

**Enhancing 10th Graders' English Reading Comprehension through a Strategy-Based
Didactic Sequence**

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Abstract

This research shows how some reading strategies can impact instructional methodologies for the developmental when using reading comprehension skills with students particularly using as sets 10th graders in two public high schools in Cali, Colombia. Based on Douglas Brown's (2001) strategies, the analysis and intervention focused on ten key strategies which include: identify the purpose in reading, use graphemic rules, use efficient silent reading techniques, skimming, scanning, semantic mapping, analyzing vocabulary, designed to enhance literal, inferential, and critical comprehension. The method used in this research features mixed-methods approach, and combines quantitative data from Pre- and Post-Tests with qualitative understanding drawn from both student reflections and teacher observations. The practical intervention was implemented through a didactic booklet designed to fulfill the students' language proficiency along with their interests. The results here show, through statistics, significant improvements along all comprehension levels, with two most outstanding gains like those in inferential and critical understanding. Students showed a noticeable increase in confidence and autonomy when reading texts. Teachers also observed a shift in students' reading habits, from focusing on individual words to using reading strategies they had learned during the intervention. This change reflected greater engagement with reading.

Key Words: reading comprehension strategies, critical thinking, making inferences, student centered learning, predicting

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Introduction

Researchers of proposed reading skills assert various reasons for teaching reading strategies to high school students. It is important to understand what strategies are necessary for the students to learn to become proficient in this important process. In this study, we analyze the relevance of some strategies we want to implement.

Reading texts cannot be considered as a simple collection of specialized lexical elements or as a compilation of structures extracted from everyday language. When expressing certain conceptual processes such as definition, classification, etc., the original English texts use a language organized in a particular way that fulfills a specific function. Linguistic structures therefore acquire a value.

In today's knowledge-based world, having access to up-to-date information through technological means is essential, and much of this information is written in English. For instance, major scientific and technological advancements are shared globally through specialized publications, which are predominantly written in English. Therefore, the more prepared students are, the more opportunities they might have in life. Strong reading comprehension allows students to understand, analyze, and critically engage with a variety of texts, which is essential for success in all subject areas. This ability not only improves their academic performance but also enhances their capacity to process complex information, solve problems, and make informed decisions in real-world situations. In today's competitive world, employers, for instance, highly value people who can read effectively, interpret information accurately, and communicate ideas clearly.

Justification

The present study was developed in response to the persistent challenges that 10th-grade students in the two schools here mentioned, face in achieving proficient reading comprehension in English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Despite the national policies on bilingual education and the growing need for English proficiency in academic and professional domains, many students continue to struggle with the cognitive and linguistic demands of reading. Block (2004) explores how second language readers employ comprehension strategies, showing that many learners face both cognitive and linguistic difficulties when reading in a foreign language. Likewise, Zhang & Wu (2009) in their study on Chinese EFL learners directly report students' perceptions of difficulties in reading, including vocabulary, background knowledge, and strategy use. These difficulties are compounded by factors such as low vocabulary knowledge, limited exposure to authentic English texts, and a lack of systematic instruction in reading strategies.

Reading comprehension is a foundational skill not only for success in language learning but also for academic achievement across disciplines, Duke, N. K., & Pearson, P. D. (2002). In the context of globalization and the digital age, students must develop the ability to access, interpret, and critically evaluate written information, much of which is English. Therefore, this research seeks to address an educational need by exploring how explicit instruction in reading strategies can empower students to become more confident, autonomous, and effective readers.

Based on Douglas Brown's (2001) *Ten Strategic Approaches to Reading*, this study justifies its focus on strategy-based instruction as a pedagogical tool to improve students'

engagement and performance in reading tasks. While many traditional English as Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms rely on translation based or grammar intensive methodologies, this research adopts a more interactive and student-centered approach. By equipping students with specific strategies, such as skimming, scanning, vocabulary analysis, and distinguishing between literal and implied meanings, they are not only taught what to read, but also how to read strategically and purposefully.

The decision to develop a booklet arose from a main consideration. Given that our research focused on three different groups of 10th-grade students with low to intermediate proficiency levels (A1–A2 according to the CEFR), it was essential to design materials that were linguistically accessible and culturally relevant. The content of the booklet was carefully adapted to reflect students' interests and social contexts, topics such as youth identity, environmental awareness, and social media use were included. This relevance played a crucial role in increasing student motivation and engagement.

From a methodological perspective, the booklet served as a bridge between theory and practice. Each section was designed to introduce, explain, and reinforce one of Brown's ten reading strategies. Activities were sequenced in a progressive manner, beginning with modeling and guided practice, and gradually moving toward independent application. In this way, the booklet supported the gradual release of responsibility model, allowing students to first observe, then practice collaboratively, and finally apply strategies autonomously.

Moreover, by designing our own material, we ensured the systematic integration of reading strategies, something not often found in commercial textbooks. For example, while

traditional materials may include a reading passage followed by multiple-choice questions, our booklet prompted students to practice the strategy worked, first identify the purpose, use graphemic rules, silent reading, skim or scan the text, use contextual clues to guess meaning, analyze vocabulary, or organize information using semantic maps, all of which are essential skills for effective comprehension. Each activity was planned to one or more strategies, thereby reinforcing the metacognitive awareness of the reading process.

The development of this booklet was a deliberate and pedagogically justified decision. It addressed curricular limitations, responded to students' learning needs, and operationalized the theoretical framework of reading strategies in a concrete and meaningful way. Through this material, we were able to implement a structured, coherent, and strategy reading instruction that significantly contributed to students' comprehension skills and overall confidence as EFL readers.

In conclusion, this research is justified by its relevance to national educational goals, its alignment with contemporary theories of reading, and its practical contributions to improving English language instruction in Colombian public schools. It not only addresses a documented gap in students' reading abilities but also promotes pedagogical innovation and professional development among teachers working in challenging educational environments.

Research Questions and Objectives

Research question

How does the implementation of explicit reading comprehension strategies impact the reading skills of 10th-grade students at Agustín Nieto Caballero and Julio Caicedo y Téllez public schools?

General objective

To explore and assess the impact of implementing a strategy-based didactic teaching sequence, delivered through a pedagogical booklet, on the reading comprehension skills of 10th graders at Agustín Nieto Caballero and Julio Caicedo y Téllez public schools.

Specific objectives

- To describe the pedagogical influence of a didactic sequence based on Douglas Brown's ten reading strategies on students' reading comprehension.
- To implement a strategy-based instructional intervention to enhance students' reading comprehension and analyze the extent of improvement observed after its application
- To analyze the outcomes of the applied reading strategies in order to understand their contribution to the development of students' reading comprehension.

Literature Review

Reading comprehension offers students the possibility to fulfill the objectives proposed and to obtain other foreign language learning benefits such as the capacity to discover other cultures diversity and to value their own, the visibilization related to inequities, and the possibilities to transform their own ideologies that position linguistic practices and groups hierarchically (Walsh, 2009, p. 216). Additionally, educating students in a second language involves integrating English teaching with a purpose. This means that learning is centered around using the language in specific social interaction contexts which make emphasis in learning skills, necessary to have an academic and professional profile in further education (Jordan, 2005, p. 1). Besides, skills integration and interrelation advocate the construction of meanings (Mayora, 2009, p. 4).

Reading comprehension is based on the principle that scientific discourse (form of communication between the scientist and the reader) has its own universal communicative structure that, in its basic forms, is universal and independent to a certain extent of the linguistic way in which it is carried. Laurence Anthony (1997, p.3) states that technical and scientific texts cannot be considered as a simple collection of specialized lexical elements or as a compilation of structures extracted from everyday language. When expressing certain conceptual processes such as definition, classification, etc. The scientist uses a language organized in a particular way that fulfills a specific function. Linguistic structures therefore acquire a value. It could be said that science has a universal language aimed at expressing specific communicative functions.

In the modern world of knowledge globalization, it is essential to have access to updated information transmitted through written and technological means. Most advances in science and technology around the world are socialized through specialized publications in English. A competent professional must be able to access this information to stay up to date with the advances in their profession and thus be able to influence the developments critically and creatively in their field of work. To effectively adapt reading comprehension skills, it is essential to categorize the strategies that students need to learn to excel in this significant area. Researchers have put forward several reasons for teaching reading comprehension to high school and college students.

The research and studies listed down below have been conducted on reading comprehension instruction. These studies focus on strategies that enhance students' skill to understand and analyze texts effectively. In the following studies, conducted with similar objectives to ours, we can observe the significance of this topic across various cultural and educational contexts. These research papers, carried out in different parts of the world, closely align with the focus of our study. Specifically, they address key variables such as the implementation of reading strategies, the involvement of high school students, and the comparison of different student groups, among other relevant factors.

Amirian (2013, p. 23) conducted a research study in an Iranian high school with the purpose of examining the effectiveness of explicit reading strategy instruction in enhancing students' reading comprehension. The study involved a quasi-experimental design with two distinct groups of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) learners. A total of 60 participants were selected and randomly divided into a control group and an experimental group. Both

groups were given reading instruction over a period of six weeks, but the nature of the instruction differed between them.

The control group received traditional reading lessons, where the focus was primarily on translating texts, reading aloud, and answering comprehension questions without any explicit instruction on how to approach the texts strategically. In contrast, the experimental group was taught specific reading comprehension strategies. These included skimming (to identify the main idea), scanning (to locate specific details), summarizing (to synthesize key points), and guessing meaning from context (to infer the meaning of unfamiliar words without translating). These strategies were explicitly explained, modeled, and practiced during class activities.

To measure the effect of these instructional differences, both groups were given a pre-test and a post-test using similar reading passages designed to assess literal, inferential, and applied comprehension. The results revealed a significant improvement in the experimental group's reading comprehension scores compared to the control group. Specifically, students in the experimental group demonstrated a higher ability to understand main ideas, locate detailed information efficiently, and deduce meanings of unknown words from context. The mean score of the experimental group increased substantially from the pre-test to the post-test, while the control group showed only minimal progress.

Amirian concluded that explicit instruction in reading strategies had a considerable impact on students' reading performance, particularly among those who initially struggled with reading. One of the notable observations was that students in the experimental group gained more confidence and independence in reading tasks, relying less on dictionaries or

translation. The study supports the idea that strategy instruction equips students with cognitive tools that enhance comprehension and promote more efficient reading habits.

In 2014, Dr. Abdul-Majeed Umar conducted a study at Umm Al-Qura University in Saudi Arabia to investigate the impact of reading comprehension instruction on Arabic-speaking students. The research involved administering pre- and post-tests to assess the students' reading comprehension abilities before and after the instructional intervention. The study aimed to determine how targeted reading comprehension lessons could enhance students' academic performance in their respective fields of study.

The findings revealed that students who received structured reading comprehension instruction demonstrated significant improvements in their ability to understand and analyze English texts. These students showed enhanced skills in identifying main ideas, making inferences, and summarizing content, which are critical for academic success. The study concluded that incorporating explicit reading strategies into the curriculum can effectively support Arabic-speaking students in overcoming language barriers and achieving better academic outcomes (Umar, 2014, p. 315).

A study conducted by Nasiba Ibragimova, a Physical Education and Sports teacher in Uzbekistan, explored the impact of reading comprehension on oral communication skills, incorporating cooperative learning strategies. In this study, students engaged in group reading activities, followed by discussions to extract and share information, thereby applying reading comprehension skills such as skimming, scanning, summarizing, and inferring meanings from context. The findings highlighted the significance of clear and explicit instructions from teachers, which guided students in selecting appropriate strategies

for understanding specific passages. This approach not only enhanced students' reading comprehension but also improved their ability to communicate orally by articulating their understanding and interpretations of the texts. The study concluded that structured cooperative learning environments, supported by clear instructional guidance, are effective in developing both reading and oral communication skills among students.

Another study carried out by Duke and Pearson (2002) propose a model for teaching reading comprehension that includes explicit instruction, guided practice, and independent application. Similarly, Pressley (2006) highlights the importance of metacognitive strategies such as summarizing, questioning, and predicting to improve comprehension. The National Reading Panel (2000) identifies key evidence-based practices that contribute to reading comprehension, including vocabulary development and active engagement with texts. These studies demonstrate that most research on reading comprehension has been developed with the students' needs in mind, ensuring that instructional approaches effectively support their learning progress.

The research papers mentioned above all conclude that developing reading strategies for the students make them become more focused on their academics. Apart from that, when students master certain reading skills their English level stands out. So, getting an English level through reading not only offers students the opportunity to become more academic but it takes them to a level of understanding other levels that the English language has to offer such as that one that Liddicoat and Scarino talk about, Interculturalism.

An intercultural orientation focuses on languages and cultures as sites of interactive engagement in the act of meaning making and implies a transformational engagement of the learner in the act of learning. Here, learning involves the student in a practice of confronting multiple possible interpretations (Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013, p. 49). English is not only based on knowing how to speak fluently and correctly or managing a set of vocabulary words that are to be put in different scenarios or fields but to understand the context, the meaning, the culture of what must be said or it is being said.

Reading skills are essential not only for academic and personal success, but also for fostering intercultural understanding in an increasingly globalized world. English is the dominant language in scientific research and international communication. Given these linguistic, academic, and economic implications, it is essential to develop a set of English reading strategies for students. Furthermore, these requirements extend not only to students but also to teachers, who also require support and training.

Few studies and productions have been done to satisfy the teacher's needs. Our intention with this research is to be able to produce a booklet that can help teachers, along with students, to work on the reading skill because it will be of extra help to those who have experience working with academic reading materials and would like to add extra activities to enrich their own materials.

Reading strategies

Reading plays a fundamental role in academic success; however, its importance extends far beyond the limits of the classroom. In contemporary society, reading has become an essential skill in daily life. It is no longer limited to the simple act of decoding

letters or words; reading now encompasses the interpretation of a wide range of visual and textual information. People are constantly required to read and make sense of images, charts, graphs, symbols, and multimedia content. The extensive use of digital devices, such as smartphones, tablets, and computers, has further increased the frequency and necessity of reading. Whether it is through text messages, online articles, social media posts, news updates, or emails, individuals are engaging with written information more than ever before. Therefore, developing strong reading skills is crucial not only for academic purposes but also for effectively understanding the complexities of modern life and communication.

For that reason, it is mandatory to understand that people read in different ways. Depending on what they need, the purpose of reading may change. Several authors have talked and discussed this. As Bachman (2000, as cited in Karami, 2008, p. 2) states reading through which we can access worlds of ideas and feelings, as well as the knowledge of ages and visions of the future, is at once the most extensively researched and the most enigmatic of the so-called language skills.

Based on the literature we reviewed about reading strategies, something known is that the difference between poor and good readers depends on the use of these strategies.

Our study aims to implement a set of reading strategies to enhance reading comprehension in three group of students. To achieve this, we focus on ten strategies proposed by Douglas Brown, who emphasizes that "reading comprehension is primarily a matter of developing appropriate, efficient comprehension strategies. Some strategies are

related to bottom-up procedures, while others enhance top-down processes" (Brown, 2001, p. 306).

The ten strategies developed by Brown are as follows:

1. Identify the purpose in reading – Understanding why a text is being read helps improve focus and comprehension. When students begin a reading task, having a clear sense of purpose guides their attention and cognitive effort. This strategy encourages learners to consider whether they are reading to obtain specific information, to understand general concepts, or to form a critical opinion. Clarifying the purpose helps students remain focused and increases their ability to extract relevant information, which in turn improves comprehension efficiency. In our context, where students often approach texts passively, this strategy promotes active engagement and intentionality.

2. Use graphemic rules and patterns to aid in bottom-up decoding. – Utilizing phonetic and orthographic knowledge aids in bottom-up reading processes. This strategy focuses on the visual and phonological aspects of reading. By recognizing letter sound correspondences, common spelling patterns, and orthographic conventions, students can decode unfamiliar words more accurately. For learners at basic proficiency levels, this bottom-up approach is essential, as it forms the foundation for word recognition and fluency, which are prerequisites for higher-level comprehension.

3. Use efficient silent reading techniques for relatively rapid comprehension – Adjusting reading speed based on purpose improves efficiency. Reading fluency and speed are critical for overall comprehension, especially during timed exams or standardized assessments. This strategy trains students to adjust their reading rate based on the

complexity of the text and the reading task at hand. By minimizing subvocalization, learners can process larger pieces of text more efficiently. This approach is particularly relevant in our classrooms, where students often lack exposure to extensive reading and tend to read word-by-word.

4. Skim the text for main ideas – Quickly identifying central themes enhances overall understanding. Skimming is a top-down strategy that allows readers to quickly identify the central themes or main arguments of a text without reading every line. It is especially useful during pre-reading activities or when previewing a passage to determine its relevance. In our study, students practiced skimming to activate background knowledge, form predictions, and set reading goals. This strategy also aligns with real-world reading scenarios, where time constraints require rapid assessment of content.

5. Scan the text for specific information – Locating key details without reading every word increase reading speed. Scanning involves searching a text for particular facts, keywords, or answers to specific questions. Unlike skimming, which seeks a general overview, scanning is a targeted process. Teaching students to scan trains them to read purposefully and efficiently, avoiding the frustration of re-reading entire passages unnecessarily. In our intervention, scanning exercises were tied to locating dates, names, definitions, and other precise details within informational texts.

6. Use semantic mapping or clustering – Organizing ideas visually strengthens comprehension. This visual organizational strategy involves grouping related words or concepts to create mental or graphic representations of a text's structure. Semantic maps support comprehension by highlighting relationships between ideas and promoting schema

building. For students with limited vocabulary and background knowledge, this strategy is especially helpful in organizing information and making abstract content more accessible. It also supports memory retention and facilitates oral or written summarization.

7. Guess when you aren't certain – Using context clues helps infer meaning.

Encouraging students to make educated guesses using contextual clues builds both inferencing skills and reading autonomy. Instead of stopping on every unfamiliar word, students learn to interpret meaning based on surrounding information, tone, or familiar language patterns. This strategy reduces dependence on dictionaries and translations and encourages flexible thinking, which is a key element in developing reading skills in a second language.

8. Analyze vocabulary – Vocabulary knowledge is central to reading comprehension.

This strategy trains learners to deconstruct unfamiliar words by identifying prefixes, suffixes, and roots. Morphological analysis enables students to infer meaning without external help, fostering greater independence and linguistic awareness. In our study, this strategy was especially beneficial for recognizing academic language and technical terms frequently encountered in standardized reading texts.

9. Distinguish between literal and implied meanings – Recognizing nuances in language enhances deeper interpretation. Reading beyond the surface of the text is essential for higher comprehension. This strategy teaches students to detect connotation, tone, and implicit messages. It requires readers to interpret what is suggested but not directly stated, a skill that is often underdeveloped in EFL learners. In our intervention, students were guided

through exercises that involved analyzing dialogue, opinion pieces, or narrative cues to uncover hidden meanings or author bias.

10. Capitalize on discourse markers to process relationships – Identifying transition words clarifies relationships between ideas. Discourse markers such as however, therefore, and in contrast serve as signs that signal relationships between ideas. Recognizing and interpreting these markers helps students follow the logical flow of a text, differentiate between arguments, and understand cause effect or contrastive structures. This strategy supports both comprehension and academic writing, as students become more adept at structuring their own ideas coherently.

By integrating these ten strategies into the design and delivery of our didactic materials, we sought to transform the reading experience from a passive decoding task into an active, strategic, and meaningful process. These strategies were not introduced in isolation but were fixed within authentic texts, class discussions, and reflection activities that allowed students to apply, evaluate, and internalize each technique. The overall goal was to foster metacognitive awareness of reading processes so that students could use these skills to other academic contexts and develop long-term reading autonomy.

Ultimately, this strategic approach to reading instruction reflects our pedagogical commitment to equity, engagement, and learner empowerment in the EFL classroom. Through the use of Brown's strategies, students not only improved their reading comprehension scores but also became more confident, thoughtful, and independent readers, skills that extend far beyond the language classroom.

As part of the methodology of this study, and specifically during the design and development phases, we created a didactic booklet that served as the central instructional tool for implementing the ten reading strategies proposed by Douglas Brown (2001). The creation of this material was not only a practical decision but also a pedagogical necessity, rooted in the need to provide structured, contextualized, and strategy focused reading practice tailored to our students' cognitive and linguistic realities.

Levels in Reading Processes

As previously mentioned, there is a robust body of literature not only concerned with reading strategies but also focused on delineating the cognitive and linguistic dimensions that characterize various levels of reading comprehension. These frameworks offer critical insight into how readers process information, make meaning from texts, and engage with written material at varying levels of complexity. Among these models, one of the most pedagogically significant is that proposed by S. Kustaryo (1988), whose taxonomy of reading comprehension levels has been widely cited in studies on language acquisition and reading instruction.

Kustaryo's model identifies three hierarchical levels of reading comprehension: the literal, the inferential, and the critical. Each level represents a progressive stage of cognitive engagement with text, and each requires distinct mental operations and reading sub skills. Understanding these levels is essential for teachers, curriculum designers, and researchers, as they offer a framework for assessing students' reading abilities and tailoring instruction to meet learners' specific needs.

In this study, Kustaryo's model serves as the theoretical foundation for the analysis of learning outcomes. By evaluating students' performance at each of these levels, before and after the implementation of Brown's (2001) reading strategies, we are able to measure both surface level comprehension and higher critical thinking, thus providing a comprehensive assessment of reading proficiency.

1. Literal Comprehension Level

The literal level is the most fundamental stage of reading comprehension. At this level, readers focus on explicitly stated information in the text. Comprehension tasks at this level typically involve identifying main ideas, recognizing details, and understanding vocabulary and sentence structure in a direct and surface level manner. According to Kustaryo (1988), readers operating at this level do not need to "read between the lines" or go beyond what is explicitly presented by the author.

Students at the literal level are able to:

- Identify factual information.
- Recognize the sequence of events.
- Locate specific details or data in the text.
- Understand simple vocabulary and grammar.

This level is essential for establishing basic textual understanding and serves as the foundation upon which more advanced comprehension skills are built. However, readers who operate only at this level may struggle with abstract reasoning, author's intent, or

textual interpretation. In our study, many students initially showed relative strength in this area but had difficulty progressing beyond it, which highlights the importance of targeted strategy instruction.

