

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **Introduction**

#### **1.0 Introduction**

Through reading literacy people gain access to information and the capability to function in societies. In today's information-technology-driven world, the intricacy of reading literacy is forever increasing as varied texts put different demands on the readers as they will be exposed to more diverse texts and are required to use information in new ways.

History reminds us that the types of literacy skills necessary in 19<sup>th</sup> century were different from those required by 20<sup>th</sup> century and from those required in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. According to Resnick and Resnick (1977), literacy in its earliest form meant being able to sign one's name. It was only much later than oral reading became important, and not until the 20th century that reading to gain information was stressed. Indeed definitions of reading literacy have changed over time. Literacy is now viewed as an advancing set of skills and strategies built on in various contexts and through interaction (Kirsch, 2001).

In our technologically advancing world written materials are growing and people are required to use these materials in more elaborate ways.

With the increase in content demands literacy demands would inevitably increase. Referring to the increasing complexity that texts present their readers, Chall and Jacobs state that “in order to read, understand, and learn from these more demanding texts, the readers must be fluent in recognizing words, and their vocabulary and knowledge need to expand, as does their ability to think critically and broadly” (2003, p. 14).

Thus, young readers face decoding, fluency, vocabulary, background knowledge and critical thinking as potential sources of trouble. According to Edelson and Joseph (2004) readers must also develop a motivation to read and learn, the strategies to monitor their own comprehension, and the flexibility to read for a wide variety of purposes in a wide variety of media as they are developing as readers and members of social groups.

In the new century classrooms are also becoming more and more diverse. According to the British Council (2007) it is estimated that over 1 billion people are currently learning English world wide and as at 2000 there were 750 million English as a Foreign Language speakers. In our globalized world the number of English learners around the world is only expected to further grow. Improving national proficiency in English now forms a key part of educational strategy in most countries (Graddol, 2006). Students with diverse reading skills, interests, and language abilities would need varied texts to meet their intellectual needs. For this heterogeneous population there is no single appropriate textbook or instruction method; One method of instruction that includes all reading levels is the use of text sets, consisting of a group of related texts of varied genres and reading levels (Hamman, 1995), which is advantageous in the reading classroom for different reasons. They employ authentic, engaging materials to implement skills with,

and they provide compatible reading selections for students of varying reading levels and experiences (Hynd, 1999). The expectation that all learners in a class will be at the same level of proficiency is gradually giving way to approaches that allow more personalized learning and stress learner autonomy and diversity of learning materials (Graddol, 2006).

### **1.1 Statement of the Problem**

Despite decades of efforts, certain groups of young English language learners continue to underperform academically. The exam-oriented education systems produce learners who lack critical thinking skills (Paul & Elder, 2000). The common mode of teaching allows students a passive role in class which leads to their being disengaged from literacy. Statistics from the secondary school teachers show that there is a mismatch between the language proficiency level of the students and the syllabus that is to be covered. Often teachers wonder if adolescents are literate enough, language-wise, to leave school and enter colleges or universities.

Young adult English Language Learners (ELLs) face a two-fold challenge: they must learn to speak, read and write in English and master complex academic content at the same time (Gough, 2007). English has mostly belonged to the high school curriculum and ELLs seldom get to study English before the age of 12. As a timetabled subject, grammatical accuracy, literature and in some cases pronunciation, have been stressed (Graddol, 2006). Traditionally students have been exposed to English only during the last 6 years of their secondary school which approximates to 600 hours contact time.

Compared against a native speaker, few EFL learners will ever be perfect. As English proficiency has become a criterion of what Graddol calls 'graduateness', universities in many countries have begun to require students to reach a certain standard of English proficiency before they are given admission. Rarely does the international students' English proficiency exceed IELTS 5.0 which is insufficient for academic study in English (Graddol, 2006).

Because of the continued failures of high school students at literacy tasks adolescent literacy has become the focal point for research and instruction. Educators are concerned about the problems high school students have to deal with in their struggle to read. Gaudart (1992) believes that these young adult readers have not been helped sufficiently to become aware of alternative ways of tackling learning situations. Some educators advocate remedial reading courses that focus on basic skills for struggling adolescents who cannot handle academic tasks in high school. Guthrie and Cox (2001), on the other hand, believe that helping teachers to become aware of the literacies they bring to their expertise can help students' learning.

