

***A Cautionary Tale:  
The Complexity of Comprehension Demands an Informed Instructional Approach***



*Securing the Strands for Skilled Reading*

NJIDA Fall Conference

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Oct. 1, 2021

Interactive Note-Taking Guide

Focus	Reflect & Connect
<p><b><i>A Cautionary Tale: The Complexity of Comprehension Demands an Informed Instructional Approach</i></b></p> <p>Securing the Strands for Skilled Reading NJIDA Fall Conference Nancy Hennessy Oct. 1, 2021</p> 	
<p><i>Our students have the right to read with meaning and we have a responsibility to teach them how.</i></p> <p><i>Learning is not just the work of our students but ours as well.</i></p>	
<p>The science of reading includes more than word recognition...</p> 	

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<p><b>Caution</b></p> <p><i>The ultimate goal of reading is comprehension: for the reader to reconstruct the mental world of the writer.</i></p> <p><i>As skilled readers, this usually feels pretty effortless and comprehension flows naturally as we read along. This sense of ease is misleading, however, as it belies the complexity of what we do as we read, even when a text is simple and straightforward.</i></p> <p><i>A whole range of cognitive and linguistic operations are at play, from identifying individual words through to making inferences about situations that are not fully described in the text.</i></p> <p><small>Nation, 2019</small></p>	
<p><b>Today</b></p> <p>Reflect &amp; Connect</p> <p>Understanding of Comprehension &amp; Science of Reading</p> <p>Connect, &amp; Consider Changes Instructional Approach</p> <p><b>Caution: Cognitive Confusion</b></p>	
<p>Reading comprehension is <b>not a single entity that can be explained by a unified cognitive model.</b></p> <p><i>Instead, it is the orchestrated product of a set of linguistic and cognitive processes operating on text and interacting with background knowledge, features of the text, and the purpose and goals of the reading situation.</i></p> <p><small>Caffrin et al, 2018</small></p>	

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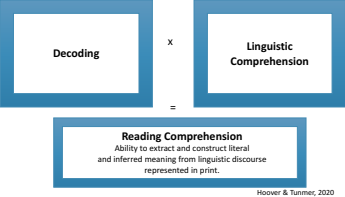
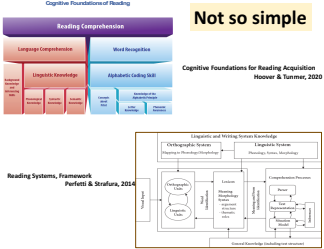
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<p><b>Reflect &amp; Connect</b></p> <p>Whether reading by eye or ear building meaning is complex and multidimensional.</p> <p>So, what do you know and understand about the complexity of comprehension?</p> 	
<p><b>The Simple View of Reading</b>  <small>Gough &amp; Tunmer, 1986</small></p> 	
<p><b>Not so simple</b></p> 	

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<p><b>Reflect &amp; Connect!</b></p> <p>Does your instruction reflect a product or process approach to comprehension instruction?</p> 	
<p><b>Process or Product</b></p> <p>The <b>products</b> of comprehension are indicators of what the reader knows and understands after reading is completed, whereas the <b>processes</b> of comprehension are those cognitive activities by which the reader arrives at those products.</p> <p><small>Rapp et al, 2010</small></p> <p>High Quality Processes=High Quality Products</p>	



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<p><b>Comprehension of written text involves processing language at many different levels...</b></p> <p><i>At the word level, the reader must decode individual words ... access meaning of the words they hear or read.</i></p> <p><i>At the sentence level, the comprehender needs to work out the syntactic structure and sense of each sentence. Simply deriving the meanings of individual words and sentences is insufficient.</i></p> <p><i>In order to construct a mental model of the text, the comprehender needs to integrate information from different sentences to establish local coherence and to incorporate background knowledge and ideas (retrieved from long term memory) to make sense of details that are only implicitly mentioned.</i></p>	

