Every effort must be made in childhood to teach the young to use their own minds.

For one thing is sure:

If they don’t make up their own minds, someone will do it for them.

Eleanor Roosevelt

Anne Goudvis
Learning is a consequence of thinking.

This sentence turns topsy-turvy the conventional pattern of schooling. The conventional pattern says that first students acquire knowledge. Only then do they think with and about the knowledge they have absorbed.

But it is really just the opposite: Far from thinking coming after knowledge, knowledge comes on the coattails of thinking. As we think about and with the content we are learning, we truly learn it.

Knowledge does not just sit there. It functions richly in people’s lives so they can learn about and deal with the world.

From Smart Schools: Better Thinking and Learning for Every Child
Strategies for Active Reading

Active Readers:

- **Monitor Comprehension**
  - listen to their inner voice and follow the inner conversation,
  - notice when meaning breaks down and/or mind wanders
  - leave tracks of their thinking by jotting thoughts when reading
  - stop, think and react to information
  - talk about the reading before, during and after reading
  - respond to reading in writing
  - employ “fix up strategies” — reread for clarification, read on to construct meaning, use context to break down an unfamiliar word, skip difficult parts and continue on to see if meaning becomes clear, check and recheck answers and thinking, examine evidence

- **Activate and Connect to Background Knowledge**
  - refer to prior personal experience
  - activate prior knowledge of the content, style, structure, features and genre
  - connect the new to the known - use what they know to understand new information
  - merge their thinking with new learning to build knowledge base
  - activate their schema to read strategically

- **Ask Questions**
  - wonder about the content, concepts, outcomes and genre
  - question the author
  - question the ideas and the information
  - read to discover answers and gain information
  - wonder about the text to understand big ideas
  - do further research and investigation to gain information
- **Infer and Visualize Meaning**
  - use context clues to figure out the meaning of unfamiliar words
  - draw conclusions from text evidence
  - predict outcomes, events and characters’ actions
  - surface underlying themes
  - answer questions that are not explicitly answered in the text
  - create interpretations based on text evidence
  - visualize as well as hear, taste, smell and feel the words and ideas

- **Determine Importance**
  - sift important ideas from interesting but less important details
  - target key information and code the text to hold thinking
  - distinguish between what the reader thinks is important and what the author most wants the reader to take away
  - construct main ideas from supporting details
  - choose what to remember

- **Synthesize and Summarize**
  - take stock of meaning while reading
  - add to knowledge base
  - paraphrase information
  - move from facts to ideas
  - use the parts to see the whole--read for the gist
  - rethink misconceptions and tie opinions to the text
  - revise thinking during and after reading
  - merge what is known with new information to form a new idea, perspective, or insight
  - generate knowledge

(Harvey and Goudvis)
Comprehension in the Primary Grades
Strategies for Active Literacy

Monitor Comprehension
- Look, listen, talk, write and draw to express thinking
- Use features (text, images, photographs, maps, diagrams, charts) to learn information
- Understand the purposes of different text and visual features

Activate and Connect
- Use personal experience to construct meaning
- Stop, think and react to new information, images.
- Merge thinking with new information
- Understand that what we know can change (e.g. misconceptions)

Ask Questions
- Ask questions and wonder when we read, listen and view
- Use questions as tools for learning
- Find answers to questions to expand thinking

Infer and Visualize
- Infer using background knowledge and clues from the text & pictures
- Visualize to create a picture in your mind
- Infer and visualize from features, pictures and words

Determine Importance
- Separate important information from interesting details
- Merge your thinking with the information and put it into your own words (paraphrase)
- Organize information with notetaking

Summarize and Synthesize
- Put information into your own words in a summary
- Synthesize to gather big ideas in the text
- Use a variety of strategies to read, write and draw new learning
- Do research and create projects to demonstrate learning and understanding

Primary Comprehension Toolkit
Harvey and Goudvis
## Comprehension Continuum

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer Literal Questions</th>
<th>Retells</th>
<th>Merges Thinking with Content</th>
<th>Acquires Knowledge</th>
<th>Actively Uses Knowledge</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Answering literal questions shows that learners can skim and scan for answers, pick one out that matches the question, and have short-term recall. &lt;br&gt;Only demonstrates surface understanding.</td>
<td>Retelling shows that learners can organize thoughts sequentially and put them into their own words. Shows short-term recall of events in a narrative and bits of information in nonfiction. &lt;br&gt;Does not, in and of itself demonstrate understanding.</td>
<td>Real understanding takes root when learners merge their thinking with the content by connecting, inferring, questioning, determining importance, synthesizing, and reacting to information. &lt;br&gt;Understanding begins here.</td>
<td>Once learners have merged their thinking with the content, they can begin to acquire knowledge and insight. They can learn, understand, and remember. &lt;br&gt;Shows more robust understanding.</td>
<td>With new insights and understandings, learners can actively use knowledge and apply what they have learned to the experiences, situations, and circumstances at hand to expand understanding and even take action. &lt;br&gt;Understanding used for problem solving and acting.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Teacher Language
- What is...?  
- Where did...?  
- Who was...?  
- How did...?  
- How many...?  