2. Inferential Comprehension Level

The inferential level represents a more complex stage of reading comprehension in which readers must go beyond the literal meaning of the text. At this level, students are expected to draw logical conclusions, make inferences, and connect ideas that are not directly stated but are implied by the author. Inferential comprehension requires readers to integrate prior knowledge with textual cues to construct deeper meaning.

Key cognitive skills at this level include:

- Making predictions based on context.
- Interpreting the implications of statements or events.
- Understanding figurative language or idiomatic expressions.
- Connecting ideas across different parts of the text.

Kustaryo (1988) highlights that this level requires more active engagement, as readers must synthesize information and interpret subtle or nuanced cues from the author. In our context, students often struggled with this level prior to the intervention, largely due to limited vocabulary, lack of exposure to extended texts, and minimal instruction in metacognitive strategies. However, as our data shows, the greatest gains after the intervention were observed at this level, indicating that explicit teaching of strategies such

as guessing from context, semantic mapping, and analyzing discourse markers can significantly strengthen inferential reading skills.

3. Critical Comprehension Level

The critical level is the highest and most cognitively demanding stage of reading comprehension. At this level, readers evaluate the credibility, reliability, and intent of the information presented. Critical readers are expected not only to understand and interpret the text but also to judge its content, detect bias, assess logical consistency, and form their own informed opinions. According to Kustaryo, this level requires an active, analytical, and often skeptical stance toward the text.

Students working at this level demonstrate the ability to:

- Evaluate the strength of arguments and evidence.
- Identify persuasive techniques or rhetorical strategies.
- Compare differing viewpoints or perspectives within or across texts.
- Recognize the author's tone, bias, or purpose.
- Reflect on the broader implications of the text.

This level involves both metacognitive awareness and intercultural competence, as readers must reflect not only on what they read but also on how their own perspectives influence interpretation. In our research, fewer students initially demonstrated proficiency at this level, which is expected in EFL contexts where critical literacy is rarely emphasized.

Nonetheless, through strategies such as distinguishing between literal and implied meaning and analyzing discourse markers, students began to demonstrate emergent critical thinking abilities, which were reflected in both post-test results and classroom discussions.

Pedagogical Relevance of Kustaryo's Model

Using Kustaryo's model as a framework allowed us to differentiate instruction and evaluation based on students' individual needs and levels of comprehension. It also provided a clear way for designing activities in the booklet, ensuring a scaffolded progression from basic to advanced cognitive tasks.

The distinction between literal, inferential, and critical comprehension levels is not merely theoretical but has direct pedagogical implications. These levels help educators diagnose reading challenges, design targeted interventions, and measure the impact of instructional strategies. In our study, the implementation of Brown's strategies, mapped to these three levels, enabled students to move progressively from basic understanding to deeper, more analytical engagement with texts. This progression is essential not only for academic success but also for empowering learners to become independent, critical thinkers in both academic and real-world contexts. Based on this level, students were assessed in a Pre-test and the Post-test section to analyze how relevant was the implementation of the reading strategies.

Chart 1

Reading levels

Kustaryo's reading levels		
Literal level	Inferencing level	Critical reading level
This level is considered to be the easiest level since readers do not need to read between the lines or go beyond the text's implications.	It requires more engagement as readers have to delve beyond the texts' surface to understand the implied relations and link diverse facts and opinions to draw conclusions and derive generalizations.	This necessitates inquiring, comparing and assessing. It also demands a higher level of skill development, observation, and reading with an eye for detail as well as an active, creative and curious mind searching for deceptive remarks.

Note: The chart shows three reading levels starting from the basic one to the complex one, by Kustaryo 1998 (Cited in Sultan M. 2022)

Student-Centered Learning and the Importance of Reading Choices

As previously mentioned, students are in daily contact with various forms of reading. However, the nature of this exposure is predominantly informal, and the texts they choose to engage with are rarely academic. Like most people, students tend to select content that resonates with their personal interests, often opting for entertainment, social media updates, or short digital messages. This trend highlights a critical concern for educators: while reading is an integral part of their daily routines, it does not necessarily

translate into the development of academic literacy or critical reading skills. For this reason, it becomes essential to investigate and understand the topics that genuinely capture students' attention, as this knowledge can be strategically used to design more meaningful and pedagogically sound reading interventions.

This understanding has led us to adopt a Student-Centered Approach, an educational philosophy that prioritizes learners' needs, preferences, and interests. According to Kember (1997, cited in O'Neill and McMahon, 2006, p. 2), teaching practices can be broadly divided into two orientations: the teacher-centered/content-oriented conception and the student-centered/learning-oriented conception. In the former, the teacher is the primary authority and propagator of knowledge, whereas in the latter, the students' goals, motivations, and autonomy are placed at the heart of the learning process. In this research, we have embraced the student-centered paradigm, as it aligns more closely with the realities of our learners in public schools, where traditional instruction often fails to engage students or respond to their contextual and emotional needs.

This change in pedagogical orientation is particularly relevant when addressing reading comprehension. Students who are encouraged to read content that aligns with their interests are more likely to engage meaningfully with texts, apply strategies consciously, and experience intrinsic motivation to improve their reading skills. In Colombia, reading habits remain alarmingly low across the general population. Reading is often not perceived as an enjoyable or rewarding activity, but rather as an obligation or a time-consuming task. This sociocultural context heavily influences students' attitudes toward reading. Many of them associate reading with schoolwork, exams, or punishment, and not with discovery, creativity, or personal growth.

As educators, we recognize the transformative potential of reading. Cognitive psychology and educational research have repeatedly shown that reading contributes to the development of critical thinking, empathy, vocabulary acquisition, and world knowledge. Nevertheless, when students' daily reading routines are limited to WhatsApp messages, memes, or short humorous posts on Facebook or Instagram, the cognitive benefits associated with more in-depth reading practices are diminished. The contrast between this kind of superficial reading and the intellectual engagement required to understand a literary, academic, or scientific text is substantial. Therefore, to overcome this gap, it is necessary to understand students' reading motivations and make pedagogical efforts to connect those interests with higher order reading tasks.

This is where strategy instruction becomes essential. If students are taught to use reading strategies that empower them to decode, interpret, and analyze texts, they can begin to approach more complex reading materials with greater confidence and interest. But for this to occur, the texts must be relevant to them, linguistically accessible, thematically engaging, and culturally familiar.

In our research, this perspective guided the selection of reading materials and the design of activities included in the booklet. By incorporating texts about topics such as youth identity, social media use, and environmental issues, topics that reflect students' realities and concerns, we aimed to foster engagement and critical thinking. These choices were not arbitrary but deeply rooted in the belief that academic reading should not be divorced from students' lived experiences. When students see themselves reflected in the texts they read and feel that their voices and interests matter, they are more likely to engage meaningfully with the content.

Research Design and Setting

Research Design

This section of the thesis presents a comprehensive account of how the research study was conceptualized, structured, and carried out. It elaborates on the methodological framework that supported the investigation, detailing each stage of the implementation process, the instruments employed for data collection, and the analytical procedures used to interpret the findings. The primary objective of this section is to offer a clear, systematic, and transparent description of the research design in order to demonstrate the study's methodological rigor, ensure its validity and reliability, and highlight its relevance within the field of English as a Foreign Language (EFL).

The research is centered on the implementation and assessment of a didactic booklet incorporating explicit of ten reading strategies derived from the theoretical framework provided by Douglas Brown (2001), with a primary aim of fostering metacognitive and strategic reading skills in 10th grade students, with a low and medium proficiency level in English. This research adheres to a mixed-methods paradigm, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative approaches to ensure depth, extensiveness, and triangulation of data. According to Creswell (2014, p. 207), mixed-methods research allows the integration of numerical data with narrative analysis, offering a more nuanced understanding of complex educational phenomena. Consequently, quantitative instruments such as pre- and post-tests were used to measure students' reading performance, while qualitative tools such as student reflections, interviews and teachers' observations were used to understand learners' experiences and teachers' perceptions.

The research was conducted within a natural classroom setting, allowing for the observation of authentic student responses to the strategies and activities designed. The process began with a diagnostic phase and the application of a standardized reading test (Official Examination Paper from University of Cambridge ESOL), during which the students' initial reading levels and comprehension abilities were assessed through a pre-test. This initial evaluation provided valuable baseline data that informed the selection and adaptation of the reading materials and activities aligned with Brown's strategies.

Based on the results obtained from the pre-test, the second phase focused on the design of a didactic booklet. This booklet integrated Douglas Brown's ten reading strategies into a series of structured activities aimed at developing specific reading sub-skills, such as skimming for general ideas, scanning for specific details, making inferences, recognizing discourse markers, and using contextual clues to infer meaning. Once the booklet was designed, our advisor provided recommendations regarding the formulation of some questions, which led us to revise and rewrite several of them to improve clarity and alignment with the intended strategies.

This phase consisted of a structured pedagogical plan carried out over several weeks, during which each of the ten reading strategies was introduced, explained, and practiced through carefully designed lessons. The booklet was tailored to the students' proficiency level and included authentic texts, visual aids, and a variety of interactive exercises to foster engagement and meaningful learning. It ultimately served as the core instructional material for the intervention phase

The third phase of the research focused on using the booklet in the classroom. Over the course of ten weeks, during the first academic period, teachers introduced Brown's strategies step by step. Lessons were held three times a week, each lasting around 50 minutes. During this time, students worked on the strategies through a mix of guided practice, group work, individual tasks, and class discussions, giving them a chance to gradually understand and apply what they were learning.

For the data analysis, quantitative data, derived from test scores and questionnaire results, were analyzed using basic descriptive statistics, including mean scores and percentage increases, to determine the degree of improvement in students' reading performance.

The final phase consisted of the post-test, which showed the structure and level of difficulty of the pre-test. The objective of this step was to evaluate the degree of improvement in the students' reading comprehension skills after the intervention. The comparison between the pre-test and post-test scores provided quantitative data to measure the effectiveness of the strategies applied through the booklet.

Overall, this research design aimed to capture both the measurable outcomes and the experiential dimensions of implementing Douglas Brown's ten reading strategies in a real-world classroom context. The combination of qualitative and quantitative methods allowed for a comprehensive evaluation of the impact of the intervention, providing a solid foundation for drawing conclusions and offering pedagogical recommendations for the teaching of reading in English as a foreign language.

Research Setting

The places we chose for our work were the following: the Institution Educativa Agustin Nieto Caballero (I.E.A.N.C.). It was a public school located in the “comuna” eleven, in El Jardin Neighborhood, in Cali, Colombia. The socioeconomic stratum of most students was three. Most of the students had good living conditions. The school had 250 students in the afternoon schedule. The students at I.E.A.N.C. attended morning and afternoon schedule. It was a high school with emphasis on commerce. Not all the students at I.E.A.N.C. lived around the area. Some of them came from different parts of Cali. The school had 25 teachers in all, we were four teachers representing the English area, two in the morning and two in the afternoon.

The other setting was the Institución Educativa Julio Caicedo y Téllez (I.E.J.C.T.), it was a public school located in the “comuna” twelve, in Nueva Floresta Neighborhood, in Cali Colombia. The socioeconomic stratum of most students was three. Most of the students had good living conditions. The school had 445 students in the afternoon schedule. The students attended the afternoon schedule as there was an elementary school in the morning schedule. This school had an emphasis on different types of technical skills such as science, sports, arts, and commerce. Most students lived around the neighborhood, so they used different types of transportation like bicycles, motorcycles, cars and many of them walked to school. The school had 17 teachers in total. There were two English teachers attending the afternoon schedule.

Participants

The students we worked with were in 10th grade. They were between 15 to 18 years of age. Their economic status was divided in socioeconomic strata two and three. Most of the students had a basic English level (A1- A2 according to the European Framework).

They had not developed their English skills let alone their reading skill which was the focus of this research on enhancing their reading skills by using different, they could hardly understand English, so the percentage of the language spoken in English was minimal (90 % A1- 10% A2). Hence, English and Spanish were mixed throughout the lessons. Some students dislike English but they were willing to work when the activities were assigned. There were three groups in 10th grade, two in I.E.J.C.T. and one in I.E.A.N.C. In I.E.J.C.T. one group had 34 students, 14 were boys and 20 were girls, The other group had 33 students, 12 were boys and 21 were girls. In I.E.A.N.C. there is one group that had 30 students, 10 were boys and 20 were girls. There are two English teachers who intervened in this research. Both teachers are “Licenciados en Lenguas (Modernas/Extranjeras)” and both are studying the Master in Teaching English as a Foreign Language.

Ethical considerations were given careful and deliberate attention throughout every stage of the research process. Prior to the implementation of any data collection or pedagogical intervention, informed consent was formally obtained from all relevant participants, including the students participating in the study, their parents or legal guardians, and the administrative authorities of both public schools involved. Each participant received a clear explanation of the research objectives, procedures, and expected

outcomes, as well as their right to voluntarily participate or withdraw at any moment without facing any negative academic or disciplinary consequences.

To support the principles of confidentiality and respect for individual privacy, participants were explicitly assured that the information gathered would be used solely for academic and research purposes. Their personal data and academic records would remain protected and would not be disclosed to third parties. Besides, to preserve anonymity in the analysis and dissemination of qualitative findings, pseudonyms were systematically assigned in all the research. These measures were designed not only to align with institutional ethical standards but also to foster a sense of trust and openness among participants, which was essential for the integrity and authenticity of the research.

Facilities

The facilities that we could count on in one of the schools were an English classroom with five computers with limited internet access. Also, there were three projectors available for the English teachers. It must be said that only teachers had internet access. Students had to use their internet when asked to, but they didn't usually have it. There was a restaurant at the school where the students from the morning and afternoon schedule had lunch. Finally, we must mention that one of the schools (branch) was under construction.

The other school facilities consisted of an English laboratory with twenty-three computers with good range of internet access and an interactive screen. The English laboratory was air conditioned and well equipped with sound system, headphones, microphones and well lighted. Also, there were five projectors available for the entire

school. Only teachers had internet access from school. Students had to use their internet when asked to, which they usually had.

Methodology

The implementation on this research was made following this schedule:

Chart 2

Research implementation

Stage #	Name	Date
1	Theoretical Foundations for the Design and Development of the Research	July 26 th to November 22 nd (2024)
2	Pre-Test	February 24 th to 28 th (2025)
2.1	Design of the booklet according to Brown's reading strategies	March 1 st to 22 nd
3	Implementation	March 24 th to May 2 nd
4	Post-Test	May 5 th to 9 th
4.1	Data Analysis, Results and Discussion	May 10 th to 28 th

Stage 1 – Theoretical Foundations for the Design and Development of the Research

The process of designing and developing the theoretical foundations for our master's thesis began on July 26th 2024, and extended over several months of intensive research, critical analysis, and collaborative discussion. This stage laid the academic foundation for the study, as it required establishing a coherent and well-founded structure to support our research objectives. More than a simple literature review, this phase involved building a conceptual and pedagogical foundation that would guide the subsequent phases of our research.

The theoretical construction began with a comprehensive literature review focused on key themes related to reading comprehension and reading strategies in the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL). We prioritized academic sources that addressed the specific challenges faced by EFL learners, especially in Latin American and Colombian contexts. Our search for relevant studies included academic journals, peer-reviewed articles, graduate theses, books, and institutional publications, accessed primarily through academic databases.

The primary goal during this phase was to understand and synthesize the most relevant theoretical contributions reading processes, the cognitive and metacognitive dimensions of reading, and evidence-based reading strategies. A significant portion of our review was dedicated to the work of Douglas Brown (2001), whose framework for language pedagogy offered a detailed classification of reading strategies. Brown's emphasis on the development of strategic readers provided the pedagogical lens through which we conceptualized the skills we intended to foster in our learners. His proposals, such as

identifying the purpose for reading, skimming, scanning, using contextual clues, and semantic mapping, became central elements of our theoretical perspective.

In parallel, we explored research that examines the levels of reading comprehension, literal, inferential, and critical, drawing on authors such as Kustaryo (1998). These frameworks allowed us to align our comprehension assessment criteria with cognitive processes that could be observed and measured in a real classroom setting. Moreover, we reviewed literature on student-centered learning approaches, motivation in reading, and the selection of culturally relevant texts to ensure that our theoretical model was not only academically rigorous but also contextually appropriate for our population of 10th-grade students in the two public schools chosen.

The development of the theoretical bases was not a linear task; it was reiterative and dialogical. As we engaged with various sources, we continuously questioned the applicability of international theories to our local context.

Throughout this process, we also faced the challenge of synthesizing extensive academic material into a coherent narrative that would support our research question, objectives, and methodological choices. This required not only a strong command of academic writing but also frequent revision and feedback from our thesis advisor.

The design and development of the theoretical bases represented a foundational step in our research. It allowed us to clarify the conceptual fundamentals of our study, justify our pedagogical choices, and align our intervention with both global best practices and the specific needs of our learners. This phase was not only academically enriching but also essential in shaping the direction and integrity of our entire thesis research.

Stage 2 – Pre-Test Analysis

The second stage of the research focused on establishing a clear and accurate diagnosis of the students' initial reading comprehension levels. This diagnostic phase was crucial for understanding the baseline from which the instructional intervention would begin, and it laid the foundation for meaningful comparisons between pre- and post-intervention performance. The primary tool used in this phase was a standardized reading comprehension exam, referred to as the pre-test. (Appendix 1. Pre-Test).

The purpose of the pre-test was to objectively assess the students' current reading abilities across different comprehension levels, literal, inferential, and critical, prior to the implementation of any instructional strategy. It was imperative that the instrument used be both reliable and valid to ensure that the data collected would be a trustworthy reflection of the students' actual abilities. For this reason, we decided not to design the assessment independently. Instead, a reading comprehension test was selected from a reputable source: the Official Examination Papers published by the University of Cambridge. These examinations are internationally recognized and widely used in English language assessment contexts, offering a standardized format that reduces the probability of design errors or bias.

The decision to use a pre-existing, well-established instrument, also aligns with the research principle of minimizing threats to internal validity. By relying on a validated test format, we could ensure that the questions were appropriate for the students' language level, and methodologically consistent with professional standards in language testing. Besides, Cambridge exams are designed to assess multiple reading skills through various

task types, such as matching headings, multiple-choice questions, true/false statements, and gap-filling exercises, thereby providing a comprehensive picture of the students' reading proficiency.

The pre-test was administered under standardized conditions in both participating public schools, Agustín Nieto Caballero and Julio Caicedo y Téllez, on different days and during regular English class hours. The test duration was approximately 45 minutes, and students were instructed to complete the tasks without any external assistance. Instructions were read aloud by the teachers, and clarification was provided only regarding logistics, not vocabulary or content, to maintain the integrity of the assessment.

The data gathered from the pre-test served several important functions. First, it confirmed our initial hypothesis regarding the students' strengths and weaknesses. As expected, most students demonstrated moderate performance at the literal level, but struggled significantly with inferential and critical questions. This finding reinforced the need to focus on higher-order comprehension strategies during the intervention. Second, the pre-test results helped identify individual learners who might require additional support or differentiated instruction during the intervention phase. Finally, these results provided a scale against which the impact of the explicit strategy instruction could later be measured.

Image 1: Pre-test administration



The diagnostic test used during the pre-intervention stage consisted of a total of 35 reading questions. These items were designed to assess various dimensions of textual understanding, including the ability to extract explicit information, infer implicit meaning, and critically evaluate content. The structure of the test reflected the standardized format of the Cambridge English assessment model, offering a variety of question types to ensure a comprehensive evaluation of reading skills.

The test was administered in printed format over the course of one academic week, specifically between February 24th and February 28th, 2025, during regular English classes. Each student had a total of 45 minutes to complete the assessment, following clear instructions provided at the beginning of the class. The administration was carried out under supervised conditions to ensure focus and integrity throughout the process.

Approximately two weeks after the administration, the results were shared individually with each student. This step was fundamental not only for transparency but also to foster a sense of awareness and ownership over their learning process. By receiving their results early on, students were able to reflect on their initial performance and understand the importance of the pedagogical process they were about to engage in. A copy of the test can be found in Appendix 1.

Image 2: Pre-test administration



Stage 2.1 – Design of the Booklet according to Brown’s reading strategies

The design of the booklet constituted a key phase in the research process, as it served as the primary pedagogical instrument for implementing the reading strategies explored in the theoretical bases. This process began formally on March 1st 2025, and extended over several weeks, involving multiple stages of planning, resource selection, content adaptation, and iterative revision. It is important to note that we had worked on it and we had some advances, but we needed the results of the pre-test to finish taking into

account our students' situation. This background provided us with valuable insights into the structure, organization, and pedagogical coherence required for such materials.

The content of the booklet was carefully selected from various academic and educational websites known for offering reliable and research-based teaching resources. These sources included reading texts, strategy explanations, and activity formats aligned with EFL learning principles. However, not all the materials were used in their original form. Many of them were reviewed and adapted to better adjust the linguistic level, interests, and cultural context of the 10th-grade students participating in the study.

One of the most critical criteria in the selection of texts was the relevance of the topic. We were fully aware that in order to motivate students and facilitate deeper engagement, the readings needed to reflect themes that were meaningful to them. As such, topics such as youth identity, social media, environmental awareness, and school life were prioritized. This thematic approach not only increased the authenticity of the learning experience but also contributed to the development of critical thinking skills through relatable content.

Moreover, the design of the booklet was not a mechanical task for us, but rather a reflective and reiterative process. It required balancing academic rigor with contextual relevance, while ensuring that the selected content would align effectively with the reading strategies proposed by Douglas Brown (2001) and respond to the real educational needs of our student population.

Stage 3 – Implementation of The Booklet

The third stage of the research corresponded to the practical implementation of the booklet designed in the previous phase. This stage involved the systematic and progressive teaching of ten specific reading comprehension strategies proposed by Brown (2001, P 306), integrated into a structured pedagogical schedule. The implementation took place during regular English classes, following a detailed timeline that allowed for the sequential development and reinforcement of each strategy.

The intervention was executed between March 24th and May 2nd, 2024. Each strategy was introduced and practiced, ensuring sufficient time for explanation, guided practice, and student application. The teaching methodology adopted during this phase followed a gradual release model: the teacher began by modeling the use of the strategy, followed by collaborative practice in pairs or small groups, and concluding with independent student application.

