Drawing A Blank: Improving Comprehension for Readers on the Autism Spectrum

Presented by Emily Iland, M.A.

Two Key Questions

1. Why do good readers with ASD have problems understanding?
2. What can we do about it?

Anticipated Outcome = Tools in your toolbox

- Gain fuller understanding of the issue
- Identify effective assessments
- Inform practice based on research findings
- Select effective strategies and tools

Agenda

1. Brief overview of reading, comprehension & hyperlexia
2. Understand how features of ASD affect comprehension
3. Identify skills that must be explicitly taught
4. Discuss assessment options
5. Five evidence-based interventions tailored to readers with ASD
6. Promising strategies

Agenda

In a review of the literature about reading comprehension instruction, Chiang and Lin (2007) identified 754 articles potentially relevant to the topic.
- Of these, only 11 had at least 1 participant with ASD.
- No studies had participants with Asperger Syndrome.
- Only 5 strategies have been identified!
A personal & professional perspective

Conservative?

“Addressing the comprehension issue is critical so that competent, capable people can fully realize their potential.”

DaB, Page 7

6 Chapters
1. ASD & the Task of Reading
2. ASD & the Comprehension Connection
3. Masking & Unmasking: Identification & Assessment
4. Evidence-Based Practices
5. Building Vocabulary
6. Using Visual Tools
Activity: Friend Venn
(Iland, 2012)
Instructions

1. Pick a partner (someone you don’t know well)
2. Draw 2 circles in the form of a Venn Diagram on the paper provided, label them with your names

Friend Venn Instructions

3. Converse until you discover 3-4 things that you have in common and 3-4 things unique about each partner.
4. Write these things in the appropriate spaces
5. Come back when you hear the signal
6. Enjoy!

What is Reading?

Get on the same page to define, understand and measure reading!

Reading is a Developmental Process!
Interactive & social

Keys: joint attention, engagement, reciprocity
The language & literacy link
From Drawing A Blank p. 17

Cognitive Development + Environmental Stimulation

Language Skills

Literacy

ASD can interfere with any or all steps of the process

The Simple View of Reading
R = D x C

Problems with Decoding, Comprehension or both
• Problems with “D only” is dyslexia
• Problems with “C only” is hyperlexia

HYPERLEXIA
Strong mechanical word recognition with comparatively poor comprehension


Grigorenko et al. (2002) recommend that the term hyperlexia be used exclusively for those with ASD and a comprehension issue.

The term reading comprehension disorder should be used to describe others who struggle to understand but do not have ASD.

What is Hyperlexia?


ASD - C = HPL

HPL looks like a gift...
The oxymoron of hyperlexia

Traditional view: Fluent decoding frees the reader’s attention for comprehension

Hyperlexia: Fluent decoding without understanding!

Comprehension is the purpose & essence of reading

National Reading Panel definition of reading (2005, p.28)

“A form of dynamic thinking [that] includes
• Interpreting information through the filter of one’s own knowledge and beliefs
• Using the author’s organizational plan to think about information (or imposing order)
• Inferring what the author does not tell explicitly, as well as many other cognitive actions.”

What are the 5 Types of Reading Comprehension?

5 types of reading comprehension may challenge readers with ASD

1. Literal
2. Inferential
3. Critical
4. Affective
5. Lexical

1. **Literal comprehension**

Understanding explicit material in text.

2. **Inferential comprehension**

Understanding ideas beyond the literal text by interpreting, synthesizing and extending meaning.

3. **Critical comprehension**

Meaning derived by evaluating, analyzing, and making judgments about material that was read.

4. **Affective comprehension**

Relating to the material at a personal and emotional level.

5. **Lexical comprehension**

Making sense of text by knowing the meaning of key vocabulary words.

Assess all 5 kinds of reading comprehension!

1. Literal
2. Inferential
3. Critical
4. Affective
5. Lexical
“It is a primary premise of this book that the demands of the dynamic reading process present a mismatch with the cognitive skills and core deficit areas often seen in ASD and, therefore, are at the root of the comprehension problems.”