Educational researchers have identified areas where further research and development are needed. Private (Carnegie Corporation of New York; the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundations and the W. K. Kellogg Foundation) and public organizations (Institute of Education Sciences, the National Science Foundation, and the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development) have also tackled the problem. According to Snow and Biancarosa (2003) a persistent problem is that teachers do not use the available tools. In some cases, they lack systemic support. In other cases, resources

are lacking. Teachers tend to be resistant to change and those who are willing to change may be unable to sustain change without ongoing professional development (Edelson & Joseph, 2001).

Considering the potential hindrances, deciding where to start with improving the reading literacy of struggling adolescent readers seem challenging. The IRA and NMSA identify the need for high-quality literacy programs, reading materials, and staff development, as well as legislation that would further “school- and district-wide efforts to improve student reading achievement” (IRA & NMSA, 2001, p. 2).

Research has taught us much about what is needed to read, nevertheless, the knowledge about the means of helping students learn to read seem to be lacking. Having said the above, this study hopes to respond to this need through a Reading Apprenticeship Framework as a partnership of expertise, relying on what the teacher does as a reader and on pre- university students’ strengths as learners. This study also hopes to provide a comprehensive description of how the Apprenticeship Framework is utilized and implemented in the classroom by the researcher and the learners and how these experiences in turn affect students’ reading achievement and engagement.

This is also in line with the aspiration of the Government of Malaysia, as stated in *The Malaysian Smart School: A Conceptual Blueprint document*:

The development of evaluation strategies to measure effectiveness of teaching-learning materials will be required to provide feedback to teachers, courseware developers and other interested parties for on-going improvement of the pedagogical approach and contents of teaching-learning materials (1997, p. 36).

## **1.2 Objectives of the Study**

The premise for the current study is that the literacy demands and practices of colleges and universities are not always fashioned around the resources people bring to learners' lives. Therefore, the task was to improve reading literacy of pre-university students to better enable them to tackle literacy demands in further education and thereafter to research the impact of interventions that seek to mobilize the literacy practices of learners in new and more effective ways.

Given the scenario, the objectives of this study are:

1. to study the learners' responses to the Reading Apprenticeship Framework
2. to study how the teacher can best utilize the framework
3. to explore the strategies that can make the framework efficient, effective and appealing.
4. to investigate how the framework can affect learners' learning.

## **1.3 Research Questions**

Considering the objectives of the study, the following research questions were addressed to be answered:

1. What is the impact of the Reading Apprenticeship Framework on adolescents' reading literacy in terms of:
  - a) engagement
  - b) strategy use and
  - c) comprehension

## 2. What teaching strategies are useful in facilitating the delivery of the Reading Apprenticeship Framework?

Based on research question 1, I investigated the utilization of the Framework in an intermediate proficiency language classroom, looking into these phenomena:

- a) how the learners interacted with the reading materials;
- b) how the learners used the instructed strategies in independent reading;
- c) how the learners showed abilities in literacy;

Based on research question 2, I looked into:

- d) how the teacher could provide the “scaffolding” needed for learners to make meaningful connections between the knowledge that they possess and the knowledge that they are being presented with;
- e) how the teacher delivered and presented new ideas or information; and
- f) what difficulties and successes the teacher experienced and what professional development experiences, activities, and resources were most helpful.

As schools should be committed to providing equal opportunities for all students, it is necessary to develop the reading literacy of those who are left behind but have to enter adult life sooner or later. The findings of this study hope to benefit learners who are on the verge of finishing high school and leading to college/university level. Looking at the richness of context, it is hoped that analysis of the framework will also offer insights and suggestions for the main stakeholders: teachers.

## 1.4 Definition of Terms

This section gives the definitions of some key terms used throughout this thesis.

### Reading Literacy

For the purpose of this study, the definition of reading literacy by PISA (Program for International Student Assessment, 2000) is considered:

*understanding, using, and reflecting on written texts, in order to achieve one's goals, to develop one's knowledge and potential, and to participate in society.* Literacy is neither a single skill suited to all types of texts nor a specific set of skills but, it is a set of ordered skills that can be used to accomplish diverse tasks (Kirsh, 2001).

