**Sample Memo to Teachers from Coaches About The Key Comprehension Routine**

As Keys to Literacy coaches, we are here to support you as you implement the Key Comprehension routine. We know you are busy with the many things required of teachers, but we wanted to give you a couple of reminders and tips. This week’s focus is on top-down topic webs.

REMINDERS:

* Start with an everyday example (e.g., music on an iPod, sports equipment; see p. 117 in the training book)
* Teach students the purposeful use of color by having them shade a sample topic web with colored pencils. Separating and “chunking” topics and sub-topics by color helps the brain comprehend and retain information.
* Set the purpose for using a topic web by using this sample script: “The human brain loves to make connections! This is a graphic organizer that helps us see the relationships between ideas in a visual hierarchy. Topic webs help our brain see the connections between ideas.”

TIPS:

* When students are generating top-down webs on their own, teach them to write their words and phrases first, and create a shape around them as a second step. That way they won’t have to squeeze their words into shapes.
* Top-down topic webs make great formative assessments. Create a topic web with blank shapes and provide a word bank. See how students build connections.