

## SFA's 4 Core Strategies

### Clarifying

\*The clarifying process requires students to monitor their own comprehension, recognize when what they read does not make sense, then stop and apply appropriate tools or strategies to fix the comprehension problem. Clarifying involves these steps:

1. The reader must recognize that there is an unknown word or idea.
2. At the word level, the reader may need to know how to pronounce the word or what the word means. When the reader attempts to figure out the word, s/he first tries one of the following strategies: sound it out, chunk familiar word parts, look for base word, reread the sentence or paragraph, or read on and then go back. The reader has had success when s/he knows both how to pronounce the word and what the word means.
3. At the sentence and paragraph level, the reader might reread, read on and go back, use other resources (partner, dictionary, etc), use text structures (headings, charts/pictures/graphs) to clarify and help with comprehending the text or story.

### Predicting

\*Predicting, in the broadest sense, is making a guess. It is telling what you think will happen before you experience it, read about it, or find out about it in other ways. This research-proven strategy engages students with the text, activates background knowledge, helps to organize information while reading, and creates a purpose for reading.

Try to avoid using the terms "right" and "wrong" when dealing with predictions. Predictions are good ones if they are based on clues from the text and the use of background knowledge that is accurate. In narrative texts (stories), effective use of context clues and of information from the story helps the reader predict what might happen next and encourages the reader to continue reading to see what actually does occur.

In expository texts, effective use of text features (titles, headings, subheadings, pictures, charts, captions, etc.) enables the reader to organize information to support their predictions and to aid in comprehension of the text.

### Summarizing

\*Summarizing is a challenging skill that requires students to identify the most important information or ideas in a text and express them in a concise and organized fashion.

\*Differentiating main ideas from supporting details can be a very difficult process, but using a graphic organizer (like the idea tree) can assist the reader to see the hierarchical patterns: the trunk of the tree (topic), main tree branches (main ideas), twigs off of main branches (important supporting details). Writing down the main ideas and supporting details will assist the reader to summarize.

\*Often in expository text, the main idea is directly stated in the first sentence of a paragraph or is used as the heading of a section. Other times it is not directly stated but is inferred. When there is an "inferred main idea" it is often beneficial to begin with the details first and then see what the "overarching topic or main idea" appears to be.

### Questioning

\*Questioning serves as a comprehension check that helps monitor students' understanding. Research shows that when students ask questions about the text they read, they mentally process the information in ways that further their understanding.

\*Use of our Question Stem Chart 2013 will assist you in asking challenging questions based on the skill or strategy that is being studied and practiced in the reading classroom. Be sure to spend a lot of your time on main idea, cause and effect, and author's purpose and point of view type questions from the chart!!

\*Prompting your child with questions such as "who, what when, where, why, and how" can help them to comprehend a text at a much deeper level.

\*Specific work on this strategy can assist the reader to pose and answer questions whose answers: 1) are in the same sentence or paragraph of the text, 2) require connecting information from various parts of the text, or 3) require connections with background knowledge.