



Keys to Comprehension for SEI and English as a Second Language

This version of *The Key Comprehension Routine* addresses the unique needs that English language learners (ELLs) have related to reading comprehension. This instructional routine teaches students a foundational set of comprehension strategies that support listening and reading comprehension in any subject area. During professional development, educators learn how to teach strategies in an SEI (Sheltered English Immersion) classroom using existing content reading and instructional materials. They also learn how to use Key Comprehension strategies to consolidate content to make it more accessible to ELLs, and to create opportunities for elaborated talk about content between ELLs and fluent English peers. When used across multiple grade levels students benefit from a consistent approach to comprehension instruction as they move from grade to grade and subject to subject.

Instructional practices in *Keys to Comprehension for SEI and English as a Second Language* address these topics, strategies and skills:

- **ELLs and the Five Components of Reading:** how difficulty with basic reading skills affects the comprehension of ELLs
- **Differentiation and Scaffolds for ELLs:** how to provide support to ELLs who bring a wide variety of educational and cultural experiences to the classroom
- **Critical thinking:** for close, analytic reading of both narrative and expository text
- **Main idea skills:** categorizing information and vocabulary, identifying main ideas at the paragraph level, and identifying central ideas in lengthier text
- **Text structure knowledge:** at the sentence, paragraph, and longer text levels
- **Top-down topic webs:** a graphic organizer that represents the major topics and big ideas of any content that is read, said, or done
- **Two-column notes:** a note taking format that supports active reading and listening
- **Summarizing:** students comprehend and synthesize the main ideas from any content that is read, said, or done
- **Generating questions:** students create and answer questions along a continuum of thinking using Bloom's Taxonomy based on content that is read, said, or done
- **I, We, You instruction:** strategies are taught explicitly through modeling and think aloud, guided practice is provided, and scaffolds are gradually released as students become independent users of the strategies
- **Cooperative learning:** students learn and practice comprehension strategies by working in cooperative pairs or small groups

This set of strategies and instructional practices have been identified consistently in the research literature as most effective for improving the comprehension of all students, including ELLs, and are highly aligned with Common Core literacy standards.

Who Should Participate: Grades 4-5 elementary teachers, 6-12 content classroom teachers, educators who provide support to struggling readers, literacy specialists and coaches, and grades 4-12 administrators.

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