### Reading Strategies

In this study a comprehensive definition by Pressley and Afflerbach (1995) is adopted:

*'Reading strategies are specific heuristics, methods or procedures which readers apply to adequately process and understand the information presented in a text. Reading strategies are procedures which can be adapted to the characteristics of the reader, the text, and the task.'*

### Strategy Training

Dansereau (1978), reports that a large portion of college-level students, have little knowledge of alternative techniques available to them. Strategy training is defined as the *"explicit teaching of how, when and why students should employ FL learning strategies to enhance their efforts at reaching language program goals"* (Cohen 1998, p. 70). Assessing the need for strategy training, Cohen notes that the 'ultimate goal for



strategy training is to empower students by allowing them to take control of the language learning process.

### **Engagement**

For the purpose of this study a combination of definitions suggested by Dolezal, Welsh, Pressley, and Vincent (2003) and Furrer and Skinner (2003) is adopted.

Therefore, engagement means time on task, which signifies paying attention to text, concentrating on meaning, and sustaining cognitive effort, such qualities as enthusiasm, liking, and enjoyment.

### **Scaffolding**

Scaffolds are temporary supports that help a learner bridge the gap between what he or she can do and what he or she needs to do to succeed at a learning task (Graves & Braaten, 1996).

### **Metacognition**

Perhaps the most straightforward definition of metacognition is that it is ‘thinking about thinking’ (Bogdan, 2000; Flavell, 1999; Metcalfe, 2000); however, this definition requires further elaboration. Thus for the purpose of this study, the definition by Downing, Ho, Shin, Vrijmoed, and Wong (2007) is adopted. To them, whilst cognition focuses on solving the problem, *metacognition also involves knowing how to reflect and analyze thought and how to draw conclusion from that analysis, and how to put what has been learned into practice*. Therefore, metacognition focuses on the process of problem-solving.

**Think-aloud**

In general think aloud simply means saying aloud one's thoughts. In an instructional context, think-alouds are usually carried out by trainers and teachers as a means of modeling cognitive processes when demonstrating how a task is carried out. Ehlinger and Pritchard (1994) pointed out that think-aloud, when used as an instructional technique in the reading instruction, is a teaching strategy that makes the invisible process of reading visible. Teachers attempt to model the kinds of strategies a skilled reader uses during reading and map out specifically what they are doing to cope with a particular problem (Davey, 1983). In this study think-aloud is defined as *verbalization of one's thoughts while engaged in a task* (Kucan & Beck, 1997).

**Critical Literacy**

The intellectual process of actively conceptualizing, analyzing, applying or evaluating information as a guide to take action (Scriven & Paul, 1987).

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **Review of Literature**

#### **2.0 Introduction**

Keeping up with the research literature is a challenge for researchers and teachers. However, in this review it was tried to draw extensively from the existing literatures on different instructional approaches, basic approaches to instruction, reading strategies, interest and engagement. The review is based on the research literature and existing designs for interest-driven, active reading.

While these principles do not represent an exhaustive list they do represent those commonly cited in the literature. As principles, they can serve as a general guide for teaching and learning and as specific indicators of best practices. They also present a point of comparison against which our own beliefs about teaching and learning can be measured. Such comparisons are useful because they reassure us that our beliefs have actually been tested and proven to be valid. In cases when our beliefs do not correspond to the principles, we have an opportunity to re-evaluate our thinking and our behaviors. In either case, there arises an opportunity to make the reasoning behind our behaviors more explicit, either to validate them or to modify them.

## 2.1 Literacy and Reading

Viewing literacy as a relationship of learners to the world, the view of Vygotsky, (1986), a number of implications for foreign language teaching will dawn. First, if literacy is a social construct, students can learn a lot about languages and societies by being exposed to sets of values reflected in texts and the ways literacy is used in those societies. Second, if literacy is acquisition of new beliefs and values, it also fosters socialization into the foreign society. Third, the view that literacy is a collection of social practices suggests that literacy needs to be developed in multiple contexts, with multiple text genres, for multiple purposes. Finally, if literacy is not a passive acceptance of discourse, we need to encourage learners to take an active, critical role towards the texts.

### 2.1.1 Definitions of Reading Literacy

Since the beginning of the twentieth century, it has been acknowledged that reading requires more than perceptual and sensory-motor skills; it also demands the reader's active participation at a cognitive level (Kern, 2000). This view takes us beyond seeing literacy as a process of decoding information and leads us to seeing reading as an act of constructing meaning between the text and existing knowledge.

