

Teaching reading and viewing

Guide for Years 4–7

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The teaching focus

In **Years 4–7**, teachers should continue to structure learning experiences so that students acquire or refine prerequisite knowledge about purpose, text, audience and language before reading a new text. Prior knowledge of the topic and fluency in decoding frees working memory to connect new and known information, make inferences, and engage with texts at a deeper level. Teachers should design learning experiences that include authentic purposes for reading. Students should be taught to be strategic readers who operate in the four roles of the reader — code breaker, meaning maker, text user and text analyst — as they successfully read and view for learning and pleasure.

By **Years 4–5** most students have achieved fluency in decoding. Explicit reading instruction in the middle years aims to develop and consolidate a repertoire of strategies that lead to fluency in comprehension of increasingly complex narrative, informational and persuasive texts. These include strategies for:

- analysing reading tasks, considering approaches to performing different tasks, and choosing among alternative actions to reach reading goals according to purpose and text type
- constructing, monitoring and evaluating meaning, and repairing comprehension breakdowns
- developing inferential and critical comprehension.

Teachers should explicitly teach:

- contextual, textual and procedural knowledge required for reading new text types, reading familiar texts in new contexts and reading for new purposes
- vocabulary knowledge including imagery
- literal, inferential and critical reading comprehension skills
- active strategies for comprehending increasingly complex, multimodal print and electronic texts
- terminology for talking about new or hybrid texts in a variety of contexts
- terminology for talking about reading and oneself as a reader.

In **Years 6–7** teachers should continue to extend students' knowledge about familiar text types through discussion and analysis of more sophisticated examples of familiar text types. Examples of texts chosen for reading instruction would include:

- narratives that construct well-developed characters and include variation in plot development and narrative voice
- explanations in which technical vocabulary is chosen to represent concepts and processes
- literary narratives that evoke mental images
- procedures written for different audiences
- advertisements that target specific audiences
- expositions with strong bias or points of view
- literary and non-literary texts in which an author attempts to persuade readers to accept particular beliefs, viewpoints and actions
- complex multimodal texts in familiar and unfamiliar contexts.

Aspects of reading should be taught daily through direct instruction and in flexible groupings. New knowledge should be consolidated through extensive practice with familiar texts and through application of skills to unfamiliar texts in many different contexts. Increasing emphasis should be placed on developing knowledge, skills and strategies that enable students to operate successfully as text users and text analysts in a broader range of print and electronic texts.

Selecting texts

Teaching students to read narratives, informational, transactional and multimodal texts in print and electronic forms requires different instructional approaches.

After selecting an appropriate text for reading instruction, teachers should identify the demands of the text in terms of the concepts, text type, textual features and readability level before designing appropriate activities. They should explicitly teach students to understand the reading task and to select and apply appropriate reading strategies. Texts with familiar topics should be chosen when introducing a new text type. Literary texts may be narrative or information texts and require significant attention to the writer's vocabulary and grammatical choices.

Working with non-literary texts

Non-literary (factual) texts are read to gain information and learn; to negotiate relationships; or to transact goods or services. These texts present significant barriers if students:

- have little or no subject matter or text type knowledge
- are unfamiliar with subject-specific or technical vocabulary
- experience difficulty in comprehending concept-dense sentences
- use inappropriate reading strategies, e.g. those suitable for narrative text
- experience difficulty in processing print, multimodal and electronic texts
- have little knowledge of themselves as readers
- do not understand how written and visual language work together in multimodal texts.

When students are unfamiliar with either subject matter or text type, teachers may design a series of lessons to develop content and text knowledge before reading the new text.

Suggested teaching sequence for non-literary texts

Teachers can ensure that students' reading experiences are successful by planning appropriate activities to be undertaken before, during and after reading. The following tables describe suggested teaching activities, explicit knowledge to be taught and examples of strategies that will help students to become strategic readers of non-literary texts. Detailed descriptions of the strategies in *italics* will be provided in a companion document, *Teaching Reading and Viewing: Comprehension strategies and activities for Years 1–9*, available soon on the QCAA website.