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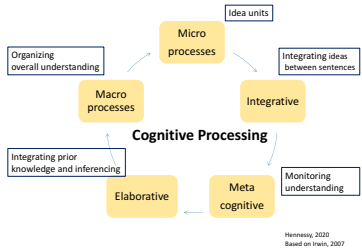
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 <p style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">Hennessy, 2020 Based on Irwin, 2007</p>	
<p>...the distinction between process and product...implies that for teachers to be able to <u>affect the product of reading</u> (e.g., increase reading performance), they need to <u>implement appropriate interventions and instructional approaches to affect the actual processes during reading</u>.</p> <p style="text-align: right; font-size: x-small;">Kintsch, 1998; van den Broek et al., 2005</p> <p><b>Instructional Implications?</b></p> <p>When a child is repeatedly <u>unsuccessful</u> in comprehending texts that he/she has read, this suggests reading <u>difficulties at the processing level</u>. These difficulties can <u>manifest</u> themselves in various ways: <u>failure to recall the main points</u> of a story, <u>failure to answer literal and/or inferential questions</u>, <u>failure to complete the actual reading</u> of the text, and so on.</p> <p style="text-align: right; font-size: x-small;">Kintsch et al., 2008</p>	
<p><b>Reflect &amp; Connect!</b></p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 10px; width: fit-content; margin: 10px auto;"> <p>What do you know about the role of the reader, text, task and purpose in comprehension?</p> </div> 	

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The student's ability to extract and construct , then demonstrate understanding (product) depends on their access to and implementation of specific processes and skills.

This is influenced by the nature of the text, task, context and by what the reader has acquired and can access.

Respond to the following questions based on your reading of Tuck Everlasting.



### The Rand Reading Study Group Report Heuristic, 2002

Readers adjust to the purpose or task e.g. skimming versus studying.

Text difficulty varies based on content, the vocabulary , linguistic structure, and genre.



Comprehenders bring varied cognitive capacities, levels of motivation, various types of knowledge.

Broad context includes the the classroom learning and social, cultural environment.





### Levels of Language Processing...

Based on Oakhill & Cain, 2007

<b>Words &amp; Phrases</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Academic vocabulary (breadth, depth, precision)</li> </ul>	<b>Sentences</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Density</li> <li>Length</li> <li>Structure</li> <li>Cohesive ties &amp; connectives</li> </ul>	<b>Knowledge</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schema</li> <li>Text structure</li> <li>Inference                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local</li> <li>Global</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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Surface code    Text base    Situation/Mental model

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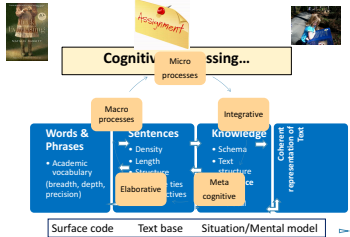

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<p>Proficient readers construct an <b>integrated representation of meaning</b> rather than an exact record of specific words, syntax, or structure (Snow, 2002).</p> <p>They create a mental model or situation model by <b>intertwining</b> background knowledge and experiences with this text-based representation. This effortful process of <b>aggregating successive units of meaning</b> results in the construction of the mental model.</p> <p><small>Hennessey, 2020</small></p>	
<p><b>Understanding of Comprehension &amp; Science of Reading</b></p>  <p><b>Your Mental Model</b></p>	

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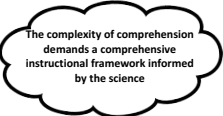
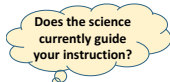

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<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 10px; text-align: center;"> <b>Today</b> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Reflect &amp; Connect</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Understanding of Comprehension &amp; Science of Reading</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Connect &amp; Consider Changes</b> Instructional Approach</p> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> <b>Caution: Cognitive Confusion</b> </div>	<p>”</p>
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 10px; text-align: center;"> <b>Connect &amp; Consider Changes</b> </div> <div style="text-align: center;">        </div>	
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 10px; text-align: center;"> <b>Caution: Consider Changes</b> </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Implement instruction that reflects the science/theoretical models that addresses processes as well as intended products/outcomes.</li> <li>✓ Implement instruction that directly addresses the development of language and cognitive processes and skills necessary for making meaning of text.</li> <li>✓ Use a comprehensive approach as a starting point for instruction, not in conflict with traditional curriculum development; rather, an opportunity for enhancement of the “it.”</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: small;">Hennessy, 2020</p>	

## Interactive Note-Taking Guide

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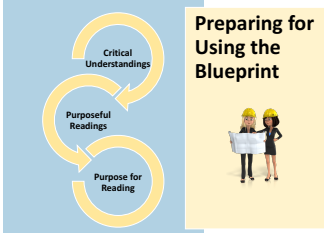