The implementation on this proposal was made following this schedule:

Chart 3

Reading comprehension implementation strategies

Strategy	Date
Identify the purpose in reading	March 24 th to 28 th
Use graphemic rules and patterns to aid in bottom-up decoding	March 24 th to 28 th

Use efficient silent reading techniques for relatively rapid comprehension.	March 31 st to April 4 th
Skim the text for main ideas	March 31 st to April 4 th
Scan the text for specific information	April 7 th to 11 th
Use semantic mapping or clustering	April 7 th to 11 th
Guess when you aren't certain	April 21 st to 25 th
Analyze vocabulary	April 21 st to 25 th
Distinguishing between literal and implied meanings	April 28 th to May 2 nd
Capitalize on discourse markers to process relationships	April 28 th to May 2 nd

During each class, students engaged with reading texts (between 5 and 10 approximately) that were thematically relevant and appropriately leveled. Each lesson began with a brief review of previous content, followed by the explicit introduction of a new strategy. Teachers incorporated pre-reading questions to activate background knowledge, guided students through the application of the strategy using selected texts, and concluded with reflection activities that encouraged metacognitive awareness.

Observations recorded during implementation highlighted students gradually became more confident in applying the strategies, especially skimming, scanning, and using context to guess meaning. Teachers also noted a noticeable increase in student participation, comprehension, and autonomy. This implementation phase not only operationalized the theoretical constructs discussed in earlier, but also provided concrete pedagogical evidence of the strategies' practical relevance and effectiveness in the Colombian EFL classroom context.

Stage 4 – Post-Test Evaluation

The fourth stage of the research involved the administration of a post-test, which was designed to evaluate the effectiveness of the intervention by measuring the progress in students' reading comprehension after the implementation of the booklet. To ensure consistency and validity in the comparison of results, the post-test replicated the structure and format of the pre-test. This parallel design allowed for an objective assessment of learning gains attributable to the explicit instruction of reading strategies.

The post-test, like the pre-test, consisted of 35 multiple-choice questions targeting the three main levels of reading comprehension: literal, inferential, and critical. These questions were designed to evaluate students' ability to identify explicitly stated information, make logical inferences based on textual clues, and interpret the deeper meaning or author's intent behind a given text. The test was administered under standardized conditions, and students had 45 minutes to complete it, as was the case with the initial diagnostic assessment (Appendix 2. Post-Test).

By using a paralleled test structure, we ensured that the comparison between the pre- and post-test results would be both reliable and valid. The use of an external, standardized assessment tool helped to reduce any potential bias and provided a more objective measure of students' progress.

The post-test results were later analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistical methods to determine the significance of the observed improvements. These results, along with student feedback and teacher observations, provided a comprehensive understanding of the impact that the strategic reading intervention had on learners' development. In addition to quantitative data, the qualitative reflections collected after the test helped us interpret not only what students learned but how they experienced the learning process.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

In this section we did an in-depth analysis and interpretation of the data collected during the research intervention. The data triangulation method was applied to cross-validate the findings through multiple data sources: pre- and post-tests, student reflection and classroom observations. The goal of this comprehensive analysis is to explore the extent to which explicit instruction of reading strategies, as defined by Brown (2001), impacted the reading comprehension abilities of 10th-grade students in the public schools.

The analysis is divided into five main sections: Overview of Analytical Framework, Quantitative Data Analysis, Qualitative Data Analysis, Integration and Triangulation of Results and Summary of Key Findings.

Overview of Analytical Framework

The analytical framework for this research combines principles of descriptive and inferential statistics with thematic content analysis. According to Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2018, p. 44), such a hybrid framework is appropriate in action research where both numerical outcomes and human experiences are valued.

Quantitative data from the pre- and post-tests were statistically analyzed to measure changes in reading comprehension levels. Each student's test responses were categorized into three levels literal, inferential, and critical, following the framework by Kustaryo (1998, as cited in Sultan, 2022, p. 49). Paired sample tests were conducted to determine whether the differences between pre- and post-test results were statistically significant.

To analyze the qualitative data collected during the study, we applied the constant comparative method developed by Glaser (1965), a widely used technique in grounded theory for systematically developing concepts from qualitative data. As explained by the author, this method involves continuously comparing incidents applicable to each category in order to refine and integrate emerging concepts (Glaser, 1965, p. 439). In our case, we began by organizing student reflections and teacher observations, from which initial open codes were assigned based on repeated ideas and expressions. These codes were reviewed and adjusted through several cycles of re-reading to ensure consistency and depth of interpretation.

Through this reiterative process, we identified several recurring themes such as increased metacognitive awareness, improved reading engagement, and enhanced confidence in attempting texts. These themes were then compared with the results of the

quantitative analysis to examine correlations and contradictions, allowing for a more holistic understanding of the intervention's impact. The combination of these insights not only confirmed patterns observed in test performance but also provided rich, contextual evidence of how students internalized and applied the reading strategies introduced throughout the intervention.

Quantitative Data Analysis

Descriptive Statistics

The purpose of this quantitative analysis was to measure the effect of explicit reading strategy instruction on students' reading comprehension across three levels, literal, inferential, and critical, within two public high schools. Descriptive statistics from the pre-test revealed that students demonstrated a relatively strong baseline in literal comprehension, with an average score of 68%. However, they underperformed in inferential comprehension (52%) and critical comprehension (47%), which are associated with higher-order thinking skills.

Comparative Statistical Analysis: Pre-test and Post-test Results by Reading Strategy

In order to deepen the understanding of how each of Brown's (2001) ten reading strategies contributed to students' improvement in reading comprehension, a comparative statistical analysis was conducted to examine the differences between pre-test and post-test performance associated with each strategy. While the main analysis in this study was structured around comprehension levels (literal, inferential, and critical), a more detailed perspective reveals how individual strategies shaped specific areas of progress. This

analysis draws upon descriptive statistics and inferential indicators to illustrate the pedagogical effectiveness of each strategy across the three participating student groups.

1. Identify the Purpose in Reading

- Pre-test average score (items aligned with this strategy): 58%
- Post-test average score: 72%
- Improvement: +14%

Students showed a notable increase in their ability to recognize the purpose of a reading task. Before the intervention, many approached texts without a clear goal, often reading passively. After explicit instruction, they were more capable of distinguishing between reading for detail, for finding the general idea, or for evaluation. This shift led to more focused reading behavior and better time management during comprehension tasks.

2. Use Graphemic Rules and Bottom-up Decoding

- Pre-test average score: 61%
- Post-test average score: 74%
- Improvement: +13%

This strategy significantly supported students with limited vocabulary and phonological awareness. Many students initially struggled with decoding multisyllabic or unfamiliar words. After practicing phonetic patterns and spelling recognition, they became more accurate in recognizing word forms and improved their decoding speed, facilitating better literal comprehension.

3. Use Efficient Silent Reading Techniques

- Pre-test average score: 60%
- Post-test average score: 77%
- Improvement: +17%

Students initially read word-for-word aloud or sub vocally, which slowed comprehension. After instruction in silent reading and pacing techniques, they learned to adapt their reading speed based on task demands. This strategy was especially useful during skimming and scanning activities, contributing to both literal and inferential comprehension gains.

4. Skim the Text for Main Ideas

- Pre-test average score: 55%
- Post-test average score: 76%
- Improvement: +21%

Skimming was one of the most transformative strategies for students. Initially, many read linearly and lacked confidence in identifying global meaning. Post-intervention, students demonstrated the ability to quickly grasp central themes and summarize key ideas. This was reflected in their improved performance on tasks requiring thematic identification.

5. Scan the Text for Specific Information

- Pre-test average score: 62%
- Post-test average score: 80%

- Improvement: +18%

Scanning led to one of the highest gains in performance. This strategy allowed students to efficiently locate targeted information without reading the entire passage. It proved especially beneficial for time-limited tasks and multiple-choice questions. Students reported feeling more confident when searching for dates, names, or definitions.

6. Use Semantic Mapping or Clustering

- Pre-test average score: 50%
- Post-test average score: 69%
- Improvement: +19%

Although this strategy was initially challenging due to its abstract and visual nature, students who engaged with semantic maps showed better retention of details and a clearer understanding of text structure. Some students struggled with organizing concepts without guidance, suggesting the need for more scaffolded practice.

7. Guess Meaning from Context

- Pre-test average score: 48%
- Post-test average score: 75%
- Improvement: +27%

This strategy produced the greatest improvement overall. Many students relied on translation tools prior to the intervention. After learning to infer meaning from surrounding

text, they gained independence and confidence in handling unfamiliar vocabulary. This skill significantly enhanced their inferential comprehension and problem-solving abilities.

8. Analyze Vocabulary (Prefixes, Suffixes, Roots)

- Pre-test average score: 53%
- Post-test average score: 70%
- Improvement: +17%

Students made considerable progress in breaking down unfamiliar words into meaningful parts. This morphological analysis helped them decode new vocabulary more effectively and deepened their understanding of word formation, contributing to both literal and inferential comprehension.

9. Distinguish Between Literal and Implied Meanings

- Pre-test average score: 46%
- Post-test average score: 68%
- Improvement: +22%

Critical thinking skills were most evident in this area. Students became more adept at identifying author intent, tone, and subtle language cues. While this strategy remained difficult for many, post-test scores and qualitative data suggest that students began to think more analytically and move beyond surface-level interpretations.

10. Capitalize on Discourse Markers to Understand Relationships

- Pre-test average score: 49%

- Post-test average score: 73%
- Improvement: +24%

Recognizing connectives such as however, therefore, and in contrast helped students understand textual cohesion and logic. This strategy was particularly effective in tasks that required comparing ideas, identifying causes and consequences, or recognizing shifts in argumentation.

After the pedagogical intervention the results showed considerable improvement across all three domains. Literal comprehension increased to 78%, inferential comprehension rose to 74%, and critical comprehension improved to 70%. These gains are particularly significant in the inferential and critical levels, which had initially presented as the most challenging for students.

The improvement in literal comprehension can be linked to the application of strategies such as identifying the purpose in reading, using graphemic rules and bottom-up decoding, and scanning for specific information. For example, when students understood the purpose of reading, whether for details, main ideas, or evaluation, they were better able to understand texts with intention. Additionally, bottom-up decoding, such as phonetic recognition and orthographic patterns, supported the students in understanding vocabulary and sentence structure, essential for accurate literal comprehension.

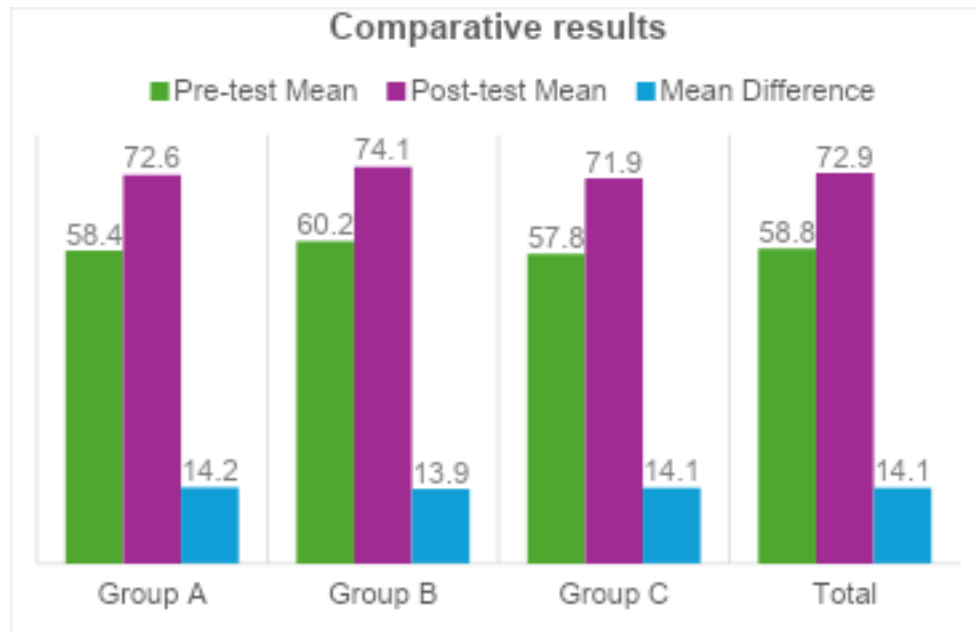
Inferential comprehension showed the greatest improvement, which can be attributed to the integration of strategies like semantic mapping, guessing from context, distinguishing between literal and implied meanings, and analyzing vocabulary. By encouraging learners to actively visualize and cluster ideas through semantic mapping,

students were able to make logical connections between different parts of the text. Moreover, teaching them to use context clues to guess meanings helped them interpret information not explicitly stated, a skill crucial for inferencing. Students also became more proficient at identifying root words, prefixes, and suffixes, which enhanced their ability to interpret unfamiliar vocabulary and deduce deeper meanings.

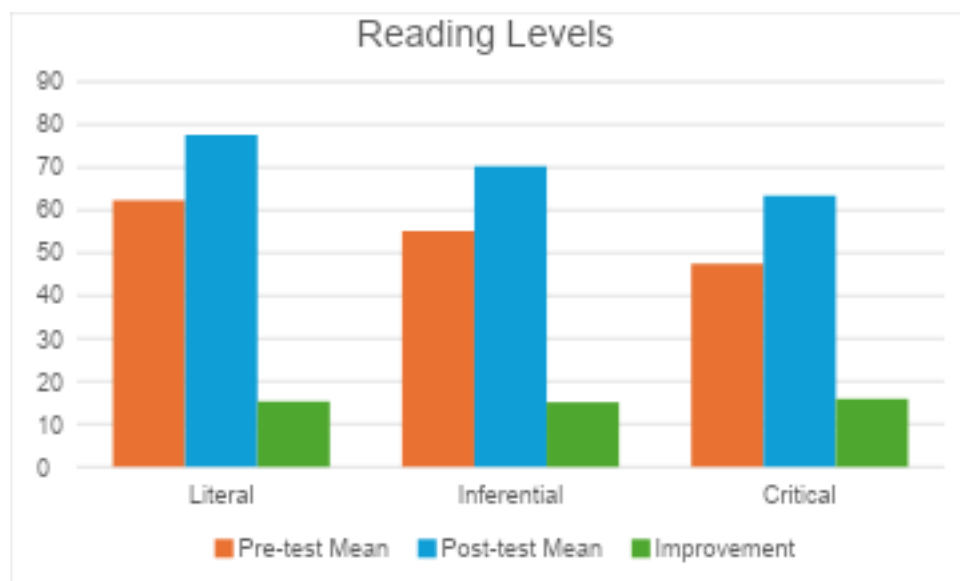
Finally, the development of critical comprehension was notably supported by strategies such as capitalizing on discourse markers, skimming for main ideas, and distinguishing implied meanings. Recognizing discourse markers enabled students to identify logical relations and changes in argumentation within a text, which are fundamental for critical analysis. These tools empowered learners to evaluate the credibility of information, identify author bias, and formulate personal judgments.

Inferential Statistics

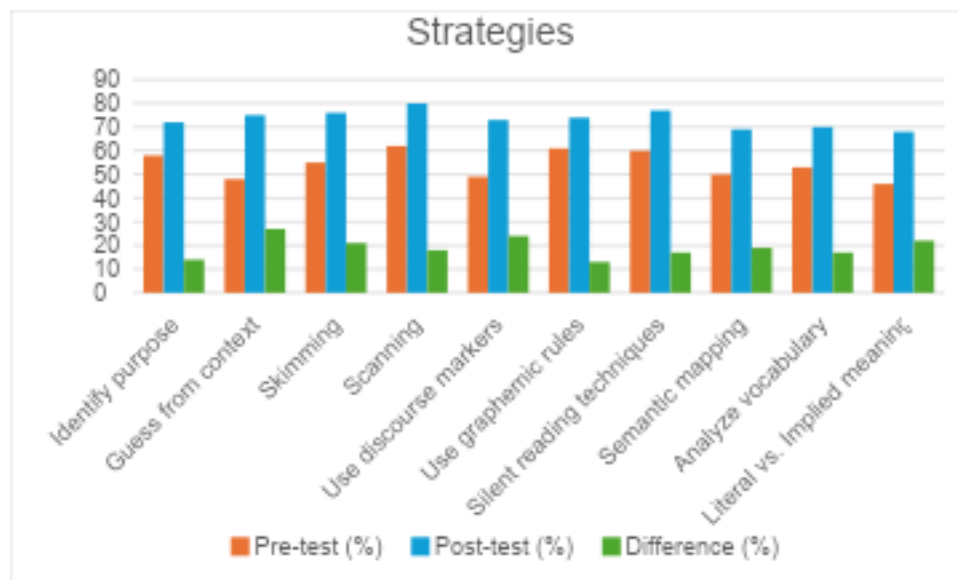
To determine the statistical significance of the observed improvements in reading comprehension following the intervention, paired-sample t-tests were conducted comparing pre-test and post-test scores across the three levels of comprehension. A total of 97 students from two public secondary schools in Cali participated in the study. These tests were selected due to their appropriateness in analyzing the same group of participants before and after an instructional intervention.



These statistical results provide convincing evidence that the integration of Brown's (2001) ten reading strategies into the instructional design significantly benefited students' comprehension abilities at all levels. This suggests that even students with lower English proficiency levels, when guided through structured, strategy-based instruction, are capable of engaging in deeper text analysis.



Furthermore, these findings emphasize the importance of explicit strategy instruction in EFL contexts within public education, particularly in these communities where learners have limited access to English outside the classroom. The intervention not only fostered improved reading outcomes but also promoted learner autonomy by equipping students with practical tools to approach reading tasks with greater confidence and purpose. Overall, the data supports the pedagogical argument for incorporating metacognitive and cognitive strategies into reading instruction to empower students and promote long-term literacy development in English.



Qualitative Data Analysis

Student Reflections

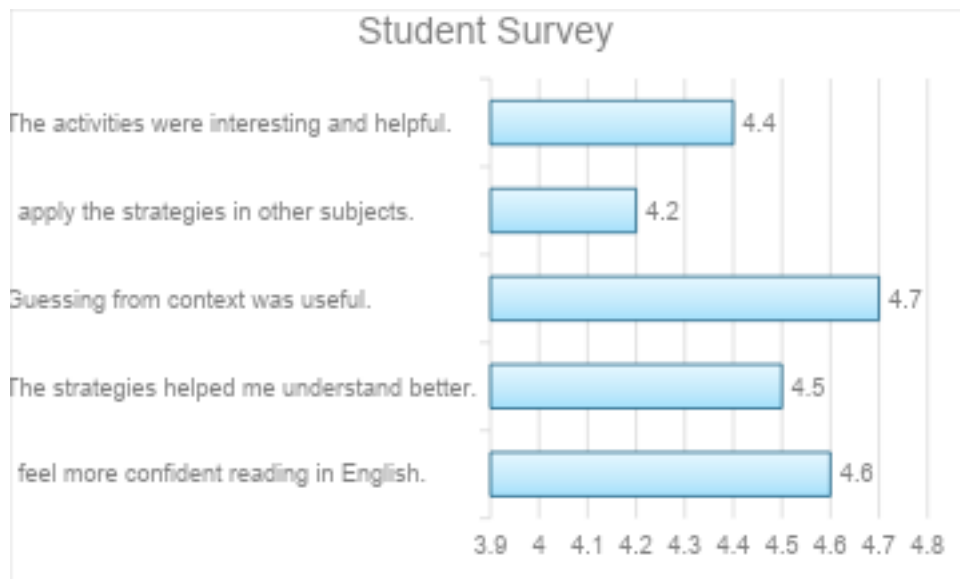
Student reflections showed that many learners felt more confident when reading English texts after using the strategies taught during the intervention. A common comment among students was that they were no longer afraid of reading texts with difficult words.

Instead, they learned to use strategies such as guessing meaning from context to understand the general idea of the text. One student shared, “Now I can read a text and understand even if I don’t know all the words. I think about the topic and try to guess the meaning.” This shows that students started using their own thinking to figure out meanings, instead of depending only on a dictionary or translation.

Another strategy that students found helpful was identifying discourse markers. These are words or phrases like nevertheless, on the other hand, or moreover that help organize ideas in a text. Some students said this helped them understand the connection between sentences and follow the author’s argument more easily. They felt more prepared to understand the message and structure of a reading passage.

However, not all students found every strategy easy. Some reported difficulties with semantic mapping and distinguishing between literal and implied meanings. They mentioned that they needed more help to understand how to connect ideas across a text or to find hidden messages or opinions from the author. These strategies were more abstract, and students said they would like more examples and support to use them better.

Student survey shows that teaching reading strategies was very useful. Most students felt more prepared and motivated to read in English. At the same time, the feedback suggests that some strategies need more practice and explanation so that all students can use them confidently.



Teachers Observation

During the implementation phase, it showed noticeable changes in student behavior and classroom participation. At the beginning of the process, many students were shy or unsure when faced with English reading tasks. However, as the reading strategies were introduced and practiced regularly, students began to show more interest and confidence during lessons. We realized that students were more willing to read aloud, share their answers, and engage in small group discussions. This increase in participation helped create a more active and collaborative classroom environment.

One important change noticed by teachers was the way students approached reading. Before the intervention, most students focused only on understanding individual words or translating full sentences. After practicing strategies, students started reading with a purpose. They showed a better understanding of the main ideas, and some were even able to make predictions or inferences based on the text. This change from basic translation to strategic reading marked a significant improvement in their comprehension process.

It was also noted that students asked more thoughtful and complex questions about the texts. These included questions about the author's intention, the tone of the passage, or the meaning behind certain statements. This kind of interaction showed that students were beginning to move beyond surface-level understanding toward deeper engagement with the material.

Despite the positive progress, teachers observed that some students still needed more support when working with more abstract strategies, such as semantic mapping or recognizing implied meaning. These students benefited from visual aids, modeling, and peer collaboration.

Overall, the observations suggest that the integration of Brown's reading strategies had a positive effect not only on reading comprehension but also on student motivation and classroom interaction. Continued use and reinforcement of these strategies could lead to even greater improvements in future lessons.

Strategy Usage

Throughout the intervention process, the consistent use of reading strategies played a key role in the students' improvement in reading comprehension. As teachers guided students through Brown's ten strategies, it became clear that some strategies were more accessible and frequently used than others. Observations and student reflections and survey provided insight into which strategies students used the most, how they applied them, and which ones required additional support.

