

Meaningful



Development

for Middle School ELLs

Part I

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9:00 - 9:15

Breakfast & Introductions

9:15 – 11:00

Welcome! Opening remarks

- Meaningful Reading
- Changing Demographics
- So what is Reading Anyhow?
- Understanding The Reading Process for ELLs

11:00–11:15

Morning Break

11:15–12:15

- Understanding The Reading Process for ELLs
 - Reading is a process of constructing meaning from text
 - Readers use background knowledge
 - Readers use linguistic cues from three systems
 - Readers use subconscious psychological strategies to construct meaning as they read
- Review & Reflection

Meaningful Literacy Development for Middle School ELLs

Dr. Ann Ebe - Hunter College, City University of New York

Research on Adolescent ELL Readers

Recently, the National Literacy Panel completed a four-year process of identifying, assessing and synthesizing research on the literacy attainment of English language learners (ELLs). One of the panel's key findings was that ELLs fell behind their native English speaking peers on measures of reading comprehension (August & Shanahan, 2006). When looking specifically at the reading of middle school students as measured by the 2005 National Assessment for Educational Progress (NAEP), 96% of eighth-grade ELLs scored below the Basic level in reading (Short & Fitzsimmons, 2007). These findings point to the challenge presented to middle school teachers who work with the increasing numbers of English learners in today's schools. There is a pressing need to increase the reading proficiency of middle school ELLs in the United States.

By middle school, students are expected to read increasingly difficult academic texts. Higher standards for reading achievement, set as a consequence of policies enacted during the past twenty years of school reform, place new demands on both adolescents and their teachers (Alvermann, 2001). In addition, as García and his colleagues (1995) point out, teachers can no longer assume that all of their students are proficient readers by the time they have reached middle school. Teachers of adolescent ELLs need to be prepared to help their students develop both English proficiency and literacy. Understanding ways to effectively support the literacy development of adolescents who are learning English is essential.

Alvermann, D. E. (2001). *Effective literacy instruction for adolescents*. Executive Summary and Paper Commissioned by the National Reading Conference. Chicago, IL: National Reading Conference.

August, D. & T. Shanahan, Eds. (2006). *Developing literacy in second-language learners: A report of the national literacy panel on language-minority children and youth*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.

García, G.E., Stephens, D.L., Koenke, K.R., Harris, V.J., Pearson, P.D., Jimenez, R.T., & Janisch, C. (1995). *Reading instruction and educational opportunity at the middle school level* (Tech. Rep. 622). Urbana-Champaign, IL: University of Illinois, Center for the Study of Reading.

Short, D., & Fitzsimmons, S. (2007). *Double the work: Challenges and solutions to acquiring language and academic literacy for adolescent English language learners – A report to Carnegie Corporation of New York*. Washington, DC: Alliance for Excellent Education.

So What Is Reading Anyhow?

(Opitz & Rasinski, 2008)

A variety of models have been created to answer this most important question, and about the only two attributes they share in common are a theorist who argues for each and an agreement that comprehension is the essence of reading (Ruddell, Ruddell, & Singer 1994). These different models remind us that reading is a complex, multidimensional process in which readers bring their own meaning and experiences to the printed page to obtain meaning from it. Indeed, our definition of *reading* is informed by these models. But our own experiences as readers and as teachers, working with children, have also informed our three-part definition:

1. **Reading is language.**

When reading, readers use three linguistic cueing systems, which they know intuitively: semantic, syntactic, and graphophonic. They derive semantic cues from the text's meaning, syntactic cues from the text's grammatical structure, and the graphophonic cues from sound-letter relationships and patterns. All three of these cueing systems are important and are constantly in motion to enable readers to construct meaning (Figure 1-1). They help readers answer questions such as, "Does this make sense? Does this sound right? Does this look right?"

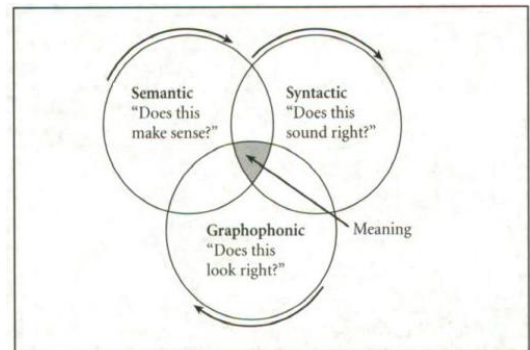


Figure 1-1. Three Linguistic Cueing Systems: Semantic, Syntactic, and Graphophonic

2. **Reading is a cognitive process.** Readers predict what they think the text is about to convey, sample words or letters within words, and confirm their predictions by checking to see if meaning is maintained. Indeed, readers monitor their reading to ensure understanding and take corrective action when meaning breaks down. For example, they may choose to self-correct or continue to read ahead, only to return later to recoup the meaning from the text they initially failed to understand. In other words, readers are strategic. They use a variety of strategies to ensure comprehension.
3. **Reading is social.** Readers use pragmatics - the context in which they are reading (e.g., school, bed, the doctor's office) and the type of book they are reading (e.g., textbook, novel, magazine) – to help guide their reading. They choose to read one type of book while sitting in an overstuffed chair and another while sitting at a desk, depending on the purpose for reading. Clearly, reading serves multiple purposes in our daily lives. We use it to share information and to learn from one another. We use it to learn more about ourselves and to complete specific activities such as hobbies and job-related tasks. We use it to enrich our lives – for pure enjoyment!

