

READING APPRENTICESHIP

**GUIDE TO USING READING STRATEGIES
IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION**



**Observatoire
de la formation
professionnelle
du Québec**

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This guide was developed with the financial support of the FRQSC.



The Observatoire de la formation professionnelle du Québec would like to thank the Centre Expé.



USING READING STRATEGIES IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

The use of various reading strategies has been proven effective in many school settings and there are several methods for learning how to use them effectively. Among these methods is the one developed by Schoenbach, Greenleaf and Murphy (2012) called [Reading Apprenticeship](#).

This method is designed to be used by all types of readers, more specifically by those who must read informative texts in a new field. Therefore, it makes sense for you, as a vocational education student, to learn to read like the professionals of the trade that you will soon be practicing!

The reading strategies suggested in the [Reading Apprenticeship](#) method help readers to retain and understand information.

These strategies will help you to:

- [Be a more active reader;](#)
- [Identify and correct lapses in comprehension;](#)
- [Increase your motivation to read;](#)
- [Develop your autonomy as a reader.](#)

In addition to learning the suggested reading strategies, this method integrates periods of collaborative learning and reflecting on the text. Discussing with your classmates and your teacher allows you to share ideas and tips. These discussions improve the implementation of the [Reading Apprenticeship](#) method.

Here are five strategies to put in your toolbox:

1. MAKING PREDICTIONS
2. ASKING YOURSELF QUESTIONS
3. MAKING CONNECTIONS
4. CLARIFYING
5. SUMMARIZING

READING STRATEGIES



As illustrated in the diagram, these strategies are meant to be used in combination while reading. For example, the Ask yourself questions strategy is often used with the Making connections and/or the Clarifying strategies. You should not be trying to use only one strategy at a time nor be trying to use the reading strategies in some specific order.

HAPPY READING!



MAKING PREDICTIONS

CLIMBING EVEREST OR JUST TAKING A LITTLE STROLL?



Before heading out, we have to plan our outing.

- Is it a trip of just a few hours or several days?
- Which boots would be the most appropriate?
- What equipment do I have to bring?
- Is it a known route?

You can ask all these questions when reading as well.

HERE ARE A FEW GUIDELINES FOR USING THE MAKING PREDICTIONS STRATEGY

WHY USE IT?

- To get prepared for reading.
- To activate your prior knowledge (what you already know about the subject).
- To recognize the emotions that the text evokes (curiosity, boredom, enthusiasm, insecurity, etc.).
- To identify the tools that may be useful to you.
- To build and maintain your motivation.

WHEN TO USE IT?

BEFORE YOU START READING:

- When you are about to start reading a text or a new section of a text, make a prediction.
- Make use of the headings and subheadings, the images, the text boxes and your knowledge on the subject as hints.

WHILE YOU ARE READING:

- Remain active, revise your prediction. (Were you right?)
- Make new predictions.

HOW TO USE IT?

- Look over the table of contents if there is one, the heading and the subheadings, the charts, the images, etc.
- Skim over the text.
- Formulate hypotheses about the content of the text you have read.
- Make connections with your prior knowledge of the subject and the information provided by the teacher (the objectives, the course outline, etc.).

EXAMPLES OF QUESTIONS

- How will reading this text be useful to me?
- What will this text be about?
- What will be discussed in the next part of the text?
- What do I already know about this subject?
- Is it related to another competency?
- Have I already read or heard something about this subject?

EXAMPLES OF TRACES

- In the margin, quickly note down any ideas, predictions, or connections with prior knowledge.





ASKING YOURSELF QUESTIONS

SHOULD I TURN LEFT OR RIGHT?

- Where do you want to go?
- How do you want to get there?
- Do you want to get there as fast as possible or do you want to enjoy the scenery?
- Are you still on the right road?

On the road, it is important to keep the focus on your destination and to be on the lookout for the signs, rather than just racing ahead with your head down.

The same applies to reading.

