

Mia Mayhem Learns to Fly

by Kara West

When Mia gets placed in a beginner’s flying class with kindergarteners, she struggles and is ready to give up! But luckily, with help from her best friend, Eddie, and the superschool’s most talented flier, Mia finally learns how to get off the ground.

Create Successful Reading Habits

Create an engaging and motivating reading environment. Recent research from the What Works Clearinghouse shows that students must actively engage with text to decipher and understand its meaning.* Students will also become stronger readers if they are taught reading comprehension in an engaging and motivating setting. One way to design this context is to provide your students with reading choices.

You can be creative about how to provide your students a choice in what they read. Here are a few examples of how you can apply this in your classroom:

- Allow students to choose from a variety of reading activities or centers.
- Permit students to choose the order in which they complete their work.
- Encourage students to think of questions that lead them to books that will keep their interest (e.g., I noticed you are interested in baseball. From what game did baseball evolve?)
- Allow students to choose how to respond to a text.
- Give students a choice in where they can read in the classroom.
- Permit students to choose from a selection of texts that serve an instructional purpose.

* U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, What Works Clearinghouse. (n.d.). Practice Guides. <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/PracticeGuides>

SCIENCE OF READING – CONNECTING RESEARCH TO PRACTICE

Reading is a Complex Task

Research has shown that fluent reading involves a set of skills and processes so complex that it is awe-inspiring. Fluent reading comprises numerous subskills and requires the brain to perform multiple tasks simultaneously and automatically. These subskills and tasks must be automatic and applied with a high degree of accuracy for a reader to gain meaning from the text.

Think about the hierarchy of skills that develops when students are learning to read:

- First, it is important for students to develop phonemic awareness, which is the conscious awareness of the individual sounds in language. The students then need to know the letters of the alphabet and their corresponding sounds.
- After developing phonemic awareness and basic letter knowledge, they can use this knowledge to begin to decode. This is called the alphabetic principle, which is the understanding that letters make sounds, and sounds go together to make words.
- Through explicit and systematic instruction paired with repeated practice, students’ decoding becomes more automatic.
- Once students can decode words without much cognitive load, this leads to fluent reading.
- With sufficient practice, reading (decoding) becomes automatic.

STANDARDS ALIGNMENT FLORIDA’S B.E.S.T. STANDARDS

The ELA foundational standards are built on the following premises:

- English Language Arts is not a discrete set of skills but a rich discipline with meaningful, significant content, the knowledge of which helps all students actively and fully participate in our society.
- The standards are clear and concise, so they are easily understood by every stakeholder.
- The texts students read are meaningful and thought-provoking, preparing them to be informed, civic-minded members of their community.
- Standards should not stand alone as a separate focus for instruction but should be combined purposefully.

Look for standards alignment in each section of this guide.

WORD WORK – READING MULTISYLLABIC WORDS

Help students learn how to read multisyllabic words by using the Chunking Strategy. In this strategy, students learn to break longer words into smaller parts, also called chunking. Chunking the word can help students learn to decode multisyllabic words.

ELA.3.F.1.3: Use knowledge of grade-level phonics and word-analysis skills to decode words.

Chunking Strategy:

- Circle the prefixes or suffixes.
- Read the root word.
- Add the the prefix(es) and/or suffix(es).
- Try reading the entire word.

Display the steps for the Chunking Strategy:

- Write the word *nervously* (p. 8). Tell the students that you will circle the suffix in the word.
- Circle *-ly* (suffix).
- Read the root word *nervous*.
- Read the word left to right by parts (chunks).
- Read the whole word and check its pronunciation.
- Read the word in the sentence, “I *nervously* looked at the clock.” (p. 8)

Provide additional guided practice with these words:

thankfully (p. 9), coolest (p. 9) , straightened (p. 13), weirder (p. 17)

ELL and SWD suggestion:

Students who need additional practice identifying word parts can highlight the prefixes and suffixes in a word. Highlighting will help students to clearly see each part (chunk) of the word.