Reading Literacy is defined in PISA (Program for International Student Assessment) 2000, as *understanding, using, and reflecting on written texts, in order to achieve one's goals, to develop one's knowledge and potential, and to participate in society*. Literacy is said to be not a single skill that suits to all types of texts nor is it a

specific set of skills but a set of ordered skills used to accomplish diverse tasks. To Kirsch, literacy is an individual's ability to use printed information to function in society, to achieve one's goals, and to develop one's knowledge and potential (1993, p. 2). In other words Kirsch believes that literacy enables the fulfillment of ambitions which enrich our personal life and that literacy provides us with a means of contributing to, as well as benefiting from, society.

He elaborates that in today's world individuals must possess the skills to locate and use information from texts for different purposes. Lyon (1998) describes the nature of the reading process:

In general, if learners can read the words on a page accurately and fluently, they will be able to construct meaning at two levels. At the first level, literal understanding is achieved. However, constructing meaning requires far more than literal comprehension. Children must eventually guide themselves through text by asking questions such as: "Why am I reading this, and how does this information relate to my reasons for doing so?", "What is the author's point of view?", "Do I understand what the author is saying and why?", "Is the text internally consistent?" It is this second level of comprehension that leads readers to reflective, purposeful reading. (p. 7)

Researchers such as Sticht (1975) and Szwed (1981) maintain that the growing acceptance of the importance of lifelong learning has expanded the views and demands of reading and literacy. They add that different cultures and groups may value different kinds of literacy practices.

To Knoblauch and Brannon being literate develops three abilities: self definition, social imagination and critical literacy. Knoblauch and Brannon (1993) also frame critical literacy as "a commitment to understanding language use and its relationship to power in

order to use language for self realization, social critique and cultural transformation.” (p. 152)

According to Hanssen (1994), literacy is both the willingness and the ability to evoke, express, receive, reflect on, share, evaluate, and negotiate meanings, in the various forms that meanings may take. Literacy is both a private and a public phenomenon. As a private act it helps the reader in the process of self-discovery and definition. But such a process is really only enacted communally.

Literacy empowers the reader to become social by understanding other perspectives. It requires readers who bring personal meaning to bear on a critical interaction with texts, and with the world, in order to outgrow ourselves (Hanssen, 1994), and to revise our theory of the world. Literacy involves more than decoding words as a linguistic process that relies on knowledge of textual organization, genres and conventions of written language. It is a cognitive process and a social practice that is developed through apprenticeship (Kern, 2000).

### **2.1.2 Goals for Reading Literacy**

According to Rivers (1978), the ability to read another language with direct comprehension and with fluency should be cultivated in progressive stages, and practiced with carefully selected materials which students can read with ease and enjoyment.

Reading is a process that involves the activation of relevant knowledge and related language skills to get information across from one individual to another. This is the basic notion considered in designing the Apprenticeship Framework.

The language barrier usually makes reading for most language learners a slow decoding process with a dictionary. The obvious answer for them seems to be reading unauthentic materials designed for their level of language proficiency.

According to the NAEP (National Assessment of Educational Progress) 2000 report, the goals for reading literacy are to develop good readers who:

- read with enough fluency to focus on the meaning of what they read;
- form an understanding of what they read and extend, elaborate, and critically judge its meaning;
- use various strategies to aid their understanding and plan, manage, and check the meaning of what they read;
- apply what they already know to understand what they read;
- can read various texts for different purposes; and
- possess positive reading habits and attitudes.

Programs such as the *Reading Excellence Act* and *No Child Left Behind* focus on improving reading achievement. The National Research Council's research-based report *Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children* (Snow, Burns, & Griffen, 1998) corroborates the characteristics listed above when it describes accomplished readers as being able to:

- summarize major points from fiction and nonfiction texts,
- read longer fictional selections and chapter books independently,

- discuss underlying themes or messages in interpreting fiction, and
- distinguish cause and effect, fact and opinion, main idea, and supporting details in interpreting nonfiction.

### **2.1.3 Different Perspectives on Literacy**

As our conceptions of literacy will influence how we teach reading in the classroom, it is essential to understand that literacy is more than a set of academic skills or decoding words. It involves an awareness of how acts of reading transform meanings. To understand literacy one can focus on the different ways in which written language is used within social groups or on how literacy is acquired. Delgado-Gaitan (1990) believes that “The ability to interpret linguistic and graphic symbols associated with text requires one type of ability. Literacy is a socio-cultural process, and it follows that another literate ability has to do with the socio-cultural knowledge and cognitive skills that are necessary for the learner” (p. 50).

