

Reading Lesson Learned 1

Students need to understand the function of a variety of text features and how these features contribute to meaning.

- Example: The raw morinda tastes
- ☐ bitter.
 - ☐ spicy.
 - ☐ sweet.

This is a *Literal* question. Questions at this cognitive level are designed to elicit responses that indicate the student has comprehended explicit information in the text.

This type of question requires that students know the function of text features. Students must use this knowledge to make connections between literally stated pieces of information in the text in order to accurately understand the text’s meaning. This type of question assesses a student’s awareness of text features and how they contribute to a text’s meaning.

In order to select the correct answer (the first option - bitter), students need to read carefully the Morinda Facts information in the website text box:

The raw morinda is so bitter that it can make your mouth pucker.

Students need to understand that they need to read text feature information as part of the complete text. They need to understand that information included in the website text box is connected to the rest of the written text on the page. Information found through the use of text features and the written text should be used together in order to understand the meaning of the text as a whole.

Text Features can be found under three categories:

Print Supports	Visual Supports	Organizational Supports
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• bold print• bullets• colour• font (type, size)• italics• underline	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• charts• diagrams• drawings• enlarged photos• labelled drawings• maps• photographs• timelines	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• captions• glossary• headings• index• labels• page numbers• table of contents• text boxes• titles

Nova Scotia Department of Education (2012). *Active Young Readers, Grades Primary–3 Assessment Resource: A Teaching Resource*, pp. 75–80.

To support readers to understand the function of a variety of text features and how these text features contribute to meaning:

Try these Teaching Suggestions	Try these Assessment Suggestions
<p>a) Magazine Hunt: Students open to a double page spread in a magazine (e.g., Time for Kids, Owl) and run their hands over the main body of the text to distinguish print text from text features. Discuss how these text features support a reader’s understanding of the overall message(s).</p> <p>b) Think Aloud: Whole group engage in guided practice through the identification of and purpose for given projected text features in the chart (see Appendix E). This general discussion familiarizes students with various developmentally appropriate features and the role that they play within the reading process to extend, deepen, and scaffold comprehension.</p> <p>c) Text Feature Walk: Small groups of students work with a short piece of non-fiction text (2–4 pages). One person begins by naming and describing a text feature (e.g., heading, picture, caption, map). As a group, discuss predictions, questions, and connections based on the text feature and how it may relate to the main idea in the service of comprehension. Everyone should contribute. Continue by moving to the next person and the next text feature and repeat until all of the text features have been discussed and connections to how these features support meaning making of the text are clear.</p>	<p>Conversations: Discussions within the groups should focus on how the text features support deeper understanding rather than the identity of the feature itself in isolation of the purpose it serves.</p> <p>Observations: Listen in to ensure that the conversation is focused on the relationship between the text feature and how it supports comprehension of the topic. Observe the dynamic of the group, watching that all participants are contributing to the discussion. (Heterogeneous grouping is important, as well as a sense of the level of background knowledge that each brings to the table.)</p> <p>Products: Look for use of and application of text feature information in conferences while reading a passage, and in situations where writing samples have included incidental and authentic use of features as helpful in scaffolding authors’ intents for understanding.</p>

Selected Resources

- *English Language Arts Curriculum Guide, Grades Primary–3: A Teaching Resource*, p. 401, pp. 405–411 2014, Nova Scotia Department of Education.
- *Teaching in Action Grades Primary–3: A Teaching Resource*, p. 33, 2006, Nova Scotia Department of Education.
- *Active Young Readers Grades Primary–3 Assessment Resource: A Teaching Resource*, pp. 75–81, 2012, Nova Scotia Department of Education.
- <http://www.readingrockets.org/>

Reading Lesson Learned 2

Students need to be able to identify, evaluate, and analyze relevant evidence throughout a text.

Example: What did Emma do that shows the feather was really interesting?

- ☐ She put it in her pocket with the small grey stone.
- ☐ She smiled when she saw it on the sidewalk.
- ☐ She went to show it to her friend Tara.

This is an *Analysis* question. Questions at this cognitive level are designed to elicit responses that indicate the student has thought critically about texts by analyzing, synthesizing, or evaluating the explicit and/or implicit information in the text.