Excerpt From: Opitz, M. & T. Rasinski. (2008). *Good-bye round robin: 25 effective oral reading strategies*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann. pp.1-3.

Monitoring the Reading Process

As you complete the cloze activity below with your partner, think about the strategies you use to fill in the missing words and make sense of the text. Good readers apply strategies seamlessly as they read, but you can gain insight into this process by metacognitively monitoring your own process.

Joey Pigza Swallowed the Key

Jack Gantos

Joey Pigza can't _____ still. He can't pay _____, he can't follow the _____, and he can't _____ it—especially when his _____ aren't working. Joey's had _____ ever since he was _____, problems just like his dad and grandma have. And whether he's wreaking _____ on a class _____ or swallowing the _____ key, Joey's problems are getting _____. In fact, his behavior is so off the _____ that his _____ are threatening to send him to the _____ education center downtown.

Joey knows he's really a _____ kid, but no matter how _____ he tries to do the _____ thing, something always seems to go _____. Will he ever get anything _____?

Strategies I Used

Whole-Group Share (other reading strategies)

Model of Reading based on Goodman (1996)

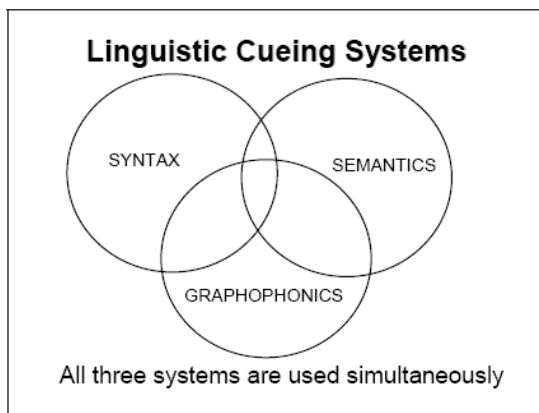
Goodman, K. (1996). *On Reading*. Portsmouth, N.H.: Heinemann

- Reading is a process of constructing meaning from text.



Please re-write the story here:

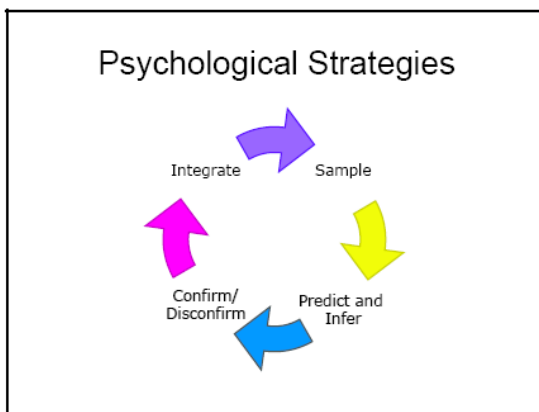
- Readers use background knowledge.
- Readers use linguistic cues from three systems.
- Readers use psychological strategies to construct meaning as they read.



Syntax:

Semantics:

Graphophonics:



Sample:

Predict & Infer:

Confirm & Disconfirm:

Integrate:

Using Alphabet Books to Develop Graphophonics

Chris Van Allsburg, 1987 Houghton Mifflin



Working in Table Groups:

- Write “riddles” for the letters L, M, N & O. Remember to use powerful and alliterative verbs.
- Exchange your sentences with another table.
- Choose your favorite to illustrate. Share the pictures with the original authors.

Write your riddle first!

Writing assignment option A:

- Stop halfway through the book. Put students in groups of three or four.
- As a group, they must create the last 13 sentence “riddles” for the book.
- Encourage the use of powerful and alliterative verbs.
- Have groups exchange their 13 sentences, and have students in other groups illustrate their favorites and share the pictures with the original authors.

Draw your riddle first!

Writing assignment option B:

- Stop halfway through the book. Have students pick one of the latter letters from the alphabet and prepare to draw it on the blank stage.
- The student will then draw (or paste pictures of) props and other additions to illustrate an alliterative riddle that he/she keeps safely in his/her head.
- Students pass their picture riddles around the class to each other.
- On Post-It notes, they write guesses for the sentence they think the picture conveys. New guesses go on new Post-Its.
- Celebrate the pictures that inspired the most Post-It guesses.

Create your own book!

Writing assignment option C:

Students love this alphabet book. They react well when asked, “Do you think you could create an original alphabet book that does the same thing? Or something really similar?”

- Instead of letters, what might be standing on the stage?
- Instead of a stage, where might the letters be?”
- Individual students or student groups can create their own alphabet books with this simple prompt and this wonderful model.



Key Ideas to Remember



Idea	When? Who?	Materials	Concerns/ Questions	Actions