Mismatch Between Cognitive Skills & Reading Demands

HOTS
Abstract & Imaginative

- Create
- Apply
- Evaluate
- Analyze

Higher Order

Lower Order

Concrete Understanding
Remember

Based on Bloom’s Taxonomy

In primary grades, comprehension issues may be masked

- Strong decoding skills
- Good memory for facts
- Understanding of concrete content
- Superficial retelling

Problems can worsen over time

Difficulty occurs when

- Reading demands include expository material (such as social studies)
- Content becomes increasingly complex and abstract (novels, poetry)
- The material goes beyond the experience, fact base or knowledge base of the reader with ASD

Study of 41 ten-year-olds with ASD
Nation, Clarke, Wright & Williams, 2006

- 65% had poor comprehension of 1SD, compared to peers
- 38% had SEVERE impairments 2SD+ below peers
- Personal gaps up to 2SD between decoding and comprehension
Fourth grade turning point

Instead of continuing to build on their reading strength, readers with hyperlexia may suddenly experience what amounts to a reading disability, worsening over time.

They do not gain meaning from text, not because they cannot decode, but because they do not understand.

The Profile of Hyperlexia

“Higher-functioning” on the spectrum

Average or above-average IQ

Comprehension issue not formally identified

In general ed all or much of the school day

Test “average” on standardized comprehension tests

Language in expressive & receptive vocabulary tests OK

The Hidden Profile of Hyperlexia

Frustrated by grade-level material

Working at school (with structure and support) is different than working at home = Homework struggles

Difficulty with higher-level interpretations and understanding

Comprehension issues with both written and spoken information, creating a double disadvantage

ASD= At-risk readers

• Foundational prerequisite skills may be missing, affecting not only comprehension, but also learning how to comprehend.
• As a result, the needs of readers with ASD are unique, particularly when compared to those of other struggling readers.

We must communicate with others:

- Reading is an integrated, complex thinking process
- HYPERLEXIA is a reading disability in people with ASD
- Assess all 5 types of comprehension selectively
ASD & the Comprehension Connection
Specific Needs

The use of this slide pattern is a comprehension strategy. This visual cue helps you follow the author’s organization of ideas.

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Make the connection between

Features of ASD
Literacy & Comprehension

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This is important for you because...

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The Autism Spectrum

• Understanding why people with ASD have difficulty comprehending helps us learn how to help them and what skills to teach

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Autism Spectrum Disorder DSM-V

A. Persistent deficits in social communication and social interaction
B. Restricted repetitive patterns of behavior interests or activities

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Autism Spectrum Disorder 299.0

A. Persistent deficits in social communication and social interaction

• Social Reciprocity
• Nonverbal communication
• Relationships

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Social-Communication Features Affect C

- Cognitive development, learning & literacy
- Conversation, vocabulary & concept development

Social Relationships & Understanding (Affective)

- Have difficulty relating to characters and situations
- Miss cues from real-life contexts & in text
- Narratives are unfamiliar, harder

Non-verbal cues

- Recognize and interpret nonverbal cues in literature
  - Characters
  - Action (Deceit, etc.)
  - Author’s intention

Perspective-Taking (Theory of Mind) Affects Affective Comprehension

- Recognizing deceit, lies, etc.
- Understanding the character’s motivation, feelings
- Understanding the author’s view and intentions

Autism Spectrum Disorder DSM-V

Restricted repetitive patterns of behavior interests or activities

- Repetitive motor movements, use of objects or speech
- Insistence on sameness, inflexible adherence to routines, or ritualized patterns of verbal or nonverbal behavior

Autism Spectrum Disorder DSM-V

Restricted repetitive patterns of behavior interests or activities

- Highly restricted, fixated interests w/ abnormal intensity or focus
- Hyper- or hypo-reactivity to sensory input, or unusual interest in sensory aspects of environment
R & R Behavior/intense interests:

- Focus on objects over people
- Specialists in a generalist world = limited general knowledge

Text difficulty

- Grade level & general interest material is less familiar
- Disinterest in material about non-preferred topics
- The MATTHEW EFFECT
  - less motivation
  - less reading

Literal & Concrete

- Extreme difficulty understanding text that is imaginative, beyond the scope of the person’s actual concrete experience
- Visualization: images & imagery
- Tom said, “If it hasn’t happened to me, my mind is a blank page.”

Cognitive & learning profile in ASD

- Understand how people with autism think to intervene effectively
- Be aware of common difficulties to search for answers

Impaired Executive Function

- Organization
- Focus
- Shifting attention
- Impulsivity
- Planning, time management

The cognitive profile seen ASD is multifaceted. Cognitive and developmental differences pose complex challenges in learning and higher-level thinking.