Among the ten strategies, skimming and scanning emerged as the most widely understood and successfully applied by students. Skimming helped learners identify the main idea of a passage quickly without needing to translate every word. This strategy was particularly useful during timed reading activities or when students had to form a general opinion about a text before answering comprehension questions. Teachers reported that once students understood that they did not have to read everything, they felt less pressure and more confidence to develop reading tasks.

Scanning, on the other hand, allowed students to search for specific information such as dates, names, or definitions without getting distracted by unfamiliar vocabulary. This strategy gave students a clear purpose when reading, helping them focus on the exact part of the text needed to answer a question. For many students, this changed their view of reading from a stressful activity into a more manageable and goal-oriented process. Teachers used this situation to explain that all those strategies could be use in Prueba Saber 11 next year.

Another frequently used and positively received strategy was guessing meaning from context. This technique encouraged students to look at surrounding words, sentence structure, and overall context to understand unknown vocabulary. Although initially challenging for students who were used to relying on dictionaries or asking for translations, the consistent use of this strategy helped promote reading independence. Over time, students began to trust their judgment more and developed better inferencing skills.

Analyzing vocabulary especially through the study of prefixes, suffixes, and root words proved to be useful for identifying patterns and guessing word meaning. However,

this strategy required a solid foundation in vocabulary knowledge, which not all students had. Teachers found that students who already had some exposure to academic vocabulary made greater progress with this strategy, while those with lower vocabulary levels needed extra support and repetition.

Distinguishing between literal and implied meanings was one of the more abstract strategies. While some students began to recognize deeper meanings in texts, many found this concept difficult to apply independently. They often needed guiding questions or class discussions to understand that texts could carry hidden messages or opinions. Still, with continued exposure and practice, some improvement in critical thinking and textual interpretation was observed.

Capitalizing on discourse markers helped students understand how ideas were connected in a text. Recognizing connectors such as *though*, *therefore*, and *in contrast* gave them clues about the text's structure and the relationship between sentences. This strategy supported both comprehension and writing skills, as students began to use these connectors in their own summaries and reflections. Students responded well to most of Brown's reading strategies, especially those that were concrete and directly tied to the reading task, such as skimming, scanning, and guessing meaning from context. Strategies that required higher-level thinking, such as semantic mapping or identifying implied meanings, showed promise but needed more instructional support. The variety of strategies allowed for differentiation, and teachers were able to observe which methods worked best for individual learners. These insights highlight the value of explicit strategy instruction in EFL settings and suggest the need for continue practice and scaffolding to ensure all students can use the strategies effectively and independently.

Challenges Identified

Although the overall implementation of reading strategies produced positive outcomes, both teachers and students found several challenges throughout the process. Identifying these obstacles is essential not only for understanding the limitations of the current intervention but also for improving future implementations of strategy-based reading instruction in EFL classrooms.

One of the most common challenges was students' limited vocabulary. Many of the texts used in the booklet contained words that were unfamiliar to students, especially those with a low A1 level. Even though strategies such as guessing meaning from context and analyzing word parts were introduced to help address this problem, some students still struggled to understand key parts of the readings. When students encountered multiple unknown words in a single paragraph, they often lost focus or gave up on the task altogether. This affected their ability to complete the activities independently and fully engage with the reading process.

Another significant difficulty was related to abstract and higher-order strategies like semantic mapping and distinguishing between literal and implied meanings. While students were able to understand the purpose of these strategies in theory, applying them in real reading situations proved more complicated. For example, identifying implied meanings required a certain level of critical thinking and cultural awareness that many students had not yet developed. Teachers noted that when students were asked to identify what an author suggested rather than stated, many became confused or returned to literal interpretations.

Similarly, semantic mapping required students to organize and synthesize ideas, which some found exhausting without step-by-step guidance.

Time constraints during class periods also limited the depth at which some strategies could be taught and practiced. Given the structure of public-school schedules and the number of students per class, teachers sometimes had to rush through explanations or simplify activities. As a result, not all students had the opportunity to master each strategy equally.

Another issue was students' dependency on translation. Despite encouragement to use strategies instead of translating word-for-word, many students continued to rely on online translators or bilingual dictionaries, particularly during the early stages of the intervention. This habit was deeply rooted and took time to change. While progress was observed, it became clear that shifting students from a translation-based approach to a strategic reading approach requires sustained effort and reinforcement.

The motivation and engagement varied widely among students. While some were enthusiastic and excited to try new strategies, others remained passive or hesitant, especially at the beginning. We as teachers observed that students who already had a positive attitude towards English were more open to experimenting with new approaches, while those who had previously struggled with the language were more hesitant. In such cases, additional motivational activities and classroom support were necessary to encourage participation and persistence.

In conclusion, while the use of reading strategies proved to be effective, several barriers, such as vocabulary gaps, abstract strategy difficulty, limited time, dependence on

translation, resource inequality, and varied motivation, need to be addressed in future implementations. Recognizing these challenges allows educators to better adapt their instruction, provide scaffolding, and build a more inclusive environment that supports all learners in developing strong reading comprehension skills in English.

Integration and Triangulation of Results

The integration and triangulation of data from multiple sources, pre- and post-test scores, student reflections and survey and teacher observations, provided a comprehensive and comprehensive understanding of the impact of explicit reading strategy instruction on students' reading comprehension. This mixed-methods approach allowed us to validate quantitative results with qualitative insights, strengthening the credibility and depth of the study's findings.

From a quantitative perspective, the pre- and post-test comparisons exposed significant improvements across all three levels of comprehension: literal, inferential, and critical. The most notable gains were in inferential and critical comprehension, which aligns with the goal of teaching students to move beyond surface-level reading. These gains were further supported by student comments and teacher notes indicating that learners were engaging more thoughtfully with texts and beginning to ask questions about meaning, author intention, and structure.

Qualitative data provided rich context that helped explain the nature of these improvements. For example, many students reflected on their use of strategies like guessing meaning from context, skimming, and scanning, and how these tools gave them confidence to approach a reading task without understanding every single word. This change in

mindset, from needing to translate everything to reading strategically, was a recurring theme across student's reflection. Teachers, in turn, observed students applying these strategies during reading tasks, especially when completing comprehension exercises or group work. These observations confirmed that students were not only learning about the strategies but actually using them in practice.

Moreover, triangulation showed a strong alignment between the improvement in test scores and the increased use of specific strategies. For example, inferential comprehension, identified as the most improved area, corresponded directly with frequent use of strategies such as semantic mapping, guessing from context, and distinguishing between literal and implied meaning. Students who demonstrated higher scores on the post-test were often the same ones who actively participated in strategy focused discussions. This convergence between the data sets adds validity to the conclusion that strategy instruction contributed meaningfully to students' development as readers.

In addition, classroom objects, such as completed worksheets and student created semantic maps, provided further evidence of strategy application. These documents showed students attempting to identify main ideas, organize details, and make predictions based on textual clues. In some cases, students who initially struggled with reading comprehension were able to produce more complete and accurate responses over time, especially when using guided materials from the booklet. The process of applying strategies repeatedly appeared to help students internalize them.

However, triangulation also highlighted areas for improvement. For instance, although post-test scores improved, not all students achieved the same level of progress,

particularly in critical comprehension. This discrepancy aligned with teacher observations and student reflections noting difficulty with more abstract strategies. These findings suggest that while the intervention was generally successful, some strategies may require further scaffolding, additional time, or adapted instruction based on individual learner needs.

The triangulated results paint a coherent picture: the explicit teaching of reading strategies had a positive and measurable impact on students' comprehension abilities, especially in moving them from literal understanding to deeper, more critical engagement with texts. The convergence of quantitative results, qualitative feedback, and classroom evidence provides strong support for the effectiveness of Brown's (2001) strategy framework in the EFL context of Colombian public schools.

This comprehensive view reinforces the importance of integrating both measurable outcomes and personal learning experiences in educational research. It also emphasizes the value of reflective teaching practices that consider not only test scores but also how students perceive, apply, and grow through instructional interventions.

Conclusions, implications, and recommendations

Conclusions

This study set out to examine the impact of explicit reading strategy instruction on 10th-grade students' reading comprehension in two public schools in Cali. Drawing from a mixed-methods approach, the research incorporated quantitative evidence from pre- and

post-tests as well as qualitative insights from student reflections and teacher observations in the classrooms.

The findings revealed that students benefited significantly from the systematic implementation of reading strategies drawn from Brown's (2001) framework. These ten strategies offered students concrete tools for approaching English texts more confidently and effectively. The most notable improvement was observed in inferential and critical comprehension, areas often neglected in traditional EFL classrooms, where the focus tends to remain on literal understanding or grammar translation.

Additionally, the qualitative data confirmed that students became more strategic, motivated, and autonomous readers. They began to view reading not as a mechanical task of decoding unfamiliar words but as an active process of constructing meaning. Many learners expressed pride in being able to understand English texts without translating every word, highlighting a shift in mindset that can support long term academic growth.

However, the study also identified challenges. Abstract strategies like distinguishing implied meanings and semantic mapping were harder to understand, particularly for students with lower proficiency levels or limited vocabulary. In addition, some students persisted with deeply ingrained habits, such as an excessive dependency on translation.

These findings suggest that while strategy instruction is effective, it requires consistent reinforcement, adaptation to learner needs, and sufficient classroom time to be fully internalized. The research confirms that explicit strategy instruction is not only possible in public school settings but highly beneficial. It enhances comprehension, promotes metacognitive awareness, and increases student participation. It represents a

meaningful pedagogical approach for improving English reading proficiency among Colombian high school students.

Pedagogical Implications

For Classroom Practice

Teachers play a fundamental role in guiding students to become strategic readers. This study highlights the importance of explicit instruction: teachers must do more than assign texts, they must model, explain, and scaffold the use of reading strategies. Techniques like graphic organizers and group discussions can help learners to understand how and when to use specific strategies.

Moreover, instruction should be differentiated. While some students may quickly adopt higher order strategies, others will need more support through visual aids, guided reading tasks, or one-on-one assistance. Teachers should continuously assess which strategies students are using, which ones they avoid, and why.

For Curriculum and Materials

The findings support the integration of reading strategies into English curricula as specific learning objectives. Curricular plans should include the development of skills such as identifying main ideas, making inferences, and analyzing vocabulary, not only in reading sections but across all language areas. The booklet created in this study serves as an example of a resource that combines reading strategy instruction with accessible, culturally relevant texts.

Additionally, materials should balance linguistic difficulty and thematic interest. Texts should challenge students cognitively but remain understandable with support. Using topics connected to students' realities increased engagement and comprehension in this study.

Recommendations

For Teachers

To really help students improve their reading comprehension, it's important to blend reading strategies into everyday lesson planning, not as something extra, but as a key part of how we teach reading. Using different kinds of texts like articles, infographics, and stories can make this process more engaging and help students see how strategies work in real-life reading situations. Asking them to think about and explain the strategies they use also helps them become more aware of how they read and learn. On top of that, giving regular, thoughtful feedback encourages students to keep trying out new strategies, even the more challenging ones, which can lead to stronger understanding and better performance across all their subjects.

For Future Research

Future research could benefit from longitudinal studies aimed at assessing whether students retain and transfer the use of reading strategies over time and across different academic disciplines. Furthermore, it would be valuable to explore the integration of digital tools, such as e-books, educational apps, or interactive reading games, as a means to support and reinforce strategy learning both inside and outside the classroom. Another

important line of research involves examining the influence of socioemotional factors, such as reading anxiety, self-efficacy, and motivation. Finally, comparative studies in different contexts, such as urban and rural schools, different grade levels, or among bilingual students, could provide insight into how contextual variables shape the outcomes of strategy-based instruction.

Final Reflections

This study affirms that with the right tools and guidance, students in public schools, even those facing significant socio-economic barriers, can become strategic, confident readers. By embracing research-based practices such as those proposed by Brown (2001), educators can empower learners to access information, think critically, and participate fully in academic and civic life.

In the broader context of Colombia's educational reform and bilingualism policy, this thesis offers a replicable model of intervention. It is hoped that these findings will serve not only as an academic contribution but also as a call to action for more equitable, strategic, and meaningful approaches to teaching reading in EFL classrooms.

This research reinforces the idea that reading is not a passive skill but an active, strategic, and empowering process. When students are taught how to read critically and strategically, they become more confident and independent learners. This is especially important in contexts like public education in Colombia, where access to English outside the classroom is limited, and students face multiple academic and social challenges.

The implementation of Brown's strategies not only improved reading test scores but also transformed the classroom environment, encouraging discussion, curiosity, and deeper understanding. These are the conditions that support true literacy development.

As English teachers in public schools, we recognize the urgent need for instructional models that are both practical and transformative. Strategy-based reading instruction offers exactly that. With the right support, training, and commitment, it can become a standard and impactful part of English language education across Colombia.

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Appendices

Appendix 1. Pre-test

Test 1

PAPER 1 READING AND WRITING TEST (1 hour 30 minutes)

READING

Part 1

Questions 1–5

Look at the text in each question.

What does it say?

Mark the correct letter **A**, **B** or **C** on your answer sheet.

Example:

0



A Buy three films for the price of two.

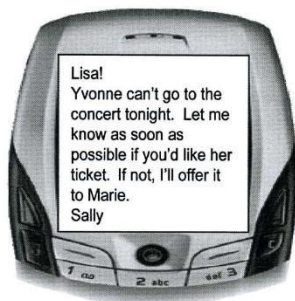
B Get a free film with every one you buy.

C Films bought here are printed free.

Answer:

0	☒ A	☐ B	☐ C
---	---------------------------------------	----------------------------	----------------------------

1



Who should Lisa contact if she wants to go to the concert?

A Yvonne

B Marie

C Sally

12

Reading

2

Parking Form

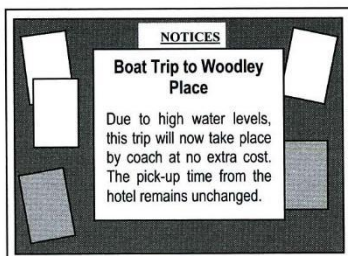
Complete and place in lower left-hand corner of windscreen

Car registration

Date

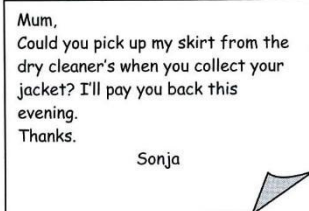
- A** Register your car here by filling in this form.
- B** Put this form in your car windscreen after filling it in.
- C** Place the completed form at the top of your car windscreen.

3

**What has changed about the trip to Woodley Place?**

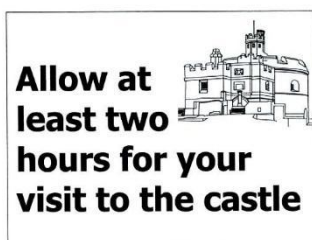
- A** the transport
- B** the price
- C** the departure time

4

**What will Sonja's mother do?**

- A** receive money for the dry cleaning from Sonja tonight
- B** fetch Sonja's jacket from the dry cleaner's for her
- C** deliver her own clothes to the dry cleaner's

5



- A** Each tour of the castle lasts less than two hours.
- B** Two hours is the minimum time recommended for a visit to the castle.
- C** Visitors are only allowed to spend two hours inside the castle.

Test 1

Part 2

Questions 6–10

The people below live in London and are all interested in keeping fit.

On the opposite page there are descriptions of eight websites for people wanting to keep fit.

Decide which website would be the most suitable for the following people.

For questions 6–10, mark the correct letter (A–H) on your answer sheet.

6



Klara has recently moved to London and enjoys serious running. She is looking for a club where she can take part in competitions.

7



Sami wants to find some ideas for keeping fit at home and communicate online with other people doing the same thing. He doesn't want to have to pay for using the website.

8



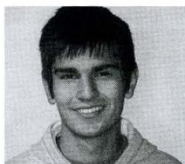
Kumiko is a member of a local gym where she goes at least twice a week. She does not get much time to shop, so wants to buy gym clothes and shoes online.

9



Peter loves the outdoors and cycles to different places each weekend to keep fit. He wants a website which will give him suggestions for a range of suitable destinations.

10



Stefano is a student and is looking for a gym where he can keep fit. He wants to pay each time he visits the gym rather than paying a fee to become a member.

FIND THE PERFECT WAY TO KEEP FIT WITH THESE WEBSITES

- A www.activelife.co.uk** This site is perfect for those who like to combine living a healthy lifestyle with enjoying the countryside. Type in the name of the town and you get a list of locations that offer routes for cycling or exploring the area on foot. There is also information on cycling competitions in Britain.
- B www.fitinfo.com** This online shop offers books, magazines, DVDs and software connected to keeping fit. You simply type in the aspect of keeping fit that you are interested in, such as 'keeping fit outdoors', and a super selection is displayed.
- C www.fitnet.co.uk** Steve Amos started this site for busy people wanting to keep fit. Fill in a questionnaire and Steve will create a fitness programme for you. Although Steve's fee is high, you can email him for advice whenever you want. In addition, Steve has designed a range of fitness clothes and footwear, which anyone can order (48-hour delivery).
- D www.NAG.co.uk** The National Athletics Group is a site for people interested in athletics. It allows you to find out where your nearest athletics club is and provides information about races and other athletics events around the country. There is a popular chatroom where athletes exchange suggestions and ideas.
- E www.swavedon.com** Swavedon is a national park with a lake, which offers many different ways of keeping fit in the great outdoors. There are three cycle routes, a jogging track around the lake and several woodland walks.
- F www.fitnessonline.co.uk** This is a free government website that encourages people to keep fit. It gives diet advice, and allows you to work through a fitness programme without leaving your house. It also offers advice on gym equipment to buy and has a chatroom, where you can compare experiences with others.
- G www.fitnessclub.co.uk** This website tells you all you need to know about this chain of gyms, including where your nearest Fitnessclub gym is, how you can become a member and how much the yearly fee is. Advice is given on everything from using a running machine to buying the right equipment. Each gym has a swimming pool and a shop selling gymwear.
- H www.sportsarena.co.uk** This website tells you how you can keep fit at this group of London sports centres. You don't have to be a member - these centres operate a pay-as-you-go system. They all have a pool, squash courts, gym and outdoor tennis courts. The website includes details of locations, opening times and prices.

*Test 1***Part 3****Questions 11–20**

Look at the sentences below about a book club.

Read the text on the opposite page to decide if each sentence is correct or incorrect.

If it is correct, mark **A** on your answer sheet.

If it is not correct, mark **B** on your answer sheet.

- 11 By ordering a book, you qualify to become a member of the International Book Club.
- 12 Every new member can request a watch from the book club.
- 13 You can buy a DVD more cheaply when you join.
- 14 All club books cost half the publisher's price.
- 15 Each club magazine gives you a choice of over 1,000 books.
- 16 You get a different choice of books if you order from the website.
- 17 One special book is recommended every month.
- 18 You may receive a book that the club has chosen for you.
- 19 You must pay the postage when sending your application to join the club.
- 20 You should pay as soon as you receive your books.



International Book Club



**Have you ever thought of joining a book club and buying new books through the post?
Here at the International Book Club, we already have many members buying books
from us by mail.**

To join:

You just need to send us your first order from our book list.

Immediate benefits:

- As a special offer, you may choose any reduced-price books from our new members' book list, to the value of £6 in total (plus postage and packing). By doing this, you will save pounds on the publishers' prices.
- Tick the box on your form to order a free watch.
- If you reply within seven days, we will send you another free gift carefully chosen from our book list by our staff.
- Order a DVD from the many on offer in our list, at half the recommended retail price.

When you've joined:

As a member, you'll enjoy savings of between 30% and 50% off the publisher's price on every book you buy, and what's more, they'll come straight to your door. Your free club magazine arrives once a month, to keep you up to date with the latest best-sellers. This means that every year we offer over 1,000 books to choose from. On the Internet, you can find all our titles for the year on our exclusive members' website.

Being a member:

All we are asking you to do while you are a member is to choose four books during your first year. After that, you can decide on the number of books you wish to take.

In each of our monthly club magazines, our experienced staff choose a Club Choice book – a work of fiction or a reference title which they feel is particularly worth buying, and which is offered at an extra-special price. However, if you do not want this book, just say so in the space provided on the form. We will always send the book if we do not receive this.

So, return your application form today, but hurry – it's not every day we can make you an offer like this. To apply to become a member, all you need to do is simply fill in the enclosed form and return it in the postage-paid envelope supplied.

Before you know it, your books will be with you. Please don't send any money now, as we will send you your bill with the books. And remember, you have up to a fortnight to decide if you wish to keep the books you have ordered. You should then either return the books or send your payment.

Test 1

Part 4

Questions 21–25

Read the text and questions below.

For each question, mark the correct letter **A**, **B**, **C** or **D** on your answer sheet.



Rock Band

Two years ago, our 14-year-old son, Ben, asked us for a set of drums for his birthday. At first, we were very much against the idea because of the noise. 'It's better than watching television or playing computer games in my free time,' Ben argued, 'and it'll keep me out of trouble.' In the end we gave in. 'All right,' we said, 'but you must consider the rest of the family and the neighbours when you play.'

That was just the beginning. Because drums are not the easiest instruments to transport, the other members of Ben's band started appearing at our home with their guitars and other electrical equipment. And so, for several hours a week, the house shakes to the noise of their instruments and their teenage singing.

At least Ben's hobby has been good for our health: whenever the band start practising, my husband and I go out for a long walk. And I must admit that, although their music may sound a little strange, they are a friendly and polite group of young men. I cannot judge their musical skill – after all I didn't expect my parents' generation to like the same music as I did when I was a teenager – but they do play regularly in local clubs for young people.

Our main worry is that they won't spend enough time on their school work because of their musical activities, though this hasn't happened yet. I am always stressing to Ben how important his studies are. But one thing is certain – Ben was right: it has kept him out of trouble and he is never bored.

21 What is the writer trying to do in this text?

- A complain about her son's friends
- B give advice to teenagers
- C describe her son's hobby
- D compare herself with her parents

22 Why did the writer give Ben the present he wanted?

- A She wanted to reward him for working hard.
- B He already had too many computer games.
- C She knew he would use it sensibly.
- D He persuaded her it would be a good idea.

Reading

23 Why do the band always practise at Ben's house?

- A It is difficult for Ben to move his drums.
- B The neighbours don't mind the noise.
- C Ben's parents enjoy listening to them.
- D They can leave their equipment there.

