**Ways of improving reading skills**

**Arfenya Khachatryan**

**Yessenov University**

When we think of reading issues, we often imagine children who struggle to decode the letters in text and turn them into spoken language. This type of struggling reader has a very difficult time figuring out what many of the words are and has poor phonological (speech-sound) skills. However, there are also many students who sound like they’re reading beautifully but have difficulty with understanding vocabulary and figurative language, inferencing, verbal reasoning, grammatical development, and oral expression. As children get older, if they are decoding text well we assume they are reading well. Once a person learns to decode, reading comprehension becomes more about language comprehension and focus. At this transition, starting around third grade, teachers may begin to notice some students who decode text fluently but are not understanding. Since this type of struggling reader is less noticeable than ones who have difficulty decoding, they often slip under the radar until they begin to fail standardized state comprehension tests. Even then, their issues may go undetected for a long time, resulting in middle and high school students who sound like they’re reading but understand nothing that they have read. These struggling readers should be targeted for remediation—the earlier the better. However, remediation consisting of practice passages and questions may be ineffective as it focuses too narrowly on text-based skills.

The benefits of reading

Reading has many benefits, but it’s a skill that even a lot of adults don’t use enough. Apart from the necessity of reading to get by in today’s world, let’s look at some other benefits of reading and how these can contribute positively to your child’s development.

Reading helps you discover the world

Reading is a gateway to learning anything about everything. It helps you discover new things and educate yourself in any area of life you are interested in. You can find a book on just about any subject you can imagine, dive in and start learning. Your child can learn about their interests (and even themselves) through reading things they enjoy.

Reading develops your imagination and creativity

When we watch television or a movie, all the information is given to us on the screen – there’s nothing we need to imagine. A book in its pure form is just words on a page, and our minds have to do the work, imagining the words coming to life. This does wonders to develop our creativity and imagination.

Reading improves vocabulary and communication

Giving your child access to a world of words is one of the best ways to improve their vocabulary and enhance their spelling skills. New knowledge that’s gained through enjoyment has a tendency to stick and doesn’t even feel like work! Both their written and spoken communication abilities can be improved through regular reading.

Reading helps with building a good self-image and playing well with others

Learning new concepts, discovering exciting places and understanding others’ perspectives is key to building a well-rounded self-image – not to mention the self-esteem boost from being able to read well! It’s at early ages that children can be most easily influenced, and a positive reading experience can do wonders to help them form a positive perception of themselves. Reading also has social benefits. Children can discuss stories with others and form friendships over shared interests.

Reading improves concentration and reduces stress

Not only does reading focus your attention entirely on the task at hand, it also immerses you in the information, improving concentration and memory of what you read. Getting completely involved in a book can help us relax and feel calm.

Active vs passive reading

Learning to read is the first step. From there, your child will start to increase comprehension and become an active reader. The use of appropriate reading strategies is essential in learning and in life. So, what is the difference between a “passive” unskilled reader and an “active” skilled reader?

The passive reader

Have you ever read a page in a book and not taken in anything you’ve just read? Or caught yourself reading and re-reading the same paragraph without actively acknowledging the words? This is passive reading without any meaningful engagement.

The active reader

Active readers engage with what they’re reading. They read with an open and questioning mind, and they stop to think more about what things mean. Here are some ideas, as set out by Miami University, of how skilled active readers read:

They can predict what will happen next in a story using clues they gain from reading.

They create questions about the main idea, message or plot.

They monitor understanding of the sequence, context or characters.

They stop to clarify parts of the text that have confused them. They connect events in the text to prior knowledge or experience. It is at this stage that children need to start actively engaging with the material they read. They are required to find information through active reading. An example would be reading something with comprehension for school. Without active reading skills, children can’t make sense of how the information they’re reading connects with anything. If they’re required to compare two different sources of information, and their active reading skills aren’t starting to develop more fully, they will struggle to comprehend how to complete the task.

The importance of reading comprehension

Reading comprehension is the ability to understand a written passage of text. It’s the bridge between the passive reader and active reader, and the crucial link to effective reading – essential for a rich academic, professional and personal life. Reading comprehension involves several different processes, such as imagining what the words describe, understanding the context of the book and being able to answer questions related to a text. Think about a book you’ve read before, and then try to summarise what the book was about. If your child can answer questions about a book or text, explain important events that happened in a story and have an opinion about why the events may have occurred, they’re displaying comprehension skills. Without reading and comprehension skills, children will struggle to grow academically, as reading is the foundation to all academic subjects such as History, Mathematics and Science. It also influences your child’s ability to write. Reading fluency is also a very important part of reading comprehension, as readers who spend their time decoding words often lose the understanding of what is being read. If your child is still decoding at a Grade 3 level, it’s vital to focus on the basics to give them a strong reading comprehension foundation. This can include paying more attention, auditory analysis, sound blending, memory, processing speed and visual perception. A lack of strong reading comprehension skills affects a child’s success at school, as academic progress depends on understanding, analysing and applying information gathered through reading.

**Bibliography:**

1. Selivanova N. A. Literary and regional approach to the selection of texts for home reading Foreign languages ​​at school. - 2007.

2. Selivanova N.A. Organization and methodology of home reading at the middle stage of teaching foreign languages ​​in a secondary school in the context of new requirements for language education. - M., 2005.

3. Solovova E. N. Methods of teaching foreign languages. - M., 2013.