Before reading (non-literary texts)

	Teaching activities	Teaching focus	Examples of strategies ¹
Activating, expanding and refining prior knowledge	<p>Part 1: Identifying the purpose for reading</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provoke a need to know by planning an investigation, discussing current affairs, posing questions, etc. • Make the purpose for reading explicit <p>Part 2: Developing subject matter knowledge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read aloud texts related to the topic (students take notes) • Provide hands-on activities across other learning areas to develop topic knowledge and introduce new vocabulary • Recount, describe and explain experiences in oral/written language • Discuss, organise and categorise shared knowledge using a structured overview (e.g. concept map showing ideas and relationships between ideas) <p>Part 3: Practising thinking in the language of the subject</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write about shared experiences around the topic • Refine writing • Edit writing (focus on vocabulary and sentence structure) <p>Part 4: Orientating to the text</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce new text • Make predictions about the text • Analyse task to identify information • Use table of contents to locate information in the text • Read selected excerpts to students to confirm predictions • Discuss type of information represented in different modes (e.g. written, visual) 	<p>Purpose, text and audience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contextual knowledge • Symbolic codes (icons, gestures, etc.) • Topic knowledge <p>Language knowledge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topic vocabulary • Textual features of images and print • Text structure • Relationships among ideas <p>Metacognition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active comprehension strategies 	<p>Making meaning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Be a reading detective</i> • <i>Expert panel</i> • <i>Starting with brainstorming</i> • <i>Build bridges to meaning</i> • <i>Concept mapping</i> • <i>Inquiry chart</i> • <i>Oral cloze</i> • <i>Possible sentences</i> • <i>Shared reading</i> • <i>Talking places</i> • <i>That reminds me</i> • <i>Top-level structuring</i> • Discussing text, title, cover, images, format • Interviewing an expert • Making sentences <p>Controlling the process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>KWL</i> • Choosing among alternative actions to reach the goal according to purpose and text type • Considering approaches for performing the task • Hypothesising about the reading • Understanding the reading purpose/task

¹ The strategies in italics will be detailed in a companion document, *Teaching Reading and Viewing: Comprehension strategies and activities for Years 1–9*, available soon on the QCAA website.

During reading (non-literary texts)

	Teaching activities	Teaching focus	Examples of strategies ²
Retrieving information	<p>Part 1: Retrieving information (literal comprehension)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a graphic outline to survey a chapter or topic section of a book. Locate position of information based on prior knowledge and task. Teach students to skim the section to confirm that the required information is included • Within text segment to be read, note title, headings, subheadings, illustrations, captions and hypertext links. Collaboratively construct a graphic outline of the relevant section • Note whether information conveyed by the images is new or supports/elaborates on information in the written text • Read aloud relevant section and “think aloud” the process of using the writer’s cues and prior knowledge in preparing to read, constructing meaning and locating information • Pose and answer questions during the reading • Use guided reading questions to explicitly teach procedures for using contextual/ textual knowledge to infer, judge and evaluate • Teach how to extract and organise main and supporting ideas • Locate information by searching for key words • Teach strategies for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – using prior knowledge – processing text – creating personal meanings • Teach active comprehension strategies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – questioning the text – mental imagery – reading selectively based on an overview – associating ideas in text with what is already known – noting whether predictions/expectations about the text are met 	<p>Purpose, text and audience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purpose for reading • How ideas are likely to be organised in different texts and subject matter • Reader–writer relationships • Publishing formats (e.g. layout, font) <p>Language knowledge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Text structure • Vocabulary • Cohesion at whole-text level <p>Strategies for comprehending texts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Word recognition (using grammar and context clues) <p>Metacognition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active comprehension strategies 	<p>Making meaning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Categorising and reviewing</i> • <i>Contextual definition</i> • <i>Inquiry chart</i> • <i>Mental imagery</i> • <i>Oral cloze</i> • <i>Round up your ideas</i> • <i>Shared/guided reading</i> • <i>Skimming and scanning</i> • <i>Top-level structuring</i> • <i>Track down the main idea</i> • <i>Turn on the meaning</i> • <i>Weave ideas while reading</i> • Determining main ideas • Directed silent reading • Graphic outlines • Note-taking frameworks • Previewing the text <p>Controlling the process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Inking your thinking</i> • <i>Possible sentences</i> • <i>Read aloud</i> • <i>Say something</i> • <i>Semantic vocabulary map</i> • <i>Top-level structuring</i>

² The strategies in italics will be detailed in a companion document, *Teaching Reading and Viewing: Comprehension strategies and activities for Years 1–9*, available soon on the QCAA website.

