A skills development course for secondary grades is outlined which is designed to improve skills in reading for understanding via the identification of main and subordinate ideas, reading and listening for directions and purposes, and reading and listening for information. It is aimed to assist both students with satisfactory performance and students with lower achievement. Sections on performance objectives, assessment devices, rationale, range of subject matter, teaching strategies, teacher resources and student resources are included. A list of assessment instruments is also given. (AW)
Language Arts: READING FOR MEANING

5111.18
5112.18
5113.18
5114.18
5115.18
5116.18

English, Reading
READING FOR MEANING

5111.18
5112.18
5113.18
5114.18
5115.18
5116.18

English, Reading

Written by Marian J. Blumenfield
for the
DIVISION OF INSTRUCTION
Dade County Public Schools
Miami, Florida
1971
COURSE TITLE: READING FOR MEANING

COURSE DESCRIPTION: A skills development course designed to improve skills in reading for understanding via the identification of main and subordinate ideas, reading and listening for directions and purposes, and reading and listening for information.

I. Performance objectives

A. Given sentences, paragraphs, and stories, the student will identify the main ideas and details.

B. Given written and oral selections, the student will apply the principles of following directions.

C. Given various types of selections, the student will demonstrate reading and listening for different purposes.

D. Given various selections, the student will demonstrate reading and listening for information.

E. Given varied reading selections, the student will read critically.

F. Given varied selections, the student will read interpretively and creatively.

II. Course content

A. Rationale

Reading is meaning. Few would dispute this statement. Reading is the process of getting meaning from print. The reader must obtain understanding from the printed symbols before one could say he is reading. One must be able to decode to get meaning, but it does not necessarily follow that he who decodes understands what has been read. All students need to improve their reading and understanding of what is read to become as effective in reading as possible.

Students need to understand what is spoken as well as to understand what is read. Reading is the counterpart of listening. Educators sometimes neglected listening skills instruction since too often we assumed that the student who hears also understands.
The listener must understand what is spoken before effective listening takes place. Meaning must be conveyed in listening and reading. As a reader or listener, one needs to know the goals. He needs to know the organization of the book or talk, specialized vocabulary, and background information. As a reader, he needs to employ a flexible rate of reading that is dependent on the purposes for reading and the type of material to be read.

Too few students reach their potential. The students must be considered individually, and be given experiences, where needed. Secondary schools must become the place where all students can be helped toward achieving their expectancy and reaching their potential. We cannot possibly meet this challenge if we as teachers and administrators ignore the importance of leading students to think critically and creatively. Meaning embraces many levels of thinking. We can no longer be content with having students only get details and main ideas. Educators must be concerned with all levels of understanding if we are to be a guiding force in directing students to become independent and clear thinking individuals. The role of the educator is vital.

The art of questioning is central to reading for meaning. Educators need to be aware of the different levels of questioning in order to reach their goals. Dr. Richard Carver, in his article entitled Levels of Questioning, describes three levels of questioning. The first level is concrete. Questions are primarily detail and fact answering where, what, who, and when. The second level is abstract. Questions go beyond stated detail and fact answering how and why. The third level is creative. Questions may encompass concrete and abstract thinking. The student explores problems and is not concerned with right or wrong answers.

Also, we must not be remiss and forget or ignore the place reading instruction (decoding, vocabulary, meaning, rate) has in every course our students enroll in. All educators must prepare students in the area of thinking skills for them to acquire as much out of the courses as they can. This guide should provide help to all teachers in the secondary school. Language is the primary way of viewing reality.

The dimensions of teaching style are activities, discussion, and information. An effective secondary reading program should emphasize activities and discussion. This ties into the use of inquiry as the favored mode of teaching over an authoritarian approach.
Style and mode must be consistent with the goals of a program.

Pre and post assessment devices are essential in a reading program. Educators also need to periodically diagnose students' strengths and weaknesses, and evaluate progress. A flexible learning environment is necessary in order to meet the changing needs of students.

Assessment devices should include the following types:

1. Group reading achievement tests
2. Group reading diagnostic tests
3. Group informal reading inventories (IRI)
4. Informal teacher-made tests
5. Teacher observations
6. Individualized tests (diagnostic and IRI)

A list of published tests is in the teacher resource section of this guide.

This course can be taught for two different groups:

1. For those students who scored within the average or above-average range of the Stanford Reading Achievement Test, and who have exhibited satisfactory performance in the classroom. This group can be made up of 25-30 students.

2. For those students who scored within the low-average range of the Stanford Reading Achievement Test, and who are performing two or three years below grade placement. This group should not be made up of more than 15 students.

