

Reading to Understand: Children's Books to Use with Comprehension Strategies

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This bibliography was developed for the Wisconsin Educational Communications Board (ECB) for their *Into the Book* reading comprehension project. It maps selected children's books to each of the eight comprehension strategies outlined in the project:

- Using prior knowledge
- Making connections
- Questioning
- Visualizing
- Inferring
- Summarizing
- Evaluating
- Synthesizing

A final category, "Using Strategies Together," suggests longer or more complex texts that demand readers to integrate various comprehension strategies.

The goal in creating this bibliography was to identify 12-15 titles for each strategy. But most books here will lend themselves to application across the strategies. The focus in choosing books was to find engaging titles that would meet a range of reading and listening abilities, and that would reflect the diversity of classrooms, communities and the world today. The book selections for every strategy include picture book stories and nonfiction for early elementary-age children. Some strategy sections also include poetry, wordless books, and/or chapter books.

For more information about ECB's Reading Comprehension Project, go to <http://ecb.org/reading/>

Using Prior Knowledge

Readers use what they already know (or think they know) before, during and after reading to clarify their understanding (or misunderstanding) of the text.

Andrews-Goebel, Nancy. *The Pot That Juan Built*. Illustrated by David Diaz. Lee & Low, 2001. 32 pages

Arnosky, Jim. *All about Rattlesnakes*. Scholastic, 1997. 28 pages

Brenner, Barbara. *Thinking about Ants*. Illustrated by Carol Schwartz. Mondo, 1997. 32 pages

Florian, Douglas. *Bow Wow Meow Meow: It's Rhyming Cats and Dogs*. Harcourt, 2003. 48 pages

Gibbons, Gail. *My Soccer Book*. HarperCollins, 2001. 32 pages (also available: *My Baseball Book*, *My Basketball Book*, *My Football Book*)

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Hartman, Bob. *The Wolf Who Cried Boy*. Illustrated by Tim Raglin. Putnam, 2002. 32 pages

Hausherr, Rosemary. *What Instrument Is This?* Scholastic, 1992. 38 pages

Jenkins, Steve and Robin Page. *What Do You Do with a Tail Like This?* Houghton Mifflin, 2003. 32 pages

Ross, Alice and Kent. *The Copper Lady*. Illustrated by Leslie Bowman. Carolrhoda, 1997. 56 pages

Prelutsky, Jack, compiler. *The Beauty of the Beast: Poems from the Animal Kingdom*. Illustrated by Meilo So. Random House, 1997. 101 pages

Trivizas, Eugene. *The Three Little Wolves and the Big Bad Pig*. Illustrated by Helen Oxenbury. Margaret K. McElderry, 1993. 32 pages

Takabayashi, Mari. *I Live in Tokyo*. Houghton Mifflin, 2001. 32 pages

Waldman, Neil. *The Snowflake: A Water Cycle Story*. Millbrook, 2003. 32 pages

Making Connections

Readers relate the text to personal experiences, to information from other texts, and to information about the world to enhance understanding of self, text and life. (Most of the books below naturally lend themselves to text-to-self connections. The books have been organized to suggest thematic text-to-text connections, although several lend themselves to use in multiple categories.)

Theme: Family

Ada, Alma Flor. *I Love Saturdays y domingos*. Illustrated by Elivia Savadier. Atheneum, 2002. 32 pages

Hamanaka, Sheila. *Grandparents Song*. HarperCollins, 2003. 32 pages

Jenkins, Emily. *Five Creatures*. Illustrated by Tomek Bogacki. Scholastic, 2001. 32 pages

Kuklin, Susan. *Families*. Hyperion, 2005. 40 pages

Little, Jean. *Emma's Yucky Brother*. Illustrated by Jennifer Plecas. (An I Can Read Book) HarperCollins, 2001. 64 pages

Nye, Naomi. *Sitti's Secrets*. Illustrated by Nancy Carpenter. Four Winds Press, 1994. 32 pages

Theme: School

Ajmera, Maya and John D. Ivanko. *Back to School*. Charlesbridge, 2001. 32 pages

Creech, Sharon. *A Fine, Fine School*. Illustrated by Harry Bliss. HarperCollins, 2001. 32 pages

- Choi, Yansook. *The Name Jar*. Alfred A. Knopf, 2001. 32 pages
- Edwards, Michelle. *Pa Lia's First Day*. (A Jackson Friends Book) Harcourt, 1999. 50 pages
- Moss, Peggy. *Say Something*. Illustrated by Lea Lyon. Tilbury House, 2004. 32 pages
- Paterson, Katherine. *Marvin One Too Many*. Illustrated by Jane Clark Brown. (An I Can Read Book) HarperCollins, 2001. 48 pages