During reading (non-literary texts)

	Teaching activities	Teaching focus	Examples of strategies ³
Interpreting texts	<p>Part 2: Interpreting texts (inferential and critical comprehension)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use guided reading questions to explicitly teach procedures for using contextual and textual knowledge when inferring, judging and evaluating • Teach active comprehension strategies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – predicting from title, book cover – predicting from features of images/diagrams – note making – paraphrasing content during reading – detecting flaws in logical arguments – confirming/correcting from semantic and syntactic cues – finding main ideas – inferring – extracting and organising information 	<p>Purpose, text and audience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural beliefs, values and practices • Reader–writer relationships • Purpose and text type • Symbolic codes • Subject matter <p>Language knowledge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patterns of textual features <p>Strategies for comprehending texts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to use contextual and textual knowledge to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – construct meaning – justify interpretations – identify underlying messages – access surface and deeper meanings – monitor and evaluate meaning <p>Metacognition</p> <p>Active comprehension strategies</p>	<p>Making meaning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Dialogical thinking</i> • <i>Find the hidden meaning</i> • <i>Mental imagery</i> • <i>Oral cloze</i> • <i>Semantic webs</i> • <i>Shared/guided reading</i> • <i>Story mapping</i> • <i>Top-level structuring</i> • <i>Turn on the meaning</i> • <i>Visualising</i> • <i>Weave ideas while reading</i> • Questioning the text • Retrieval charts • Three-level guides • Using contextual clues <p>Controlling the process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Inking your thinking</i> • <i>Reciprocal teaching</i> • <i>Say something</i> • Note-making in personal journals • ‘Talking the text’ to unpack concepts

³ The strategies in italics will be detailed in a companion document, *Teaching Reading and Viewing: Comprehension strategies and activities for Years 1–9*, available soon on the QSA website.

After reading (non-literary texts)

	Teaching activities	Teaching focus	Examples of strategies ⁴
Reflecting and creating personal knowledge	<p>Part 1: Evaluating authenticity/usefulness of information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss ideas and information in the text, and writer's language choices <p>Part 2: Using knowledge to achieve new things</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work collaboratively to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – synthesise information – apply new information to a new situation • Transform texts from one mode to another using interpretations from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – written to visual – spoken to written/visual – visual to spoken/written – written to multimodal including across other learning areas (e.g. artwork, dramatic performance, product) • Teach active comprehension strategies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – organising new ideas in a form that can be retrieved from memory – evaluating, analysing quality of text 	<p>Purpose, text and audience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representation of people, places, ideas • Ways readers are positioned by writers' language choices • Symbolic codes <p>Language knowledge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Textual features of written language • Textual features of images <p>Metacognition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Metacognitive awareness about aspects of reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – what is liked and disliked, when and why – what is easy or difficult, when and why – what strategies were successful or unsuccessful, when and why • Link between effort and success in reading • Active comprehension strategies 	<p>Transforming meaning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Be a reading detective</i> • <i>Dialogical thinking</i> • <i>Inquiry chart</i> • <i>Story mapping</i> • <i>That reminds me</i> • <i>Turn on the meaning</i> • Debating topic issues • Questioning the author • Researching different aspects of the topic • Writing about the topic for a new purpose • Writing from another perspective <p>Controlling the process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Inking your thinking</i> • <i>KWL</i> • <i>Top-level structure</i> • <i>Learning journals</i>

⁴ The strategies in italics will be detailed in a companion document, *Teaching Reading and Viewing: Comprehension strategies and activities for Years 1–9*, available soon on the QSA website.

Working with literary texts

Literary texts may be narrative, informational or persuasive texts. They are characterised by sophisticated vocabulary, complex sentence structures and literary devices that create layers of meaning within a text.

Explicit teaching of literary non-narrative texts should follow the procedure outlined in the previous section. However, more time must be spent in talking and interacting around these texts in order to develop essential vocabulary and grammatical knowledge.

Literary narratives may be produced as prose, drama or verse. Teaching should follow the sequence outlined in the next section.

Students bring to the reading of narratives their familiarity with story content of various kinds. However, students often have less familiarity with the written language of literature. The words and sentence structures of literary texts differ from those of everyday speech and the language patterns of transactional and informational texts. Readers may not be familiar with the syntactic patterns and the formal or more sophisticated vocabulary chosen by the author. To work successfully with such texts, readers must build a storehouse of knowledge about the language of literary texts to support comprehension processes.

Students at all levels of primary school need to be immersed in the language patterns and imagery of stories, poems, chants, rhymes and songs. A strong oral language program in which students are immersed in different forms of literature must run parallel to and be interwoven with the reading/writing program.