TALK ABOUT NEW AND INTERESTING WORDS

Choose words to help your students increase their vocabulary knowledge. When thinking about which words to select, choose words that provide specific ways to say simple things. For example, route is a precise way to say a way to travel from one place to another.

chaos (p. 7): completely disordered or disorganized, in a state of utter confusion. Mia has a bit of a reputation for causing **chaos** and mayhem herself.

panic (p. 57): strong feeling of anxiety or fear that makes you act without thinking carefully. Mia paces back and forth in a **panic** when she hears the same noise from earlier.

declare (p. 57): to say something strongly or firmly. “Watch and learn,” Pam **declares**.

misled (p. 93): to cause someone to believe in something not true or to make a wrong decision, to guide in the wrong direction. His tracker must have **misled** him ... because he is headed straight into a construction site.

ELA.3V.1.1: Use grade-level academic vocabulary appropriately in speaking and writing.

ELL and SWD suggestion:

Teach students using a graphic organizer such as a Concept Map. This strategy includes three elements of a quality definition:

- The central category to which the word belongs — what is it?
- The essential features of the word— what is it like?
- Several specific examples— what are some examples?

READ FOR MEANING – COMPREHENSION STRATEGY: SUMMARIZING

Develop your students' reading comprehension. Comprehension strategies help your students increase their understanding of text, overcome difficulties in comprehending text, and gain confidence and knowledge related to the text.

- **ELA.3.R.2.2: Identify the central idea, and explain how relevant details support that idea in a text.**
- **ELA.3.R.3.2: Summarize a text to enhance comprehension.**
- **ELA.3.C.2.1: Present information orally, in a logical sequence, using nonverbal cues, appropriate volume, and clear pronunciation.**

Before: Introduction

- Share the purpose for reading the book, which is to use comprehension strategies to better understand text.
- Practice using the strategy to help students identify the literary elements as they read. This will help to increase their understanding of the text.
- Introduce the title and explore the photographs on the front and back covers of the book.
- Based on the title and photographs, ask students what they think this book is going to be about.

During: Summarizing Using the Five W's (who, what, where, when, why)

- Read the title of the book aloud, "*Mia Mayhem Learns to Fly.*"
- Prereading: Scan the text with your students so that they get a feel for what the story will be about. Once they are finished, ask, "Now, what do you think this story will be about? Why do you think this?"
- Read the first chapter, *In the Doghouse*, with your students, and monitor for understanding by asking specific questions using the prompts (who, what, where, when, why, how).
 - Who is Chaos? (p. 1)
 - What is Chaos doing? (p. 1)
 - Who is the narrator? (p. 2)
 - What does she do during the day? (p. 3)
 - When does Mia Macarooney become Mia Mayhem? (p. 3)
 - When does Mia go to the PITS? (p. 4)
 - Why does Mia go home? How does she get there? (p. 4)
 - Where does Mia take Chaos? Why? (p. 4)
- Continue asking the students the who, what, where, when, why, how questions throughout Chapter 1.
- After reading the first chapter, ask students to read additional chapters, asking and answering the who, what, where, when, why, how questions.

After: Summarizing

- Summarize the novel using who, what, where, when, and why questions that guide students to think about the literary elements and how they come together to tell the plot of a story.
- Use the graphic organizer to help students gather and organize information learned so they can write a summary of the whole text.

Fiction Summary

Who is the main character in the story?

What happens in the beginning, middle, and end of the story?

Where does Mia learn to fly?

When does Mia learn to fly?

Why is flying important to Mia?

Use the information above to write a complete summary of the text:

ELL and SWD suggestion:

Summarizing helps students develop their thinking skills because they are making connections between all the details a text provides. When summarizing a highly complex skill, use a strategy called, "Somebody, Wanted, But, So." This strategy will help students capture the plot of the story. It will also prompt them to think about the most important parts of the story so they can write a summary of the whole text.

- **Somebody:** Who is the main character in the story?
- **Wanted:** What does the main character want to do?
- **But:** What is the problem? Why can the character not do what they want to do?
- **So:** How does the character solve the problem?