



Strategies That Work: Teaching Comprehension for Understanding and Engagement

Stephanie Harvey, Anne Goudvis

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Since its publication in 2000, *Strategies That Work* has become an indispensable resource for teachers who want to explicitly teach thinking strategies so that students become engaged, thoughtful, independent readers. In this revised and expanded edition, Stephanie and Anne have added twenty completely new comprehension lessons, extending the scope of the book and exploring the central role that activating background knowledge plays in understanding. Another major addition is the inclusion of a section on content literacy which describes how to apply comprehension strategies flexibly across the curriculum. The new edition is organized around four sections:

Part I highlights what comprehension is and how to teach it, including the principles that guide practice, a review of recent research, and a new section on assessment. A new chapter, Tools for Active Literacy: The Nuts and Bolts of Comprehension Instruction, describes ways to engage students in purposeful talk through interactive read alouds, guided discussion and written response.

Part II contains lessons and practices for teaching comprehension. A new first chapter emphasizes the importance of teaching students to monitor their understanding before focusing on specific strategies. Five lessons on monitoring provide a sound basis for launching comprehension instruction. At the end of each strategy chapter, the authors outline learning goals and ways to assess students' thinking, sharing examples of student work, and offering suggestions for differentiating instruction.

Part III, Comprehension Across the Curriculum is new. Comprehension strategies are essential for content-area reading, where information can be challenging, and presented in unfamiliar formats. This section includes chapters on social studies and science reading, topic study research, textbook reading and the genre of test reading.

Part IV shows that kids need books they can sink their teeth into and the updated appendix section recommends a rich diet of fiction and nonfiction, short text, kid's magazines, websites and journals that will assist teachers as they plan and design comprehension instruction. Through its focus on instruction that is responsive to kids' interests and learning needs, the first edition of *Strategies That Work* helped transform comprehension instruction for teachers across the country. For them, this new edition will be a welcome extension of that work. Those coming to it for the first time will find a current and essential resource. When readers use these strategies, they enjoy a more complete, thoughtful reading experience. Engagement is the goal. When kids are engaged in their reading they enhance their understanding, acquire knowledge, and learn from and remember what they read. And best yet, they will want to read more!

Strategies That Work: Teaching Comprehension for Understanding and Engagement Details

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Jonathan Peto says

I've had this book on the shelf and have pulled it down and read parts of it here and there for a few years. I finally sat down in the last couple of weeks and read it through. It's an excellent resource. I was pleased to discover that I'm already doing a lot of the things it suggests, probably because of the pulling it off the shelf over the last few years... Despite that, there was still a lot of practical ideas that I want to incorporate into my repertoire, mainly from Part 2 about strategy lessons. That section alone might make the book worth 5 stars, especially to someone who has not already read Mosaic of Thought. Other parts were less useful to me personally. There was a nice review of the "nuts and bolts of comprehension instruction". The chapters that addressed "reading for understanding in social studies and science" and "topic studies" were also interesting to me, mainly as a pat on the back because I work at a PYP school and I think we're doing very well according to the standards Harvey and Goudvis set.

Kellie Wagner says

The first half of the book was used to remind readers why comprehension is so important and why reading is strategic. Since I didn't need to be convinced, I found it too obvious. There were sections in the second half that included names of picture books and how to use them within your secondary classroom to teach different strategies including predicting or inferring. I'll use those suggestions.

Julie Suzanne says

I read this several years ago and loved it. This and Tovani's *I read it but I don't get it* taught me how to explicitly teach comprehension strategies. I became a post-it teacher, but I never really saw the results that I should've. These books are filled with engaged students making amazing growth as readers, and this particular one focuses primarily on younger children, so I wonder if it's because my students were in 7th and 8th grade that the lessons were less successful. This year, I have to read this edition (the green one, published in 2007) for a college course, and I had to buy this edition particularly rather than rely on my red copy. However, I do not recommend purchasing the new edition. Even though it's newer, it offers little more than the original (a few more lesson ideas), and what's shockingly missing is technology. Kids are still post-it noting, and teachers are still using chart paper for every lesson. The kids have to be drowning in paper in these classrooms. In an updated edition, I expected some creative use of the technology available to our classrooms, teachers, and students. There are even times when the author mentions how cumbersome getting up and going to a dictionary is, which is why students should use context clues.... Yes, it's important for students to be able to infer the meaning of words based on context, but are we going to pretend that it isn't a piece of cake to use a dictionary these days (dictionary apps on mobile devices, clicking on the word in e-readers, etc.)? Since it's so easy to use a dictionary now, it becomes increasingly important to teach students how to make sense of dictionary definitions. This is entirely ignored, even in this 2007 edition.

It's also interesting to read this after having read Nancy Atwell's *The Reading Zone* because she's completely opposed to these teaching methods and touts her own miracle program.

So, while I enjoyed reading this lengthy text because I can fantasize about students doing as well as the kids in this book, I'm a bit disappointed in missed opportunities and perhaps a bit jaded by the fact that I didn't meet similar results after using these lessons and strategies in my classroom.

Kimberly says

Absolutely outstanding book to follow up with after reading Debbie Miller's *Reading with Meaning*. This book also gives many lesson ideas and is another phenomenal resource that I feel every teacher, just beginning or 15 years in, should have as a reference. Super text filled with awesome information that is extremely user - friendly!