The numerous effects of ASD on comprehension support the view that hyperlexia should be considered a learning disability in reading, as proposed in DaB Chapter 1.
Central Coherence: Get the Big Picture

- Bottom-up processing, focused on details
- Integrating the parts and the whole: Synthesis
- The GIST: getting the point

Difficulties in Central Coherence can cause reading difficulties

- Finding the main idea
- Separating relevant from irrelevant
- Summarize

Critical & Inferential Comprehension

Conceptualization, reasoning, logical analysis

- Understand cause & effect
- Predict
- Infer
- Resolve ambiguity (clarify)
- Monitor comprehension

Due to features of ASD & the cognitive profile

“Emily’s List”

43 Skills to Teach Explicitly from the research
DaB Pages 56-57

1. Basic foundational skills
2. Language-based skills
3. Active, higher-order thinking skills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Basic</th>
<th>Language-based</th>
<th>Higher Order</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Main idea</td>
<td>Multiple meanings of words</td>
<td>Synthesize</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cause-and-effect</td>
<td>Categorize objects by concept</td>
<td>Analyze characters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Predict</td>
<td>Use context clues</td>
<td>Use comprehension strategies while reading</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Excerpt From Areas in Need of Explicit Instruction, pp 56-57 From Drawing A Blank by Emily Iland, M.A.
How is comprehension taught in schools?

“To be successful readers and gain meaning when reading, exposure to the curriculum not enough. Students with hyperlexia are likely to need explicit instruction and individualized interventions to support the growth and development of specific, essential skills.”

Drawing a Blank, p. 56

Multiple, complex needs
Need help w/ writing, organizing ideas
Readers with hyperlexia
Skill gaps
Require explicit instruction
Lmt benefit from classroom

Let’s Try the Synonym Strategy
Drawing A Blank Pages 123–126

- Grows vocabulary, self-monitoring, pre-reading skills, multiple meanings, parts of speech
- A tool to instantly clarify word meanings—without a “dictionary”
- User-friendly and fast

Benefits of the Synonym Strategy

- Defines words in context
- Links known & unknown
- Quick & easy
- Maintains train of thought
- Useful tool for life

Consider textbooks in computer format as an accommodation
Scholastic books on DVD, electronic dictionaries
**Identification & Assessment of Comprehension Issues**

4th Grade Turning Point = Discrepancy appears

- Learn to read vs. read to learn
- Mismatch between skill sets & task demands
- Complexity
- Peers catch up
- Reading affects math
- Homework
- Demand for independence
- Changes in instruction/setting
- Need to respond to instruction

“Instead of continuing to build on their reading strength, readers with hyperlexia may suddenly experience what amounts to a reading disability”

Drawing A Blank, p. 75

Standardized tests can have limitations for this population, when in fact...

- Independent and silent reading comprehension 1-6 grade levels behind
- Frustration with independent reading & grade-level texts
- Loss of motivation to read


*Read the Test Manual!*

- How is reading defined?
- How is comprehension defined?
- Does the test measure what you want to measure?
- What else can you do?
- Review records to see how comprehension was measured in the past to understand why the problem was not revealed

“An independent measure requires reasonable expectation that subjects have prior familiarity with the words used in the passages and have knowledge of any concepts that are prerequisite for processing the passage contents.”

*WJ-III Test 9 Reading Comprehension Test Manual pages 80-81*
“Asking a subject to study a passage and then answer questions about the content, such as to state the author’s purpose or to predict what may happen next, does not tap into skills specific to reading. It taps language processing and cognitive skills…”

Given that many common comprehension measures, such as a cloze procedure, yielded normal scoring results with this population in spite of known difficulties, Newman & colleagues (2007) suggest the need to develop new, cohesive comprehension measures...

Examine working memory, higher-level language skills, comprehension monitoring & understanding ideas across text

**WJ-III Test 9 Reading Comprehension Test Manual pages 80-81**

Key Points about standardized measures

1. Comprehension means different things
2. Averaging, subtest scores and composite scores can mask (computer scoring)
3. YES! Language testing for higher-order language skills
4. Appendix F, page 234 lists “sensitive” tests

**CTL Maps- Vocabulary Instruction for Kindergarten**

[Mapping of Instruction to Achieve Instructional Priorities Kindergarten](https://dibels.uoregon.edu/c_maps.php2_comp)

**Mapping of Instruction to Achieve Instructional Priorities**

**Kindergarten**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructional Priority: Vocabulary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>123456789</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus 1: Vocabulary Development and Use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus 2: Vocabulary Development and Use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus 3: Vocabulary Development and Use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus 4: Vocabulary Development and Use</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Key Points**

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**CTL Maps**

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Given that many common comprehension measures, such as a cloze procedure, yielded normal scoring results with this population in spite of known difficulties, Newman & colleagues (2007) suggest the need to develop new, cohesive comprehension measures...