This type of question requires that students read the entire text carefully in order to find, evaluate, and analyze evidence to support their answer. This type of question assesses deeper understanding of a text's message.

In order to select the correct answer (the third option), students need to find evidence in the text that shows that Emma found the feather really interesting. Toward the end of the text, Emma says *“Those are both interesting,”* about a feather and a stone that she found. However, the first option is not correct since the sentence goes on to say *but she only put the feather in her pocket*. The text does not say that Emma smiled when she saw the feather on the sidewalk so the second option is not correct. The text does say that Emma took the feather to Tara's house, and students need to analyze and evaluate this sentence in combination with a sentence at the beginning of the text: *When Emma finds something really interesting, she puts it in her pocket so she and her friend Tara can figure out what it is.*

To support readers to be able to identify, evaluate, and analyze relevant evidence throughout a text:

Try these Teaching Suggestions	Try these Assessment Suggestions
<p>a) RAN Strategy (Appendix F):</p> <p>Tony Stead, in his book <i>Reality Checks: Teaching Reading Comprehension with Nonfiction K–5</i>, identifies three sources of understanding that assist learners in making sense of text through identifying, evaluating, and analyzing facts. They are literal understandings, interpretive understandings, and evaluative understandings. This lesson falls under the latter (see pp. 9–10)</p> <p>Reading and Analyzing Nonfiction Strategies (RAN): This example uses nonfiction as a springboard that may be reflected in the use of fiction, as in the example <i>Emma’s Pockets</i> provided. Provide learners with a piece of nonfiction text on a Unifying Concept currently being investigated as a class (e.g., Animals). This could be done in a small group, in pairs, or as an independent experience. For younger learners for whom it may be more developmentally appropriate, modify the RAN chart to focus only on “What I Think I Know”, “Yes, We Were Right”, “New Information”, and “Wonderings”. “Misconceptions”, as a column for consideration, may be provided to older learners or for those for whom this more sophisticated thinking is more developmentally appropriate.</p> <p>Suggestion: to model the gradual release of responsibility (GRR) in the workshop framework, work through to complete a chart as a whole class first with the teacher doing most of the modeling with a big book or projected text. Then try again in a more interactive mode with much student participation, analyzing text for evidence and evaluating text based on findings. Finally, learners would work in small groups or triad/pairs, or independently to practice the evaluative and analytic understandings. (See chart Appendix F and <i>Reality Checks: Teaching Reading Comprehension with Nonfiction K–5</i>, pp. 17–31.)</p> <p>Moving to repeat this level and depth of understanding using fiction would require practice as well so that a level of automaticity in</p>	<p>Conversations: Discussion throughout while navigating through the chart to hear and see how to search and recognize where evidence lies is modeled. Use of sticky notes may be helpful to hold thinking and represent it in each category. Highlight literate conversation as the form of exchange, rather than interrogational exchanges where the teacher is providing too much of the lead so that students begin to own the ability to analyze, look for evidence, and evaluate accordingly. This would be gradual release scaffolding to put ownership of thinking more in the hands of the learner.</p> <p>Observations: Note individual use of text as an anchor to the thinking and how each participant contributes to the overall conversation, as well as contributions made in smaller groupings. If working independently, watch to see how the learner positions his or her thinking to seek and then reflect on analytic and evaluative understandings. Can they show and explain?</p> <p>Products: Students may complete RAN charts with a level of detail, making connections to the analytic and evaluative understandings about the topic or passage being investigated.</p>

Try these Teaching Suggestions	Try these Assessment Suggestions
recognizing, analyzing relevant evidence, and evaluating based on that evidence is established.	

Selected Resources

- *English Language Arts Curriculum Guide: Grades Primary–3*, p. 159, 2014, Nova Scotia Department of Education.
- *Teaching in Action Grades Primary–3: A Teaching Resource*, p. 33, 2006, Nova Scotia Department of Education.
- *Active Young Readers Grades Primary–3: A Teaching Resource*, pp. 93–96, 2012, Nova Scotia Department of Education.
- *Reality Checks: Teaching Reading Comprehension with Nonfiction K–5*, Part 3, pp.111–127, 2006, Tony Stead. Pembroke Publishers Ltd.

Reading Lesson Learned 3

Students need to be able to make inferences by gathering explicitly and implicitly stated information from a text to support a conclusion.