We want students to be efficient and proficient readers and thinkers. We want students to become effective readers. Effective readers are able to obtain the most meaning from the printed page. We must stop sitting on the sidelines yelling cliches, and step onto the field of action to make READING FOR MEANING a team effort in order to reach the goal.
B. Range of subject matter

1. Identifying main ideas
   a. Listens to short stories
   b. Reads sentences, paragraphs, stories
      (1) Understands sentence meaning
      (2) Recognizes topic sentences
   c. Understands author's central thought
   d. Relates main ideas of paragraphs to the whole selection

2. Relating details to main ideas
   a. Listens to short stories
   b. Locates ideas
   c. Understands development of story
   d. Distinguishes between essential and non-essential details
   e. Understands relationship of details
   f. Understands the use of comparisons and contrast
   g. Recognizes author's signal for details

3. Following written and oral directions
   a. Understands all word meanings in the directions
   b. Refers to visual aids
   c. Follows one step and two or more step directions
   d. Verbalizes directions in his own words
   e. Reads directions noting key words
   f. Writes down steps to follow and follows directions one step at a time until completed
4. Setting the purpose for reading and listening

Establishes a purpose for reading as to:

(1) Locating information
(2) Obtaining answers to questions
(3) Grasping the organization of a book or topic
(4) Acquiring information
(5) Finding the main ideas and important details
(6) Distinguishing between relevant and irrelevant ideas
(7) Reading critically
(8) Reading creatively
(9) Reading for pleasure
(10) Skimming and scanning

5. Reading and listening for information

a. Listens and reads to find the sequence of events
b. Chooses the best sentence that summarizes a paragraph
c. Restates the author's idea in a few sentences
d. Outlines a selection so that he
   (1) Understands the whole selection
   (2) Understands and evaluates an author's logical development
e. Makes use of the author's organizational devices

6. Developing critical reading

a. Understands accurately what the author says
b. Distinguishes between facts and opinions
c. Understands the scope of a selection
d. Learns what to accept, reject, and investigate further
e. Analyzes patterns of thinking as inductive and deductive
f. Reads for inferences, implied meanings, and interests of the author
7. Developing interpretive and creative reading ability
   a. Learns the character's reasons for his emotions or actions
   b. Interprets the author's meanings
      (1) Makes inferences and generalizations
      (2) Realizes implications and drawn conclusions or opinions
      (3) Learns to predict outcome
   c. Reacts to reading material
   d. Combines what is read with known concepts
      (1) Makes comparisons
      (2) Sees relationships (cause and effect)
      (3) Explores connotative and denotative effect of words

III. Teaching strategies

A. Given sentences, paragraphs and stories, the student will identify the main ideas and details.

1. Identifying main ideas
   a. Have students read brief paragraphs and identify the main idea of each.
   b. Give students practice locating the topic sentences when they are found at the beginning, at the ending, or in the body of a paragraph.
   c. Have students identify the main idea which is implied in a paragraph, but not expressed.
   d. Ask students to suggest captions for cartoons, then compare with original captions and evaluate.
   e. Have students match a list of titles to paragraphs.
   f. Ask students to make a diagram stating the main idea, then details.

   Main idea
   Details
g. Have the students write telegrams from given paragraphs. The number of words can be specified. Students can write paragraphs from the telegrams. Want ads also can be written from a paragraph or list of information.

2. Relating details to main ideas

a. Have students prepare an outline of three or four main ideas and discuss the details that would need to be added to write a good article.

b. Ask students to locate the topic sentences in a series of paragraphs, and select the details which are necessary for understanding the main ideas expressed in the topic sentences.

c. Have students answer questions about a selection to determine whether or not they comprehended the reading material, and can select the main ideas and the supporting details.

d. From a supply of pictures from magazines, have students choose one picture and write a story about what is being depicted. They can be asked to tell who the characters are in the picture, what they are doing, where they are going and to determine the time of year, the setting, and the mood of the characters.

e. After having read a certain story, ask students to make a cardboard figure of one of the story's characters. The other students can be asked to guess the identity of the character and the story.

f. Given pictures, the students are asked to write a descriptive sentence or two to identify or explain each picture.

g. The student can be asked to take a joke, a funny story, or a humorous incident drawn from an experience or from a book and to portray the incident in a comic-strip format.

h. Have one student say a topic sentence. Other students are to add sentences that will go into the paragraph. Repeat the sentences to determine if all the sentences are necessary and in sequence. Make changes if the sentence order is incorrect.
i. Have students classify phrases under the headings of who, what, when, where, how, why. (ex. After the Game)

j. Have students read a newspaper story, and then answer who, what, where, when, why and how.

k. Using a reference book, the student is asked to write a paragraph about a famous person, without naming the person. The other students are to guess the identity of the famous person from the given clues. It can be read or put up on the board.

l. The student can take a newspaper or magazine article, and delete from each sentence any non-essential words.

m. Have the students underline key words and phrases, and signal words (consequently, etc.) found in paragraphs.

