

Effective Ways of Improving Reading Comprehension

1. Discuss Reading Comprehension

Writing a one-page handout detailing your ideas about reading comprehension and why it's important can be helpful. You can include your ideas about subjects such as taking notes, setting goals, and asking questions. Additionally, connect the importance of improving reading comprehension to something practical and relevant to them like texting, emails, and blogs.

2. Practice What You Preach

improving reading comprehension is crucial. Tests that emphasize rote memorization is backward reasoning are important .

3. Discuss Each Assignment

what you want them to learn from the text.

Perhaps the most important tip you can give learners about how to read is that their reading comprehension is most likely to improve when they stop reading. Students should be thinking while they're reading rather than reading continuously.

4. Urge Thinking Before Reading

Students should read your questions and/or the book's questions before they begin reading. This should help them know when to focus on text and when to skim it.

In other words, thinking before reading can help them be selective instead of trying to comprehend every sentence.

The questions can also help them formulate their own questions before they begin reading.

5. Teach Goal Setting

Teaching students to set goals before they read is also a good idea. Initially, the goal might be to answer your questions. Eventually, they should be able to set their own goals such as “I want to understand why the Civil War started.” “Before reading, good readers tend to set goals for their reading,” reports the article “What Research Tells Us About Reading, Comprehension, and Comprehension Instruction.”

“They are likely to focus more of their attention on the parts of the text that are most closely tied to their reading goals.”

6. Urge Thinking While Reading

Perhaps the most important tip you can give learners about how to read is that their reading comprehension is most likely to improve when they *stop* reading.

Students should be thinking while they’re reading rather than reading continuously.

Thus, they should be taught to stop when they are confused or have a question or thought about what they have just read. Teaching students to stop and think might lead them to reread what they have just read or seek the answers to their questions in the material that they haven’t read yet.

7. Urge Note Taking

It's likely most of your high school classmates did not take notes while they did their schoolwork. In college, though, everyone took notes in their textbooks. **Your students should know that college students regularly highlight important material via underlining, circles, and notes in margins.** They can take notes too, in notebooks rather than textbooks. Students should be encouraged to stop reading after they have read something

important and write down that fact, point, or argument. They should also be writing the answers to your pre-reading assignment questions.

Teaching students to set goals before they read is also a good idea. Initially, the goal might be to answer your questions.

8. Tell Them to Plan Ahead

Reading doesn't accomplish much in and of itself. Reading assignments should be connected to future class discussions, oral presentations, tests, or reports.

Thus, you should urge students to stop reading when they think of a point they want to make for a class discussion, oral presentation, test, or report.

They should write down their points. Emphasize that they can prepare for a test while reading. There is nothing wrong with giving students an idea about questions on tests. You want them to practice improving their skills so they're ready when they're being graded.

9. Recommend Visualizing

“Some good readers may also create mental images, or visualize a setting, event, or character to help them understand a passage in a text,” the Texas Education Agency wrote. Are students more apt to recall what happened at the Yalta Conference if they can visualize U.S. leader Franklin D. Roosevelt, United Kingdom leader Winston Churchill, and Soviet Union leader Joseph Stalin talking about what to do after World War II ended? Some will. It's a good idea to mention to students, who could also learn better by studying the text's photos and captions.

10. Assign Summaries

Asking students to write summaries of what they have read sounds like you're requiring them to do a lot of work, but you can emphasize that these

summaries can reduce how much time they spend studying, or cramming, for a test. Essentially, these summaries can be homework. They can also help students prepare for class discussions and oral presentations.