

Building Bridges of Understanding

A Strategic Approach to Children's Comprehension Development

Presenters: Dr. Martin Gleeson Mary Immaculate College,
Maria Power Our Lady of Mercy N.S., Bantry
Deirdre Lehane, Scoil an Chroí Ró-Naofa, Castletownbere

Venue: West Cork Education Centre, Dunmanway, Co Cork

Dates: 17th & 24th February 2010.



Overview of Presentation

In this presentation a range of comprehension strategies including **prediction, visualization, developing schema, comprehension monitoring, making connections, questioning, determining importance and synthesis** will be modelled for the participants with appropriately chosen fiction and non-fiction from contemporary children's literature. Children's understanding of each individual strategy will be supported by the introduction of **comprehension process motions**. Such kinesthetic hand placements and movements that portray the physical and visual representations of abstract unseen comprehension processes such as making connections, inferring etc. have been shown to be of particular benefit to children. This will be further consolidated by the development of **anchor charts** in the children's own language as an aide memoire for the application of individual strategies. Through the use of video footage and transcripts participants will be enabled to observe the depth of children's understanding, their ability to listen and respond to each other and accommodate diverse interpretations in their exploration of text.

Participants will be introduced to the independent application of these strategies in mixed ability groups through the process of **Transactional Strategies Instruction**. This will enable participants to observe the gradual withdrawal of teacher guidance as children support each other in the processes of word identification, vocabulary development and the construction of knowledge through the application of strategies prompted by the individual members of the group. The presentation will be punctuated with examples of classroom practice in an Irish setting representing all levels within the primary school system. Participants will learn how the teacher and learner move back and forth between the what, why and how of strategy instruction and how learners actually use the strategies to comprehend text.

West Cork Education Centre, The Square, Dunmanway, Co Cork

T: 023 8856756/7 F: 023 8856752 E: wcecentre@eircom.net W: westcorkeducationcentre.com