

READING IS A MESSAGE-GETTING
ACTIVITY:

ARE WE DOING EVERYTHING WE CAN
TO ENSURE THAT CHILDREN ARE USING
MEANING AND UNDERSTANDING THE
TEXT THEY ARE READING?

MEANING MAKING

- An inherent desire to make sense of the world.

Sulzby, 1985

“Two criticisms of my previous work have been that I neglect the central role of meaning and I do not seem to understand that a reader brings a meaning to a text. In fact I regard meaning as the 'given' in all reading--the source of anticipation, the guide to being on track, and the outcome and reward of the effort.”

Clay, BL p. 1 & 2

MEANING

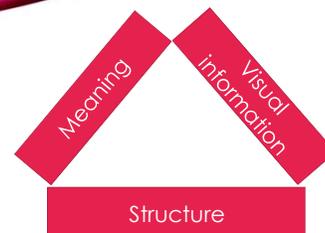
Meaning is paramount. There is no point in reading if you do not make sense of the text.

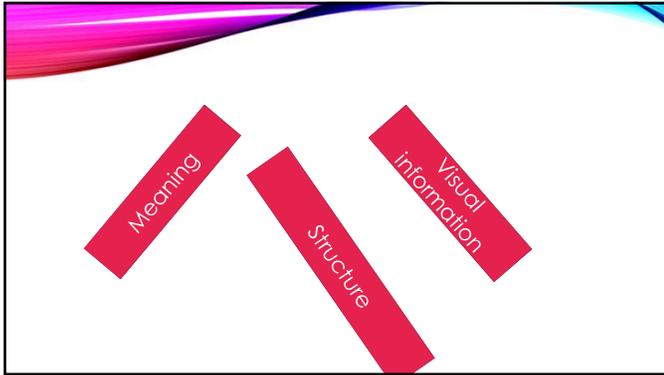
Meaning should drive the process and be the outcome of the process

DEFINITION OF MEANING IN READING

- “ the process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning through interaction and involvement in written language”
- Emphasizes what the author has written and the reader's ability to make sense of what they read

Improving Reading Comprehension in Kindergarten
Through 3rd Grade, WWC





"... the teacher aims to strengthen the child's ability to search flexibly for information from different sources to problem-solve the meanings of text." p137

COMPREHENSION IS:

<p>an active process occurring as we read and not the product of having read.</p>	<p>concerned as much with what the reader brings to the text as it is with what the reader gets out of the text.</p>
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The panel believes that students who read with understanding at an early age gain access to a broader range of texts, knowledge and educational opportunities, p5

COMPREHENSION

"We pay so much attention to decoding and fluency in the early years that children sometimes come to believe that flawless and rapid word recognition is the point..."

Lipson, M.Y. (2003) The challenge of Comprehension Instruction
The New England Reading Association Journal 39:1-6

Children are natural constructors of meaning, but we educators often take the sense out of reading and make the whole process more difficult for them.

Regie Routman 2011

The Big Hit
Who hid? Pig.
Who had a mitt? Pig.
Who did not sit?
Who did hit?
Up. Up. Up.
Who had a big hit? Pig.
Who slid? Pig did!

Meaning is a facilitator of reading, not just a product of it.

Clay, BL p. 290

TWO LEVELS OF COMPREHENSION

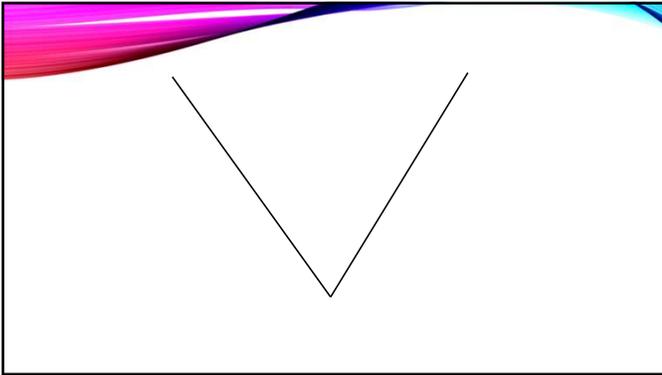
- Surface level is a literal level of understanding that is the ability to recall factual information
- Deep level of comprehension is a conceptual level of understanding that is the ability to think beyond the text



The meaning is not in the words.

An orientation to the book and the story involves limiting the possibilities of 'what is said' by defining the parameters of the search or 'context'...."

Phillips, 1997, p136



DEFINITION OF THE GIST

- the main or essential part of a matter; the gist of a story.
- the most important pieces of information about something,
- The central meaning of something

THE GIST

- 1 You need to work out what the gist is of the book and share this with the child.
- 2 The gist (story) is different to the plot. It is what lies behind the plot.
- 3 A picture walk does not provide the gist!
- 4 With the gist the child can interpret the pictures and confirm the sense of the text.

THE GIST

- In this story or in this book or in this poem:
- then in 4 phrases give the gist
- then introduce any language, vocabulary etc that this child might need.

MEANING THE SOURCE OF ANTICIPATION

- Using meaning and structure allows the child to narrow the possibilities when problem-solving the visual information
- The child should be driven by meaning and structure and add in the visual information

THE GUIDE TO BEING ON TRACK

- Does it make sense? This is imperative.

Initially we have to teach what to make sense means
 Child read- the cat is up in the tree
 Teacher- that makes sense, the cat is up in the tr

- Rhetorical use of 'does that make sense'

• Teacher- Does that make sense? It does doesn't it
Danny is sitting on the chair.

- Using where the child notices

Child- I go to school in a car/ sc
van

Teacher- I liked the way you noticed that it wasn't a
car that didn't make sense.

Then we need to help children always monitor on
meaning:

- You said.... Does that make sense?

Prompt the child to think about the meaning of the
story, to search for meaning;

- Try that again and think what would make sense

WHEN THE BOOK HAS BEEN READ:

- Do not just put it away or put it in the book
bag. Make sure the child has got hold of what
the book was about.

"Attend to the meaning of the story"

p119

A GOOD QUESTION

- " Authentic questions give the message that
the whole story was the point of the reading...
- Meanings can be negotiated in a brief but
helpful conversation.

"An open-ended question can reveal a
wealth of understanding and can also reveal
misunderstanding or confusion."

P 119

OLD TUATARA AND DOG TALK

- What might be a useful discussion or question at the
end of Old Tuatara?
- What might be a useful discussion or question at the
end of Dog Talk?
- We are aiming for a conceptual understanding



A MESSAGE GETTING, PROBLEM SOLVING ACTIVITY

- We need to support children getting conceptual understanding of the text by the way we introduce the text. A gist is important as part of this.
- Children need to be using meaning as one source of information as they read. We need to make sure that children are being led to do this.
- Children need to be taught how to monitor, search for and use meaning as they read.



A MESSAGE GETTING, PROBLEM SOLVING ACTIVITY