B. Given written and oral selections, the student will apply the principles of following directions.

1. Ask students to listen or read and understand entire list of directions before starting; such as, directions for a fire drill or directions for an assignment.

2. Ask the students to repeat and explain directions previously given by the teacher or another pupil.

3. Provide practice in giving directions to others by having students give directions for working a problem or for making a chart or graph.

4. Have students follow a recipe, one step at a time.

5. Ask students to carry out directions for assembling model airplanes and other toys.

6. Ask students to perform science experiments.

7. Have students learn new games from written directions.

8. Ask students to follow directions for assignments.
9. The itemized directions for making something can be separated and then printed separately on index cards (or printed out of sequence on one card). The student is asked to rearrange (or number) the directions in proper sequence.

10. From a book containing puzzles, games, riddles, or tricks, the student can be asked to choose one activity and be prepared to demonstrate it to the class.

C. Given various types of selections, the student will demonstrate reading and listening for different purposes.

1. Before beginning to read, the student should have a specific purpose for reading.

2. An author has a purpose for writing a story. Have the students read a selected paragraph and discuss with them the reasons which the author may have had for writing the paragraph or story.

3. Provide a variety of reading materials requiring various rates of reading. Specify a purpose for reading before the material is read. After each selection has been read, ask the students the following questions:

   What rate of reading should you have used to read this story? (Skimming? Fast reading? Careful reading? Why?)

4. Have the students evaluate the lesson in terms of what he learned, what else he needs to find out, and the degree of ease with which he read the material. (Several students could discuss and evaluate the lesson).

   Ask the students to determine the key word in a question that indicates what to look for in the story. (ex. Why did the three men leave the house?)

5. Ask the students to locate answers to specific questions without reading an entire selection.

6. Ask students to locate information by using:

   a. The title of a book as an aid in deciding whether the book probably contains information on a given topic.
b. Table of contents for the same reason

c. Index

d. Maps and illustrations

e. Reference books

8. Have students use the SQ3R method of study with various types of material. The teacher first should work with students through the steps.

S - Survey (survey table of contents, headings, sub-headings, introductions, summaries, illustrations and captions)

Q - Question - (formulate questions from headings)

R - Read (read at a flexible rate to answer first questions)

R - Recite (answer the question (orally) in your own words and write key words)
   (Repeat steps Q, R, R for each question)

R - Review (review selection in your own words)

9. Another method of studying is PQRST:

P - preview

Q - question

R - read

S - stating

T - testing

10. The TQLR method for effective listening entails:

T - tune in

Q - question

L - listen

R - review

This listening formula should be pointed out to students for effective listening.
11. Give students a labeled diagram with an explanation. Ask questions on the labeled parts and information.

12. Given the classified or want-ad section of a newspaper, the student can be asked a series of questions that call either for interpreting individual ads or for analyzing that newspaper's system of ad classifications. (ex. What is the rate for placing ads in this paper? What kinds of pets are offered for sale?)

13. Give students postage stamps commemorating famous people or events placed on cards with questions for research. (ex. Why is he famous? What made this event important?)

14. The student can be given a road map covering a particular region and plot a trip from one specified place to another. He can be asked to compute the distance, to find the most suitable route, etc.

D. Given various selections, the student will demonstrate reading and listening for information.

1. Have students understand that chapter headings and sub-headings are similar to newspaper headlines and can help:
   a. In summarizing the facts in the news
   b. In providing a guide to study
   c. As a start for outlining
   d. For surveying the content

2. Ask students to use the telephone books to locate information on doing business or to find a job.

3. Give students several paragraphs to read. Ask questions including one that is not completely covered in the material given. The students are to answer the questions, and state which one cannot be completed.

(Many of the strategies in this guide also apply to reading and listening for information. The headings all overlap.)
E. Given varied reading selections, the student will read critically.

1. Have students read and discuss various sections of the newspaper, noticing slanted articles, half truths, and other propaganda techniques.

2. Ask students to develop an idea and have them find valid and invalid information concerning the idea.

3. Have students hold panel discussions presenting different views on the validity of various opinions.

4. Have the students copy from the newspaper statements which might be doubted. Have them also list reasons why they might be doubted and reasons why they should be accepted as facts.

5. Have the students list a number of facts and a number of opinions as found in a newspaper. Ask them to discuss what makes each a fact or an opinion.

6. The teacher can clip two or more newspaper accounts dealing with the same incident. Have the students analyze how the same incident is reported differently and give his evaluation and explanation of the differences.

7. Ask students to find differing views on a subject and discuss which are most valid and why.

8. Have students develop criteria, such as author's background, position, experience with the subject, prejudices, style of writing, and date of publication, for determining competency of the author.

9. Give students a newspaper or magazine review of a television program, book, show, or movie to serve as the basis for questions. (ex. Would you want to see this movie after reading this review? Why?)

