

NAVIGATING THE COMPLEX JOURNEY OF READING DEVELOPMENT

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Reading viewed as an intellectual process of decoding symbols to determine the meaning of a text, is a profound skill that is taught to us over time. The reader must be able to match a symbol or combination of symbols (letter(s)) to a sound in order to decode the text, which consists of symbols. They must then identify the patterns of sounds that make up words. The reader is then given interpretation by these words. (Grell, 2023)

Reading is a dynamic process that calls for both basic and complicated elements. The reader needs to grasp the grammar rules, have a basic understanding of the symbols and vocabulary that make up the language. Higher-level processing will also be used by the reader to determine the author's intent and the text's meaning, among other things. (Blakely, 2023)

These elements can be divided into three reading processes: word recognition, the capacity to observe a word and, without conscious effort or thought, understand its pronunciation and meaning. The process of deriving meaning from the text as a whole is called comprehension. The capacity to read a text accurately and rapidly, as if it were spoken, is known as fluency.

In the initial stage, according to Murray (2016), word recognition develops naturally as children start to interact and converse with people around them. It is the ability to hear or see a word and understand its meaning. Furthermore, it is characterized as the rapid process of the brain to sound out symbols and recognize it all at the same time. As they start to comprehend the meaning of words, which are composed of certain

sounds, this results from the mastery of phonemes and phonetic awareness. Children eventually learn to link letters to sounds and sounds to certain words, allowing them to acquire the ability to combine them and create sentences.

As they mature, this stage serves as the fundamental basis for their reading ability. Without these building blocks of sounds and basic to complex word recognition, the connecting bridge to literacy may be at a disadvantageous situation.

Subsequently, the development of understanding the whole reading text is identified as comprehension. During this phase, a reader draws connection between all the elements, details and constituents of the material read. At this point, a student begins to learn new ideas, discover new feelings and explore new issues from varying perspectives. This helps gain fresh insights and draw connection to prior knowledge before, during, and after reading. Beyond word-for-word recognition, one can go below the surface and explore the metaphor, voice, point of view, theme and overall message of printed resources. Readers are also expected to be able to ask questions, synthesize information, make inferences while reading, and decide what is significant in a text. (Hutchins, 2024)

As one develops comprehension, he or she is now obliged to utilize reading for life – not just within the classroom setup but also outside the school to further develop one’s personality and understanding of his or her dynamic environment.

In the study of Salarvand,et.al. (2024) at the end of the process, self- awareness and self-monitoring gradually advance, thus allowing independence and analytic evaluation to occur naturally. Every moment of decoding and extension of knowledge, a learner improves the skill discriminately, sensitively and associatively. By which, this progression is ignited by clear guided instruction of a role model and the keen personal desire to develop reading fluency. The reading journey and development does not merely

end in fluency, but rather continuously expands one's horizon through the level of attention given to every reading text and author's purpose and standpoint.

Therefore, process of reading development has no true endpoint; it is a continuous journey. Each reading experience propels the reader forward, with the eyes, the tongue, and the words themselves constantly in pursuit of new meanings. Every time we read, we engage with words and contexts that shift, transform, and evolve, making reading a dynamic, never-ending process. The act of reading doesn't just involve decoding text – it's about interpreting, understanding, and reinterpreting, with each new encounter building upon the last. As we move through different texts and contexts, the experience of reading adapts, expanding our knowledge and comprehension in ways that are always unfolding. In this sense, reading development is an ongoing adventure, driven by change and the constant discovery of new layers of meaning, with no final destination in sight.

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