At the lower levels of most foreign language curricula, literacy is more text-centric, rather than reader-centric (Kern, 2000). Literacy instruction at this level calls for using “functional” exercises, as well as reading stories and journalistic texts, with the goal of providing vocabulary and grammar practice rather than meeting any communicative purpose. It is assumed that knowledge of textual forms will provide the necessary foundation for students’ success in literary and cultural studies (Barnett 1991; Jurasek, 1996). Byrnes (1998) states that “Foreign language departments must learn to



play a crucial role in enhancing student's literacy, students' ability to interpret and produce texts, orally and in writing, in a fashion that shows a rich awareness of the relation among sociocultural contexts of use, meaning and significance" (p. 283).

In the college curriculum, two other factors get involved. One is the transmission of cultural knowledge and the development of aesthetic appreciation. The other, called "cognitive" strand, involves the development of textual analysis skills and critical thought. Thus, the kind of literacy taught in advanced courses should be more analytical and critical (Kern, 2000).

This is where most students underperform as they have not been prepared for such readings. Thus, there is room for socio cognitive principles to be introduced in classrooms and that is why Kern discusses the following to be translated to the realities of classroom teaching and curriculum. He believes that literacy involves:

1. Interpretation
2. Collaboration
3. Conventions
4. Cultural knowledge
5. Problem-solving and
6. Reflection and self-reflection

He then summarizes them all by the macro-principle: *communication*. By practicing literacy in a non-native language, students learn about discourse. They learn to deal with ambiguities, rather than relying on simplistic form-meaning correspondences (Kern, 2000). Therefore, it can be concluded that the goal of a literacy-based curriculum

should be to engage learners in activities that involve as many of these principles as possible. However, a gap exists between research and practice in literacy instruction (e.g., Greenwood & Abbott, 2001). A number of reports (Snow et al., 1998) have identified reading instruction practices that accelerate learning to read; nevertheless the adoption of these practices seems to be slow (e.g., Lyon, 1998). Some of the proposed solutions are (a) increasing the collaboration between researchers and teachers to make educational research more accessible to classroom teachers; (b) aligning practice with current research findings (Simmons, Kuykendall, King, Cornachione, & Kameenui, 2000); (c) creating roles in schools for professionals whose duties include identifying and translating research into practice (Boudah, Logan, & Greenwood, 2001); (d) implementing professional development models that go beyond the teacher training (Fuchs, Mathes, Fuchs, & Lipsey, 2001). Greenwood and Abbott (2001) remain skeptical as to whether such reforms will actually change teachers' practices and whether the implemented practices will be prolonged.

Changing teacher practices in schools is a challenge (Boudah et al., 2001). However, teachers' practices can improve through monitoring of classroom implementation accompanied by feedback to teachers. Another obstacle seems to be a lack of knowledge regarding how to combine multiple effective practices into an instructional program (Baker & Smith, 2001) and how to measure the progress in a reformed curriculum. Therefore, reforms take place without evidence that (a) implemented practices meet standards of fidelity, (b) these practices are working, and (c)

if they are not working, whether new changes are working (Deno, 1997; Greenwood & Maheady, 1997).

Most literacy instructions have focused on one key factor to development of literacy. It was tried to make this study significant by giving varying emphases to these presuppositions-- be it motivation, purpose, strategy use, schemata, or connectedness to the material-- hoping to help pre-university students enhance their reading literacy through usage of multiple forms of representation; explicit meta cognitive talks; and a balance of scaffolded and less scaffolded engaging activities (John-Steiner & Mahn, 1996).

## **2.2 Adolescent Literacy**

The focus on adolescents takes the study of literacy to a broader view. Four themes are mentioned by Alvermann, Moon, and Hagood (1999) in relation to adolescent literacy. First, adolescent literacy is more complex and sophisticated than what is traditionally known due to adolescents' multiple literacies. Second, due to such multiple literacies, they have an expanded notion of text which includes films, the Internet, popular music, television, magazines, newspapers, and so forth. Moreover, literacy plays an important role in the development of adolescents' individual and social identities. Smith (1996) stresses the importance of apprenticeship and the learner's personal sense of group membership, which leads to a literate identity. Finally, adolescents need spaces in schools to explore and experiment with multiple literacies and to receive feedback

from peers and adults. Schools advocating only school-sanctioned literacy do not provide such spaces (Moje, Young, Readence, & Moore, 2000). Alvermann et al. (1999) discuss the importance of increasing adolescents' awareness of the social, political, and economic messages coming at them from the popular media and that current classroom settings tend to ignore such messages.