Theme: Friendship

- Grimes, Nikki. *Danitra Brown Leaves Town*. Illustrated by Floyd Cooper. HarperCollins, 2002. 32 pages
- English, Karen. *A Hot Day on Abbott Avenue*. Illustrated by Javaka Steptoe. Clarion, 2004. 32 pages
- Kasza, Keiko. *The Rat and the Tiger*. Putnam, 1993. 32 pages
- Pinkney, Andrea Davis. *Solo Girl*. Illustrated by Nneka Bennett. Hyperion, 1997. 51 pages
- Rogers, Fred. *Extraordinary Friends*. Photographs by Jim Judkis. Putnam, 1999. 32 pages
- Zolotow, Charlotte. *My Friend John*. Illustrated by Amanda Harvey. Random House, 2000. 32 pages

Questioning

Readers ask questions about the text, and about the author and/or illustrator's intentions, seeking information to clarify and extend their thinking before, during and after reading.

- Browne, Anthony. *Into the Forest*. Candlewick Press, 2004. 28 pages
- Davies, Nicola. *Big Blue Whale*. Illustrated by Nick Maland. Candlewick, 1997. 27 pages
- Erdrich, Louise. *Grandmother's Pigeon*. Illustrated by Jim LaMarche. Hyperion, 1996. 32 pages
- Geisert, Arthur. *River Town*. Houghton Mifflin, 1999. 32 pages
- Gillette, J. Lynette. *Dinosaur Ghosts: The Mystery of Coelophysis*. Illustrated by Douglas Henderson. Dial, 1997. 32 pages
- Griffith, Helen V. *Granddaddy and Janetta Together: The Three Stories in One Book*. Illustrated by James Stevenson. Greenwillow Books / HarperCollins, 2002. 80 pages
- Hearne, Betsy. *Who's in the Hall? A Mystery in Four Chapters*. Illustrated by Christy Hale. Greenwillow, 2000. 32 pages
- Lehman, Barbara. *The Red Book*. Houghton Mifflin, 2004. 32 pages

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Macaulay, David. *Shortcut*. Houghton Mifflin, 1995. 32 pages

Myers, Christopher. *Wings*. Scholastic Press, 2000. 40 pages

Wiesner, David. *The Three Pigs*. Clarion, 2001. 40 pages

Woodson, Jacqueline. *The Other Side*. Illustrated by E.B. Lewis. Putnam, 2001. 32 pages

Reiser, Lynn. *Two Mice in Three Fables*. Greenwillow, 1995. 32 pages

Visualizing

Readers create images in their mind that reflect or represent the ideas in the text to enhance understanding.

Alarcón, Franciso X. *Iguanas in the Snow and Other Winter Poems / Iguanas en la nieve y otros poemas de invierno*. Illustrated by Maya Christina Gonzalez. Children's Book Press, 2001. 32 pages

Banks, Kate. *And If the Moon Could Talk*. Illustrated by Georg Hallensleban. Frances Foster Books / Farrar, Straus and Gioux, 1998. 40 pages

Davies, Nicola. *One Tiny Turtle*. Illustrated by Jane Chapman. Candlewick Press, 2002. 32 pages

Karas, G. Brian. *Atlantic*. Putnam, 2002. 32 pages

Hopkins, Lee Bennett. *Weather: Poems for All Seasons*. Illustrated by Melanie Hall. (An I Can Read Book) HarperCollins, 1994. 64 pages

Medearis, Angela Shelf. *Our People*. Illustrated by Michael Bryant. Atheneum, 1994. 32 pages

Miller, Sara Swan. *Three Stories You Can Read to Your Cat*. Illustrated by True Kelley. Houghton Mifflin, 1997. 48 pages

Perkins, Lynne Rae. *Snow Music*. Greenwillow, 2003. 36 pages

Schaefer, Lola M. *What's Up? What's Down?* Illustrated by Barbara Bash. Greenwillow Books, 2002. 32 pages

Schertle, Alice. *Down the Road*. Illustrated by E.B. Lewis. Browndeer Press, 1995. 40 pages

Stock, Catherine. *Gugu's House*. Clarion, 2001. 32 pages

Updike, John. *A Child's Calendar*. Illustrated by Trina Schart Hyman. Holiday House, 1999. 32 pages

Wetterer, Margaret K. and Charles M. *The Snow Walker*. Illustrated by Mary O'Keefe Young. Carolrhoda, 1996. 56 pages

Inferring

Readers think about and search the text and art, and sometimes use personal knowledge, to construct meaning beyond what is literally stated.

