

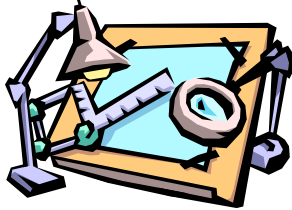
Chunking and Questioning Aloud Strategy Summary Sheet

Chunking is the grouping of words in a sentence into short meaningful phrases (usually three to five words). This process prevents word-by-word reading, which can cause lack of comprehension, since students forget the beginning of a sentence before they get to the end (Casteel, 1988). Smith (1982) assessed chunking as the largest meaningful combination of units that can be placed in short-term memory. Studies indicate that the presentation of “chunked” material separated into meaningful related groups of words improves the comprehension of some readers, most noticeably those readers who are classified as poor or low-ability readers (Casteel, 1989).

- Chunking is a procedure of breaking up reading material into manageable sections. Before reading a “chunk” students are given a statement of purpose, which guides them to look for something specific in the text. This process is repeated until students complete the passage.
- For checking comprehension: once students have read a passage they are asked to close their books and pretend they are teachers. They are to ask questions relating to what they have read. After a while, the teacher reverses the roles having students answer comprehension questions (Bondaza, 1998).
- Excessive chunking (chunk’s chunks) may hinder text comprehension. A misapplied segmentation strategy causes slower reading (Keenan, 1984).
- Extreme variability in line length may slow reading by disrupting the rhythm of eye movements (Keenan, 1984).
- A related technique – Read Cover Recite Check (RCRC).

The advantages of reading aloud to students: reluctant readers might be “turned on” to reading, students may be exposed to literature beyond their reading ability, aural exposure to more complex patterns prepares listeners to predict these structures in future experiences, listening comprehension is developed, and vocabulary is increased (Shoop, 1987).

- Developing comprehension through questioning in a teacher-question, student-response format. Neither literal (focused on details) nor affective (focused on attitudes) questions are sufficient.
- Questioning prior to reading aloud (prior knowledge aids).
- The reciprocal questioning procedure: students are asked to listen and to formulate questions they can ask the teacher.
- Students are asked to develop their own questions about the text. The teacher can provide exemplary questions, if necessary.
- Questioning the author: reminding students that what they read is just someone else’s ideas written down. Sometimes what authors have in their minds does not come through clearly as they write about it. Generating questions and answering them. A more advanced comprehension check (Chatel, 2002).



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