Teaching students to comprehend literary texts involves explicit teaching about:

- literary language — story types and literary language features including devices such as alliteration, metaphor, allusion and hyperbole
- the role of illustrations in narrative texts
- layers of meaning within the text
- devices such as parallel plots and flashbacks used to engage readers
- strategies for successful comprehension of literary texts.

Suggested teaching sequence for narrative texts

Effective strategies are taught before, during and after reading as students operate in the four roles of the reader: code breaker, meaning maker, text user and text analyst. The following tables describe suggested teaching activities, explicit knowledge to be taught and examples of strategies that will help children become strategic readers of narrative texts.

Detailed descriptions of the strategies in *italics* are provided in the companion document, *Reading for meaning*, available on the QSA website.

Before reading (narrative texts)

	Teaching activities	Teaching focus	Examples of strategies ⁵
Activating, expanding and refining prior knowledge	<p>Part 1: Establishing a purpose for reading</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make the goal/purpose for reading explicit <p>Part 2: Experiencing the language</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Model: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – characterisation through storytelling – ways of thinking about a story as it unfolds during serial reading of a novel – retelling through choice of medium (e.g. visual art, drama, media or writing) • Discuss vocabulary and identify unusual words • Examine the structure at both whole-text and sentence levels through patterning or innovation • Discuss the role of images in introducing or elaborating on ideas in the written language <p>Part 3: Predicting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examine and discuss the cover (title, images, colours, endorsements) to predict the story-line, possible audience, etc. • Speculate about story content • Make connections to other literature and personal experiences 	<p>Purpose, text and audience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contextual knowledge • Symbolic codes • Topic knowledge • Story types • Interpersonal knowledge <p>Language knowledge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topic vocabulary • Textual features of images and print • Relationship among ideas <p>Metacognition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active comprehension strategies 	<p>Making meaning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Be a reading detective</i> • <i>Expert panel</i> • <i>Starting with brainstorming</i> • <i>Build bridges to meaning</i> • <i>Concept mapping</i> • <i>Inquiry chart</i> • <i>Oral cloze</i> • <i>Possible sentences</i> • <i>Reading aloud</i> • <i>Say something</i> • <i>Shared reading</i> • <i>Talking places</i> • <i>That reminds me</i> • <i>Top-level structuring</i> • Choral groups • Readers theatre <p>Controlling the process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KWL • Hypothesising about the reading purpose/task • Monitoring meaning-making

⁵ The strategies in italics will be detailed in a companion document, *Teaching Reading and Viewing: Comprehension strategies and activities for Years 1–9*, available soon on the QCAA website.

During reading (narrative texts)

	Teaching activities	Teaching focus	Examples of strategies ⁶
Retrieving information	<p>Part 1: Retrieving information (literal comprehension)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Through shared/guided reading, identify the structure and language of the narrative Teach terminology for talking about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the English language/texts active reading strategies Locate information about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> setting characters plot (orientation, complication, resolution) Teach active comprehension strategies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> forming a broad understanding associating ideas in text with what is already known noting whether predictions and expectations about text content are met 	<p>Purpose, text and audience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural/social beliefs, values, practices Purpose for reading Types of narratives How ideas are organised in narratives Publishing formats (e.g. layout, font) <p>Language knowledge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Typical text structures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> plot types orientation, complication, climax, resolution Content of a narrative: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> setting (where, when) characters/characterisation (who) plot/episodes/climax (what happened and why) Literary language: sentences, words/vocabulary, grammar, punctuation, literary devices Synthesising information from written and visual modes <p>Metacognition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Active comprehension strategies 	<p>Making meaning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Oral cloze</i> <i>Reading aloud or serial reading</i> <i>Round up your ideas</i> <i>Say something</i> <i>Shared/guided reading</i> <i>Story mapping</i> <i>Top-level structuring</i> <i>Track down the main idea</i> <i>Turn on the meaning</i> <i>USSR</i> <i>Visualising</i> <i>Weave ideas while reading</i> Character profiles Literary letters Map a story Read and retell Story ladder <p>Controlling the process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Inking your thinking</i> <i>KWL</i> <i>Possible sentences</i> <i>Read aloud</i> <i>Say something</i> <i>Semantic vocabulary map</i> <i>Top-level structuring</i> Note-taking frameworks

⁶ The strategies in italics will be detailed in a companion document, *Teaching Reading and Viewing: Comprehension strategies and activities for Years 1–9*, available soon on the QCAA website.