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<p>...<i>a synthesis of what individuals should understand</i>          —not just know or do—          as a result of reading/studying a particular content area.</p> <p>...<i>the thread that links units, lessons, and year to year teaching.</i></p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p>What is the essential knowledge base we want to develop within and across grades and disciplines?</p> <p>Are there enduring concepts and understandings that we want our students to have?</p> <p>What essential questions do we want our students to answer?</p> </div> <p style="text-align: center; background-color: #fff9c4; padding: 5px;"><b>What do you want your students to know and understand?</b></p>	
<p>Too often the emphasis of a reading lesson is so much on the reading skill or strategy that the opportunity to expand children's understanding of their world is lost...reading lessons need to have <i>double outcomes—an improvement in reading ability and an increased knowledge about whatever was read.</i></p> <p style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">Shanahan, 2017</p>  <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p>Acquiring knowledge of critical topics, including enduring understandings, constitutes <u>content goals</u>, whereas the acquisition of critical language skills provides the basis for formulating <u>literacy goals</u> and objectives.</p> </div> <p style="text-align: center; background-color: #fff9c4; padding: 5px;"><b>What is the purpose of reading?</b></p>	

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<p><small>There are two key and core goals in designing instruction for beginning readers. On one hand, we want to teach first graders to read print on their own. To this end, the earliest texts need to be easy enough to be penetrable by readers and to progress by some design to strengthen and expand [the] beginning reader's independence with print. On the other hand, we want to help young students to develop the <i>language knowledge</i>, literary appreciation and mode of thought to make reading that is productive and rewarding.</small></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><small>Mims, 2009</small></p> <p><b>Choosing Purposeful Readings</b></p> <p><small>...students actually learn more from reading texts that are considered too difficult for them—in other words, those with more than a handful of words and concepts a student doesn't understand. What struggling students need is guidance from a teacher in how to make sense of texts designed for kids at their respective grade levels—the kinds of texts those kids may otherwise see only on standardized tests, when they have to grapple with them on their own.</small></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><small>Shanahan, 2018</small></p> <p><small>The acquisition and application of critical competencies (e.g. vocabulary, sentence comprehension) and use of related strategies should occur in the context of reading carefully selected texts rather than in isolation.</small></p>	
<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;">  <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Do your readings support the development of critical understandings?</li> <li>✓ Do your readings provide opportunities to develop necessary language processes and skills?</li> <li>✓ Do your texts provide opportunities to develop and apply academic language to text?</li> <li>✓ Do your readings represent different genre, disciplines, the interests and experiences of your readers, an integrated approach to learning?</li> <li>✓ Have you considered access issues for struggling readers?</li> </ul> </div> </div> <p><b>What are your students reading?</b></p>	
<p><b>Connect &amp; Consider</b></p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 20px; width: fit-content; margin: 20px auto;"> <p>What critical contributors to comprehension do you focus on in designing and delivering instruction?</p> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center; margin-top: 10px;">   </div>	



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### The Bidirectional Arrow...

-recursive nature of comprehension and the interrelatedness and necessary integration of these skills.

-flexibility before, during, after dependent on needs of the reader, the demands of the text, and, of course, the purpose for reading.

-integration of text processes such as comprehension monitoring.

Before	During	After
What do I know?	Do I understand what I am reading?	What did I learn?
What do I want to learn?	What am I learning?	What was the big idea?
What questions do I have?	What connections can I make to what I am learning?	What else do I need to do or learn?

...the collection of strategies or skills used to evaluate one's own comprehension, to identify when comprehension has gone astray, and, where appropriate, to repair any misunderstanding.  
Castles et al, 2018

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<p>Words are not just words. They are the <u>nexus</u>—the interface— between <u>communication</u> and <u>thought</u>. When we read, it is through words that we build, refine, and modify our <u>knowledge</u>. What makes vocabulary valuable and important is not the words themselves so much as the <u>understandings</u> they afford.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><small>Adams, 2009</small></p>	
 <p><b>Mental Dictionary</b></p>	
<p>...early as kindergarten, <u>language measures, including vocabulary, add to the prediction of reading comprehension difficulties</u> over and above other word reading predictors, and are direct measures of word reading performance in second grades.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><small>Catts et al., 2014</small></p> <p>Children with <u>better vocabulary knowledge</u> have <u>higher reading comprehension scores</u> concurrently and longitudinally.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><small>Oakhill, Cain &amp; Elbro, 2015</small></p>	