To begin changing the patterns of adolescent literacy achievement, issues around adolescents' positions within the community and their engagement with texts must be addressed.

### **2.2.1 Improving Adolescent Literacy and Texts**

According to IRA/NMSA, improving adolescent literacy is linked to improving texts. Although more diverse and motivating texts for youths are being published, the IRA/NMSA calls for the increased development of print and non-print "material that will appeal to linguistically and culturally diverse students" and the inclusion of a wide selection of those and other materials in classroom and school libraries (2002, p. 2). They add that the element of choice should be a key factor in motivating adolescents to read even though matching motivating texts to readers can prove challenging.

Researchers have found that background knowledge interacts with reading comprehension and thus, a lack of background knowledge produces lower comprehension. A few studies have indicated that this is not always the case (Sinatra, Brown, & Reynolds, 2002). Coherent texts are believed to promote better comprehension in all readers; this assumption however, is not always true as some students with low

background knowledge comprehended coherent texts better. Moreover, students with greater background knowledge understood more from the less coherent texts (McNamara, Kintsch, Butler-Songer, & Kintsch, 1996). Texts do not assume lives of their own but fit into the practices of everyday lives of students (Schofield & Rogers, 2004). Reading comprehension is the construction of the meaning of texts. Meaning emerges from the interaction between reader and text, between knowledge, skill and motivation of the reader and the text which has a specific intention and structure (Pardo, 2004). Thus, as a strong connection exists between the interest of students in texts and their comprehension of texts (Renninger, 1992; Schiefele, 1992), it was tried for the sake of this study to utilize reading material that is coherent and/or students have some background knowledge about, hoping that interest leads to engagement of learners and the comprehension of texts.

### **2.2.2 Adolescents' Engagement in Reading**

Based on Guthrie's (2004) research the term engagement includes many meanings. One is time spent on task, which signifies paying attention to text and sustaining cognitive effort (Dolezal, Welsh, Pressley, & Vincent, 2003). A second meaning emphasizes affect which refers to qualities such as enthusiasm and enjoyment (Furrer & Skinner, 2003). A third meaning refers to cognitive qualities, emphasizing depth of processing during reading (Meece, Blumenfeld, & Hoyle, 1988). A fourth meaning is activity-based, referring to the amount and diversity of students' reading practices (Guthrie, Schafer, & Huang, 2001; Kirsch, 2001).

Guthrie (2004) adds that engaged reading is also defined as using strategies well, which implies that the learner uses understanding to gain new knowledge from texts. Finally, engaged reading is often socially interactive which refers to the students' engagement in discussion or sharing with peers. Guthrie summarizes engaged reading as an observable behavior which entails cognitive, motivational, and social attributes.

In the same line, the most recent model to emerge in sociolinguistic perspectives is engagement theory (Baker, Afflerbach, & Reinking, 1996). Interest and engagement lead to learning (Edelson & Joseph, 2001). Engaged readers are motivated, strategic, knowledgeable, and socially interactive individuals (Baker et al., 1996) who read frequently for various purposes, and who can appropriately comprehend texts (Guthrie, McGough, Bennett, & Rice, 1996). The recent emphasis on active forms of learning has promoted moves towards constructivist pedagogies. Engaged learning is grounded in active learning, where learners take responsibility for their own learning and actively develop learning strategies and formulate new ideas in working with others. Active engagement is defined as engaging in the learning process, constructing knowledge from experience, and a meaning interpretation process where people negotiate with one another relating to their multiple perceptions of reality (Jonassen, Peck, & Wilson, 1999).

According to Guthrie (2004), in a classroom, engaged readers look, behave, feel, and interact in very different ways from disengaged readers. Being an engaged reader involves desires for learning through literacy. Teachers are encouraged to hold knowledge-based, strategic, internally motivated, and socially responsive goals for their teaching (Guthrie, Wigfield, & Perencevich, 2004).

Engagement theory also accounts for the development of skilled young readers. Engagement in reading is of interest to literacy educators because of its many benefits for reading namely, increased understanding about the world, diverse aesthetic experiences, and acquisition of new skills (Guthrie, 1996).

If academic literacy is to be effective, it must address issues of engagement (Guthrie & Wigfield, 2000). For instance, providing struggling adolescents with clear goals for a comprehension task and then giving feedback on their progress can lead to greater engagement. Keeping in line with this literature in preparing the Apprenticeship Framework of this study this notion was considered.