Karen Stevens says

This book goes beyond the general information about reading comprehension and gets to the heart of what matters to teachers--strategies and how to teach them. This was required reading for one of my master's level courses in reading education, but it is far from being a boring textbook.

Strategies That Work seems to have been written to give teachers easy access to a treasure trove of strategies and activities they can utilize in the classroom. It's broken down into four main parts. Part I: The Foundation of Meaning, Part II: Strategy Lessons, Part III: Comprehension Across the Curriculum, and Part IV: Resources That Support Strategy Instruction (several appendices full of handy resources). More than just course reading, this book will be on my shelf as a well-worn, go-to resource for years to come.

Sally says

This shows the second edition. It I actually read the third edition. This new edition is even more fabulous than the others. A must read for every educator.

Kendra says

This is a great professional resource for teachers k-8 that are looking to teach comprehension strategies. It gives detailed examples of what strategies such as visualizing, inferring, predicting look like and sound like. They give great mini-lessons at different grade levels as well. The appendixes with lists of books sorted by comprehension strategies and genres would make unit planning much easier for beginning teachers.

JennE says

I have had this book since it was published but only skimmed it. I love, love, love the first edition and reading it transformed my teaching. However, after hearing Stephanie Harvey speak at Furman University, I decided it was time to read the newest edition. It doesn't disappoint. In the age of Common Core Standards, everything Harvey & Goudvis suggests and states is so relevant to teaching reading and writing. The chapters on informational text and the chapter on the Genre of Test Reading offers so many ideas shared from other teachers and well as ones they have developed. Strategy lessons new to the book are even easily marked in the Table of Contents. The Appendices include titles for mentor texts, websites for magazines and newspapers, professional journals and visuals of anchor charts. Paired with Reading and Writing Genre with Purpose is all anyone needs to read to be common core "ready."

Marika Gillis says

I read this for a book study at work. It's filled with valuable information and I consider it an important resource for teachers but since I had read an earlier edition years ago (and even led the book study for that edition) I think it lost some of its impact this time. I was already intimately familiar many of the concepts, although there were parts of the book that contained updated information. I always appreciate a good conversation about a book and so meeting weekly with other teachers to talk about the chapters was beneficial. In the end, I believe it's never a bad idea for a teacher to reread Stephanie Harvey!

Jeff says

The first edition of Strategies that Work was a great tool to help teachers dive into reading comprehension instruction. It provided a framework and a language to talk explicitly about the skills good readers use to make meaning from text. This new edition is a substantial improvement on that first ground breaking work. It reflects Harvey and Goudvis' developing understanding of reading comprehension and how that plays out in classrooms. What is most admirable about this work is that it acknowledges that the authors too are in a process of learning. They share openly their new findings and have adjusted their framework to reflect their new understanding.

I've used the first edition and now this text for professional development at my school. It provides a strong background in reading comprehension for new teachers and a common language for our whole school to engage in conversations about how we teach reading comprehension. I can't recommend it more highly.

Helen says

This edition is basically an update of the original strategies book that Stephanie Harvey wrote. There are quite a few new lessons included- I think its a good resource to have in the bookcase!

June 24, 2014- I decided that I need to reread this book so it is on my summer reading list. I can't wait! I saw Stephanie Harvey at Rutgers a few weeks ago- she is timeless- she is amazing! I will keep track of my new insights and share them with you! It was such a joy to see that I had included this book on GoodReads when it was firsts published and I first bought it!

NICOLE says

Need a strategy to help you teach comprehension? This is the text for you! This text is an excellent resource for all teachers, not just "reading" teachers. The text is broken into four different sections. It contains what comprehension is, lesson ideas, how to use strategies across content areas, and specific books in all different genres that can help teach comprehension strategies. This can even benefit readers by using these strategies with mentor texts at any level.

Ann Haefele says

While I have not read this from start to finish, I have spent some time browsing and reading it and am looking forward to implementing some of the strategies mentioned for comprehension instruction in the library for both fiction and nonfiction. I will probably be referring to this text throughout the year. It has a great list of resources to use in the appendixes and actual samples of children's work that show their thinking and questioning.

Claudia says

While this book is aimed at teachers of younger students, I've found lots of lines that perfectly support my approach to reading in the high school setting. Choice, prediction, questioning...all are part of what I do every day with students. I like the flexibility of their approach. And I absolutely appreciate the student examples, both the strong examples and not-so-strong. A teacher could use them in class as the models and have a rich conversation.

The last chapters were the ones most applicable for me: Reading in the content areas, research, and test reading as a separate genre. These chapters are the ones I'll return to over the next year as I work with my students.

Gook lines to use in presentations as well. "Curricular demands and mandates are at an all-time high; the list of what we're asked to teach gets longer and more complicated every year." For sure!

Ms. B says

No matter what reading series your curriculum uses, this one has excellent strategies for teaching comprehension that can be used with any of them. Even though, I did not read it in its entirety at this time; this is a book I will purchase and read more closely. I love how it recommends specifics picture books for each strategy Even though the copyright is 2007 and some of the books mentioned may be out of print, these are titles that should be available from a school library. If not, your local public library will be able to assist you

Recommended by a colleague at my old school.