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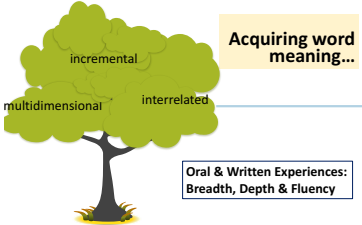


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<p><b>Connect &amp; Consider</b></p> <p><i>What questions do you ask yourself as you identify the how of vocabulary instruction?</i></p> 	
<p><b>The Blueprint &amp; Vocabulary</b></p> <p>Which words will your students need to know? Which are worth knowing?</p> <p>Which ones will you intentionally target and directly teach?</p> <p>Which ones will you incidentally-on-purpose teach? How? When?</p> <p>How and when will you teach and foster the use of independent word learning strategies?</p> <p>Which words will you purposefully discuss and incorporate into expressive language activities?</p> 	

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**An Informed Structure for Vocabulary Instruction**

Intentional Instruction	Incidental on Purpose Instruction	Intentional Independent Word Learning Strategies Instruction
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Word Choice</li> <li>✓ Principles of Instruction</li> <li>✓ Instructional Routines</li> <li>✓ Processing &amp; Practice Activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Structured Point of Contact Teaching</li> <li>✓ Structured Teacher-Student Talk</li> <li>✓ Structured Shared Reading</li> <li>✓ Structured Independent Reading</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Using the Dictionary</li> <li>✓ Using Context Clues</li> <li>✓ Using Morphemic Analysis</li> </ul>
Word Consciousness	Word Consciousness Purposeful Activities	Word Consciousness

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**Principles of Instruction**

Seale, 2005

**Teacher Behavior**

Pronounces targeted word and discusses structure and/or asks questions about linguistic structure.

Asks students to repeat.

Explains the meaning in everyday language.

Provides examples from context and other situations. Asks students for example.

Says, spells and writes the word.

**Simple Routine**

Be my student!

★

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## Complex Routine-Processing & Practice

Connect	Represent	Use
Semantic Maps	Pictures Drawings Videos	Questions, Examples
Semantic Feature Analysis	Gestures and Movement	Conversation Prompts
Concept Maps	Word Walls	Writing Stems

Multiple exposures & deep processing...

## Processing & Practice...

Word Choice	Definition	Connect-Semantic Relationships	Represent-Visuals	Use-Synthesizing & Writing
Guidelines Guidelines Growth Understanding	Word Maps In Your World Just the Facts Paint a Picture Retained but...	Semantic Maps In Your World Just the Facts Paint a Picture Retained but...	Pictures Drawings www.ccsdshd.com	Writing Conversation Stems/ Generation Knowledge Paragraphs Vocabulary Vocabulary Vocab
Units Vocabulary: Vocabulary Units, Guided, 2014 Vocabulary: Vocabulary Units, Guided, 2014 Vocabulary: Vocabulary Units, Guided, 2014	Four Squares In Your World Just the Facts Paint a Picture Retained but...	Scaling In Your World Just the Facts Paint a Picture Retained but...	Vocabulary Videos www.ccsdshd.com	Using Your Words Examples, Questions, Conversations • Why would... • When have you... • Would you want to be...
Turn 3 & 4 Book 3 & 4, 2018	Dimensions Right, round, smooth, plain...	Attributes Right, round, smooth, plain...	Word Walls • Parts of Speech • Morphological Families Shared word walls www.podet.org	Approaches: • Academic • Conversations • Semantic Context ©2018 Nancy Hennessy

**Knowledge is the medium of understanding  
and therefore of reading with understanding.**

Adams, 2018

Prior knowledge about the topic at hand  
is like *mental velcro*. The relevant  
knowledge gives the words of the text  
places to stick and make sense, thereby  
supporting comprehension and  
propelling the reading process forward.

