

Book Study

Prepared by the
Kansas Multi-Tier System of Supports (MTSS) Project

Six Super Comprehension Strategies: 35 Lessons and More for Reading Success

Lori Oczkus
(Christopher-Gordon Publishers, 2004)

Book Description:

Lori Oczkus offers a research-based hands-on resource that helps you achieve reading success with all students in your classroom through motivating lessons that can use with any materials. The strategies, which Oczkus refers to as the “Super Six,” include: Building Background and Making Connections, Predicting/Inferring, Questioning, Monitoring, Summarizing/Synthesizing and Evaluating.

Target Audience:

This book is an excellent resource that could be used by K-6 regular and special educators who are looking for practical ways to build comprehension in students’ reading.

Chapter 1: Comprehending with the Super Six

Overview

This chapter is a general overview of all the Super Six comprehension strategies. It contains engaging lessons that can be taught throughout the school year. Lessons include creating metaphors for each strategy, decorating anchor posters and a poem about the Super Six. The focus is seeing all the strategies in action.

Helpful Hints

It might be beneficial for each participant to read the introduction as an overview of how the book is set up and the research behind the six strategies. An idea for the first day of the book study might be to jigsaw each of the strategies found on pages 2-3 individually or with partners. Then go back to the whole group and share the main points of each strategy. It may also be beneficial to frame the discussion around the following questions:

Based on what you learned in Chapter One, think of how reading comprehension is currently being addressed in your school. How has teaching comprehension changed over the past several years? What looks the same?

Discussion Questions

1. After sharing each of the Super Six comprehension strategies in whole group, discuss how these align with your district's current language arts core curriculum.
2. How can the chart on pages 4-5 be used to help reinforce the Super Six strategies in tier 2 or tier 3 settings?
3. Look at the chart on page 7. Discuss different ways of using this information with support staff, volunteers and parents who support reading in your school.

Chapter 2: Building Background and Making Connections

Overview

In this chapter, teachers will learn how to hook students through building background and making connections with prior knowledge. The lessons assist students in making connections to their lives, other texts and the world around them.

Helpful Hints

While reading this chapter, think of the different ways to incorporate the following activities to help students make connections with the text they are reading: a people search, a one-minute book look and a connection workshop.

Discussion Questions

1. Discuss how using the one-minute book look can make a KWL lesson more powerful.
2. Using a fiction and non-fiction guided reading book, practice using the question prompts found on page 34.
3. Bring a favorite read aloud and work with a grade level colleague to fill out the Find Someone Who sheet on page 39. Try this in your classroom as an introduction to the next read aloud to help students build background and make connections.
4. Which activity out of this chapter could best be used in a tier-2 group to reinforce the “making connections” strategy that has been taught in the core curriculum?

Chapter 3: Predicting

Overview

Chapter 3 gives explicit ways of teaching students to predict. Students will learn to Partner Predict, Whisper Skim and Scan in a text that has no or few illustrations. They also learn to Stop and Draw Predictions, and predict words they think will be in the text.

Helpful Hint

Before the book study session for this chapter make multiple copies of a journal or magazine article and the whisper skim and scan form to complete with partners.

Discussion Questions

1. Discuss with peers the importance of predicting before, during and after reading and how predicting helps students comprehend.
2. Create a simple chart with partners or small groups showing the differences in predicting with narrative and expository text.
3. For students in tier 2 and 3 intervention groups how does the author suggest shaping struggling readers to become more logical with their predictions? What strategies can teachers use to get struggling students to monitor and check their own predictions?
4. With partners or small groups design a lesson plan using the One Word activity found on pages 70-75. How could this strategy be used in tier 2 to preview an upcoming selection taught in the core?

Chapter 4: Inferring

Overview

In this chapter you will learn how inferring is a difficult strategy and can separate good from the poor readers. Hunting for inferences in a book or studying characters' feelings provides students with guided experiences to learn how to infer. Questioning before reading and then answering questions after reading by inferring provides students with meaningful context.