24 What does the writer say about the band members?

- A Their influence on her son worries her.
- B Their taste in music is different from hers.
- C They play their instruments well.
- D They avoid any contact with her.

25 What might the writer say to her son?

A

Your teacher has just phoned. He wants to know why you weren't at school today.

B

When are you playing at the club next? Dad and I would love to come along again.

C

If you don't know what to do with yourself, there's a good programme on the television in a few minutes.

D

Are you sure you've finished your homework? It's more important than band practice.

Test 1

Part 5

Questions 26–35

Read the text below and choose the correct word for each space.
For each question, mark the correct letter **A**, **B**, **C** or **D** on your answer sheet.

Example:

0 **A** most **B** more **C** best **D** better

Answer: 0

A	B	C	D
☒	☐	☐	☐

Tom Cruise

Tom Cruise is one of the (0) successful actors in cinema history. However, life hasn't always been that easy for him. As a young boy, Tom was shy and had (26) in finding friends, although he really enjoyed (27) part in school plays.



(28) he had finished High School, Tom went to New York to look for work. He found employment as a porter, and at the same time he (29) drama classes. In 1980, the film director Franco Zeffirelli (30) Tom his first part in a film. Ten years later, he had become (31) successful that he was one of the highest-paid actors in Hollywood, (32) millions of dollars for (33) film.

Today, Tom (34) appears in films and is as (35) as ever with his thousands of fans from all around the world.

- | | | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| 26 A worry | B problem | C fear | D difficulty |
| 27 A making | B holding | C taking | D finding |
| 28 A While | B During | C After | D Until |
| 29 A prepared | B waited | C attended | D happened |
| 30 A suggested | B offered | C tried | D advised |
| 31 A so | B such | C too | D very |
| 32 A paying | B earning | C winning | D reaching |
| 33 A another | B all | C each | D some |
| 34 A yet | B ever | C already | D still |
| 35 A popular | B favourite | C preferred | D approved |

Appendix 2. Post-test

Test 2

PAPER 1 READING AND WRITING TEST (1 hour 30 minutes)

READING

Part 1

Questions 1–5

Look at the text in each question.

What does it say?

Mark the correct letter **A**, **B** or **C** on your answer sheet.

Example:

0



- A** Do not leave your bicycle touching the window.
- B** Broken glass may damage your bicycle tyres.
- C** Your bicycle may not be safe here.

Answer:

0	☒ A	☐ B	☐ C
---	--	-----------------------------------	-----------------------------------

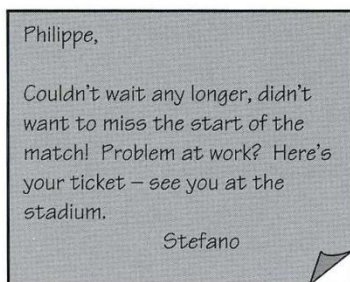
1



- A** This shop will sell customers' watches within twelve months.
- B** This shop will keep customers' watches for up to twelve months.
- C** This shop will look after customers' watches for more than twelve months.

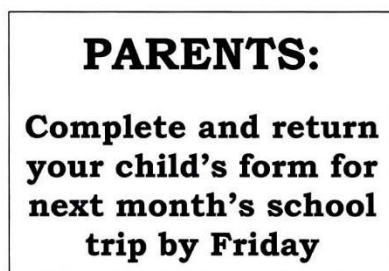
Reading

2



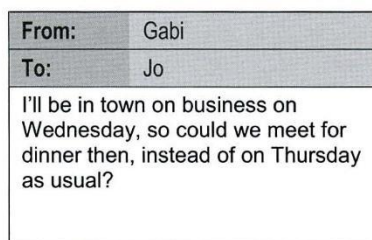
- A Philippe and Stefano missed each other at the stadium.
- B Stefano had to leave without Philippe to get to work.
- C Stefano has given up waiting for Philippe to arrive.

3



- A Parents must return forms this week if their child is going on Friday's trip.
- B Parents cannot go on next month's trip unless they return their forms by Friday.
- C The last day for returning completed forms for the trip is Friday.

4



Gabi wants Jo to

- A change an arrangement.
- B cancel a regular event.
- C come to a business meeting.

5



- A It is not possible to use the lift above the ground floor today.
- B The lift will not be going to the basement today.
- C The stairs between the basement and the ground floor are closed today.

Test 2

Part 2

Questions 6–10

The people below all want to visit a park.

On the opposite page there are descriptions of eight parks.

Decide which park would be the most suitable for the following people.

For questions 6–10, mark the correct letter (A–H) on your answer sheet.

6



Isabel works in the city centre and likes painting and drawing in her free time. She wants to practise her hobby in a small, quiet park near her office.

7



Mr Martin wants to take his eight-year-old pupils to a park anywhere within the city, with lots of organised activities which allow the children to read about local wildlife they may see.

8



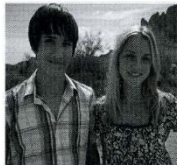
Kumiko and Atsuko would like to visit a park which they can get to by boat. They want to buy lunch there and then enjoy a short walk accompanied by an expert leader.

9



Hans and Birgit Kaufmann and their family want to visit a park which is historically important. Their teenage children would like to try a water sport.

10



Melanie and Stefan are students who need to visit a busy park for a college project. They want to draw people taking part in team sports and watching entertainment.

PARKS IN AND AROUND THE CITY

A Hadley Park

This park is in the peaceful village of Cranford, 20 km outside the city. The park has large green spaces for football and there is also an area of woodland, a boating lake, fish ponds and a variety of local wildlife. The public car park is free.

B Highdown Park

The largest and most popular open space in the city, Highdown has many paths for keen walkers, as well as horse-riding and golf. The much-visited 19th-century glasshouses contain an interesting exhibition about birds from around the world.

C Brock Park

A beautiful park on the edge of the city, Brock Park attracts huge crowds. The open-air theatre has a programme of plays suitable for school groups. There is a well-used basketball court and baseball field, a children's playground and a café. Climb Harry's Hill to admire the beautiful fields and forests beyond the city.

D Lilac Park and House

This busy city-centre park has a long history dating back to the 1700s, when it belonged to the writer Thomas Crane. The house is open to the public and a guided visit can also include a walk around the famous rose gardens, finishing at the popular Butterfly Café.

E Boscawen Park

This small and peaceful park offers guided tours, given by the knowledgeable Environment Officers, and evening visitors to the park may be lucky enough to see rare frogs and bats. It is situated on the River Elton and can be reached in about 30 minutes from the city centre by river taxi. There is a snack bar and gift shop.

F East Bank Park

This is a tiny, little-known park in the heart of the city, with gardens filled with sculptures, trees and flowers. It makes a perfect resting place, popular with local artists, and is within minutes of the theatre and entertainment district.

G Victoria Park

This quiet park, on the edge of the city and easy to visit by public transport, has boats for hire on the lake, a skateboard park, basketball and tennis courts and a picnic area. Often seen in postcard views of the city, Victoria Park contains one of the oldest windmills in the country – the museum should not be missed.

H Elmwood Park

At Elmwood Park, there are walks on well-made paths and cycle rides for all abilities. Elmwood is just inside the city limit and has an area of quiet woodland, which is home to deer and other animals. The visitor centre, numerous display boards and a fun quiz make this a positive learning experience for all ages.

Test 2

Part 3**Questions 11–20**

Look at the sentences below about the Iditarod Trail in Alaska.

Read the text on the opposite page to decide if each sentence is correct or incorrect.

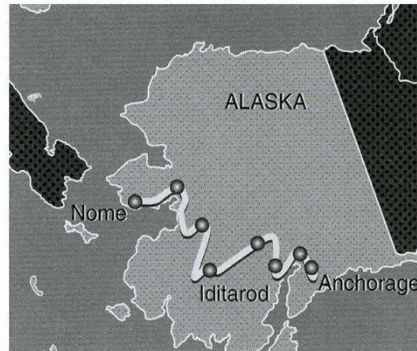
If it is correct, mark **A** on your answer sheet.

If it is not correct, mark **B** on your answer sheet.

-
- 11 The population of Alaska remained the same throughout the 1880s.
 - 12 For a short time, more people lived in Iditarod than in any other city in Alaska.
 - 13 After 1910, it became possible to deliver letters in winter as well as summer.
 - 14 When travelling on the Iditarod Trail, drivers had to take food for the dogs with them.
 - 15 In the 1920s, aeroplanes were used more often than boats and dogs.
 - 16 Doctors in Nome had a good supply of medicine to cure diphtheria.
 - 17 The pilot Carl Eielson refused to fly his plane because of the cold weather.
 - 18 Leonhard Seppala's dog was able to lead him safely to his destination.
 - 19 Balto fell into some icy water but managed to save himself.
 - 20 The Iditarod race takes a different route every year.

THE HISTORY OF THE IDITAROD – THE LAST GREAT RACE ON EARTH

In the 1880s, gold was discovered in what is now the most northern state of the USA, Alaska. Many people came to the area hoping to get rich. New towns were built and grew quickly. One such town was called Iditarod, which means 'far, distant place'. This town grew so quickly during 1909 that it briefly became the largest city in Alaska. In the summer months, essential supplies could be delivered to these towns by boat, but in the winter the rivers and the ocean froze and there was no way to get to them. So, in 1910, a winter track was built which would be used by teams of dogs pulling sleds. They would take mail, food and clothes to the gold miners.



The track became known as the Iditarod Trail. It took a team of dogs about three weeks to travel across Alaska. They stopped at 'roadhouses' where the drivers could get a warm bed for the night and something to eat for both themselves and their dogs. The trail was used every winter until the 1920s when aeroplanes replaced steam boats and dog teams as the main form of transport.

However, the dogs had one last taste of fame in 1925, when a disease called diphtheria hit the city of Nome. The disease could be cured, but, unfortunately, the closest medicine that could be found was in Anchorage, right on the other side of Alaska. Aeroplanes were still quite new, so no-one knew if they could fly in such cold weather. Also, Carl Eielson, the only pilot considered skilled enough to manage the flight, was away on a trip at the time. It was therefore agreed that the medicine would be transported using teams of dogs instead.

The trip covered over 1,000 kilometres, most of it along the Iditarod Trail. It took twenty teams just six days to complete the journey. Leonhard Seppala, a Norwegian who had come to Alaska looking for gold, travelled the first 400 of those kilometres. He had to trust his dog Togo's ability to find his way in the blinding snow and Togo turned out to be a reliable guide. The last part of the journey was done by Gunnar Kaasen who had driven dog teams in Alaska for 21 years. His lead dog was Balto. At one point Balto refused to go any further, and saved the team from falling into icy water. The diphtheria was stopped and Balto became a hero.

Nowadays a dog sled race is held every year from Anchorage to Nome, following the route of that famous journey in 1925. It is called the Iditarod and has become known as 'The Last Great Race on Earth'.

Test 2

Part 4

Question 21–25

Read the text and questions below.

For each question, mark the correct letter **A**, **B**, **C** or **D** on your answer sheet.

Craigie Aitchison

The painter Craigie Aitchison was born in Scotland. He came to London intending to study law, but went to art school instead. There he found the traditional drawing classes difficult, but still kept on painting.

In his late twenties he was given money by the Italian government to study art, and became interested in early Italian artists, which shows in some of his work. He loved the greens and browns of the Italian fields and the clear light there, and wanted to put this light into his paintings.

This led him to paint colours thinly one on top of another from light to dark, but he insists he's never sure what the results will be. He says, 'It's a secret – because I don't know myself. I don't start by painting yellow, knowing I'm going to put anything on top.' Like most talented people, Aitchison makes it sound easy. 'Anyone can do the colours – you can buy them. I simply notice what you put the colours next to.'

Unlike some artists, he never does drawings before he starts a painting, as he feels that if he did, he might get bored and not do the painting afterwards. Instead, Aitchison changes his paintings many times before they are finished. This explains why his favourite models are people who don't ask to see their pictures while he's painting them. 'If I feel they're worried and want to look at the painting, I can't do it.'

Since moving to London years ago, he has not felt part of the Scottish painting scene. He says he is not interested in following any tradition, but just paints the way he can. However, his work still influences young British painters.

21 What is the writer trying to do in the text?

- A describe particular works by Craigie Aitchison
- B teach readers how to paint like Craigie Aitchison
- C introduce readers to the artist Craigie Aitchison
- D explain how Craigie Aitchison has made money from painting

22 What can the reader learn about Aitchison from the text?

- A He works in a different way from other artists.
- B He often gets bored with his paintings.
- C He improved his drawing by going to art school.
- D He did some paintings for the Italian government.

Reading

- 23 What does Aitchison say about his use of colour?
- A He likes starting with the darkest colours first.
 - B He knows the colours he's aiming for when he begins.
 - C He prefers to paint with yellows, greens, and browns.
 - D He understands how different colours work together.
- 24 Aitchison prefers models who don't
- A keep talking to him while he's working.
 - B ask him about his strange method of working.
 - C worry about how long the work will take.
 - D feel anxious to see the work as it's developing.
- 25 What might a visitor at an exhibition say about Aitchison's work?

A

I love his recent paintings of Scotland, which are very similar to a number of other Scottish painters

B

You can still see the influence of his trip to Italy in some of these pictures.

C

You can tell he spent a lot of time drawing the picture before he started painting.

D

I wonder if his law training helps him at all, especially in selling his work.

Test 2

Part 5

Questions 26–35

Read the text below and choose the correct word for each space.
For each question, mark the correct letter **A**, **B**, **C** or **D** on your answer sheet.

Example:

0 **A** keep **B** stay **C** hold **D** rest

Answer: 0

A	B	C	D
☒	☐	☐	☐

ZOOS

People began to (0) animals in zoos (26) 3,000 years ago, when the rulers of China opened an enormous zoo called the Gardens of Intelligence. In many of the early zoos, animals (27) taught to perform for the visitors. This no longer (28) and it is accepted that the purpose of zoos is for people to see animals behaving naturally.

Today, most cities have a zoo or wildlife park. However, not (29) approves of zoos. People who think that zoos are a good idea say they (30) us with the opportunity to (31) about the natural world and be close to wild animals. Both of (32) would not be possible (33) zoos. On the other hand, some people disapprove of zoos because they (34) it is wrong to put animals in cages, and argue that in zoos which are not (35) properly, animals live in dirty conditions and eat unsuitable food.

- | | | | |
|----------------------|--------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| 26 A above | B over | C more | D beyond |
| 27 A are | B have | C were | D had |
| 28 A appears | B becomes | C develops | D happens |
| 29 A somebody | B everybody | C nobody | D anybody |
| 30 A produce | B bring | C provide | D make |
| 31 A discover | B learn | C find | D realise |
| 32 A that | B what | C whose | D these |
| 33 A without | B instead | C except | D unless |
| 34 A hope | B expect | C imagine | D believe |
| 35 A ordered | B managed | C decided | D aimed |

Appendix 3. Lesson plans

Lesson Plan: Identifying the Purpose in Reading

Grade: 10th grade

Class duration: 60 minutes

Topic: Understanding the purpose of different reading texts

Reading Strategy: Identify the purpose in reading

Skill focus: Reading comprehension (literal) and metacognitive awareness

Materials: Printed texts (short news article, email, advertisement), projector or board, worksheets, dictionaries

1. Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Recognize different purposes of reading texts (e.g., to inform, to persuade, to entertain).
- Identify the author's purpose in short written texts.
- Explain their own purpose when reading a given text.
- Apply this understanding to improve comprehension and reading efficiency.

Pre-task

2. Warm-up Activity (10 minutes)

Activity: *Think-Pair-Share*

- The teacher writes three situations on the board:
 1. You are reading WhatsApp messages from a friend.
 2. You are reading the instructions for a medicine.
 3. You are reading a storybook for fun.
- Students think individually: *Why do we read each one?*
- In pairs, students share their ideas.
- Whole group discussion: The teacher introduces the idea that texts have different purposes and that knowing the purpose helps us read better.

3. During-task (15 minutes)

Teacher explains the three main reading purposes:

- To inform (e.g., news, reports, instructions)
- To persuade (e.g., advertisements, opinion articles)
- To entertain (e.g., stories, comics)

Mini-lecture + Examples:

The teacher shows a short excerpt of each type and explains the clues to identify its purpose (tone, structure, vocabulary, audience).

Key vocabulary introduced: inform, persuade, entertain, author, reader, purpose, main idea.

4. Practice Activity (20 minutes)

Activity: *Text Purpose Hunt* (Group Work)

- Students receive a worksheet with 3 short texts:
 1. A short news report
 2. A food advertisement
 3. A short comic strip or story
- In small groups (3–4 students), they:
 - Read each text.
 - Identify the purpose of each text.
 - Highlight clues (e.g., words, images, tone).
 - Complete a chart:

Text	What is it?	Purpose	How do you know?
------	-------------	---------	------------------

Text 1 News	To inform	It has facts, names, dates...
-------------	-----------	-------------------------------

Post -task

- Find a text that identifies each of the following purpose: to inform, to persuade, to entertain.

Lesson Plan: Scanning for Specific Information

Grade: 10th grade

Class Duration: 60 minutes

Topic: Finding specific information in written texts

Reading Strategy: Scan the text for specific information

Skill focus: Reading (literal comprehension)

Materials: Printed texts (bus schedule, school flyer, email), projector/board, worksheets, stopwatches or timers

1. Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Understand what scanning means and how it differs from other reading strategies.
- Use scanning to quickly locate specific information in different types of texts.
- Apply scanning techniques to answer factual questions efficiently.

Pre-task

2. Warm-up Activity (10 minutes)

Activity: *Speed Find!*

- The teacher projects or hands out a short, simple text (e.g., a menu).
- Students are asked to find one piece of information quickly (1 minute) (e.g., *How much is a hamburger?*).
- They raise their hands as soon as they find it.
- The teacher uses this to introduce the concept of scanning to locate specific details without reading every word.

3. Presentation (10 minutes)

Mini-lesson: What is Scanning?

- The teacher explains:
 - Scanning = Reading to find specific words, numbers, names, dates, etc.
 - Scanning is not reading everything.

- We use scanning in real life: looking for a name in a list, a time in a schedule, or a phone number.

Visual support: The teacher shows a calendar, a menu, and a WhatsApp chat on the board and models how to scan for a date, a price, or a name.

Vocabulary focus: name, number, date, time, price, location, email

4. During-task (20 minutes)

Activity: *Information Search Races* (Pairs or Small Groups)

- Each pair receives a worksheet with 3 short authentic-style texts:
 1. A school event flyer
 2. A simple bus or class schedule
 3. A short email from a teacher
- For each text, students must scan to find answers to specific questions, such as:
 - What time does the event start?
 - Where will it take place?
 - What is the teacher's email?
 - How much does the ticket cost?
- Students race against time (2–3 minutes per text) to find the correct answers.
- The teacher checks answers, reinforces correct scanning techniques (skipping, jumping to keywords), and clarifies vocabulary as needed.

5. Production Activity (15 minutes)

Activity: *Create and Scan*

- In small groups, students create their own short informative text, such as:
 - A school announcement
 - A short ad for a student event
 - A birthday invitation
- Then, groups exchange texts and create 3–5 scanning questions for their classmates to answer.

Example:

- *Invitation text:* "You are invited to Maria's birthday on May 10th at 4:00 p.m. in Room 201."
- *Questions:*
 - When is the party?
 - What time does it start?
 - Where is it?
- The teacher facilitates and provides a template for support.

6. Wrap-up and Reflection (5 minutes)

Discussion prompts (oral or written):

- How is scanning different from reading everything?
- When can scanning help you in real life?
- How can this strategy help you in exams?

The teacher writes the sentence frame on the board:

"Today I learned that scanning helps me _____."

7. Assessment (Formative)

- Participation and accuracy in group scanning tasks.
- Completion of "Information Search" worksheet.
- Relevance and clarity of student-created texts and questions.
- Ability to explain or reflect on how and why they used the strategy.

8. Post-task

Find an example of a real-life text at home (e.g., a school schedule, a receipt, a social media post with event info).

Write three scanning questions about it to share with the class next session.

Lesson Plan: Guessing Meaning from Context

Grade: 10th grade

Class Duration: 60 minutes

Topic: Using context to understand unknown words and ideas

Reading Strategy: Guess when you aren't certain

Skill focus: Reading (inferential comprehension), vocabulary development

Materials: Short reading texts (story excerpt, dialogue, description), worksheets, projector or board

1. Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Recognize how context provides clues for understanding unfamiliar vocabulary.
- Use strategies to infer the meaning of unknown words or phrases.
- Build confidence when reading without needing to translate every word.
- Explain and justify their guesses based on textual evidence.

Pre-task

2. Warm-up Activity (10 minutes)

Activity: *Mystery Word Puzzle*

- The teacher writes a sentence on the board with a made-up word:

“Yesterday I wore my *florak* because it was raining.”

- Students work in pairs to guess what "florak" means.
- Teacher elicits answers (e.g., “coat,” “jacket,” “umbrella”) and asks:

How do you know? What helped you guess?

Conclusion: Words around the mystery word give us context clues.

3. Presentation (10 minutes)

Mini-lesson: Using Context Clues

The teacher explains four basic types of context clues:

1. Definition: The meaning is given in the sentence.
2. Synonym or restatement: A familiar word is used nearby.

3. Antonym or contrast: An opposite word gives the hint.
4. General sense of the sentence: Use logic and world knowledge.

Example sentence (projected or on board):

“The desert was *arid*; it hadn’t rained for months.”

Students guess: *Arid* = *dry*

Vocabulary introduced: clue, guess, meaning, synonym, antonym, context, sentence

4. During task (20 minutes)

Activity: *Guess the Meaning Challenge* (Pairs or small groups)

- Students receive a worksheet with 6 short texts (1–3 sentences each), each with one bolded unknown word.

Example:

“The girl was *elated* when she got the highest score in class.”

What does *elated* mean? a) sad b) tired c) very happy

What clues helped you?

- Students read each sentence, guess the meaning, choose the correct option, and explain why they think so.
- The teacher walks around, checks understanding, and facilitates.

5. Production Activity (15 minutes)

Activity: *Create a Context Sentence*

- Students choose or receive a list of 3 new or invented words (e.g., *glimmer*, *norp*, *exult*).
- They write short sentences that give clues to guess the word.
- Then, students exchange sentences and try to guess each other’s mystery word meanings.