Adams, 2015

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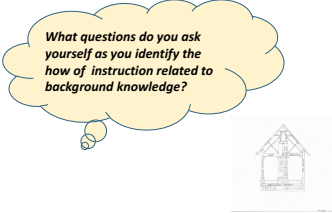
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<p>Formal comprehension skills can only take students so far; <b>knowledge is what enables their comprehension to keep increasing.</b>  <small>Mixa, 2006</small></p> <p>We need to be able to have a <b>broad base of common knowledge</b> so that our diversity can be most fully activated.  <small>Liu, 2015</small></p> <p>Studies also suggest that compared to good readers, <b>poor readers tend to have less well-developed knowledge structures as well as problems accessing and using their knowledge to make inferences and build coherent representational models of text.</b>  <small>Compton et al., 2014</small></p>	
<p><b>Focus on Knowledge</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•What kids read, matters...</li> <li>•Kids should learn what they read...</li> <li>•Kids should review and revisit content...</li> </ul> <p><i>General Guidelines</i></p>	
<p><b>Connect &amp; Consider</b></p> <p><i>What questions do you ask yourself as you identify the how of instruction related to background knowledge?</i></p> 	

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<div style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #e6f2ff; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What is necessary for understanding the critical topics and understandings represented in this text?</li> <li>2. What did the author assume readers would bring to the text?</li> <li>3. How will I activate or gain access to my students' knowledge?</li> <li>4. Given what my students know, what else might my students need to know?</li> <li>5. How will I facilitate the building of necessary knowledge?</li> <li>6. How will I prompt students' integration of background knowledge with the text?</li> </ol> <p style="text-align: right; font-size: 0.8em; margin: 0;">Hennessy, 2020</p> </div> <div style="background-color: #fff9c4; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p><i>How often do you consider the planning questions indicated?</i></p> </div>																
<div style="background-color: #fff9c4; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p><b>A Targeted Instructional Approach</b></p> </div> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <thead> <tr style="background-color: #4682b4; color: white;"> <th style="padding: 5px;">Activate and assess background knowledge</th> <th style="padding: 5px;">Build background knowledge</th> <th style="padding: 5px;">Connect to background knowledge</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">Anticipation guides</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">Multiple topical/themed texts</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">Anticipation guides</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">Questions and prompts</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">Virtual and real-time experiences</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">Questions and prompts</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">Charts, webs, maps</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">Authentic artifacts</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">Charts, webs, maps</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">Visual images</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">Vocabulary connections</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">Application to other readings</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <div style="background-color: #e6f2ff; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> <p><b>The ABCs of Background Knowledge</b></p> </div>	Activate and assess background knowledge	Build background knowledge	Connect to background knowledge	Anticipation guides	Multiple topical/themed texts	Anticipation guides	Questions and prompts	Virtual and real-time experiences	Questions and prompts	Charts, webs, maps	Authentic artifacts	Charts, webs, maps	Visual images	Vocabulary connections	Application to other readings	
Activate and assess background knowledge	Build background knowledge	Connect to background knowledge														
Anticipation guides	Multiple topical/themed texts	Anticipation guides														
Questions and prompts	Virtual and real-time experiences	Questions and prompts														
Charts, webs, maps	Authentic artifacts	Charts, webs, maps														
Visual images	Vocabulary connections	Application to other readings														
<div style="background-color: #fff9c4; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p><b>Consider your Context, Curriculum &amp; Students</b></p> </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Implement instruction that reflects the science/theoretical models that addresses processes as well as intended products/outcomes.</li> <li>✓ Implement instruction that directly addresses the development of language and cognitive processes and skills necessary for making meaning of text.</li> <li>✓ Use a comprehensive approach as a starting point for instruction, not in conflict with traditional curriculum development; rather, an opportunity for enhancement of the "it."</li> </ul> <div style="background-color: #4682b4; color: white; text-align: center; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p><b>Caution</b></p> </div>																

***A Cautionary Tale:  
The Complexity of Comprehension Demands an Informed Instructional Approach***

*Securing the Strands for Skilled Reading*

NJIDA Fall Conference

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Oct. 1, 2021

Interactive Note-Taking Guide

<p>Instructional Approach</p>  <p>Your Mental Model</p>	
<p>Gratitude</p>  <p><i>We need the courage to start and continue what we should do, and the courage to stop what we shouldn't do.</i></p> <p>Richard Evans</p>	