- What do you think?  
- What did you learn?  
- What does this remind you of?  
- What do you wonder?  
- What do you visualize?  
- What do you infer?  
- What is this mostly about?  
- What makes you say/think that?  
- How did you come up with that?  
- What, if anything, confuses you?  

- What do you want to do about this?  
- Why do you want to take action?  
- Is there a way you can get involved?  
- How do you think you can help?  
- How would you convince others of your point of view?  
- What is your plan?  
- How might you engage the help of others?  

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The Comprehension Toolkit  
Harvey & Goudvis 2016
The Gradual Release of Responsibility

CONNECT AND ENGAGE
Before we begin to model a strategy, we capture our kids’ enthusiasm and activate their prior knowledge. We share a compelling image, a lively video, an interesting title, some content knowledge, or a personal story to get them excited about what’s to come. And we have them turn and talk about their own experience and what they think they might already know about a topic at hand.

MODELING
As literacy teachers, we open up our own cognitive process to show kids how we read, sharing both our successes as readers and how we handle challenges along the way. We model instruction by thinking out loud, reading aloud interactively, and conducting shared readings.

GUIDED PRACTICE
Much of our teaching and learning in the active literacy classroom occurs during guided practice. We invite kids to turn and talk throughout the lesson so that they have a better shot at understanding. Guided practice allows us to respond to the kids while they practice up close to us, and we scaffold our instruction to meet their needs.

COLLABORATIVE PRACTICE
During collaborative practice, kids work in pairs or small groups throughout the room to read, draw, write, and talk together as we move around and confer with individuals or small groups.

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE
The ultimate goal of instruction in the active literacy classroom is to move kids toward independence. We want all kids to become confident, capable, agentive readers and thinkers who initiate further learning. So we allow plenty of classroom time for kids to read, write, and practice the strategies on their own as we confer, assess, and coach.

SHARING THE LEARNING
As a community, we share informally throughout the entire GRR process. Kids turn and talk briefly during our mini lessons. They share their thoughts with partners and small groups during guided and collaborative practice. And they always come back together at the end to share more formally, teaching their classmates and responding to each other’s ideas.

(adapted from Gallagher and Pearson 1983, Fielding and Pearson 1994)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lesson Component</th>
<th>What Teacher Did/Said</th>
<th>What Students Did/Said</th>
<th>Questions, Thoughts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Connect/Engage</strong></td>
<td><strong>• Teacher explains strategy and how it will be used</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>• Teacher engages students in the lesson</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>• Teacher builds/activates background knowledge and interest in the text to be read</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Model “I Do”</strong></td>
<td><strong>• Teacher reads aloud small chunks of text and thinks aloud use of strategy(ies)</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>• Teacher records thinking (sticky notes, anchor chart)</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>• Turn and talk</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Guide “We Do”</strong></td>
<td><strong>• Teacher continues to read aloud and guides students to use strategy(ies) and record their own thinking</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>• Turn and talk for students to share, support each other</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>• Teacher circulates, prompts, praises, assesses</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>• Teacher chooses children to share their own thinking as examples for all</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson Component</td>
<td>What Teacher Did/Said</td>
<td>What Students Did/Said</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Differentiation: Collaborative and/or Independent Practice “You Do”</td>
<td>• Teacher provides choices of text and/or task for students at different levels, or ways for all students to access core text&lt;br&gt;• Students use strategy(ies) and record as they read&lt;br&gt;• Teacher circulates, prompts, praises, assesses and/or meets with small group(s)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whole Class Sharing</td>
<td>• Students return to rug and share how they used the strategy(ies)&lt;br&gt;• Teacher provides closure</td>
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<tr>
<td>Additional Notes:</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Plan Ahead to Highlight Specific Teaching Points
We plan ahead and note places in the text where we want to model specific strategies and show how we analyze and interpret the text. We think about questions that zero in on important concepts or ideas that we stop and discuss with kids to further their understanding.

Share Aspects of the Inner Conversation
We share how we monitor and keep track of our thinking when reading. We note our reactions, connections, confusions, questions, and so forth. "In this book, Gleam and Glow, I think it would be really scary to have your dad off fighting in a war somewhere like the father in this story is doing. We also share how our attention can flag and our thoughts can stray from the text and how we repair this, so that kids will see how we get ourselves back on track. We jot and sketch our thoughts on sticky notes or in the margins to leave tracks of our thinking and stay on top of meaning.

Share How We Activate and Connect to Background Knowledge
We show kids how we merge what we already know with new information we encounter as we read. "I knew that sharks have big teeth, but they are even bigger than I thought they were. Wow!" We also show how our thinking changes as we read, "I always thought that sharks like to eat people, but now I know that they are very picky eaters."

Share Our Questions
We demonstrate the questions we have while reading. We note that some questions are answered and others are not. We show how we read with a question in mind and how one question often leads to another. "Why are the sea otters disappearing? Is there not enough food? Is a predator killing them? Is the water polluted?" In this way, we demonstrate how our questions can lead to a line of thinking.