HERE ARE A FEW GUIDELINES FOR USING THE ASKING YOURSELF QUESTIONS STRATEGY

WHY USE IT?

- To remain active while you are reading.
- To better react to the text by quickly identifying lapses in comprehension.

WHEN TO USE IT?

BEFORE YOU START READING:

- When you are about to start reading a text or a new section of a text, ask yourself questions about the text.
- To get started, use the Make predictions strategy and your prior knowledge about the subject.

WHILE YOU ARE READING:

- Remain active, regularly ask yourself questions and try to answer them.

AFTER YOU HAVE FINISHED READING:

- Make sure you have answered all your questions with the help of the Clarifying strategy.

HOW TO USE IT?

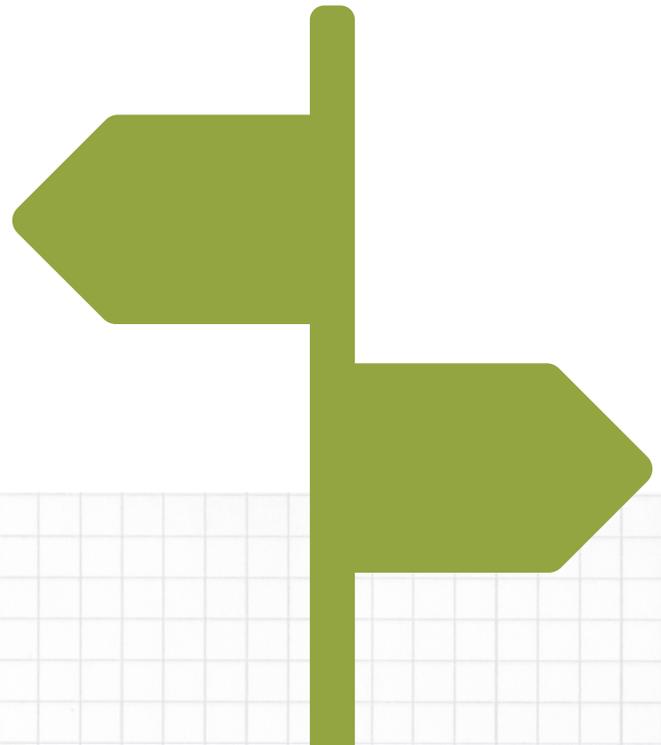
- Write down any questions which come to mind.
- Put question marks in the margin of the text and write in the answers when you find them.
- Use the Making predictions strategy.

EXAMPLES OF QUESTIONS

- What does this word or concept mean?
- How can the images, tables, diagrams, etc., help me?
- Did I understand?
- What did I understand?

EXAMPLES OF TRACES

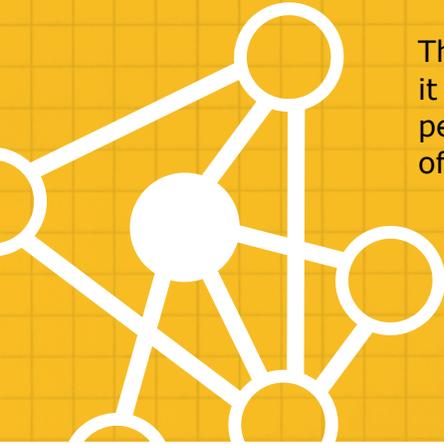
- Write your questions and their answers in the margin.
- Highlight passages which you are uncertain about and identify them with a question mark.
- Highlight words you don't know.



MAKING CONNECTIONS



ONE STITCH UNDER AND ONE STITCH OVER!



The strings of a tennis racket are woven into a regular grid to give it strength and flexibility. All these interconnections make it a high performance racket. This is analogous to what goes on in the mind of someone who is reading.

HERE ARE A FEW GUIDELINES FOR USING THE MAKING CONNECTIONS STRATEGY

WHY USE IT?

- To remain active while you are reading.
- To facilitate comprehension.
- To remember what you read.
- To deduce implied information.

