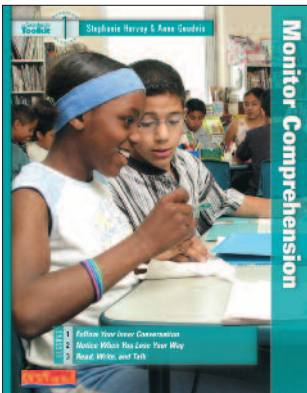


The Comprehension Toolkit: Grades 3-6

strategy books

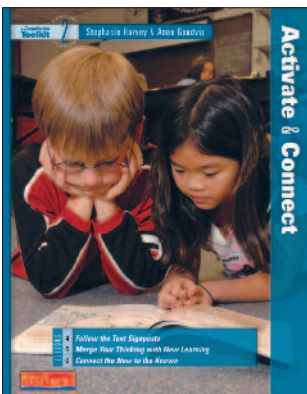
Instruction in *The Comprehension Toolkit* centers on **six Strategy books** organized around research-based comprehension strategies. Each Strategy Cluster book contains a series of lessons that build on one another to teach readers how to use the strategy, construct meaning, and understand what they read.



1 Monitor Comprehension

When readers monitor their comprehension, they keep track of their thinking while reading. They listen to the voice in their head that speaks to them as they read. They notice when the text makes sense or when it doesn't. We teach readers to “fix up” their comprehension by using a variety of strategies including stopping to refocus thinking, rereading, and reading on. All of the comprehension instruction suggested in the *Toolkit* supports readers to monitor and use strategies to maintain understanding and repair comprehension when it breaks down.

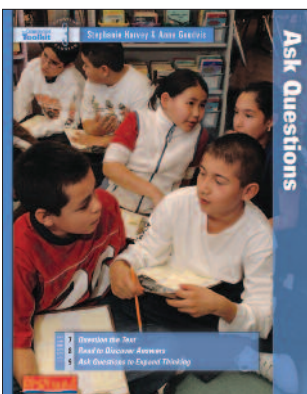
- Contents**
- 1 Follow Your Inner Conversation: Listen to the voice in your head and leave tracks of your thinking**
 - 2 Notice When You Lose Your Way: Monitor your inner voice to focus your thinking**
 - 3 Read, Write, and Talk: Think your way through the text**



2 Activate and Connect

The background knowledge we bring to our reading colors every aspect of our learning and understanding. Whether we are questioning, inferring, or synthesizing, our background knowledge is the foundation of our thinking. You simply can't understand what you read without thinking about what you already know. Readers must connect the new to the known. Sometimes, however, our background knowledge consists of misconceptions that get in the way of new learning. So we have to prepare kids not only to think about what they already know, but also to change their thinking when they encounter new and more accurate information.

- Contents**
- 4 Follow the Text Signposts: Use nonfiction features to guide learning**
 - 5 Merge Your Thinking with New Learning: Read and think about new information**
 - 6 Connect the New to the Known: Activate and build background knowledge**



3 Ask Questions

Questions are at the heart of teaching and learning. They open the doors to understanding the world. Posing questions allows us to seek out information, solve problems, and extend our understanding. As we try to answer our questions, we discover new information and gain new knowledge. The best questions spark more questions and spur further research and inquiry. When we read nonfiction, our questions abound. Our questions help us to clarify confusion when we meet unfamiliar information, concepts, and vocabulary. They propel us to read on and do further research. Questions nudge curious minds to investigate.

- Contents**
- 7 Question the Text: Learn to ask questions as you read**
 - 8 Read to Discover Answers: Ask questions to gain information**
 - 9 Ask Questions to Expand Thinking: Wonder about the text to understand big ideas**



4 Infer Meaning

Inferring is the bedrock of understanding. Inferring involves drawing a conclusion or making an interpretation about information that is not explicitly stated in the text. Typically, skillful writers do not spill information on to the page for all to plainly see. They leak the information slowly, one idea at a time, enabling the reader to make reasonable inferences. Inferential thinking allows readers to make predictions, surface themes, and draw conclusions. When reading nonfiction, readers may have to crack open language word by word to get at the meaning of unfamiliar vocabulary and concepts. Often answers to questions must be inferred.

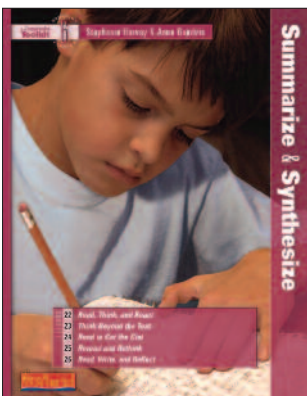
- Contents**
- 10 Infer the Meaning of Unfamiliar Words: Use context clues to unpack vocabulary
 - 11 Infer With Text Clues: Draw conclusions from text evidence
 - 12 Tackle the Meaning of Language: Infer beyond the literal meaning
 - 13 Crack Open Features: Infer the meaning of subheads and titles
 - 14 Read With a Question in Mind: Infer to answer your questions
 - 15 Wrap Your Mind Around the Big Ideas: Use text evidence to infer themes



5 Determine Importance

What we determine to be important in text depends on our purpose for reading it. When we read nonfiction, we are reading to learn and remember information. We can't possibly remember every isolated fact, nor should we. We need to focus on important information and merge it with what we already know to expand our understanding of a topic. We sort and sift rich details from important information to answer questions and arrive at main ideas. We identify details that support larger concepts. We teach kids a way to use information to develop a line of thinking as they read, surfacing and focusing their attention on important ideas in the text.

- Contents**
- 16 Spotlight New Thinking: Learn to use a Fact/Question/Response chart
 - 17 Record Important Ideas: Create an FQR with historical fiction
 - 18 Target Key Information: Code the text to hold thinking
 - 19 Determine What to Remember: Separate interesting details from important ideas
 - 20 Distinguish Your Thinking From the Author's: Contrast what you think with the author's perspective
 - 21 Construct Main Ideas From Supporting Details: Create a Topic/Detail/Response chart



6 Summarize and Synthesize

Synthesizing information nudges readers to see the bigger picture as they read. It's not enough for readers to simply recall or restate the facts. Thoughtful readers integrate the new information with their existing knowledge to come to a more complete understanding of the text. As readers encounter new information, their thinking evolves. They merge the new information with what they already know and construct meaning as they go. As they distill nonfiction text into a few important ideas, they may develop a new perspective or an original insight.

- Contents**
- 22 Read, Think, and React: Paraphrase and respond to information
 - 23 Think Beyond the Text: Move from facts to ideas
 - 24 Read to Get the Gist: Synthesize your thinking as you go
 - 25 Reread and Rethink: Rethink misconceptions and tie opinions to the text
 - 26 Read, Write, and Reflect: Create a summary response to extend thinking

“Reading comprehension occurs when readers engage in an inner conversation with the text, merge their thinking with it, ask questions, infer, think about what’s important, and summarize and synthesize.”