During reading (narrative texts)

	Teaching activities	Teaching focus	Examples of strategies ⁷
Interpreting texts	<p>Part 2: Interpreting texts (inferential and critical comprehension)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use guided reading questions to explicitly teach procedures for using contextual and textual knowledge when inferring, judging and evaluating • Teach active comprehension strategies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – predicting from title, book cover – predicting from illustrations – confirming/correcting from semantic and syntactic cues – note-making – paraphrasing ideas during reading – questioning the text – finding main ideas – identifying tensions (setting, characters, events) within the narrative – inferring – extracting and organising information 	<p>Purpose, text and audience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural/social beliefs, values, practices • Reader–writer relationships • Purpose and text type • Symbolic codes <p>Language knowledge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patterns of textual features • Literary devices <p>Strategies for comprehending texts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to use contextual and textual knowledge to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – synthesise information from written and visual modes – construct and justify interpretations – identify deep meanings – monitor and evaluate meaning <p>Metacognition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active comprehension strategies 	<p>Making meaning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Dialogical thinking</i> • <i>Find the hidden meaning</i> • <i>Mental imagery</i> • <i>Oral cloze</i> • <i>Semantic webs</i> • <i>Shared/guided reading</i> • <i>Story mapping</i> • <i>That reminds me</i> • <i>Top-level structuring</i> • <i>Turn on the meaning</i> • <i>Visualising</i> • <i>Weave ideas while reading</i> • <i>Visualising</i> • Constructing questions • Inference grids • Plot profiles • Sketch to stretch • Through the eyes of the author • What's new • Word-association grids <p>Controlling the process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Inking your thinking</i> • <i>Reciprocal teaching</i> • <i>Say something</i> • Response journals

⁷ The strategies in italics will be detailed in a companion document, *Teaching Reading and Viewing: Comprehension strategies and activities for Years 1–9*, available soon on the QCAA website.

After reading (narrative texts)

	Teaching activities	Teaching focus	Examples of strategies ⁸
Reflecting and creating personal knowledge	Reflecting/evaluating <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retell stories, translating ideas from one mode to another (e.g. visual to written or spoken, picture book into prose or drama) • Model and discuss ways of responding to literature: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – engaging – understanding – empathising – relating – distancing – evaluating • Identify and discuss: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – new content knowledge – new textual knowledge – particular views represented or silenced in texts • Discuss and evaluate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – effectiveness/appropriateness of comprehension strategies for specific reading goals – craft of the writer • Teach active comprehension strategies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – organising new ideas in a form that can be retrieved from memory – evaluating, analysing quality of text 	Purpose, text and audience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction of texts • Different representations of people, places and ideas • Ways readers are positioned by writers' language choices • Symbolic codes Language knowledge <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Textual features of written and visual language • Vocabulary (nuances of meaning) Strategies for comprehending texts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to read critically • Alternative readings Metacognition <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Metacognitive awareness about aspects of reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – what is liked and disliked, when and why – what is easy or difficult, when and why – what strategies were successful or unsuccessful, when and why • Link between effort and success in reading • Active comprehension strategies 	Transforming meaning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Be a reading detective</i> • <i>Dialogical thinking</i> • <i>Inquiry chart</i> • <i>Reciprocal teaching</i> • <i>Story mapping</i> • <i>That reminds me</i> • <i>Turn on the meaning</i> • Collaborative strategy instruction • Deconstructing texts • Problem-based learning • Questioning the author Controlling the process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Inking your thinking</i> • <i>KWL</i> • <i>Top-level structure</i> • Roleplay • Collaborative reasoning

⁸ The strategies in italics will be detailed in a companion document, *Teaching Reading and Viewing: Comprehension strategies and activities for Years 1–9*, available soon on the QCAA website.

Working with non-narrative or non-linear texts

Processing non-narrative and non-linear texts in print and electronic media involves the reader retrieving information, interpreting meaning, and reflecting on and evaluating the message and the craft of the writer. Successful reading of these texts also requires additional skills such as integrating information from various sources and retrieving information from non-linear texts. Success requires visual, computer and reading literacy. Access features in electronic texts, such as navigation icons, scroll bars, tabs, menus, site maps, embedded hyperlinks, and search and find buttons, may create barriers in retrieving text-based information.

Electronic texts on the internet are likely to be more difficult and should be carefully analysed for readability and cohesiveness to determine their suitability. Electronic texts with many links to additional information of varying relevance may adversely affect students' success in identifying main ideas and supporting details. Careful selection of texts for instruction and explicit teaching of strategies for retrieving, interpreting and evaluating information are essential.