WHEN TO USE IT?

BEFORE YOU START READING:

- Make connections between your existing knowledge and your predictions.

WHILE YOU ARE READING:

- Make connections between what you have read and why you are reading, or what questions could be on an exercise or an exam.

HOW TO USE IT?

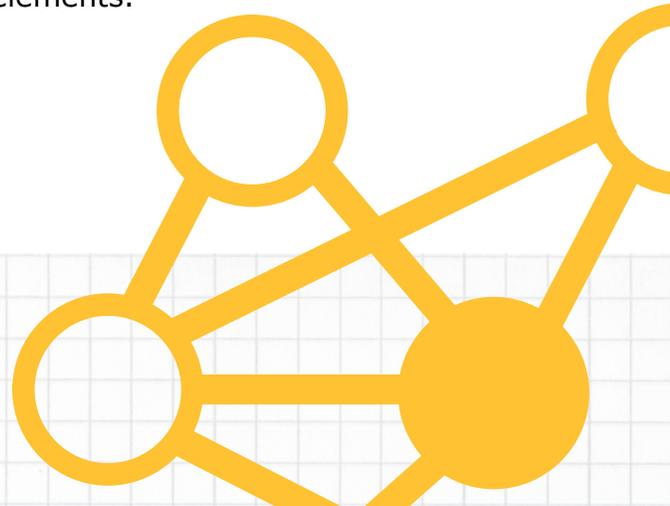
- Make connections not only between the ideas expressed in the text, but also with anything else that lies outside the text (tasks to be done, already known ideas, other information, etc.).
- Find similarities, differences, points of comparison, and contrasts between the concepts or ideas in the text.
- Take cues from words which specify the relationship between the ideas (because, however, therefore, etc.).

EXAMPLES OF QUESTIONS

- What are the connections between the elements presented in the text?
- What connections can I make with my prior knowledge (for example: this reminds me of...)?
- What is the explicit information (that which is clearly stated in the text)?
- What is the implicit information (the information which you must deduce)?

EXAMPLES OF TRACES

- Use a system of symbols in the margins.
- Organize the information into a table, a concept map, a diagram or a schematic to illustrate the connections.
- Draw lines between elements that are related.
- Use a colour code to group information on the same subject (related elements).
- Use numbers to connect related elements.





CLARIFYING

TURN ON YOUR FOG LIGHTS!

To clarify means “to make more clear or understandable”. It is like cutting through the fog to better be able to see the road signs and know where you are. When we can see clearly, we are less likely to have an accident, go around in circles, or get lost. In the same way, you can also shine light on the text....

HERE ARE A FEW GUIDELINES FOR USING THE CLARIFYING STRATEGY

WHY USE IT?

- Enhance your comprehension of the text.
- Improve and increase your vocabulary with technical words related to the trade.
- Understand unknown words.
- Identify what is impeding your understanding.

WHEN TO USE IT?

WHILE YOU ARE READING:

- Make sure you really understand the overall text as well as the more specific information. Answer your own questions.

HOW TO USE IT?

CLARIFYING AN UNKNOWN WORD:

- Make use of its similarity with other known words.
- Take a cue from the prefixes and suffixes.
- Base yourself on the words surrounding the word to be clarified (the context).
- Continue reading a little further to see if the meaning of the word is clarified.
- Look it up in the dictionary.

CLARIFYING THE MEANING OF A PASSAGE YOU DIDN'T UNDERSTAND:

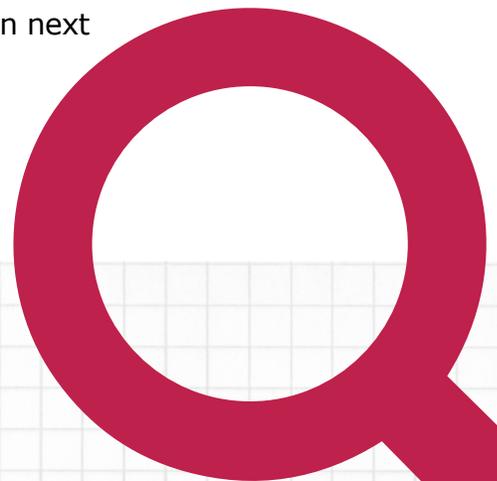
- Stop and reread the passage more attentively, using the other reading strategies.
- Discuss the text with other students or the teacher, to see what they think various passages in the text mean.