### **2.2.3 Teaching to Engage Young Adolescents**

According to Guthrie, Wigfield, and Perencevich (2004) engaged readers possess cognitive competence. They have comprehension skills and cognitive strategies and are able to use background knowledge, form questions, search for information, summarize, organize their knowledge, and monitor their comprehension.

Another quality of the engaged reader is motivation. Such readers want to learn, and persist in the face of difficulty. They are moreover knowledge-driven and expand their conceptual structures. They are also socially interactive in their learning (Baker, Dreher, & Guthrie, 2000). To sum up, engaged readers are said to be strategic, motivated, knowledge driven, and socially interactive.

Stanovich (1991) believes that students who are good at reading enjoy it and therefore read more frequently. An opposing idea states that students who read a lot will become more competent readers. He concludes that engagement and achievement are correlative and that they grow together. Young students with a little skill in reading are able to read more and thus, their fluency and knowledge expand. Their self-confidence grows and they begin to see themselves as thinkers (Guthrie, 2004).

The work of Csikszentmihalyi (1993) has demonstrated that learners even reach a kind of “flow” (highly engaged) state. Flow occurs when people develop a sense of mastery and get absorbed in a state of concentration while on task. It occurs when individuals are engaged in challenges they find neither too difficult nor too easy and in the areas that they believe to have some skill.

#### **2.2.4 Reading Motivation as a Source of Difference among Young Readers**

Reading motivation activates and guides reading behavior. According to Guthrie and Wigfield (2000), it is likely “that motivational processes are the foundation for coordinating cognitive goals and strategies in reading” (p. 408).

Readers who apply strategies to understand a text have a higher level of reading motivation. Those with this desire are thus engaged also and possess the prerequisite for becoming good readers (Verhoeven & Snow, 2001). To Guthrie (1996) motivation is the characteristic which influences the activities and achievements of individuals. He sees reading motivation as an important aspect of reading attitude. Research has found a



reciprocal relation between reading motivation and reading comprehension (Baker & Wigfield, 1999).

Pressley (1998) sees motivation of critical importance for the acquisition and application of reading strategies. Van Kraayenoord and Schneider (1999) further add that a relation exists between reading motivation and the use of strategies: reading motivation influences the use of reading strategies and the use of reading strategies influences reading motivation.

The RAND Reading Study Group (RRSG, 2002) asserts that the differences among readers can be due to differences between readers, differences within readers, socio-cultural differences, and group differences. Differences between readers are relatively stable as a student's identity as a reader tends to be consistent. However, other factors may vary within readers. Motivation to read, relevant background knowledge, and degree of personal connection to the text can influence outcomes. Those who can maintain high motivation, have enough background knowledge and apply strategies will be good readers across different texts and tasks (RRSG, 2002). In sum, reading motivation has an indirect effect, via the use of reading strategies, on reading comprehension (Van Elsacker, 2002).

The literature on characteristics of classrooms that influence engaged reading is expanding. According to Guthrie (2004) these investigations contrasted different contexts to examine their influences on motivation for learning from text. However, their classroom implications are limited as most of them are not long-term, teacher-delivered, classroom-based, and realistically evaluated (Guthrie, 2004). Other studies with more

significance to the classrooms show outstanding teachers or reading programs and practices that are expected to influence engagement in reading (Dolezal et al., 2003; Taylor, Pearson, Clark, & Walpole, 2000). Additional studies describe teacher discourse that has proven to be engaging (Patrick, Anderman, Ryan, Edelin, & Midgley, 2001). Stipek (1996) portrays other engagement-supporting practices that are advocated for middle (Guthrie & Davis, 2003) and high schools. One of the most renowned studies in this field is CORI (Concept-Oriented Reading Instruction) by Guthrie, Wigfield, Barbosa, Von Secker and Richardson (2001). This study suggests providing explicit support for knowledge development, motivational development, and strategy learning (Guthrie, Wigfield, Barbosa, et al., 2001). The fundamental aspects of Reading Apprenticeship are based on the same notion.

### **2.3 Reading Strategies**

At this juncture first different types of reading instruction will be addressed and then the characteristics that distinguish skills and strategies and the conceptual frameworks of reading strategies will follow.

As indicated by the National Reading Panel's review of text comprehension, "reading comprehension can be improved by teaching students to use specific cognitive strategies or to reason strategically when they encounter barriers to comprehension when reading. The goal of such training is the achievement of competent and self-regulated reading" (p. 4).