Baker, Jeanne. *Window*. Greenwillow, 1991. 32 pages

Banks, Kate. *Howie Bowles, Secret Agent*. Illustrated by Isaac Millman. Frances Foster Books / Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1999. 89 pages

Esbensen, Barbara Juster. *Swing around the Sun*. Illustrated by Cheng-Khee Chee, Janice Lee Porter, Mary GrandPré, and Stephen Gammell. Carolrhoda, 2003. 48 pages

Kasza, Keiko. *My Lucky Day*. Putnam, 2003. 32 pages

McKissack, Patricia. *Ma Dear's Aprons*. Illustrated by Floyd Cooper. Atheneum, 1997. 32 pages

Minshull, Evelyn. *Eaglet's World*. Illustrated by Andrea Gabriel. Albert A. Whitman, 2002. 32 pages

Morales, Yumi. *Just a Minute: A Trickster Tale and Counting Book*. Chronicle, 2003, 28 pages

Palotta, Jerry. *The Skull Alphabet Book*. Illustrated by Ralph Masiello. Charlesbridge, 2002. 32 pages

Pattison, Darcy. *The Journey of Oliver K. Woodman*. Illustrated by Joe Cepeda. Harcourt, 2003. 32 pages

Prelutsky, Jack. *If Not for the Cat*. Illustrated by Ted Rand. Greenwillow, 2004. 40 pages

Simont, Marc. *The Stray Dog*. From a true story by Reiko Sassa. HarperCollins, 2001. 32 pages

Scamell, Ragnhild. *Buster's Echo*. Illustrated by Genevieve Webster. HarperCollins, 1993. 24 pages

Young, Ed. *Seven Blind Mice*. Philomel, 1992. 40 pages

Wiesner, David. *Tuesday*. Clarion, 1991. 32 pages

Summarizing

Readers identify key elements and condense important information into their own words during and after reading to solidify meaning.

Bang, Molly. *Common Ground: The Water, Earth and Air We Share*. Blue Sky Press / Scholastic, 1997. 32 pages

Blake, Robert J. *Togo*. Philomel, 2002. 40 pages

Cooper, Elisha. *Ice Cream*. Greenwillow, 2002, 40 pages

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Fleming, Candace. *Boxes for Katje*. Illustrated by Stacey Dressen-McQueen. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2003. 36 pages

Fleming, Denise. *Buster*. Henry Holt, 2003. 32 pages

Goldin, Augusta. *Ducks Don't Get Wet*. Illustrated by Helen K. Davie. (Let's-Read-and-Find-Out Science) HarperCollins, 1999. 32 pages

Haas, Jessie. *Runaway Radish*. Illustrated by Margot Apple. Greenwillow, 2001. 56 pages

Harjo, Joy. *The Good Luck Cat*. Harcourt, 2000. 32 pages

Markle, Sandra. *Creepy, Crawly Baby Bugs*. Walker, 1996. 32 pages

Muth, Jon J. *The Three Questions*. Scholastic Press, 2002. 32 pages

Rylant, Cynthia. *Mr. Putter and Tabby Stir the Soup*. Illustrated by Arthur Howard. Harcourt, 2003. 48 pages

Willey, Margaret. *Clever Beatrice: An Upper Penninsula Conte*. Illustrated by Heather Solomon. Atheneum, 2001. 32 pages

Winter, Jeanette. *My Name Is Georgia: A Portrait*. Harcourt / Silver Whistle, 1998. 48 pages

Evaluating

Readers explain their responses to or understandings of a text based on stated criteria (e.g., **Would you want a friend to read this? Why or why not?**)

Aliki. *Ah, Music!* HarperCollins, 2003. 32 pages

Creech, Sharon. *Love That Dog*. HarperCollins, 2001. 84 pages

DePaola, Tomie. *26 Fairmont Avenue*. Putnam, 1999. 56 pages

Foreman, Michael. *Wonder Goal*. Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2003. 32 pages

Frame, Jeron Ashford. *Yesterday I Had the Blues*. Illustrated by R. Gregory Christie. Tricycle Press, 2003. 32 pages

Herrera, Juan Felipe. *Grandma and Me at the Flea / Los meros meros remateros*. Children's Book Press, 2002. 32 pages

Hopkinson, Deborah. *Fannie in the Kitchen*. Illustrated by Nancy Carpenter. Atheneum, 2001. 32 pages

Jones, Bill T. *Dance*. Photographs by Susan Kuklin. Hyperion, 1998. 32 pages

Livingstone, Star. *Harley*. Illustrated by Molly Bang. SeaStar, 2001. 64 pages

Pringle, Laurence. *Sharks: Strange and Wonderful*. Illustrated by Meryl Henderson. Boyds Mills Press, 2001. 32 pages

