

What's the story, morning glory ?

FLJ, August 2014, John T. McMahan III

Understanding what you read whether you are 3 years old or 80 years old is a defining moment as you traverse through a passage deciding whether or not you **comprehend what you are reading**. As I reflect back on different eras of my educational journey, I can remember skipping over words that I did not know the meaning. What this did was manipulate the meaning of the sentence and often times the true meaning of what I was reading was affected. This skewed my **comprehension** of the material which may cause reading frustration but also cause me to mistakenly interpret the meaning of a sentence incorrectly. By doing this a question on a test may be missed or the overarching meaning of an indicator or objective may be mistaken or negatively affected.

Reading literacy is the key to success. To be an effective reader we must be able to understand and synthesize the material. This is where **reading comprehension** must be embraced by the reader and monitored by the parent and teacher. The main indicators of how well a student reads is directly correlated to vocabulary first. Secondly the fluidity of how a child reads is a sign that a child may be a great reader or may be struggling. These are important signs that a parent can look for as they start to read with their child at the earliest age possible. Your vocabulary that you use with your child on a regular basis will help them learn the meaning of words faster and allow them to excel much quicker in their early years of reading. With only 24% of our country having at least a Bachelor's degree, it is imperative for us as parents and grandparents to play that initial, crucial role as our child's first teacher. A college education does not guarantee you success or a job but is going to allow for the opportunity of landing an interview that someone who does not possess the degree or same knowledge that an individual without a degree may not get.

Comprehending what you read is the single most important part of reading literacy. An individual who understands what they are reading will be able to gravitate faster through curriculum and embrace instructional practices without as much rancor and enjoy their educational life more fully. Parent's initial investment of time and love within a home, reading framework will infuse life into their child's initial educational experiences and allow them to thirst for more knowledge continually. **Comprehension** of material gives a child the confidence that they know and understand what they are reading and allows them to connect information to prior knowledge and to the discovery of new knowledge on the horizon. One of the ways that I have increased my knowledge is by regularly improving my vocabulary by learning new words. Imagine if this is the focal point of your family's initial connections at home. What a head start you can get in your educational journey before your first year of pre-school. Parents, please share these early reading moments with your children. The rewards will be great,

comprehension of what you talk about and read will grow and the family connectedness that is created by sharing these educational moments together will be fun and forever impactful.