _____ a verb _____ an adjective _____

What are the clue words that you used? ___________________________
Biology: Plant Responses

Plants respond to stimuli such as light and gravity by changing their growth.

The change in growth of a plant in response to these stimuli is called a tropism.

Phototropism is the way in which a plant changes its growth in response to light.

The shoots of a plant respond by growing towards light.

This allows the leaves to absorb as much light as possible.

As a result, the leaves can make more food.

1) Respond

What does this word mean? _________________________________

What type of word is it? _____________________________

What are the clue words that you used? __________________________

2) Stimuli

What does this word mean? _________________________________

What type of word is it? _____________________________

What are the clue words that you used? __________________________
3) **Response**

What does this word mean? ________________________________

What type of word is it? ________________________________

What are the clue words that you used? ________________________________

4) **Tropism**

What does this word mean? ________________________________

What type of word is it? ________________________________

What are the clue words that you used? ________________________________

5) **Phototropism**

What does this word mean? ________________________________

What type of word is it? ________________________________

What are the clue words that you used? ________________________________

6) **Shoots**

What does this word mean? ________________________________

What type of word is it? ________________________________

What are the clue words that you used? ________________________________

7) **Absorb**

What does this word mean? ________________________________

What type of word is it? ________________________________

What are the clue words that you used? ________________________________
The Boa

After the donkey ran from the beach, it arrived at the **lair** of the snake and stopped. Although the donkey **realised** its danger, it could not move. The poor animal should have **fled** but it stood **fascinated** and groaned. The boa, its hungry jaws wide open, **approached** until it was close. The donkey could not move because it was **paralysed** by fear.

1) **Lair**

What does this word mean? ____________________________

What type of word is it? Tick the correct one

A noun _____ a verb _____ an adjective _____

What are the clue words that you used? ___________________________

2) **Realised**

What does this word mean? ____________________________

What type of word is it? Tick the correct one

A noun _____ a verb _____ an adjective _____

What are the clue words that you used? ___________________________
3) Fled

What does this word mean? _________________________________

What type of word is it? Tick the correct one

A noun _____ a verb _____ an adjective _____

What are the clue words that you used? ___________________________

4) Fascinated

What does this word mean? _________________________________

What type of word is it? Tick the correct one

A noun _____ a verb _____ an adjective _____

What are the clue words that you used? ___________________________

5) Approached

What does this word mean? _________________________________

What type of word is it? Tick the correct one

A noun _____ a verb _____ an adjective _____

What are the clue words that you used? ___________________________

6) Paralysed

What does this word mean? _________________________________

What type of word is it? Tick the correct one

A noun _____ a verb _____ an adjective _____

What are the clue words that you used? ___________________________
“A Team for Trish”

OPEN ENVELOPE NUMBER ONE

Trish watched as all her classmates were divided into two teams for today’s lesson on basketball. Mr. Truman had named Amber and Jesse the two team captains, and they were choosing their team-mates by who were the best athletes. That meant Trish was left last.

“Trish, you’re with me,” Amber said, sounding disappointed. Trish lowered her head and joined her team on the court. If only her classmates knew she was pretty good at basketball. Her older brother had taught her how to make a free throw, but Trish was sure no one in her class would give her a chance to show them.

OPEN ENVELOPE NUMBER TWO

Once everyone was in position, Mr. Truman blew his whistle to start the game. Jesse’s team was very aggressive. They marked all the players on Amber’s team, except for Trish. The girl who was supposed to mark Trish was blocking Amber from passing the ball.

Trish moved across the court and met Amber’s eyes. She reached her hands out to show Amber she was open. Amber turned and looked for someone else to throw the ball to, but everyone was marked.

OPEN ENVELOPE NUMBER THREE

ASK FOR THE SECOND PART OF THE STORY
Trish lowered her arms thinking Amber was going to throw the ball away before she gave Trish a chance. But Amber passed the ball, bouncing it under the arms of the two girls blocking her. Trish caught the ball and stared at it, still in shock that Amber had passed it to her. “Shoot!” Amber yelled.

Trish squared her feet and lined up her shot. She threw the ball and watched as it bounced off the backboard and fell through the net. Trish’s teammates cheered.

“Great shot!” Amber said, walking over to Trish. “Thanks,” Trish said. “My brother taught me how to play. We shoot baskets almost every night.”

“You should come out and play with our team,” Amber said. “My friends and I play in a league at the park every Saturday.”

Trish thought about that. She thought playing basketball with the other girls would be fun. And, If she joined the basketball team maybe she wouldn’t be picked last in gym anymore.

“I think I will,” Trish said with a smile.

STOP

OPEN ENVELOPE NUMBER FOUR
ENVELOPE ONE

Having read the title, what do you think the story might be about?

ENVELOPE TWO

Write down three questions that you can ask about the story so far

1) 

2) 

3)
ENVELOPE THREE

Make guesses about what is going to happen in the story

ENVELOPE FOUR

Summarise what happened in the story in four sentences.

1)

2)

3)

4)

How many predictions did you get right?
Write the number here ___
Alicia carried the box to the attic and placed it next to all the other moving boxes. She couldn’t believe how much stuff her grandparents had accumulated over the years. And they insisted on bringing it all to their new house. Alicia walked to the window and peered down at the street below. The town was very quiet. Alicia’s grandparents’ had a pool at their last house. This house was much smaller and the yard couldn’t fit a pool. But the attic was interesting. It was a full room with a low ceiling. Alicia figured she could ask her grandparents if she could put a chair up here and maybe a table, too. It wouldn’t be a bad place to hang out.

She saw a trunk in the corner and a book resting on the floor in front of it. Alicia picked up the book. The cover was blank, so she flipped through the pages. “A diary!” Alicia said. She sat down and started to read. The girl in the diary was amazing. She was a dancer. Alicia had always wanted to take dance classes, but she wasn’t the most graceful person. She worried she’d embarrass herself.

Alicia read the diary for a long time, until her grandmother walked into the attic room. “What do you have there?” Grandma Maggie asked. Alicia held up the diary. “I found this diary on top of the trunk. I think it belonged to the girl who used to live here.”

Grandma Maggie shook her head. “No sweetie. That’s my old diary, from when I was about your age.” Alicia’s eyes widen. “You’re the girl in the diary? But she was a dancer.” Grandma Maggie twirled across the attic. “Yes, I was. Looks like I still remember a few things, too.” Alicia smiled. “I wish I knew how to dance.”

Grandma Maggie looked around the attic. “I think there will be enough room for a dance studio up here after we go through all these boxes. What do you say you help me sort through all this stuff, and then I’ll teach you a few things about dance?” “That would be great!” Alicia said, opening the box closest to her.
Additional Strategy: Decoding
SYMBOL SIGNS
Strategy One: Activating Prior Knowledge:

Already know
Strategy Two: Generating Questions
Strategy Two: Making Predictions

guess
Strategy Three: Summarizing
Strategy Four: Organising Information Graphically
Strategy Five: Looking for Clues
References and further reading