F. Given varied selections, the student will read interpretively and creatively.

1. From a collection of short stories clipped from magazines, the teacher omits the endings. Without seeing this final portion, have the student write his own ending and later compare his with the original.
2. From various magazines and newspapers, the teacher can collect an assortment of illustrations presenting scenes that the students will find comical or fanciful, (MAD magazine is a good source). Students can be asked to write captions that are humorous because of its inappropriateness or incongruity.

3. Write a generalization, such as, "Boys are stronger than girls". Ask the pupils to prove that this is not necessarily true.

4. Ask the student to examine certain sections in two or more content-area texts, and then write a short summary telling which book he thinks does the best job of providing information about the specified subject.

5. Have students observe a story character in what the person does, what he says, and what is said about him.

6. Ask the students to choose a nursery rhyme or fairy tale, and rewrite it with modern characters and setting. The revised story can be read to the class. Students are to guess the title of the original story.

7. The teacher presents a humorous or political cartoon to the class. The students would be asked what message the drawing is trying to convey, whom the characters are supposed to represent (as in a political caricature), why it is humorous, and whether they agree with the idea expressed by the artist.

8. Have the student describe an important event, throwing in erroneous information or inserting information out of sequence. The class then tries to determine what is wrong with the description.

9. List pairs of words or phrases, and have students identify the words telling cause and the words telling effect.

10. The "Cloze" procedure can be used for testing and exercises of comprehension. Give students a sentence or paragraph in which words are omitted. They are to fill in the missing words. Discussion of the answers is as important as the techniques.
IV. Student resources

A. State-adopted textbooks


B. Non-state-adopted Materials


RL= reading level II=interest level

V. Teacher resources

A. Professional material


Dawson, Mildred A. (ed.) Developing High School Reading Programs, Newark, Delaware: International Reading Association, 1967.


Smith, Carl B. *Correcting Reading Problems in the Classroom*, Newark, Delaware: International Reading Association, 1970.


B. Tests for assessing reading for meaning

*California Reading Test* by Ernest W. Tiegs and Willis W. Clark. California Test Bureau, Monterey, California, 1957 edition with 1963 norms, (levels 4-6, 7-9, 9-14).

*Dade County Group Informal Reading Inventory*. Special Reading Services, Dade County Public Schools, (levels 1-9).

*Davis Reading Test* by Frederick B. Davis and Charlotte C. Davis. The Psychological Corp., New York, 1956-1962, (levels 8-11, 11-13).

*Diagnostic Reading Tests*. Committee on Diagnostic Reading Tests, Inc., Mountain Home, N.C., 1947-1963, (levels 4-8, 7-13).


C. Dade County Audio-Visual materials (J=junior high, S=senior high).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Publisher</th>
<th>Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Developing Reading Maturity:</td>
<td>Coronet, II'C, JS</td>
<td>1-01232</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comparative Reading</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical Evaluation</td>
<td></td>
<td>1-01230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpreting Meaning</td>
<td></td>
<td>1-01234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Mature Reader</td>
<td></td>
<td>1-01231</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding Style</td>
<td></td>
<td>1-01238</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective Listening</td>
<td>McGraw-Hill, 15'BW, S.</td>
<td>1-13334</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How Effective is Your Reading?</td>
<td>Coronet, 10'C, JS.</td>
<td>1-01240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How to Judge Authorities</td>
<td>Coronet, 10'BW, JS.</td>
<td>1-00513</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How to Judge Facts</td>
<td>Coronet, 12'BW, JS.</td>
<td>1-00178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How to Read a Book</td>
<td>Coronet, 11'BW, JS.</td>
<td>1-00650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How to Study</td>
<td>Coronet, 11'BW, JS.</td>
<td>1-00526</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning to Study</td>
<td>EBEC, 14'BW, JS.</td>
<td>1-10274</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening Skills: An Introduction.</td>
<td>Coronet, II'C, JS.</td>
<td>1-00745</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Improvement:</td>
<td>Coronet, II'C, JS.</td>
<td>1-00707</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehension Skills</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defining the Good Reader</td>
<td></td>
<td>1-00713</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective Speeds</td>
<td></td>
<td>1-00715</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
D. Other audio-visual materials

Find the Information. Coronet, C., JS.

Fundamentals of Language Arts. Eye Gate, C., Filmstrips, J.

Fundamentals of Thinking. Eye Gate, C., Filmstrips, J.

(Both Eye Gate filmstrips are open-ended presentations.)

How to Read: To Understand, Evaluate, Use. Society for Visual Education, filmstrip, JS.

Pathways to Reading Series: How to Read.
C-B Educational Films, JS.

Reading for Understanding: Content Clues.
Pacific Productions, filmstrips, JS.

What to Ask, How and Where to Find the Answers, parts 1 and 2. Society for Visual Education, filmstrips, JS.