Examine working memory, higher-level language skills, comprehension monitoring & understanding ideas across text

**Dibels Data System- Vocabulary Instruction Map for Grade 3**

[https://dibels.uoregon.edu/c_maps.php2_comp](https://dibels.uoregon.edu/c_maps.php2_comp)

**Mapping of Instruction to Achieve Instructional Priorities**

**Third Grade**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructional Priority: Vocabulary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>123456789</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus 1: Concept Categorization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus 2: Concept Categorization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus 3: Concept Categorization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus 4: Concept Categorization</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Mapping of Instruction to Achieve Instructional Priorities**

**Kindergarten**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructional Priority: Comprehension</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>123456789</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus 1: Predicting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus 2: Identifying Information from Texts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus 3: Identifying Information from Texts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus 4: Identifying Information from Texts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Drawing a Blank Appendix F**
Assess carefully to identify comprehension issues
Some ideas From Drawing A Blank, Appendix F

- Gray Oral Reading Test 3 (GORT) Comprehension section
- Test of Written Language-3rd edition (TOWL)
- Story construction subtests, logical sentences, sentence combining
- Test of Adult Language, Listening vocabulary subtest
- CELF Listening to paragraphs subtest
- Reading Inventories, Retelling
- Adolescent Test of Problem Solving
- Tests of semantic relationships, formulated sentences, and sentence assembly

Be discerning & selective choosing evaluation materials and methods to identify the comprehension gap. Don’t overlook it!

View thru the ASD lens

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3 General Findings

1. Strategies used with students with ASD must take into account both the general cognitive profile as well as individual variations (O’Connor and Klein, 2004).
2. Methods helpful to students with other learning differences may be appropriate for some students with ASD.
3. Some methods that work for those with other learning differences will not be effective for those with ASD.

DaB p. 101
In a review of the literature about reading comprehension instruction, Chiang and Lin (2007) identified 754 articles potentially relevant to the topic.
- Of these, only 11 had at least 1 participant with ASD.
- No studies had participants with Asperger Syndrome.

There has been VERY LIMITED research in comprehension & autism, or in effective methods for improving comprehension. Studies including subjects with ASD have been SMALL.

Research says YES to...

1. Primer passage (pre-teaching facts)
2. Informative title & primer passage
3. Related narratives
4. Anaphoric Cuing
5. Idiomatic Expressions
Research Says YES to

Preparing to read = multiple cues to make relevant connections

Primer passages = pre-teach basic concepts, just the facts

Tip: English Language Learner materials often contain primer passages

PRIMER PASSAGE Example
Basic facts about oceans
(extracted from the passage, “Looking at the Seas”)

1. Our Earth is a water planet. 71% of its surface is water. This is why earth is called the “water planet.”
2. There are four main oceans, the Atlantic, Pacific, Indian and Arctic.
3. Some people think there is a fifth ocean around Antarctica.
4. All oceans and seas are connected. The same water travels through them all.

Looking at the Seas
If you look down at our planet from outer space, most of what you see is water; 71% of the planet’s surface is covered by ocean and it is because of this that the Earth is sometimes called the water planet.” Only about three-tenths of our globe is covered with land.

The ocean wraps the globe and is divided into four major regions: the Atlantic Ocean, the Pacific Ocean, the Indian Ocean and the Arctic Ocean. Some scientists consider the waters around Antarctica to be a separate, fifth ocean as well. These oceans, although distinct in some ways, are all interconnected; the same water is circulated throughout them all.

Comprehension Questions

1. Why is the earth called the “water planet.”
2. What are the four main oceans?
3. Where do some people think there is a fifth ocean?
4. What do all oceans have in common?

