Helping Your Child to Read and Respond to Books

As children learn to use decoding strategies in reading, they must also focus on reading comprehension. TEMIS teachers are aware that although students can read accurately and decode fluently, it does not always translate into having comprehension of what they are reading. TEMIS teachers actively engage students in the texts they are reading by using a number of strategies, thereby becoming more proficient readers.

So what is it that good readers do? We know that…

Before reading, good readers…
•   Activate prior knowledge
•   Are clear about why they are reading a particular text
•   Know what type of text they are about to read
•   Preview the text
•   Make predictions
•   Ask questions

During reading, good readers…
•   Construct and revise meaning
•   Monitor their understanding of the text
•   Continue revising and adjusting their predictions and questions
•   Use a variety of strategies to determine the meaning of unknown words and concepts
•   Make connections with ideas in the text
•   Make inference

After reading, good readers...
•   Evaluate whether the text met their purpose for reading
•   Revisit their predictions and questions and adjust and revise them if necessary
•   Are able to summarise what they have read
•   Synthesise what they have read

Research indicates the most effective way of teaching reading strategies is by using a gradual release of responsibility approach. At TEMIS, teachers are encouraged to use the following five step approach:

1.   Explicit description of strategy
2.   Teacher modelling of strategy
3.   Collaborative use of strategy with teacher
4.   Guided practice
5.   Independent use

There are 10 reading strategies that are taught explicitly at TEMIS: Monitoring Comprehension, Visualising, Inferring, Predicting, Summarising, Synthesising, Determining Importance, Making Connections, Predicting and Questioning.

By the end of Grade 2, students would be expected to…
- Read and comprehend self-selected and teacher-selected texts at an appropriate level
- Participate in collaborative reading experiences (i.e. choral reading, partner reading, group listening of audio books), acknowledging that people see things differently and are entitled to express their point of view
- Monitor their own comprehension, recognising unfamiliar words and acknowledging when understanding has broken down
- Retell a narrative in the correct sequence including setting and characters
- Summarise the key information in a grade appropriate text
- Make predictions showing an understanding of title, events and characters
- Revise or confirm predictions as the text progresses
- Before reading a text, activate prior knowledge from clues on the title, cover and back page
- Make text to self and text to text connections
- Begin to ask questions about character motivation and plot
- Ask questions to clarify meaning
- Make visualisations from descriptive texts
- Make inferences and begin to justify.

By the end of Grade 4, students would be expected to…
- Self-select books that are at appropriate individual reading levels
- Identify plot, characterisation and voice of the story
- Give reasons why events happen or why characters change
- Understand that a text may be interpreted differently by different readers for a variety of reasons i.e. personal background, author's perspective, socio-cultural background
- Understand and respond to the ideas, feelings and attitudes expressed in various texts showing empathy for characters
- Decipher between fact and opinion
- Participate in collaborative reading experiences (i.e. choral reading, partner reading, group listening of audio books), acknowledging that people see things differently and are entitled to express their point of view
- Monitor their own comprehension, recognising unfamiliar words and acknowledging when understanding has broken down. Apply 'fix up' strategies
- Summarise the key information in a text and begin to respond to the overall theme or author's perspective
- Make predictions based on evidence in the text.
- Revise or confirm predictions as the text progresses
- Before reading a text, activate prior knowledge from clues on the title, cover and back page. Identify how this will aid in the comprehension of the text.
- Make meaningful text to self, text to text and text to world connections.
- Ask questions about character motivation, plot and theme.
- Ask questions to clarify meaning.
- Determine the most important ideas in a text.
- Make visualisations from descriptive texts. Begin to recognise why a particular section of the text is visual.
- Make and justify inferences.
- Begin to synthesise information from the text by identifying new learning or a change in their own viewpoint

By the end of Grade 6, students would be expected to…

- Self-select books in the interest of building on existing reading fluency and comprehension skills.
- Participate in collaborative reading, considering multiple perspectives.
- Identify reasons for and discuss why a text may be interpreted differently by different readers i.e. personal background, author's perspective, socio-cultural background.
- Reach their own conclusions about what might represent valid information.
- Appreciate author's use of language and begin to interpret meaning beyond the literal.
- Recognise and understand figurative language i.e. similes, metaphors, idioms
- Monitor their own comprehension, recognising unfamiliar words and acknowledging when understanding has broken down. Apply 'fix up' strategies.
- Summarise the key information in a text and respond to the overall theme or author's perspective.
- Make predictions and justify based on evidence in the text.
- Revise or confirm predictions as the text progresses
- Before reading a text, activate prior knowledge from clues in the title, cover and back page. Identify how this will aid in deepening understanding of the text.
- Make meaningful text to self, text to text and text to world connections. Explain why these connections help in deepening understanding of the text
- Ask questions about character motivation, plot and theme. Consciously extend thinking through quality questioning.
- Ask questions to clarify meaning.
- Determine the most important ideas in a text.
- Make visualisations from descriptive texts. Explain why a particular section of the text is visual and how this deepens understanding of the text.
- Make and justify inferences. Identify if personal bias or experiences contributes to inferences.
- Recognise the difference between author's point of view and reader's point of view. Synthesise information from the text by identifying new learning or a change in their own viewpoint.