- Example: The sentence with the 😊😊 says, “Tara and Emma looked at each other and smiled.”
Why did they smile?
- ☐ They were happy they knew what it was.
 - ☐ They did not want to eat the morinda.
 - ☐ They liked to eat food with salt and spices.

This is a *Non-literal* question. Questions at this cognitive level are designed to elicit responses that indicate the student has comprehended implicit information in the text such as inferences, connotative meaning, idioms, and figurative language (e.g., simile and metaphor).

This type of question asks students to make inferences from information in the text. It is important that these inferences be suggested by the text. For example, students who chose the first option may have inferred that Tara and Emma smiled because they were happy, but this inference is not suggested by the text. This type of question assesses deep understanding of texts and their meanings.

In order to select the correct answer (the second option), students need to combine the following pieces of information from the text: Tara and Emma decided to *just look at the morinda and not take a bite* after they read on a website that the morinda is bitter but that it can be made to taste better if fried with salt and spices. The placement of the sentence *Tara and Emma looked at each other and smiled* just before their decision not to take a bite allows students to infer that they smiled because they didn’t want to eat it. There is no explicit or implicit information in the text that supports that they smiled because they were happy to know what it was or that they smiled because they like to eat food with salt and spices.

To support readers to be able to make inferences by gathering explicitly and implicitly stated information from a text to support a conclusion:

Try these Teaching Suggestions	Try these Assessment Suggestions
<p>a) Think Aloud: Make thinking visible in an effort to show or model how to combine and incorporate what is in the text with what is in your head to make connections to meaning through thinking aloud the process of an internal conversation that leads to questions and ponderings/wonderings. This making the invisible visible helps students in using what they already know and what is presented explicitly in the print, with what is hidden “between the lines”. Modeling both what can be seen within the pages and what thinking is needed to connect the dots to the implicit will assist students in going beyond the text to infer.</p>	<p>Conversations: Listen to the comments offered by students while thinking aloud is modeled, focusing on how learners can combine explicit and implicit information to clarify confusions, create new conclusions, and satisfy puzzling information. Encourage lots of talk in pairs and in small groups to practice the process of looking within and beyond the page to create inferences.</p> <p>Observations: Watch for bridging techniques used by learners as they make sense of what they are reading in shared and guided learning experiences, as well as in conferences, around inferring. How do they bring together the invisible? How do they connect it to the known?</p>

Try these Teaching Suggestions	Try these Assessment Suggestions
<p>b) Graphic/Strategy Organizers: When appropriate, provide students with a template on which they can hold their thinking, (see Appendix G for an example). Making thinking visible in this way helps the learner identify and represent the combination of what is in the book and what is brewing around inside one's head making the newly formed ideas or inferring possible.</p> <p>c) Picture Books: Many picture books provide visual supporting detail that is not explicitly mentioned in the text. Using picture books during read aloud/think aloud can help learners see that to infer requires combining explicit and implicit clues to fully and successfully make meaning. Reading between the lines requires that the reader play an active role in using clues from the text along with thinking in the head to draw conclusions and construct meaning. Using what we know, to understand what we don't know, is the process of inferring.</p>	<p>Products: Record the learner's ability to infer as needed through the use of the various templates/organizers such as <i>What's in the Book/What's in My Head</i> template provided in Appendix G. Completed templates such as this one provide evidence of the student's thinking process during reading.</p>

Selected Resources

- *English Language Arts Curriculum Guide Grades Primary–3*, pp. 160-161, 2014, Nova Scotia Department of Education.
- *Teaching in Action Grades Primary–3: A Teaching Resource*, p. 33, 2006, Nova Scotia Department of Education.
- *Active Young Readers Grades Primary–3 Assessment Resource: A Teaching Resource*, p. 19, 2012, Nova Scotia Department of Education.
- *Comprehension from the Ground Up: Comprehension from the Ground Up: Sensible Instruction for the K–3 Reading Workshop*, pp. 156–157, pp. 221–226, p. 252, 2011, Sharon Taberski, Heinemann.
- *Reality Checks: Teaching Reading Comprehension with Nonfiction K–5*, Chapter 5, pp. 73–88, 2006, Tony Stead, Pembroke Publishers Ltd.