Example:

“He started to *norp* after he ate three hot dogs very fast.”

Guess: *Norp* = *vomit*

- This activity builds both inferencing skills and creativity, encouraging flexible thinking.

6. Wrap-up and Reflection (5 minutes)

Discussion prompts:

- *How did you guess the meaning of unknown words?*
- *Do you need to understand every word when you read?*
- *How can guessing help you feel more confident in English?*

Reflection frame:

“Today I learned that I can understand texts better by _____.”

7. Assessment (Formative)

- Completion and reasoning on the “Guess the Meaning Challenge” worksheet.
- Accuracy and clarity of the context sentences created.
- Participation in peer activities and explanations.
- Ability to explain context clue use during wrap-up.

8. Post task

Find a word you don’t know in a short English text (story, post, or news).

Write the sentence, guess the meaning, and explain what helped you.

Use the frame:

I think the word _____ means _____ because...

Lesson Plan: Distinguishing Between Literal and Implied Meaning

Grade: 10th grade

Level: A1–A2 (CEFR)

Class Duration: 60 minutes

Topic: Understanding what is said and what is meant

Reading Strategy: Distinguish between literal and implied meanings

Skill focus: Inferential and critical reading comprehension

Materials: Short texts (dialogues, descriptions, social media posts), worksheets, board/projector

1. Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Identify the literal meaning of a statement (what the words directly say).
- Recognize the implied meaning (what the author or speaker suggests without saying it directly).
- Use clues in the text (tone, context, word choice) to infer implied meanings.
- Explain the difference between literal and implied messages in short texts.

2. Warm-up Activity (10 minutes)

Activity: *Say One Thing, Mean Another*

- The teacher reads the following aloud with different intonation:

"Oh great! Another test..."

- Ask students: *Is the speaker happy? What do they really mean?*
- Elicit responses and guide students to understand that sometimes words say one thing, but mean something else.

Mini-discussion:

- *When do people say things that are not literal? Why?*
- Introduce terms: literal = exact words, implied = hidden meaning.

3. Presentation (10 minutes)

Mini-lesson: Understanding Implied Meaning

- The teacher explains that in many texts (stories, conversations, posts), the writer or speaker does not say everything directly. We must read between the lines.
- Examples on the board:
 1. *Literal*: "He is tall." → He is not short.
 2. *Implied*: "He thinks he knows everything." → He is arrogant or annoying.

Vocabulary focus: literal, implied, sarcasm, tone, suggest, mean, context

4. Practice Activity (20 minutes)

Activity: *Literal or Implied?* (Pairs or Groups)

- Students receive a worksheet with 5–6 short texts (conversations, social media comments, story dialogues).

Example 1:

A: "Did you enjoy the movie?"

B: "Well... I didn't fall asleep."

→ Literal: He stayed awake.

→ Implied: He didn't like it much.

Example 2:

Post: "Thanks a lot for the surprise homework!"

→ Literal: The student is thankful.

→ Implied: The student is upset (sarcasm).

- For each item, students answer:
 - a) What does the sentence say (literal meaning)?
 - b) What does it really mean (implied meaning)?
 - c) What clues helped you decide?

The teacher circulates, supports understanding of sarcasm, irony, and indirect language.

5. Production Activity (15 minutes)

Activity: *Write Between the Lines*

- Students create two short dialogues or comments where someone says something with an implied meaning.

Examples:

- “Nice haircut...” (when someone made a mistake).
- “You really tried your best!” (after a failed attempt).

They exchange their texts with a partner and identify the literal vs. implied meaning in each example.

6. Wrap-up and Reflection (5 minutes)

Discussion prompts:

- Why is it important to understand implied meaning in English?
- Can we find implied meaning in stories, ads, or real-life conversations?
- What strategy helps us discover what is *not said directly*?

Reflection sentence (written or oral):

“Today I learned that sometimes texts say _____, but really mean _____.”

7. Assessment (Formative)

- Completion and accuracy of worksheet answers.
- Ability to justify implied meanings using context clues.
- Creativity and clarity in student-generated dialogues.
- Oral explanations during reflection and peer review.

8. Homework (Optional)

Find an English meme, social media post, or comic with sarcasm or implied meaning.

Take a screenshot or copy the text and write:

- Literal meaning
- Implied meaning
- What clues helped you?

Appendix 4. Booklet

BOOKLET FOR DEVELOPING READING COMPREHENSION

FRANCISCO CORTÉS

JESÚS GARCÍA

2025

INTRODUCTION

This booklet has been designed as a pedagogical resource for teachers working in public high schools in Cali, Colombia, specifically targeting 10th-grade students who are developing their reading comprehension skills in English as a foreign language. The material is based on the implementation of key reading strategies proposed by Douglas Brown (2001), which are widely recognized for fostering effective reading practices and supporting students' language acquisition processes. The purpose of this booklet is to provide a structured, research-based set of activities aimed at improving students' reading proficiency through the systematic application of these strategies.

The creation of this booklet responds to several needs observed in the educational context of public schools. Firstly, it seeks to assist teachers by offering additional materials that enrich and complement existing resources. Many English teachers in public institutions face challenges related to the scarcity of updated and contextualized materials designed to improve reading comprehension in alignment with students' linguistic levels. By applying Brown's (2001) reading strategies, this booklet offers an innovative approach to reading instruction, focusing on bottom-up and top-down processes that support students in understanding and analyzing written texts.

Secondly, this booklet is particularly intended to guide teachers in delivering reading instruction through a variety of interactive and engaging strategies. The activities and lessons included promote the use of techniques such as skimming for main ideas, scanning for details, predicting content, using graphemic patterns, and applying semantic mapping, among others. These strategies, rooted in Douglas Brown's model, aim to develop both cognitive and metacognitive reading skills, helping students become more autonomous and strategic readers (Brown, 2001).

Moreover, the booklet encourages teachers to foster a participatory classroom environment. Each lesson is designed to include activities that involve pair work, group discussions, and reflection tasks, ensuring that students are actively engaged in the reading process. By doing so, the booklet aligns with communicative and learner-centered approaches, making reading instruction more dynamic and meaningful for students who often struggle with traditional, teacher-centered models (Richards & Rodgers, 2014).

While the primary objective of this material is to strengthen reading comprehension, it also seeks to expose students to relevant and accessible texts that are appropriate for their level. The texts selected vary in topic and style, ranging from general themes to culturally relevant topics that resonate with the experiences of Colombian high school students. This contextualization helps learners relate to the texts, thereby improving motivation and comprehension outcomes.

In conclusion, this booklet is intended to serve as a valuable teaching tool for high school English teachers and students in Cali's public education system. It provides a set of carefully designed activities and lessons that apply Douglas Brown's (2001) reading strategies to enhance students' reading comprehension abilities. It is hoped that this material will contribute to improving students' English proficiency while offering teachers practical support for developing more effective and interactive lessons.

I. IDENTIFY THE PURPOSE IN READING

1. Read the following text and choose one option to identify the author's purpose
 - a. Entertain
 - b. Inform
 - c. Describe
 - d. persuade

Rumbola

Rumbola is available for private bookings of up to 100 people. Hire one of our DJs, who will keep you and your guests moving to the music all night. If you know the words, he'll encourage you to join in! We have no restaurant, but light refreshments are available.

2. In the following text why did the author write this piece?
 - a. Entertain
 - b. Inform
 - c. describe
 - d. show evidence

The Darlington Centre

This modern building, situated in the countryside, is perfect for all business events. We have rooms of varying sizes – the Haversham is the largest with space for 300 people. Included in the price are meals, overnight accommodation and tea/coffee.

3. In the following text, what message does the author want the reader to know?
 - a. The author wants to highlight the importance of the place.
 - b. The author aims to criticize the place.
 - c. The author encourages the reader to visit the place.
 - d. The author emphasizes the importance of the place.

Amazon Café

Situated in the town centre, this restaurant is an exciting place to celebrate a birthday or other special event. The restaurant is decorated to look and sound like a rainforest. Busy and fun, it is popular with young people who like Brazilian food and listening to loud music.

In the following text, what is the author's tone? Choose an option:

- a. Sarcastic
- b. Optimistic
- c. Persuasive
- d. Critical

Hillcourt House

This family-run hotel is famous for its beautiful gardens. It can host private or small business events. The dining room holds 150 and meeting rooms hold 10-20. The hotel is in the countryside but close to two motorways and has plenty of parking spaces.

II. USE GRAPHEMIC RULES AND PATTERNS TO AID IN BOTTOM-UP DECODING

1. Word Families Matching

Objective: To recognize common graphemic patterns in word families and understand their meaning in context.

Match the words from Column A with their correct meaning or synonym from Column B. After matching, read the short text below and underline all the words that belong to the "-ight" and "-ate" word families.

Column A:

1. fight
2. light
3. late
4. plate
5. bright

Column B:

- a. opposite of dark
- b. not on time
- c. a flat dish
- d. to argue or struggle physically
- e. shining strongly

Text:

It was late at night when Anna saw a bright light coming from the kitchen. She quietly grabbed a plate and went to investigate. To her surprise, it was her brother having a midnight snack after a small fight with their parents earlier.

Comprehension Questions:

- a. Why was Anna surprised? Why was there light in the kitchen?
- b. What time of day does the story take place?
- c. What was Anna's brother doing in the kitchen?

2. Fill in the Blanks with Graphemic Clues

Objective: To complete sentences and improve comprehension, orthographic rules and peculiarities.

Complete the sentences using words from the word bank. Pay attention to the graphemic clues provided by the "-tion" and "-sion" endings.

Word Bank: decision, station, explosion, vacation, vision

- a. The train arrived late at the _____.
- b. The loud _____ scared the whole neighborhood.
- c. Maria made a quick _____ and left the room.
- d. We are going on _____ next week to the beach.
- e. His _____ was blurry after the accident.

3. Phonics-Based Skimming

Objective: To skim a text while identifying key graphemic patterns.

Read the text and highlight all the words that contain the "-ough" graphemic pattern.

Discuss with a partner how different words with the same pattern can have different sounds.

Although it was a rough day, Mark thought it was worth it. He went through many challenges but finally bought the ticket to his dream concert. Even though he was tired, he laughed when he got home and shared the news with his friends.

Comprehension Questions:

Choose an option:

1. How did Mark feel when he got home?
 - a. Angry and disappointed.
 - b. Relieved but too tired to share the news.
 - c. Tired but happy and excited to share the news with his friends.
 - d. indifferent and uninterested.

2. What is the final positive event in the story?
 - a. Mark decided not to go to the concert.
 - b. Mark lost his ticket on the way home.
 - c. The concert was canceled.
 - d. Bought the ticket to his dream concert.

4. Sentence Sorting by Spelling Patterns reinforces the connection between sounds and letters, helping students recognize sound patterns in words.

Objective: To apply bottom-up decoding by sorting sentences based on graphemic cues.

Read the following sentences and sort them into two categories: sentences with words containing the "-ed" past tense ending and sentences with words containing the "-ing" continuous participle ending.

Sentences:

1. The boy was reading a book in the park.

2. She walked to the market before noon.
3. They are running to catch the bus.
4. We played soccer after school.
5. The children are singing a new song.

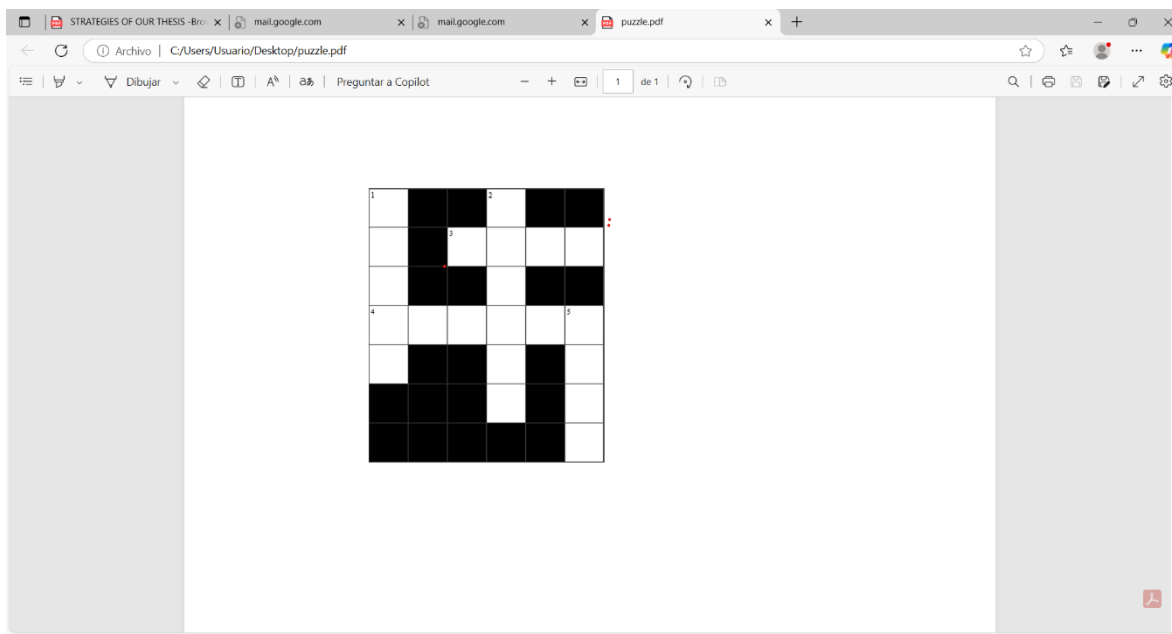
5. Phonetic and Orthographic Crossword activity

Objective: To reinforce decoding of words with common graphemic patterns while reading clues carefully.

Complete the crossword using the following clues. All the answers include the graphemic pattern "ea"

Clues:

1. (Across) You do this with a book.
2. (Across) The opposite of dirty.
3. (Down) A group of people working together.
4. (Down) A healthy breakfast option
5. (Across) A synonym for “show up”



https://puzzel.org/en/crossword/play?p=-OM1tgw_mkKAfLi5ApZ1

III SILENT READING COMPREHENSION

Read the following text and do the activities below

A Story of Change

La Paz School is a rural school in the mountains of Central Colombia. A few years ago, teachers and students decided to do something about the environmental problems they had. Deforestation and bad management of waste were their main concerns. As a result, they created an environmental group to look for solutions.

First, they researched information about the people, their businesses and the impact of their actions. Then they organized a campaign to protect their rivers in their town. They talked to the local authorities about prohibiting the industries from dumping waste. They started teaching people about recycling methods and the whole town signed a petition to stop the destruction of their forests. They planted more than 2,000 trees near the river.

Now people in our town are happy with the results. Liliana, a 15-year-old student at La Paz School, said: 'Now we have lots of trees around our houses and parks; the rivers are clean; and we understand that when people work together to support a cause, the little things that everyone does can create changes.'

Multiple Choice – Choose the correct option:

1. Where is La Paz School located?
 - a) In a city near the coast of Colombia
 - b) In the Amazon rainforest
 - c) In the mountains of Central Colombia
 - d) In the capital of Colombia

2. What were the main environmental problems they faced?
 - a) Air pollution and climate change
 - b) Deforestation and poor waste management
 - c) Noise pollution and water scarcity
 - d) Littering and overpopulation

3. What was the first action the environmental group took?
 - a) Planted trees
 - b) Started a protest
 - c) Did research about people and local businesses
 - d) Collected money from the government

4. What did they do to protect the rivers?
 - a) Built a dam
 - b) Cleaned the river every weekend
 - c) Asked authorities to stop industries from dumping waste
 - d) Stopped people from swimming in the river

5. What shows the town supported the group's efforts?
 - a) Everyone moved away from the area
 - b) The students went on a trip
 - c) The whole town signed a petition
 - d) The teachers wrote a book

True or False – Mark the statements:

1. La Paz School is located in a large city in southern Colombia. _____
2. The main environmental problem was air pollution. _____
3. The students organized a campaign to protect the rivers. _____
4. Industries were encouraged to dump waste into rivers. _____
5. People were taught about recycling methods. _____
6. The town signed a petition to protect the forests. _____
7. The group planted more than 2,000 trees. _____
8. Liliana said the rivers are still dirty today. _____
9. The project helped people realize the power of working together. _____

10. People in town are unhappy with the results. _____

Answer the questions about the text

1. Why did students and teachers create an environmental group?

2. What was the first step the group took in their project?

3. What action did they take to stop deforestation?

4. How did the town help with the environmental efforts?

5. According to Liliana, what are some results of the project?

6. What message does Liliana share at the end of the story?

Fill-in-the-blanks with the information from the text

1. La Paz School is a _____ school in the mountains of Central Colombia.

2. Teachers and students decided to act against _____ and poor waste management.

3. They created an environmental _____ to find solutions.

4. Their first step was to _____ about people and businesses.

5. They organized a campaign to protect the _____.

6. They asked local authorities to stop industries from _____ waste.

7. The town signed a _____ to stop deforestation.

8. Over 2,000 _____ were planted near the river.
9. Now people say they _____ are clean and the town looks better.
10. Liliana believes small actions can create _____ when people work together.

III. SKIMMING FOR MAIN IDEAS

The Young Achiever of the Year

Kal Kaur Rai has always been interested in fashion and has just won the title of *Young Achiever of the Year* at the Asian Business Awards. Ever since she was a child, she has drawn clothes and designed patterns. She never told her hard-working parents, who own a supermarket, that she wanted to turn her hobby into a career. She thought they expected her to go into a more established business, so she went to university to do a management degree.



After university, she moved to London and worked in an advertising agency. She had to attend industry events but couldn't afford the designer clothes she liked. She started making skirts and tops for herself. When her friends saw her clothes, they asked her to make things for them. She then found a small shop in London willing to take her designs on a sale-or-return basis. They were very popular and nothing came back. This encouraged her to leave her advertising job, take out a £20,000 loan and begin her own womenswear label.

Kal's parents were not angry about her career change and said they would support her, which really pleased her. Her clothes are now on sale in over 70 stores and her business has an income of over £500,000. Her clothes appear in fashion magazines, she designs for pop stars and she has just gained public recognition by winning this award. Her business has come a long way and she knows she is extremely lucky. 'What I do is my hobby – and I get paid for it! But remember, I've worked hard for this.'

- a. First, students scan the heading and the picture and say what the reading will be about.
- b. Ask them to read the first and last sentences of each paragraph.
- c. Finally, ask them to skim the text and explain the main points to a partner.

Activity 1: Understanding Business Trends

Instructions: Skim the passage and choose the best option for the main idea.

Passage:

Many businesses are adopting hybrid work models, combining remote and in-office work. This approach aims to increase flexibility, reduce operational costs, and maintain productivity. While some employees appreciate the balance, others miss daily in-person interactions.

Main Idea Options:

- a. Hybrid work models reduce productivity.
- b. Hybrid work models balance flexibility and cost-saving.
- c. Employees prefer working entirely remotely.

Activity 2: Marketing Strategies

Instructions: Skim the passage and identify the main idea.

Passage:

Social media marketing has transformed how businesses reach consumers. By using platforms like Instagram and TikTok, companies can target specific audiences with personalized content. This strategy has proven effective for increasing brand awareness and driving sales.

Main Idea Options:

- a. Social media marketing is only for large companies.
- b. Social media helps businesses connect with targeted consumers.
- c. TikTok is the best platform for marketing.

Activity 3: Financial Challenges

Instructions: Skim the passage and choose the best main idea.

Passage:

Rising interest rates have made it more difficult for businesses to borrow money. As a result, many small companies struggle to finance expansions or manage debt. Some businesses are adjusting by reducing costs and focusing on essential operations.

Main Idea Options:

- a. Small businesses find it harder to expand due to higher interest rates.
- b. Businesses are rapidly expanding.
- c. High interest rates do not affect businesses.

Activity 4: E-commerce Growth

Instructions: Skim the passage and pick the main idea.

Passage:

The growth of e-commerce has changed consumer shopping habits. Many prefer the convenience of online shopping, leading to a decline in foot traffic for traditional retail stores. Businesses now focus more on creating user-friendly online platforms to stay competitive.

Main Idea Options:

- a. Traditional retail is becoming obsolete.
- b. E-commerce has influenced consumer behavior and business strategies.
- c. People still prefer to shop in person.

Activity 5: Sustainable Business Practices

Instructions: Skim the passage and select the best main idea.

Passage:

Many companies are integrating sustainable practices into their business models. These efforts include reducing waste, conserving energy, and sourcing materials responsibly. Such practices not only benefit the environment but also enhance brand reputation and customer loyalty.

Main Idea Options:

- a. Sustainable practices are expensive for businesses.

- b. Sustainable business practices benefit the environment and companies.
- c. Customers do not care about sustainability.

Skim and select the correct summary

Skim the short text and select the option that best summarizes it.

Text 1

Effective marketing is essential for business growth. By understanding customer needs and creating strong branding, companies can increase their market share. Marketing strategies like promotions and advertising help businesses reach new customers and keep existing ones.

Summary Options:

- a) Marketing is mostly about selling products at a discount.
- b) Marketing helps businesses grow by reaching and retaining customers.
- c) Marketing is only important for large corporations.

Text 2

Budgeting is a crucial part of financial management. It helps businesses plan their expenses, control costs, and prepare for unexpected challenges. Without a proper budget, a company may struggle to manage its finances effectively.

Summary Options:

- a. Budgeting is unnecessary if a business is profitable.
- b. Budgeting is essential for controlling costs and financial planning.
- c. Budgeting focuses only on reducing expenses.

Text 3:

Human resources play a vital role in maintaining a productive workforce. They handle recruiting, training, and addressing workplace issues. By supporting employees, HR departments help reduce turnover and increase job satisfaction.

Summary Options:

- a) Human resources are mainly responsible for hiring employees.
- b) HR departments focus solely on employee training.
- c) HR supports employees to reduce turnover and improve productivity.