Primer passage
& informative title - Pre-reading Strategy

Wahlberg and Magliano (2004)

1. Provide a clear title for a passage that does not have a title or is unclear.
2. Prepare a primer passage that contains all of the main ideas of the passage to be read.
Primer passage & informative title

3. After reading a primer passage, ask readers to notice the title again, and make a link between the title of the selection to be read and the primer passage. This connection serves as an anchor to help readers focus on information relevant to the passage to be read.

4. After reading, discuss with the reader how the primer passage, the title and the passage itself all relate to one another.

Prepare a primer passage containing all of the main ideas of the passage.

1. Queen Isabella of Spain financed Columbus’ voyage with the money she got for her own jewels.
2. Most people thought the world was flat like a table. They thought the horizon was the edge of the world, and that ships that sailed there would fall off the earth.
3. Columbus thought the world was round like an egg and wanted to prove it.

Columbus’ Voyage in 1492

With hocked gems financing him, our hero bravely defied all scornful laughter that tried to prevent his scheme. “Your eyes deceive you” he had said. “An egg, not a table correctly typifies this unexplored territory.” Now three sturdy sisters sought proof, forging along, sometimes through calm vastness, yet more often over turbulent peaks and valleys. Days became weeks as many doubters spread fearful rumors about the edge. At last, from nowhere, welcome winged creatures appeared, signifying momentous success.

Prepare a primer passage containing all of the main ideas of the passage.

4. Even though many people made fun of him, Columbus was determined to sail the globe to prove it was round.
5. The Nina, the Pinta and the Santa Maria, Columbus’ ships, sailed the choppy ocean for months. People at home worried that they would fall off the edge of the earth.
6. When birds flew to the ship, Columbus knew that land was near and the exploration was a huge success.

Multiple, Thematic Exposure Related narrative passages

Colasent & Griffith, 1998

- Adolescent students with autism were more successful with recall and oral retelling when thematic stories were used as content.
- Drawing and writing about the stories improved retelling even more.
- The students were able to relate information from one rabbit story to another (text to text).
Related narrative passages

- *Who’s in Rabbit’s House?* By Verna Aardena (1977)
- *Foolish Rabbit’s Big Mistake* by Rafe Martin and Ed Yound (1985)
- *The Velveteen Rabbit* by Margery Williams (1971)

Repeated reading of
*similar but different* materials

- Thematic stories, multiple exposures, and **reading aloud** may also benefit individuals with poor verbal skills or weak auditory comprehension

(rather than re-reading the same thing over and over, less information gain)

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Pages 109-110
Explicit Teaching of Idioms

- **Opaque**
- **Transparent**

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Literal Visuals
*p. 110*

- *In a Pickle & Other Funny Idioms*
  By Marvin Terban
  Illustrated by Giulio Maestro

- *What Did You Say? What Do You Mean?*
  By Jude Welton
  Illustrated by Jane Telford

*Amelia Bedelia* series

Teaching Anaphoric Cueing
*Who? Whom? Whose?*

Addresses

- Difficulty with pronouns
- Self-monitoring of understanding
- Clarification of ambiguity
- Asking questions
Who? Whom? Whose?
Teaching Anaphoric Cueing
p 113 and Appendix G, p. 249

Teach the skill:
• Underline or highlight possessive pronouns in a short text.
• Offer options and decide who is referred to in each example.
• Read the passage together AFTER clarification

How-to
My mother and I are baking a birthday cake. We want to surprise grandma.

My mother and I
Grandma and me
The cake

Practice
Geraldo and Scott have been friends for a long time. They are on the same baseball team.

The teacher saw that Lisa did not bring a lunch and asked, “Do you have money to buy lunch?”

Practice
Geraldo and Scott have been friends for a long time. They are on the same baseball team.

The teacher saw that Lisa did not bring a lunch and asked, “Do you have money to buy lunch?”

Next steps
Practice the skill
• Stop while reading to clarify (think aloud)

Independent practice
• Self-monitor use of the strategy while reading

Authentic text
Avoid strategies that are NOT a good fit to ASD

Not recommended
- Dictionary Definitions*
- Q & A = not an instructional method

May not work (O’Conner & Klein)
- Activate Prior Knowledge
- Cloze Task

*Texas Reading Initiative, see DaB p123

WE WANT MORE!
Chapter 5
Building Vocabulary: Promising Practices

Promising Practices: The Rationale
- Limited research
- Diversity of needs
- Capitalize on strengths (rote, visual, concrete)
- Use interests to maximize motivation and attention (technology, themes)
- Move from the personal to the general
- Use existing tools...with caution