Helpful Hints

While reading the first section of this chapter be thinking about the similarities and differences of predicting and inferring. Also, have large chart paper ready for the whole group titled, Inferring – What it is, what it isn't.

Discussion Questions

1. Use the large chart paper described in helpful hints as a springboard to discuss and define this very important and sometimes difficult strategy. Provide examples and non-examples.
2. As a group evaluate how inferring is taught in the core curriculum. Use the evaluation tool in the appendix on page 225 to estimate how well students can infer. What changes or additions need to be made to the core?
3. Discuss how using the Dinner Party lesson on pages 106-107 would help students in a tier 2 or tier 3 group be successful.

Chapter 5: Questioning

Overview

Chapter 5 deals with helping students figure out how to ask thoughtful questions throughout the reading process. Students learn the value of wondering before reading a fiction or nonfiction text. Learning questions to ask before, during and after reading aides in comprehending the text.

Helpful Hints

Before reading this chapter, have group members self-evaluate their question asking techniques used during guided reading. For example: 90% of the questions are asked by the teacher, most of the questions are right there questions, etc.

Discussion Questions

1. Discuss how moving from teacher lead questions to student lead questions could improve comprehension.
2. Discuss how changing the verbiage from, “Are there any questions?” to “What are you wondering about the text?” can change the amount and types of questions students generate.
3. In a tier 2 setting, discuss how using the chart on page 116 can help struggling readers become more proficient with asking questions at all levels.

Chapter 6: Monitoring Comprehension

Overview

In this chapter, students use a variety of tools to help them repair or “fix up” comprehension along the way. A mark-the-spot bookmark helps students pay attention to their thoughts and keeps them engaged during reading. Teachers will learn activities to help students become successful at monitoring the text.

Helpful Hints

Have participants begin by reviewing the Teaching Monitoring box on page 142. Discuss which of these strategies are used during their own reading.

Discussion Questions

1. How can teachers get students, especially struggling readers, to know if they are understanding the text or not? Refer to page 140 for this discussion.
2. Struggling readers may have a difficult time with monitoring their understanding. What words or phrases can be used when modeling confusion with text in a tier 2 setting?
3. Reflecting on the two strategies, “Famous Last Words” and “Right on Track Bookmarks”, discuss which would be best for tier 2 and core instruction. Why?

Chapter 7: Summarizing and Synthesizing

Overview

Chapter 7 discusses how to teach the difficult and complex strategy of summarizing. Sequencing the text by separating the important and unimportant details helps aid in comprehension. Learning how to teach students to synthesize the text to understand the big picture or author's message will also be discussed.

Helpful Hints

Have each person in the group choose one of the summarizing and synthesizing activities from this chapter. Have group members come prepared to lead that part of the chapter. Assign the following: Small Summaries, Summary Hand, Choose a Quick One, Strip Poem and Synthesis Starters.

Discussion Questions

1. Discuss how group members summarize and synthesize when recommending a book to a friend.
2. How would students' summarizing differ when reading narrative and expository text?
3. Have small groups share their assigned activity from the Helpful Hints section to help students become more efficient at summarizing and synthesizing. How can each of these ideas be used in a tier 2 setting?

Chapter 8: Evaluating

Overview

Chapter 8 encompasses how students can evaluate before, during and after reading. Students will learn to argue important and controversial issues from the text and rate the stories read.

Helpful Hints

If possible, have the reading data available from state testing for main idea, details and text structures. Discuss the need to specifically teach evaluating as a strategy.

Discussion Questions

1. Discuss the following statement found on page 197. *Determining important ideas from unimportant ones is a critical reading strategy that is part of a bigger strategy: evaluation.*
2. What are the main components involved with the concept of evaluating reading? Discuss each component found on pages 198-199.
3. Jigsaw the different activities for teaching evaluating. Discuss how these activities could be taught as core and tier 2.
4. Take time to explore the Appendix and the CD Rom. Discuss how the Assessment Tools and the Assessment Rubrics help to form Tier 2 groups and monitor progress.