Share Our Inferences
We model how we use the context to infer the meaning of unfamiliar words and concepts. We show how we infer themes in fiction. We show how we use illustrations, photos, and features to draw conclusions in nonfiction. "It says the radio guys on the Titanic were weary. I'm inferring it means they were tired, because the next sentence says they had been up all night."

Verbalize Confusing Points and Demonstrate Fix-Up Strategies
We monitor ongoing comprehension and show our reaction when meaning breaks down. "Huh? I don't get this part. This doesn't make sense." And we also show how we use fix-up strategies like rereading or reading on to clarify confusion, saying something like, "Oh, now I get it. I missed that the first time I read."

Share How We Sort and Sift Information to Determine Important Ideas
We demonstrate how we can't remember all of the details when we read. So we model how we pick out the information we want to remember. "Boy, there are a lot of details here about photosynthesis. But what's really important is how plants use sunlight to make their food. I can tell that because the writer talks a lot about the sunlight and its relationship to plants."
Interactive Reading Aloud

As with thinking aloud, during an interactive read-aloud, we model our own thinking to show kids how we interact with the text and then quickly give them opportunities to talk with one another and respond on their own.

We build and activate background knowledge about the text by asking kids to turn and talk about what they think they already know about the topic at hand. Then we allow a minute or two for them to share some of this information. This engages our kids and prepares them to participate.

We read through a bit of the text and model our thinking as we read. We share our inner conversation, our use of a strategy, our confusions, our background knowledge, some content information, whatever the focus of the lesson was. We stop and record our thinking on sticky notes, a chart, think sheets, the margins, or in notebooks. After kids have observed us modeling, we often stop and ask them to share what they noticed us doing as a reader, so they can do it themselves when they are reading independently. We might record their thinking on an anchor chart, both what they noticed us modeling and their own thoughts.

During guided practice, we read a bit more and encourage kids to further discuss the ideas and issues. As we read, we stop and give them time to draw or write their responses and talk to one another.
Chapter 6 Instructional Practices for Teaching Comprehension

Annotating Text

Annotating Text is the most powerful tool for holding thinking when reading, listening, and viewing. We need our students to be up close and personal, clipboards in hand, during our lesson as we read through the text, stop to demonstrate how we use a strategy, and invite them to annotate and draw their responses.

We explain that annotating means stopping briefly to write or draw our ideas in the margins, on sticky notes, or on think sheets as we read. Leaving tracks like this gives readers a place to hold and remember their thinking.

To highlight the power of kids' thinking, we often say, "Nothing matters more than your thinking when you read, and annotation is a great way to share it, hold it, and remember it."

We model our own annotations and share a variety of text codes, and kids contribute their own. Here are some possibilities:

- * for important information
- ? for a question
- L for learn
- R for "It reminds me of . . ."
- ! for amazing or surprising information
- I for inference
- V for visualize
- Huh? for confusion

This character is just like me, a little shy at first.

I never knew that dinosaurs lived on land & plesiosaurs lived in the water.

What is parkour?

A sport of running, jumping, climbing through obstacles.

Co-Constructing Anchor Charts

Anchor charts make thinking big, concrete, and visible. We co-construct them so that kids have ownership and continue to use them. They evolve over time as kids learn more and add to them. Everybody weighs in.

Anchor charts provide a record of our launch lessons. We co-construct anchor charts to record kids’ thinking about a text, a lesson, a strategy, or the content so that we can return to it to remember what we have learned. Halls and walls teach in our classrooms.

We create a wide range of anchor charts to hold the learning and thinking from the lessons. A variety of anchor-chart types include the following:

- **Strategy charts.** During a strategy lesson, we co-construct charts incorporating the lesson content as well as students’ comments and insights. We define the strategy, capture the language that demonstrates strategic thinking, and show examples of the kids’ use of the strategy.

- **Content charts.** Content matters. Content anchor charts record the interesting and important information that readers discover when reading and researching. Sometimes we record new learning, how our thinking has evolved and changed, or new information we have acquired.

- **Genre charts.** We discuss and define the genre and share examples. As kids read in a particular genre and discuss what they know about it, we capture their thoughts in writing. So we might co-construct a chart about the features of nonfiction or the elements of fiction, which we post for all to see and remember.

- **Response charts.** We honor kids’ thinking by collecting their thoughts, drawings, and all manner of responses on anchor charts. Many of these charts relate to strategy lessons we have taught as well as content they have learned.

**Monitoring Comprehension**

When we monitor our comprehension we listen to the voice in our head speaking to us. We read Robin Cruise’s *Little Mama Forgets*, the story of Lucy, a little girl who lives with her mom, dad, baby brother and her beloved grandmother. As her grandmother gets older, she forgets more and more things every day. But she never forgets how much she loves her little Lucy and the rest of the family.

After we read it, we wrote down what the story made us think about.

What the story makes us think about...

It reminds me of my favorite uncle who is really old but still loves to have fun.
It makes me think of my grandpa who forgets lots of stuff.
It makes me hungry when they eat all those tortillas for breakfast.
I don’t like to take a nap either.
Why did she forget the stop light? That’s dangerous.
I wonder why some people forget so much when they get old.