Teaching vocabulary
Drawing a Blank Chapter 5

- Synonyms – on the computer
- Electronic dictionary
- Using objects to pre-teach vocabulary
- Visual dictionaries
- Connotation: Shades of meaning
- Word elements: Suffixes, affixes, and root meanings
- Homographs

Electronic Dictionary
Electronic Dictionary Advantages

- Small, portable, user-friendly
- Less disruptive
- Use for any task, including testing
- Use while listening
- Consider a “cool” version

Image Search & Visual Dictionaries

Albert Einstein: “If I can’t picture it, I can’t understand it”

- Google Images - A picture is worth 1,000 words - examples pillory, hod, albatross

Provide Visual Options for Vocabulary

Support visualization = Riddle Game

1. I am a bridge for people. I am definitely not strong enough for cars!
   I am a footbridge.
2. I have very modern construction and I am strong enough for trucks and cars.
   I am a highway bridge.
3. I am a bridge that goes over a river. When a tall boat comes, I have to be opened.
   I am a drawbridge.

Shades of Meaning Activity

Drawing A Blank Pages 141-144

- Expands vocabulary by teaching synonyms
- Teaches connotation: the emotion and intention attached to specific words
- Reveals the hidden meaning behind words (inference)
- Clarifies the **perspective** and **intention** of characters or the author (social thinking)

Rating Synonyms= hidden judgments & inferred meaning

- Rank from lightest to heaviest “emotional load”
  - Any **neutral** words go first
  - then **light** meaning
  - then **heavy** meaning
  **NOT** positive to negative

| SLENDER | ANOREXIC | THIN | SKINNY |

Try Temple Grandin’s Examples

- Wicked
- Evil
- Bad
- Naughty
Advantages of this activity

- Visual
- Concrete
- Systematic
- Grows Vocabulary
- Author Intention
- Inference
- Improves writing

Roots, Suffixes and Affixes=
apply a formula to words

- Of all the strategies we used, Tom reported that this was *the* breakthrough for him.
- Start by breaking down the parts of words from the person’s area of intense interest, (Star Wars, Harry Potter, trains)
- See DaB Appendix H

Have you tried...
Drawing A Blank Chapter 6

Closed captions
Reading scripts of plays and films
Film & visualization
Finding the main idea
Graphic Organizers
Text organization (features, structures & previewing)
Highlighted Texts

Media Strategies

- Show movies before reading books
- Read scripts before reading books
  www.imsdb.com
  www.simplyscripts.com
Advantages of Scripts

1. Reveals thoughts and feelings of characters
2. Character reactions are explicitly described
3. Nonverbal cues and physical actions are clear
4. Acting out scripts can help with social understanding and interaction
5. Helps with dramatic play
6. Introduction to the benefits of drama for students with ASD

Media Strategies

- Summarize & sequence the events
- Analyze plot, characters, themes & vocabulary before looking at the same elements in text
- Compare and contrast

Highlighting

Buy used books already highlighted

Training

Knowledge useful abilities backbone of required for a task

A Final Story

Final Comprehension Idea

Don’t ask “IF,” ask “WHEN”

- Relate to the KNOWN
- Make it personal
Our accomplishments=
Tools in your toolbox

✓ Examined the research
✓ Learned 5 evidence-based strategies
✓ Identified promising techniques

BE SAFE Teaching Edition
Use Lesson & Episodes Together

Companion Curriculum + Movie DVD

BE SAFE Teaching Edition
Supports Comprehension Multiple Ways!

- 37 Activities
- 110 Materials & Visual Tools
- 100+ Safety Words

Real-life application:
Does Your Student Comprehend Safety?

Use the Movie & Curriculum Together to Teach
Seven Key Safety Skills

1. Follow the law to be safe
2. Stay where you are when you meet the police
3. Keep your hands to yourself when you meet the police (don’t touch their stuff!)
4. When the police tell you to do something, just do it
5. Tell the police about your disability
6. Remain silent if arrested and ask for a lawyer
7. Tell where you are when you call 911

Thank you!
Emily Iland, M.A.
emilyiland@gmail.com

www.ReadingAutism.com
www.BeSafeTheMovie.com

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References


Chapter 1: An Overview of Autism Spectrum Disorders by Tony Attwood

Chapter 2: Brain-Behavior Connections in Autism by Nancy J. Minshew & Diane L. Williams

References