IV. SCANNING FOR SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Read once again the text “The young achiever of the year” and answer the following questions:

1. Why did Kal start making her own clothes?

- A) She wanted to impress her parents
- B) She was working for a famous fashion brand
- C) She couldn't afford the designer clothes she liked
- D) She wanted to sell them in a supermarket

2. What encouraged Kal to leave her advertising job?

- A) Her parents asked her to start her own business
- B) A shop successfully sold her clothes on a sale-or-return basis
- C) She won a business competition
- D) She received a scholarship for fashion design

3. How did Kal's parents react to her career change?

- A) They were disappointed
- B) They told her to return to advertising
- C) They refused to support her
- D) They were happy and supported her

4. What is Kal's annual business income?

- A) Over £100,000
- B) Over £250,000

- C) Over £500,000
- D) Over £1,000,000

5. What do Kal Kaur Rai's parents do for a living?

- A. They own a small business
- B. They own a large company
- C. They own a supermarket
- D. They work for a supermarket

6. What award did Kal Kaur Rai win?

- A) Best Designer of the Year
- B) Young Achiever of the Year
- C) Businesswoman of the Year
- D) Fashion Icon of the Year

7. Why did Kal start making her own clothes?

- A) She wanted to impress her parents
- B) She was working for a famous fashion brand
- C) She couldn't afford the designer clothes she liked
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- A) Over £100,000
- B) Over £250,000
- C) Over £500,000
- D) Over £1,000,000

Answer the following questions based on the text "The young achiever of the year":

1. What convinced Kal to start her own business? _____
2. What kind of clothes does Kal design? _____
3. Who are some of Kal's current clients? _____
4. What helped Kal gain public recognition? _____
5. What does Kal say about her job? _____

Answer TRUE or FALSE to the following questions based on the text "The young achiever of the year":

1. Kal Kaur Rai has been interested in fashion since she was a child. (True/False)
2. Kal's parents encouraged her to start a career in fashion from a young age. (True/False)
3. Kal studied fashion design at university. (True/False)
4. Kal started making her own clothes because she couldn't afford designer brands.
(True/False)
5. A large department store was the first to sell Kal's designs. (True/False)

Fill in the blanks with words from the text

1. Kal Kaur Rai won the title of _____ at the Asian Business Awards.
2. Since childhood, Kal has been interested in _____ and designing patterns.
3. Kal's parents own a _____, and she never told them about her interest in fashion.
4. After university, Kal worked in an _____ agency before starting her fashion business.
5. Kal started making her own clothes because she couldn't afford _____ brands.
6. A small shop in _____ agreed to take Kal's designs on a sale-or-return basis.
7. Encouraged by her success, Kal took a £_____ loan to start her womenswear label.
8. Kal's clothes are now sold in over _____ stores.
9. Kal's designs have been featured in _____ magazines and worn by pop stars.
10. Kal describes her work as a _____, saying, "What I do is my hobby – and I get paid for it"

VI. USING SEMANTIC MAPPING AND CLUSTERING

Write a winning story!

You could win £1,000 in this year's Fiction Prize and have your story printed in Keep Writing magazine. Ten other lucky people will win a cheque for £100.

Once again, we need people who can write good stories. The judges, who include Mary Littlejohn, the novelist, Michael Brown, the television reporter, and Susan Hitchins, *Keep Writing's* editor, are looking for interesting and original stories. Detective fiction was extremely popular last year, although the competition winner produced a love story. You can write about whatever you want but here's some advice to start you thinking:

- **Write about what you know**

This is the advice which every writer should pay attention to and, last year, nearly everyone who wrote for us did exactly that. Love, family, problems with friends – these were the main subjects of the stories. However, you need to turn ordinary situations into something interesting that people will want to read about. Make the reader want to continue reading by writing about ordinary things in a new and surprising way.

- **Get your facts right**

It's no good giving a description of a town or explaining how a jet engine works if you get it wrong. So avoid writing anything unless you're certain about it.

- **Hold the reader's attention**

Make the beginning interesting and the ending a surprise. There is nothing worse than a poor ending. Develop the story carefully and try to think of something unusual happening at the end.

- **Think about the characters**

Try to bring the people in your story alive for the reader by using well-chosen words to make them seem real.

Your story must be your own work, between 2,000 and 2,500 words and typed, double-spaced, on one side only of each sheet of paper.

Even if you're in danger of missing the closing date, we are unable to accept stories by fax or email. You must include the application form with your story. Unfortunately your story cannot be returned, nor can we discuss our decisions.

You should not have had any fiction printed in any magazine or book in this country – a change in the rules by popular request – and the story must not have appeared in print or in recorded form, for example on radio or TV, anywhere in the world.

Your fee of £5 will go to the Writers' Association. Make your cheque payable to *Keep Writing* and send it with the application form and your story to:

Keep Writing
75 Broad Street
Birmingham
B12 4TG

The closing date is 30 July and we will inform the winner within one month of this date. Please note that if you win, you must agree to have your story printed in our magazine.

Match the following words from the text above with their correct meanings.

WORDS	DEFINITIONS
1. Judge	A) A story that is made up rather than based on real events. ____
2. Original	B) Something new, unique, or never seen before. ____
3. Fiction	C) A person in a story, play, or film.
4. Surprise	D) The process of printing and distributing a book or magazine. ____
5. Develop	E) A written document submitted before it is published. ____
6. Character	F) An unexpected event or twist in a story. ____
7. Publication	G) To improve or expand an idea over time. ____
8. Manuscript	H) A written order for a bank to pay a specific amount of money. ____
9. Double-spaced	I) A person who evaluates and decides the winner of a competition. ____
10. Cheque	J) A formatting style where there is extra space between lines of text. ____

Connect each word with a word it is related to: Example: Judge → Competition

WORD	RELATED TO
1. Judge	
2. Original	
3. Fiction	
4. Surprise	
5. Develop	
6. Character	
7. Publication	
8. Manuscript	
9. Double-spaced	
10. Cheque	

Synonyms and Antonyms

Use a dictionary to find a synonym and an antonym for each of the words below.

1. Original

a. Synonym: _____

b. Antonym: _____

2. Interesting

a. Synonym: _____

b. Antonym: _____

3. Fiction

a. Synonym: _____

b. Antonym: _____

4. Encourage

a. Synonym: _____

b. Antonym: _____

5. Surprise

a. Synonym: _____

b. Antonym: _____

Story Writing Elements Cluster

Complete the cluster with details from the text above.

Main Idea: Writing a Winning Story

1. Main Theme: _____

2. Key Elements of a Story:

- a. Plot _____
- b. Characters _____
- c. Setting _____
- d. Surprise Ending _____

Competition Rules Cluster

Fill in the details under each category.

Main Idea: Competition Guidelines

- a. Word Limit: _____
- b. Submission Format: _____
- c. Entry Fee: _____
- d. Eligibility Rules: _____

3. Judging Criteria Cluster

Instructions: Identify the four key aspects mentioned in the text.

Main Idea: What Judges Look For

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____

4. Submission Process Cluster

Instructions: Organize the submission steps in a logical sequence.

Main Idea: Submitting Your Story

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____

5. Rewards and recognition cluster

Instructions: Categorize the rewards mentioned in the text by writing what the winners receive.

Main Idea: What Winners Receive

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____

6. Create a Semantic Map from a Short Text

To extract key ideas from a text and organize them into a semantic map.

Read once again the text “Write a winning story” and create a semantic map with the main idea in the center and related ideas around it

Task:

- What is the main idea?
- Create a semantic map showing at least 4 supporting ideas from the paragraph.

Reflection: Ask students to discuss the following questions in pairs. Then, as a group discuss. Question: how does the Semantic Map help you understand the text?

VII GUESS WHEN YOU AREN'T CERTAIN

CONTEXT CLUES

Warm up activity: who am I?

Write the following sentence on the board for the students to guess the meaning.

I wake up early every day, I look like a golden coin, I give energy to earth.

Who am I? _____

Explain the students that unknown words are surrounded by reading clues (other words) that help you understand them. Remark the importance of this technique to help you make a guess to get the meaning of certain words you don't know in a text.

Ask a student to read the following and discuss it with the whole class.

The context refers to words that are before and after the unknown word. There are several ways in which the context can help to define the meaning of a term: equivalence, related words, the use of synonyms, antonyms or the presentation of opposed ideas.

RELATED WORDS

The introduction of key words in a text can also help to infer the meaning of unknown words.

Activity 1

Read the text. Decide what the best definition of the underline words is.

Dear Diary,

I overslept this morning. I had to eat my bowl of **poof-poofs** very quickly, and I almost missed the **tramzam**. When I got to school, I realized I had forgotten my **zilgping**. Luckily, Ms. Jutzi is very **zoosh**, and told me I could bring it tomorrow.

After school, some friends and I played **plingming**. It's a new game I am learning. We scored 7 points and they only scored 5 points, so we were the **zoiters**!

Dad says that next weekend we're going to the **fladder**. I can't wait! I love to swim and play in the sand. I hope I don't get a sunburn though.

Well, I better go to bed soon. I don't want to wake up late again and miss my **tramzam**!

Until tomorrow,

Rya

www.slideshare.net/.../context-cluesn

Ask students the following question: what clue context words helped you to make that choice?

Activity 2

Read the following text and answer the questions below

DIVERS RECOVER ANCIENT WONDERS

October 4, 1995

Web posted at: 11:15 p.m. EDT (0315)



From Correspondent Gale Young

ALEXANDRIA, Egypt (CNN) -- Until now, the ancient city was lost to everyone but divers. The Alexandria of Anthony and Cleopatra spreads across 2 acres under the choppy waters of the Mediterranean. The fishes playing with sphinxes and colossal statues make a very strange impression.

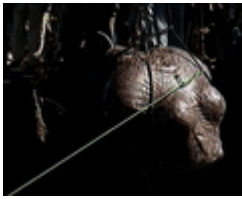


The murky depths conceal the remains of palaces, pharaonic statues and a colossal lighthouse. It's a gold mine for archeologists fishing for clues about a colorful past. Archeologist Honor Frost says that the waters are chock full of remains, possibly containing such treasures as Alexander's tomb.

French marine archeologists have an ambitious plan to raise the lighthouse piece by piece, along with dozens of other pharaonic artifacts. They plan to use balloons to float the stones to the surface.



The lighthouse was built in 280 B.C. By the time of Cleopatra, it was considered one of the seven wonders of the world. An earthquake in the fourth century A.D. sent it toppling into the Mediterranean. There it remained with the rest of the city until this century, when technology allowed archeologists access.



Rough weather hampered the first day of the planned retrieval. But it was hardly a bust. Archeologists lifted the torso of a pharaonic goddess into the sunshine, shedding new light on long-buried treasures that, until now, could only be imagined. *Taken from:*

<http://edweb.sdsu.edu/courses/edtec670/egypt/hunt/EgyptHunt.html>

1. Where is Alexandria Located?
2. There are “y” endings that form 4 new words, can you find them?
3. What does “very strange impression” imply to?
4. What cause(d) the lighthouse to disappear?

True and False

5. Are the following statements True or False?
 - a. They found a gold mine under the mediterranean.
 - b. There was bad weather when the works started.
6. What’s the meaning of the following words. Justify your answers with context clues.
 - a. Piece by piece
 - b. Gold mine

c. Colorful past

7. Find a word or phrase in the text which, in context, is similar in meaning to:

a. A period of a 100 years.

b. Chest.

Activity 2

Students pair up.

Give each student a list of words you want them to know.

Students take turns to explain the words to each other.

e.g. It Is made of plastic or metal, is of different colours, you can write with it. (pen)

Being an older student

At 32, I have just finished my first year at university. As well as attending lectures regularly, I have had to learn to read books quickly and write long essays.

I decided to go to university after fourteen years away from the classroom. As a secretary, although I was earning a reasonable amount of money, I was bored doing something where I hardly had to think. I became more and more depressed by the idea that I was stuck in the job. I was jealous of the students at the local university, who looked happy, carefree and full of hope, and part of something that I wanted to explore further.

However, now that I've actually become a student I find it hard to mix with younger colleagues. They are always mistaking me for a lecturer and asking me questions I can't answer. I also feel separated from the lecturers because, although we are the same age, I know so much less than them. But I am glad of this opportunity to study because I know you need a qualification to get a rewarding job, which is really important to me. Unlike most eighteen-year-olds, I much prefer a weekend with my books to one out partying. Then there are the normal student benefits of long holidays and theatre and cinema discounts. I often have doubts about what I'll do after university, but I hope that continuing my education at this late date has been a wise choice.

Guess the Missing Word

Read the text “Being an older student” and fill in the blanks with the correct word.

1. This word describes feeling very sad or hopeless.
d _ _ _ _ _
2. The action of being isolated from others.
s _ _ _ _ _
3. The period of rest and enjoyment that students often experience, especially during summer.
h _ _ _ _ _
4. A job that offers satisfaction and good financial rewards.
r _ _ _ _ - _ _ _
5. When someone believes they are unable to leave a situation or position.
s _ _ _ _
6. A formal meeting at a university where a teacher gives a talk to students.
l _ _ _ _ _
7. To feel uncertain about something or lack confidence.
d _ _ _ _ _
8. Feeling envy of others' opportunities or experiences.
j _ _ _ _ _
9. People who work at a university, especially teaching staff.
l _ _ - _ _ _ _
10. The qualification or evidence of education often needed for better job opportunities.
d _ _ _ _ _

Categorization Word Formation

Words can comply with several functions: They can be articles, pronouns, prepositions and conjunctions. These categories are part of a certain type of vocabulary called *structural*. Or they can also be verbs, nouns, adjectives, adverbs, that are in general related to word derivation (**DERIVED WORDS**).

The function of words can give clues to sense the meaning of unknown words, helped, of course, by the context. If we know that the necessary unknown word to give meaning to an idea is a verb or a noun, for example, we can guess its meaning more easily. That is why we study the grammatical function (word function / **parts of speech**), which is linked to word formation.

Use the words from the box to match the words below with the correct category. Then, use each word in a sentence that shows its grammatical function.

noun - adjective - verb - adverb - conjunction
--

- a. University _____
- b. Happy _____
- c. Studying _____
- d. Because _____
- e. Quickly _____
- f. Jealous _____
- g. Qualification _____
- h. Prefer _____
- i. Although _____
- j. Separated _____

Guess the Discourse Relationship

Below are sentences from the text “being an older student” with missing discourse markers (linking words). Choose the correct option from the word bank to complete each sentence.

Word Bank

However - Although - Therefore - But - Because - Rather than

- a. **Part 1: Fill in the Blanks**
- b. I decided to go to university after fourteen years away from the classroom.
_____, I was earning a reasonable amount of money, but I was bored.
- c. I became more and more depressed by the idea that I was stuck in the job. _____,
I was jealous of the students at the local university.
- d. Now that I’ve actually become a student, I find it hard to mix with younger
colleagues. _____, they always mistake me for a lecturer.
- e. I feel separated from the lecturers _____ we are the same age, but I know so
much less than them.
- f. Unlike most eighteen-year-olds, I much prefer a weekend with my books _____
one out partying.
- g. I often have doubts about what I’ll do after university, _____ I hope that
continuing my education has been a wise choice.

Part 2: Explanation

After completing the blanks, students pair up and explain to each other why each discourse marker is used. What kind of relationship does it show (contrast, cause-effect, comparison, etc.)? Then, have a class discussion.

Inferring Meaning Activity

Read the sentences carefully and answer the questions by making logical inferences based on the text above.

Part 1: Answer the Questions

- a. The writer says, *“I was jealous of the students at the local university, who looked happy, carefree, and full of hope.”*
 - a. What can you infer about the writer’s feelings towards her past job?
- b. The writer states, *“Unlike most eighteen-year-olds, I much prefer a weekend with my books to one out partying.”*
 - a. What does this tell us about the writer’s lifestyle and personality?
- c. The text says, *“I also feel separated from the lecturers because, although we are the same age, I know so much less than them.”*
 - a. What can we infer about the writer’s academic confidence?
- d. The writer mentions, *“I often have doubts about what I’ll do after university, but I hope that continuing my education at this late date has been a wise choice.”*
 - a. What does this suggest about the writer’s level of certainty about their future?
- e. The writer notes, *“They are always mistaking me for a lecturer and asking me questions I can’t answer.”*

Part 2: Discussion

Discuss the following questions with a partner:

- a. Do you think the writer made the right decision in going back to university? Why or why not?
- b. How do you think their experience will change by the time they graduate?

Guess the Cultural Reference

The text provides insights into university life and societal expectations. Use your understanding of culture and education to answer the following questions. Choose one.

1. The writer expresses feeling different from younger students because of their age and lifestyle. In many cultures, younger university students tend to:
 - a. Have similar life experiences as older students.
 - b. Prioritize academic responsibilities over socializing.
 - c. Engage in more social and active lifestyles.
 - d. Face similar challenges regardless of age differences.
2. The text mentions the importance of getting a "qualification" for a rewarding job. This suggests that in the writer's culture:
 - a. Personal skills are valued more than formal education.
 - b. Practical experience is more important than academic credentials.
 - c. Academic qualifications are necessary for professional success.
 - d. Jobs are typically obtained through personal connections.
3. The writer enjoys benefits like cinema and theatre discounts. This suggests that:
 - a. The writer has a high-paying job.
 - b. There are special privileges available for students.
 - c. The writer has a strong interest in the arts.
 - d. The writer receives financial support from their family.

Part 2: Open-ended Discussion

In pairs, have a discussion about these two questions. Then, have it as a class.

1. In some cultures, people go to university right after high school, while in others, it's common to start later in life. How is university education perceived in your country?
2. Do you think older students face the same challenges in all cultures, or does it depend on societal expectations? Why?

Guess the Content Message

Read the statements below and decide whether they correctly reflect the main ideas of the text. If the statement is **true**, write **T**. If it is **false**, write **F** and explain why.

Part 1: True or False?

- a. ___ The writer returned to university because they wanted to experience student social life.
- b. ___ The writer feels completely comfortable interacting with younger students.
- c. ___ The writer regrets their decision to return to university.
- d. ___ The writer believes that having a qualification is necessary for a rewarding job.
- e. ___ The writer finds it difficult to keep up with reading and writing essays.
- f. ___ The writer enjoys student discounts and long holidays.
- g. ___ The writer feels more similar to lecturers than to younger students.

VIII ANALYZE VOCABULARY

Different words that are originated from roots are called DERIVED **WORDS**: they are words that have a *prefix* or a *suffix*.

Prefixes can consist of one letter, two letters or a group of letters. They are word parts attached at the *beginning* of a word. They change the *meaning* of the root. (**r**eread, **un**cover, **super**market).

Suffixes, like prefixes, can consist of one letter, two letters or a group of letters. They are attached at the *end* of a word. They change the *word function* (noun, verb, adjective, and adverb).

Read the following text and do the activities below

The Interconnectedness of Life

Everything is connected. There is a symbiotic relationship between all living things. One good example of this relationship is ecosystems. These are communities of living organisms that share the benefits of their habitat. They get air, water, and food. Our planet is an ecosystem, made up of many other small ecosystems. But human actions have transformed the Earth. Too much CO₂ in the atmosphere is changing the climate of the planet. This change creates other conditions that affect ecosystems.

We create pollution. We build roads, kill animals, cut down trees, pollute the soil, air and water, and consume resources without thinking of the effects. Forests are necessary to purify the air. Trees absorb CO₂ and release oxygen. They also maintain the water cycle by releasing water vapour into the atmosphere. The forests are the habitat of many organisms and animals. They provide food and water. Clearly, deforestation is our biggest problem. A healthy ecosystem allows many different species to live together. This is biodiversity, and it is sustainable when it is capable of providing the necessary conditions for all species to live and reproduce.

1. Matching Definitions

Match the words to their definitions:

1. **Ecosystem** _____
2. **Biodiversity** _____
3. **Deforestation** _____
4. **Sustainable** _____
5. **Symbiotic** _____

- a. The cutting down of forests and trees
- b. A system where living things interact and share resources
- c. When two or more organisms benefit from each other
- d. Able to maintain balance and continue over time
- e. Variety of living species in one area

2. Synonyms Hunt

Find words in the text that mean the same as:

1. Environment = _____
2. Destroy = _____
3. Creatures = _____
4. Relationship = _____
5. Clean = _____

3. Antonyms Challenge

Find words in the text that are opposite in meaning to:

1. Dirty = _____
2. Death = _____
3. Alone = _____
4. Harm = _____

4. Word Association

Write at least three words that come to mind when you see each word:

1. **Forest:** _____, _____, _____
2. **Pollution:** _____, _____, _____
3. **Ecosystem:** _____, _____, _____
4. **Species:** _____, _____, _____

IX DISTINGUISH BETWEEN LITERAL AND IMPLIED MEANINGS

Understanding both literal and implied meanings in reading is crucial because it helps students fully grasp the depth and intent of a text. Mastering both literal and implied meanings enriches students' reading experience, helping them appreciate the complexity of language and communication.

My name is Paul and last year I joined City Year, a youth organization which works in poor communities to try and reduce the numbers of teenagers dropping out of school. I've been a volunteer for nine months. We find students who are at risk; those who skip school, are disruptive or who are failing their courses, and give them support. We provide help for them in the classroom, after-school tutoring, and, for older students, we give college and career guidance. All the volunteers are young. Students find it easier to trust and confide in us because we are close in age, and they can relate to us better. I get to know my students, who they are and what they have been through. We aim to be good role models. CityYear

volunteers have made a huge difference to the lives of thousands of students, and transformed hundreds of schools and neighbourhoods.

1. Identify Literal vs. Implied Meaning

Read the text above to determine the following sentences have **literal (L)** or **implied (I)** meaning.

- a. Paul is a volunteer for City Year. (___)
- b. Some students are at risk of dropping out. (___)
- c. Students find it easier to trust young volunteers. (___)
- d. The volunteers have transformed hundreds of schools. (___)
- e. City Year works to change students' lives. (___)

2. Explain the Implied Meaning

Pair work

In pairs, read the sentences below. The meaning is implied rather than directly stated. Then, orally discuss what the sentence suggests.

- a. *"We aim to be good role models."*
-What does this suggest about the volunteers' behavior?
- b. *"Students who skip school, are disruptive, or are failing need support."*
-What does this imply about the challenges these students face?
- c. *"Volunteers have transformed neighborhoods."*
-What does this suggest about the impact of City Year beyond schools?

3. Multiple Choice – Implied Meaning

Choose the best explanation for the **implied** meaning of the sentence.