EXAMPLES OF QUESTIONS

- Are there words or parts of the sentence that I don't know?
- Can the word be replaced with a synonym?
- Do I know a word from the same family?
- Is it technical vocabulary related to my trade?

EXAMPLES OF TRACES

- Circle the words that are giving you trouble.
- Write in synonyms for difficult words.
- Write a short definition in the margin for any previously unknown words.
- Write a short explanation in the margin next to any difficult passages.

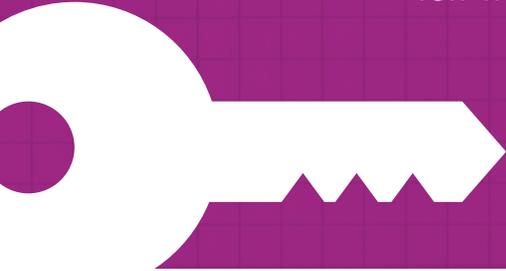


SUMMARIZING



*FIGURE IT OUT,
FIND YOUR KEY!*

Trying to figure out a code is all about finding the key. Summarizing is sort of like finding the key to a code... this strategy allows you to express what you have understood in one word (or in just a few words).



HERE ARE A FEW GUIDELINES FOR USING THE SUMMARIZING STRATEGY

WHY USE IT?

- To better remember information.
- To better organize your ideas.
- To better understand the text.
- To present the ideas in the text accurately and concisely.
- To validate your comprehension of the text.
- To prepare your revision of the text.

WHEN TO USE IT?

WHILE YOU ARE READING:

- Reducing the idea of a paragraph down to just one word would be a brilliant idea.

AFTER YOU HAVE FINISHED READING:

- If necessary, restate the text in a few sentences.

HOW TO USE IT?

- Identify the main idea and the secondary ones.
- Restate the ideas in your own words on paper or in your head.
- Make a table, a concept map, a diagram or a schematic to illustrate the connections.

EXAMPLES OF QUESTIONS

- What is this text about?
- What was the purpose of the text?
- What observations did you make from the text?
- Is it divided into sections? What is each of them about?
- How is this information useful to me or how will it be?

