

ReadingFish

Every day, children struggle and fail in school due to reading problems, and all the additional hours of homework create tension at home.

Teachers who insist a child will do better, "...if only he would pay attention," don't solve the problem, and having a student re-read a paragraph repeatedly in order to understand, doesn't deal with the underlying weakness.

Schools emphasize decoding when teaching reading skills, but they generally do not teach the underlying skills needed for effective reading comprehension. Without reading comprehension help, struggling learners do poorly on tests and don't gain the knowledge needed for success.

No skill is more important to success than reading comprehension. ReadingFish[®] is a highly effective reading and listening comprehension remediation program. This is the first program to integrate and sequentially apply three types of instructional practice identified by independent research as effective at improving reading comprehension. ReadingFish[®] includes:

- A highly structured 'visual imagery' program.
- 'Cognitive skills training' designed to improve working memory, attention and visualization skills.
- Instruction and practice using effective 'reading comprehension strategies'.

ReadingFish[®] is effective because it employs research-based teaching techniques, which include multi-sensory instruction techniques and scaffolded, direct instruction. The way information is introduced, developed, reinforced, and practiced is based upon years of independent research and classroom verification.

ReadingFish[®] is effective because it is administered one-to-one. No instructional method is more effective than one instructor adjusting the material and methods to the needs of one student.

ReadingFish[®] is effective because it has been developed and refined in a clinical setting. Years of experience involving multiple clinicians and a variety of students with a wide range of needs have helped shape ReadingFish[®] into a highly effective program.

ReadingFish[®] is effective because testing is administered prior to beginning the program to ensure that it is appropriate for the student's needs. Upon completion of the program, testing is administered to quantify the student's progress.

ReadingFish[®] is so effective that after 30-50 hours of instruction, students on average gain over three-years in reading comprehension on standardized testing.

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We begin by having students describe a picture (expressive language.) Students learn a series of questions that need to be answered in order to describe the picture accurately. This provides students with direction to help them identify what is important and a structure to relate those elements to another person. The aim is to create the same picture in the tutor's mind that the student is viewing, by using language.

As this process becomes easier for students, the tutor then describes a picture to them using the same questions (receptive language). Students must accurately construct the image in their

mind and use expressive language to describe the picture created in their mind to the tutor. The goal is for students to improve their observation and accuracy and form a gestalt of the image using receptive language.

Once the student is successful, the process is repeated with individual words. At this stage we are looking for rich, detailed imagery for a relatively simple word. The individual then progresses to creating mental imagery for sentences, again using expressive language to verify the gestalt. The final step is to move from a static mental picture created from a short sentence to a "mental movie" that can translate the meaning of a paragraph, essay or book into mental imagery.

Instruction begins now in a variety of proven strategies for comprehension. All are designed to actively engage the student with the text, provide a structure for the student to extract the needed information and a method to improve the retention of the information. These skills are integrated with the mental imagery skills.

Concurrent with the mental-imagery skill development, students engage in a series of cognitive-skills training exercises. These exercises are designed to improve:

- Auditory memory
- Left/Right brain integration
- Sequencing skills
- Attention
- Spatial Relationships
- Visual memory
- Visualization skills
- Vocabulary

The program is designed to take between 30 and 50 sessions, depending upon the needs of the student. It should be administered between two and five times per week. Each session is 50 minutes long. The session is divided into different skill areas with the tasks changing about every ten minutes.

This program is intended for students who are at or above the 3rd grade reading level. In other words, it is for students that are reading to learn, not learning to read. We select reading materials that are at an appropriate reading level for each student.

Goals

Goals include improvements in identifying what is important in a sentence or paragraph; more accurate recall of details; improved ability to make inferences and draw conclusions; and an increase in the individual's enjoyment of reading. Additional benefits include improvements in writing composition, vocabulary, auditory comprehension (lectures and verbal direction), and conversational cohesiveness.

During instruction, techniques are demonstrated through direct application to schoolwork. By seeing the real-world application and success of the approach, the student is much more likely to use and practice the techniques in the future. The result is more confidence and better grades with less effort.



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