Sayre, April Pulley. *Dig, Wait, Listen: A Desert Toad's Tale*. Illustrated by Barbara Bash. Greenwillow, 2001. 32 pages

Stevenson, James. *The Castaway*. Greenwillow, 2002. 32 pages

U'Ren, Andrea. *Mary Smith*. Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2003. 32 pages

Weitzman, Jacqueline. *You Can't Take a Balloon into the Metropolitan Museum*. Illustrated by Robin Glasser. Dial, 1998. 36 pages

Synthesizing

Readers create original insights, perspectives and understandings by reflecting on the text, and by merging elements from the text with their own way of understanding information and the world around them.

Casanova, Mary. *The Hunter: A Chinese Folktale*. Illustrated by Ed Young. Atheneum, 2000. 32 pages

Diakit  Baba Wagu . *The Magic Gourd*. Scholastic Press, 2003. 32 pages

Falwell, Cathryn. *David's Drawing*. Lee & Low, 2001. 32 pages

hooks, bell. *skin again*. Illustrated by Chris Raschka. Hyperion, 2004. 32 pages

Jim nez, Francisco. *La Mariposa*. Illustrated by Sim n Silva. Houghton Mifflin, 1998. 40 pages

McDonald, Megan. *Judy Moody Saves the World*. Illustrated by Peter Reynolds. Candlewick Press, 2002.
144 pages

Martin, Jacqueline Briggs. *The Water Gift and the Pig of the Pig*. Illustrated by Linda Wingerter. Houghton Mifflin, 2003. 32 pages

Muth, Jon J. *Stone Soup*. Scholastic Press, 2003. 32 pages

Rumford, James. *Calabash Cat and His Amazing Journey*. Houghton Mifflin, 2003. 32 pages

Ormerod, Jan. *Who's Whose?* Lothrop, Lee & Shepard, 1998. 32 pages

Paterson, Katherine. *The Smallest Cow in the World*. Illustrated by Jane Clark Brown. HarperCollins, 1991. 64 pages

Raschka, Chris. *John Coltrane's Giant Steps*. Atheneum, 2002. 32 pages

Reiser, Lynn. *The Surprise Family*. Greenwillow, 1994. 32 pages

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Wong, Janet S. *Apple Pie 4th of July*. Illustrated by Margaret Chodos-Irvine. Harcourt, 2002. 32 pages

Using the Strategies Together

Readers combine the eight strategies as needed to come to a fuller understanding of the text.

Ada, Alma Flor. *My Name Is María Isabel*. Illustrated by K. Dyble Thompson. Atheneum, 1998. 56 pages

Arnold, Caroline. *Birds: Nature's Magnificent Flying Machines*. Illustrated by Patricia J. Wynne. Charlesbridge, 2003. 32 pages

Ahlberg, Alan. *The Cat Who Got Carried Away*. Illustrated by Catherine McEwan. Candlewick, 2003. 79 pages

Bechtold, Lize. *Buster, The Very Shy Dog*. Houghton Mifflin, 1999. 48 pages

Browne, Anthony. *Voices in the Park*. DK, 1998. 32 pages

Cole, Joanna. *The Magic School Bus Explores the Senses*. Illustrated by Bruce Degen. Scholastic Press, 1999. 48 pages

French, Vivian. *T. Rex*. Illustrated by Allison Bartlett. Candlewick, 2004. 32 pages

Gerstein, Mordicai. *What Charlie Heard*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2002, 32 pages

Lester, Julius. *John Henry*. Illustrated by Jerry Pinkney. Dial, 1994. 40 pages

Look, Lenore. *Ruby Lu, Brave and True*. Illustrated by Anne Wilsdorf. Atheneum, 2004. 105 pages

Macaulay, David. *Black and White*. Houghton Mifflin, 1990. 32 pages

Sis, Peter. *The Three Golden Keys*. Doubleday, 1994. 56 pages

Sobol, Richard. *Adelina's Whales*. Dutton, 2003. 32 pages

Smith, Cynthia Leitich. *Indian Shoes*. Illustrated by Jim Madsen. HarperCollins, 2002. 66 pages

Williams, Vera B. *Scooter*. Greenwillow, 1993. 147 pages

Megan Schliesman is a librarian at the Cooperative Children's Book Center of the School of Education at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. The CCBC is a noncirculating collection of children's and young adult literature for adults. The library serves the UW-Madison campus, and librarians and teachers across Wisconsin.

This bibliography was created in consultation with Marta Bechtol and Peggy Garties of the Wisconsin Educational Communications Board.

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