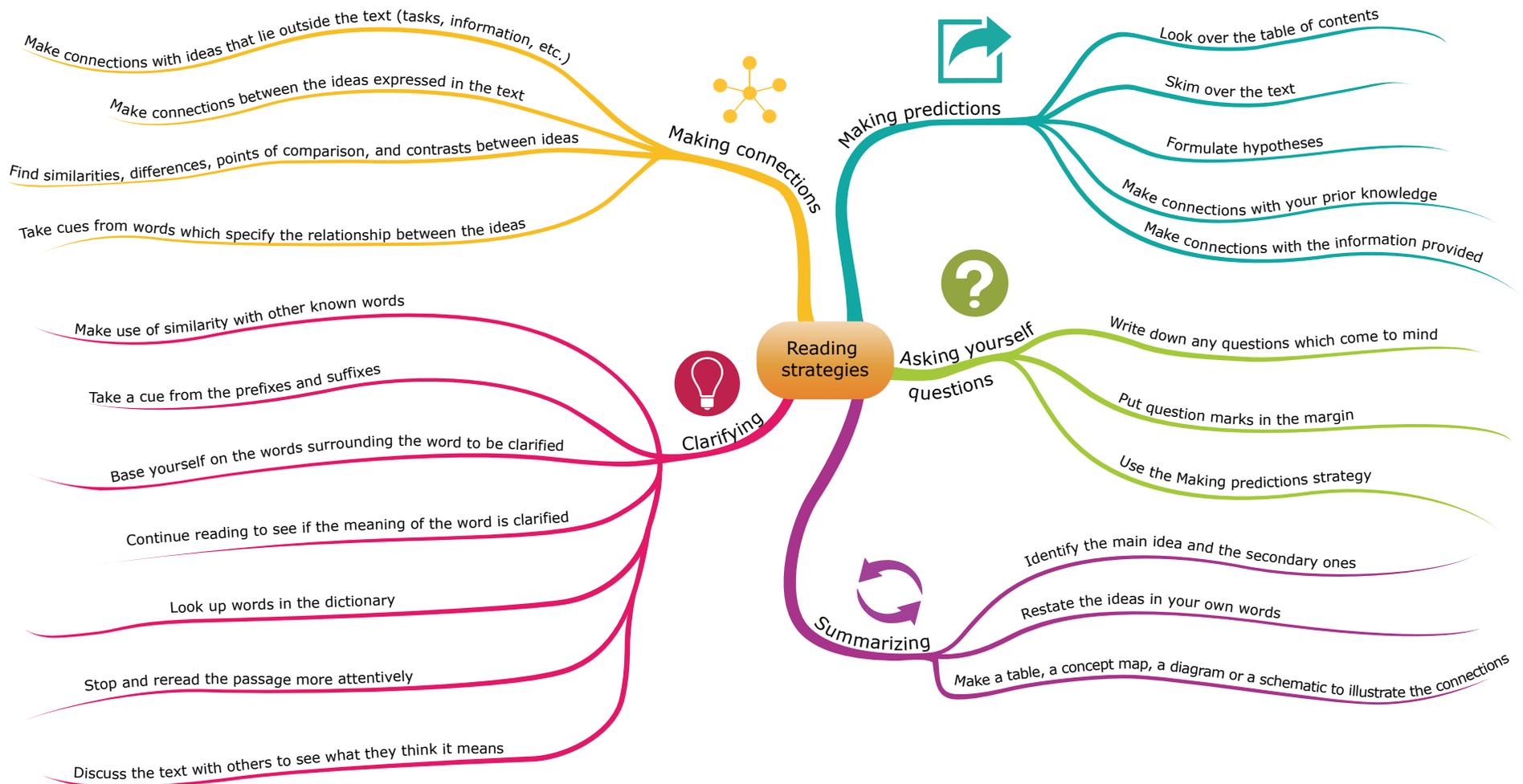
EXAMPLES OF TRACES

- In the margin, restate a paragraph in one word.
- Leave distinctive marks (for example, highlight procedures in yellow, required material in orange, health and safety information in blue, etc.).
- Highlight some global elements (for example, a summarizing sentence in the concluding paragraph).
- Organize the information into a table, a concept map, a diagram or a schematic to illustrate the connections.

IN CONCLUSION

Using the five reading strategies will help you become an active reader! The following map allows you to quickly visualize how to use each of the five suggested strategies. If needed, you can print out this map and leave it in plain sight to be able to refer to it quickly!

HOW TO USE THE FIVE STRATEGIES OF THE READING APPRENTICESHIP METHOD



It is now up to you to learn the five strategies of the **Reading Apprenticeship** method by using them regularly when reading. You could also start out by using just one or two of them. When you feel sufficiently at ease with that, you can then add others while reading.

The **Reading Apprenticeship** method also includes collaborative group activities and demonstrations by your teacher. These will help you get familiar with using the featured strategies. Participate actively in these activities because by observing others and using the reading strategies often, you will learn to read like a professional.

Finally, the strategies suggested in this guide are an excellent starting point for helping you to properly understand texts read in the context of learning a trade. However, don't forget that there are many other useful reading strategies for understanding a text (for example, reading out loud, annotating, taking part in a group reflection, etc.). You can use these additional strategies in combination with the featured strategies for an even more personalized reading.



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