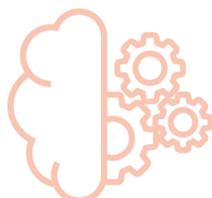


What support do students with ASD need to comprehend texts?



What is reading comprehension?



Comprehension is a process of creating a mental representation from the text by using a range of skills like **inference-making, comprehension monitoring, and perspective-taking.**

When reading, readers draw on their background knowledge and comprehension strategies when comprehension breaks down.

Understanding the unique needs of readers with ASD

Students with ASD may have difficulties with understanding what they are reading even if they can read the words well.

Understanding others' thoughts, perspectives, and beliefs, may make it difficult for readers with ASD.

Teaching Suggestions

Instructors can support comprehension by encouraging conversation about characters' emotions and thoughts.

Strategy 1: Activate social background knowledge

- Students with ASD need explicit instruction to activate their social knowledge about the social aspects of fictional stories.



Prereading activities

01.

Make connections between their own experiences and the characters' experiences.

02.

Provide explicit and direct instruction on vocabulary about emotions and social situations.

Strategy 2: Encourage series and familiar genres

- Students with ASD respond better to familiar stories and characters since this decreases cognitive load. Book series can also help students with these skills.

Strategy 3: Identify figurative language

- Provide contextual framing or explicit instruction on figurative expressions. Students with ASD have trouble understanding them in a non-literal way.

Strategy 4: Use graphic organizers to support perspective-taking

- Perspective-taking skills are imperative to reading comprehension because students are required to understand different points of views to be able to understand each character's motives and conflicts in stories.
- Graphic organizers (e.g., modified story maps) and direct discussion about mental states can help students with ASD to think critically about how there are different perspectives on the events in a story.

Reference:

[Henry, A. R., & Solari, E. J. \(2021\). Developing Social Knowledge to Support Reading Comprehension in Elementary Students With ASD. *Teaching Exceptional Children.*](#)

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