1. *"Paul gets to know his students, who they are and what they have been through."*
 - a) Paul only talks to students about their schoolwork.
 - b) Paul learns about students' lives and struggles.
 - c) Paul gives personal advice to every student.
2. *"We provide help in the classroom, after-school tutoring, and career guidance."*
 - a) Some students need extra help beyond regular school hours.
 - b) Teachers are not good at their jobs.
 - c) Students are lazy and don't want to study.
3. *"Students confide in us because we are close in age."*
 - a) Younger people trust other young people more.
 - b) Students don't trust adults.
 - c) The volunteers force students to talk to them.

4. Rewrite with Literal Meaning

The following sentences contain implied meanings. Rewrite them using **literal language** to make the meaning clearer.

1. *"City Year volunteers have made a huge difference in students' lives."*

2. *"Some students are at risk of dropping out."*

3. *"We help students through self-confidence and support."*

5. True or False – Implied Meaning

Decide if the following statements correctly interpret the implied meanings from the text above.

- a. *"City Year volunteers work in poor communities to reduce dropout rates."*

-This implies that economic conditions can affect education. (**True / False**)

- b. *"Volunteers aim to be good role models."*

-This means volunteers tell students what to do at all times. (**True / False**)

- c. *"The volunteers have transformed neighborhoods."*

-This suggests that City Year's work has an impact beyond individual students. (**True / False**)

X CAPITALIZE ON DISCOURSE MARKERS TO PROCESS RELATIONSHIPS

To teach reading comprehension is important to look at text structure.

Some text structures are:

1. Description
2. Sequence
3. Compare/contrast
4. Cause/effect
5. Problem/solution

DESCRIPTION (The author describes a topic)

Start the lesson by asking the students to tell situation that has happened to them. (Suitable enough to be told in class). It can be funny, weird (strange), dangerous, etc.

After finishing the previous exercise, discuss with students the following chart: These are words found mostly in descriptive texts. If unknown words, ask students to look them up in a dictionary.

Description
For example, character- istics, such as, is like, including to illustrate

Ask students to read the following paragraph individually and silently. Then do the following:

Underline the words that make the paragraph descriptive.

What is being described? What is it said about it?

However, its pervasive presence has raised concerns about its effects on mental health. Teenagers often feel compelled to remain constantly connected, fearing they might miss out on important updates or messages. This constant connectivity can lead to sleep disturbances, anxiety, and depression. A study highlighted that teenagers engaging during nighttime are at risk of damaging their sleep patterns, which can adversely affect their overall health. The pressure to be available 24/7 and the fear of missing out can be overwhelming, leading to emotional exhaustion. It's essential to recognize these challenges and promote healthy habits among teenagers to ensure their well-being.

contotext.com+1www.slideshare.net+1

SEQUENCE (The author uses numerical or chronological order to list items or events)

To begin with, ask students randomly to tell you orally how to:

1. Create a web page.
2. Get a passport.
3. Get a visa to USA.
4. Send a picture to somebody through the phone or any other relevant process they want to share with the class.

After finishing the previous exercise, discuss with students the following chart: These are words found mostly in sequence texts. In case of unknown words, ask students to look them up in a dictionary.

Sequence
First, second, third, later, next, now, before, then, finally, after, when, later, since, previously

Use the following sequence words to fill in the blanks and unscramble the text:

In the first,

In the second,

In the third,

Finally,

The World of Social Media

Social media helps people stay close. You can talk to your cousin in another country or send a birthday message to your friend. Some people also use it to **learn new things** like cooking, English, or how to play an instrument.

Social media is a big part of our lives today. It is a place where people **share photos, send messages, and talk to others**. Every day, millions of people open apps like **Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and WhatsApp** to see what is happening in the world.

But we must be careful. If we use social media too much, we can feel tired. Our eyes can hurt, and we might not sleep well. It is also important to be kind online. We should not post mean words or photos of other people without asking. Social media is like a big window to the world. It can be fun, colorful, and interesting. But like everything, we must use it with care.

When we open Instagram, we see beautiful pictures of food, nature, and happy moments. On TikTok, there are short videos with **music, dancing, and funny jokes**. Many young people love these videos. They watch them after school or during their free time. *Source. Google.com*

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CAUSE AND EFFECT (The author delineates one or more causes and then describes the ensuing effects)

Show the following chart to students. Ask them to choose one of them and translate it into Spanish.

Cause/effect
If, then, reasons why, as a result, therefore, because, consequently, since, so that, for, hence, due to, thus, this led to

In pairs, ask them to write a sentence in Spanish using the word chosen, and then translate it into English.

Correct some of the sentences with students.

Ask them to write the sentence again with the clauses reversed, both in English and Spanish.

Example:

Due to- debido a

Debido a la polución incesante del hombre el calentamiento global es inminente.

Due to constant pollution caused by men, global warming is imminent.

El calentamiento global es inminente debido a la polución incesante del hombre.

Global warming is imminent due to the constant pollution caused by men.

Write/show the following sentences (or use your own) on the board and ask the students to match the number with the correspondent sentence.

Significant learning is not internalized. 1. As a result,

_____ there is not motivation to achieve it.

Inefficiency in the conduct of the inspection bodies. 2. Therefore,

_____ to crimes against public administration.

Russians anticipated the invasion by Napoleon 3. Thus,

_____ they burned down the capital

The term "polymer" is derived from the Greek "poly", 4. Leads to
meaning "many", and "mer", meaning "parts".

_____, polymers are substances made of "many parts".

Table 1 reveals that Costa Rica has far better health 5. Because
indicators than other low-income countries.

The infant mortality rate is over four times lower
and the life expectancy significantly higher.

_____, from this data we can conclude that Costa Rica
is significantly healthier than other low-income countries.

READING ACTIVITY

Ask students to read the following text.

THE EFFECTS OF SLEEP DEPRIVATION ON BRAIN AND BEHAVIOR

Sleep deprivation is a commonplace occurrence in modern culture. Every day there seems to be twice as much work and half as much time to complete it in. This results in either extended periods of wakefulness or a decrease in sleep over an extended period of time. While some people may like to believe that they can train their bodies to not require as much sleep as they once did this belief is false. Sleep is needed to regenerate certain parts of the body, especially the brain, so that it may continue to function optimally. After periods of extended wakefulness or reduced sleep neurons may begin to malfunction, visibly affecting a person's behavior. Some organs, such as muscles, are able to regenerate even when a person is not sleeping so long as they are resting. This could involve lying awake but relaxed within a quiet environment. Even though cognitive functions might not seem necessary in this scenario the brain, especially the cerebral cortex, is not able to rest but rather remains semi-alert in a state of "quiet readiness" . Certain stages of sleep are needed for the regeneration of neurons within the cerebral cortex while other stages of sleep seem to be used for forming new memories and generating new synaptic connections. The effects of sleep deprivation on behavior have been tested with relation to the presence of activity in different sections of the cerebral cortex.

The temporal lobe of the cerebral cortex is associated with the processing of language. During verbal learning tests on subjects who are fully rested functional magnetic resonance imaging scans show that this area of the brain is very active. However, in sleep deprived subjects there is no activity within this region. The effects of this inactivity can be observed by the slurred speech in subjects who have gone for prolonged periods with no sleep.

serendip.brynmawr.edu/exchange/node/1690 –

READING ACTIVITY 1

Based on the reading above, complete the following sentences using words that indicate CAUSE and EFFECT (see the chart above).

1. There is too much work and little time to complete it,
2. To regenerate the brain sleep is necessary,

3. Neurons could begin to malfunction,
4. A person's behavior can be visibly affected,

How Social Media Affects Teenagers

Social media is a big part of teenagers' lives today. Apps like Instagram, Snapchat, and TikTok help teens share photos, send messages, and stay connected with friends.

However, using social media too much can sometimes make teenagers feel bad. They might see pictures of people who look perfect and think they need to look the same. This can lead to low self-esteem and sadness.

Also, when teens spend a lot of time online, they might miss out on face-to-face conversations. This can make it harder for them to talk to people in person.

To feel better, it's good for teenagers to take breaks from social media. Spending time with family, playing sports, or enjoying hobbies can help them feel happier and more confident. (contoh-text.com)

Parents can support their teens by talking about social media and setting time limits for its use. This way, teenagers can enjoy the benefits of social media without feeling overwhelmed. **Source:** Adapted from "How Using Social Media Affects Teenagers" by Child Mind Institute. ([Child Mind Institute](http://ChildMindInstitute.org))

Match each **cause** with the correct **effect**. Write the letter of the effect next to each cause.

Causes

1. Teenagers use social media a lot. _____
2. They see pictures of perfect people online. _____
3. They spend too much time on phones or computers. _____
4. They take a break from social media. _____
5. Parents talk to their teens about social media. _____

Effects

- a. They miss real conversations with friends.
- b. They feel better and more confident.
- c. Teens start to feel sad or have low self-esteem.
- d. They enjoy the good parts of social media without problems.
- e. They stay connected with friends but may feel pressure.

COMPARISON AND CONTRAST (The author compares and contrasts two or more similar events, topics, or objects)

ACTIVITY 1

Pair work. Give (show) the students the following pictures and ask them to find the differences.



Now ask a student to read the following statement, and then discuss it with the class.

Comparing and contrasting texts is an important reading strategy as this will enhance their ability to read and study not only more quickly but also more effectively.

Show students the following chart to identify COMPARE and CONTRAST terms and ask them to look up their definition in Spanish.

Compare (same)

Both

Alike

Similar

Compare to

Contrast (different)

But

On the other hand

Instead of

In contrast to

Review the following chart with students containing some more comparing and contrast words

Comparison/ Contrast
However, nevertheless, on the other hand, but, similarly, although, also, in contrast, different, alike, as same as, either, or , as in the same way, just like, likewise, in comparison,

whereas, yet, like

ACTIVITY 2

Write the following sentences on the board (or use yours) for students to complete with words from the chart.

e.g. Masivo Integrado de Occidente (MIO) is a transportation system designed to replace the old one. *However*, the system is not well seen entirely by users.

1. "He lived the Romantic's view of an artist's life: in poverty, bohemian, at times almost nomadic; and he died an early, tragic death at age 31." FRANZ SCHUBERT:
2. The Colombian Government and the FARC sustain peace talks in Cuba, in Colombia the war continues.
3. Japan, USA, are being transformed from industrial economies to knowledge and information-based service.
4. Van Gogh painted countless post-Impressionist chefs-d'oeuvres; he only sold one painting in his lifetime.

READING ACTIVITY 3

Ask students to search within the reading texts below and copy one sentence for each of the transition words and phrases from the chart above.

NIKOLA TESLA

Early in the 20th century, brilliant scientist Nikola Tesla was a world-famous inventor and regular headline news-maker. As for genius, we have Tesla to thank for alternating current, radio, wireless technology, neon lamps, and X-rays. Sadly, Tesla's life was a series of run-ins with guys like Thomas Edison, who famously stiffed Tesla out of \$50,000, and Guglielmo Marconi, who stole the credit for the invention of the radio by using 17 of Tesla's patents. Nevertheless, Tesla died penniless in 1943 in the New Yorker Hotel, where he had lived for 10 years after being evicted from another hotel for not paying his bill.

EDGAR ALLAN POE

Poe's attempt to live off writing alone was not a successful experiment. Days after being found wandering the streets drunk and babbling, wearing clothes that weren't his, Poe proclaimed, "Lord help my poor soul," and died in October 1849. And poor he was. He had been writing to magazine editors begging for money, and although *The Raven* was celebrated immediately upon its debut in 1845, and has helped establish Poe as the literary genius we know today, it did not give him financial security. He died penniless and a meager 10 people attended his funeral.

SOCRATES

Just like many other famous people, this Greek philosophical also genius from the 400s BC died penniless because, by his own admission, discussing philosophy was the only occupation he found worthwhile. What we know of Socrates' life is sketchy and pieced together by his students and followers, most notably Plato. Plato relates that Socrates refused to accept payment for teaching the young men of Athens. Whatever the story, we know that Socrates was executed by poisoning for the crime of not believing the state gods, and his last words were requesting that a follower pay a debt of a rooster to Asclepius, the god of healing.

OSCAR WILDE

"Like my wallpaper I am fighting a duel to the death. Either of us has got to go." Oscar Wilde reportedly said this of his room in the Hôtel d'Alsace in Paris where he would soon die in November 1900, penniless and under an assumed name. The once-acclaimed writer had suffered mightily five years earlier when he was jailed for the crime of homosexuality, while his plays were at the height of their popularity, and the legal fees forced him into bankruptcy. Today Oscar Wilde is remembered as a genius wit, one of the cleverest men in history.

GUTENBERG

Its importance has been weakened a bit now that we have digital media, but Gutenberg's printing press has been kind of a big deal for more than 500 years. However, late in his life Gutenberg became embroiled in a dispute with his creditor, and the man sued and won control of Gutenberg's Bible workshop and half the Bibles printed. Thus, Gutenberg was bankrupted and lived out the rest of his years in obscurity. He died poor in 1468 and was buried in a church cemetery which was later destroyed and the grave lost. *SOURCE: nanopatentsandinnovations.blogspot.com/.../10-c.*

READING ACTIVITY 4

Ask students to read the text below and answer the following question:

- a. What two things are being compared?

Then, underline sentences and words that tell you how these two things are similar /different.

Finally, check the activities with the class.

COMMUNICATION STYLES OF MEN AND WOMEN

The key to getting along with others is good communication skills. This is true at home, at school, and at work. Communication is one of the biggest challenges in relationships between men and women. Researchers say that the main problem is different communication styles. Men and women have very different communication styles. Understanding the differences can help men and women communicate more effectively.

Men's communication style is more direct. They usually take a direct approach to a problem and suggest a solution. Men often make decisions more quickly than women. They also prefer to make decisions by themselves. Women's communication style is to discuss problems and ask other people for their opinions. Women like to talk with other people before they make a decision.

The topics of conversation are also different between men and women. Women like to discuss personal issues and talk about their feelings. Talking about problems is important in friendships for women. Even at school or on the job, women are more comfortable talking about personal topics and feelings.

Men, on the other hand, are less comfortable discussing their feelings. Many men don't like to talk about emotions and feelings. Men like to talk about current events, business, and personal accomplishments. In conversations, it is important for men to see who the leader in the group is. Men often talk about important things they have done. Men build friendships by doing activities together. On the other hand, women build friendships by sharing feelings.

How do these different communication styles cause problems in relationships? There are several ways. First, women may think it is important to discuss how they feel about a problem. Men, however, prefer to come to a solution. Second, men often think that women are complaining, because women want to continue talking about their feelings. Men offer a solution to a problem, and then want to talk about something else. The third problem is that women often think that men don't want to discuss things. Actually, men just want to discuss different things. As men and women learn more about their different communication styles, they can better understand each other.

college.cengage.com/collegesurvival/.../students/timed_reading.html

PROBLEM SOLUTION (The author poses a problem or question and then gives the answer).

Problem is, dilemma is,

if then, because,
so that, question and answer,
puzzle is solved
since
consequently
nevertheless
a solution
however
therefore
in addition
as a result

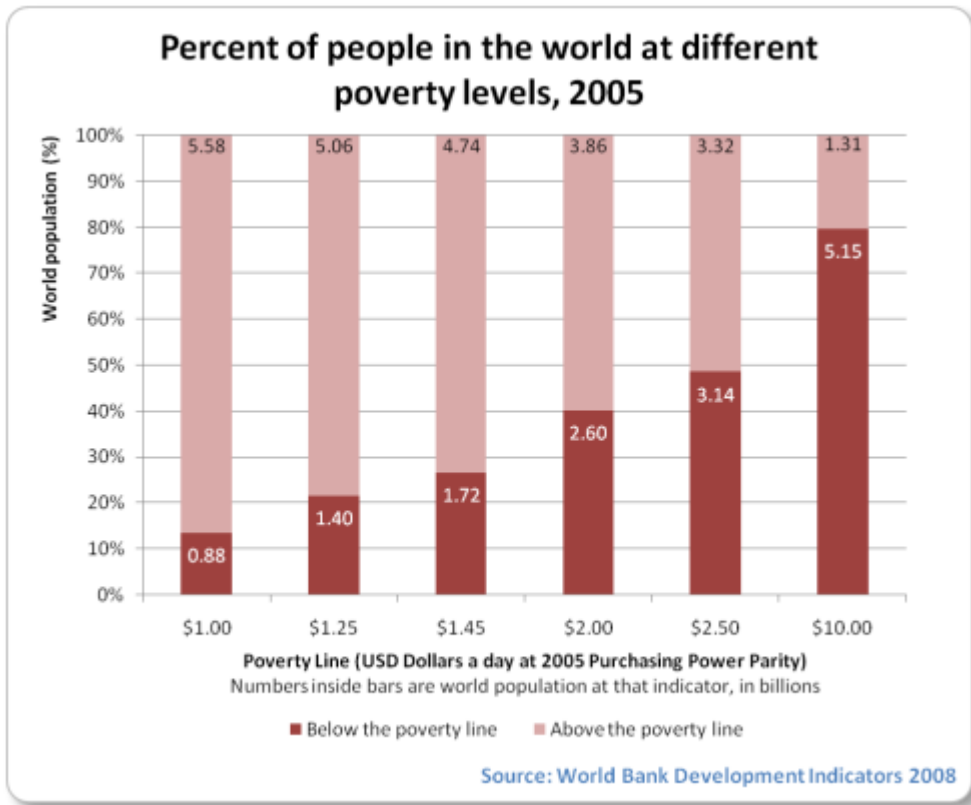
ACTIVITY 1

Pair work. Write a problem on the board for the students to come out with a solution.
Accept any solutions and discuss the most relevant with the class.

Example of problems: How can poor countries raise sufficient tax revenues?

Analyze the following chart on poverty and give some possible solutions to the following:

- a. How could people in our country read more?
- b. How can you contribute to help the environment?
- c. How can the drug Trafficking be stopped?



ACTIVITY 2

Ask volunteers to read aloud the following article. Stop reading where the problem happens in the story.

Ask the students to brainstorm what the problem is.

Ask the students to give supportive details (proof); when the problem has been identified. How did they know?

Practice the same for the solution. When the problem is solved, brainstorm how the problem was resolved. Again, ask the students to give supportive details (proof); how did they know?

LEADING THE WAY OUT OF DEBT

Adalberto Jaimes offers his clients personalized financial planning. Like private bankers and wealth managers, he helps people set their financial priorities and goals. He picks up the phone to negotiate deals and helps them take care of the paperwork.

Instead of working in a sleek Midtown bank, however, Jaimes' office is a cubicle in the back of the Northern Manhattan Improvement Corporation in Washington Heights, where people can get services ranging from legal representation in eviction cases to asthma management. Jaimes, a native of Colombia, helps clients facing arrears in their rent, mountains of credit card debt, and credit scores that prevent them from renting apartments or getting jobs.

His services are free to clients. Jaimes is employed by [Neighborhood Trust](#), a nonprofit that provides financial advice to low-income New Yorkers. Neighborhood Trust is the largest operator of New York City's [Financial Empowerment Centers](#), which were established in June, 2008. Jonathan Mintz, the commissioner of the Department of Consumer Affairs, said the centers were established to "take a look at the whole picture. How do you walk out of here not just literally with reduced debt, which is great, of course, but with your arms around your finances?" *Taken from ten New York times* By [TINA ROSENBERG](#)

ACTIVITY 3

Complete the following chart according to the reading above.

Problem	Solution
1.	
2.	
3.	

ACTIVITY 4

Read the following article and underline some of the words from the box

Problem is, if then, because, so that, question and answer, puzzle is solved, since, consequently, nevertheless, a solution, however, therefore, in addition, as a result.

THE POWER OF FAILURE

By [SARIKA BANSAL](#)



Seven years ago, the consulting group Bridge span presented details on the performance of several prestigious nonprofits. Nearly all of them had one thing in common — failure.

These organizations had a point at which they struggled financially, stalled on a project or experienced high rates of attrition. “Everyone in the room had the same response, which was relief,” said Paul Schmitz, the chief executive of the nonprofit [Public Allies](#). “It was good to see that I wasn’t the only one struggling with these things.”

As in any field, people who work in nonprofits, social enterprises, development agencies, and foundations experience failure on a regular basis. People make hiring and budgeting mistakes. Shipments arrive late, or not at all. Organizations allow their missions to drift. Technologies prove inappropriate for the communities meant to benefit from them.

“The ironic thing,” said Schmitz of Public Allies “is that you have donors who took major risks in their own fortunes, but are very risk averse when giving to charity. People rightly want their dollars to have the maximum impact, but don’t apply the same logic model that they give to their private sector investment.” As a result, he said, many social change groups innovate less often and less wildly.

Individuals within the social change community have recognized the value in emulating Silicon Valley’s culture of calculated risk-taking, and are actively working to de-stigmatize failure. FAIL Faire is one example. At the event, Aleem Walji, the director of the World

Bank Institute's Innovation Labs, spoke of a failed [collaboration with Google](#), in which the World Bank would have provided Google's Map Maker program to governments and multilaterals to help with disaster preparedness. However, development experts [lambasted](#) the World Bank for supporting Google's closed platform, which would not allow users free access to the map data they would create. A month after the partnership was announced, the bank changed course and announced its commitment to open-source mapping programs.

One of the site's aims, said Good, a firm representative, and is to create a "feedback loop" that does not currently exist in the development sector. In the private sector, she said, people know immediately whether a product is of value to customers. By contrast, "there are incentives [in the social change world] to not accept feedback, since your accountability is not to your beneficiaries but to your donors. N.G.O.s need to be able to say to donors, 'Don't fund this, it doesn't work.'"

In addition, Jill Violet of Playworks emphasizes the importance of "failing fast and cheap" (as opposed to slow and expensive). She sets aside a budget for new programs that intentionally have unpredictable outcomes. They limit the scope of these programs, clearly define failure and success at the outset, and decide when to measure the new program's merits. "It's about being disciplined and rigorous," said Violet, since human nature normally prevents us from recognizing our mistakes while they are occurring.

In the majority of cases, however, failure in the social change world does not involve as many dollars or stakeholders, and admitting it can have a net positive impact on an organization. Doing so can build institutional knowledge and create a culture where people are more open to taking risks. Admitting failure can also signal to funders like Milgrom-Elcott that an organization is "unafraid to change and address the next problem."

Ultimately, said Good, her hope is to remove the negative connotation of failure and instead see it as an "indicator of innovation, and a driver of collaboration that's needed to catalyze systemic change." Only then can the social change world reach its true potential. *Taken from the New York times.*