The NRP's literature search identified 7 categories of text comprehension instruction which seem to have the potential to improve comprehension in non-impaired readers. Some of these types of instruction are helpful when used alone, while others are more effective as part of a multiple-strategy method. The types of instruction are:

- *Comprehension monitoring*, where readers learn how to be aware of their understanding of the material;
- *Cooperative learning*, where students learn reading strategies together;
- *Use of graphic and semantic organizers*, where readers make graphic representations of the material to assist comprehension;
- *Question answering*, where readers answer questions posed by the teacher and receive immediate feedback;
- *Question generation*, where readers ask themselves questions about various aspects of the story;
- *Story structure*, where students are taught to use the structure of the story as a means of helping them recall story content; and
- *Summarization*, where readers are taught to integrate ideas and generalize from the text information.

In general, teaching a combination of reading comprehension techniques appears to be the most effective. When students use these strategies appropriately, they aid them

in recall, question answering, question generation, and summarization of texts. These techniques can improve learners' performance in tackling different reading texts via deliberate usage of different reading strategies.

Experts do not seem to be able to agree on the definition of the term “reading strategies”. However, they mostly restrict reading skills to automatic processes and contrast those to the view that strategies are conscious and deliberate repair strategies. Skills refer to information processing techniques that are automatic and unconscious and are applied due to expertise and repeated practice, while strategies are actions selected deliberately to achieve particular goals. In time, a strategy can become a skill (Paris & Winograd, 1990). Strategies are the conscious actions that learners take to improve their language learning. Hence, there is active involvement of the L2 learner in their selection and use. To Cohen (1998), strategies are not isolated actions, but rather a process of taking more than one action to accomplish an L2 task. A reading strategy can be described as any interactive process that has the goal of obtaining meaning from connected text and reading skills operate within the context of such strategies (Hudson, 2007). Although we can identify individual strategies, rarely will one be used in isolation. Strategies are related and must be viewed as a process and not as single actions.

Reading strategies, as stated by Garner (1987), can be defined as series of actions employed in order to construct meaning. To Bamett (1989, p. 66) the term reading strategy is the mental operations involved when readers purposefully approach a text to make sense of what they read. In the light of these definitions, the term “reading strategy” for the purposes of this study is defined as *specific methods or procedures*

*which readers apply to adequately process and understand the information presented in a text* (Pressley & Afflerbach, 1995). In a nutshell, reading strategies are specific actions consciously employed by the learner for the purpose of reading.

Studying reading strategies seems to be essential to academic learning areas and lifelong learning. Grabe (1991) points out that the importance of reading skills in academic contexts has led to a considerable amount of research on reading in a second language. Levine, Ferenz, and Reves (2000, p.1) state that “the ability to read academic texts is considered one of the most important skills that university students of English as a second language (ESL) and English as a foreign language (EFL) need to acquire”.

Shuyun and Munby (1996) note that ESL academic reading is a very deliberate, demanding process in which the students are actively involved in a repertoire of reading strategies. Having discussed the definition and importance of investigating reading strategies, how these strategies are to be instructed shall be addressed.

### **2.3.1 Reading Comprehension Strategies Instruction**

Teaching reading comprehension strategies is challenging. Teachers must have a solid grasp of the content together with substantial knowledge of the strategies. They need to know which strategies are most effective for different students and different types of content and how best to teach and model strategy use (Hammond & Bransford, 2005).

Research on comprehension strategies has evolved dramatically over the last 2 decades (Walpole & McKenna, 2004). Researchers used to focus on teaching one strategy at a time; later studies examined the effectiveness of teaching several strategies

in combination. However, implementation of this approach has faced some problems (NRP, 2000) as teachers need to be skillful in their instruction and be able to respond to students' needs for instructive feedback. The National Reading Panel's 2000 analysis of 38 multiple strategies studies led them to conclude that "the evidence supports the use of combinations of reading strategies in natural learning situations" (pp. 4-83). Also Rosenshine and Meister's (1995) analysis revealed that multiple strategies instruction is most effective for older students.

The NRP search for studies relevant to the preparation of teachers for comprehension strategy instruction identified four studies which met the methodology criteria. Reviewing these studies revealed two major approaches: Transactional Strategy Instruction and Direct Explanation.

Transactional Strategy Instruction emphasizes the teacher's ability to provide explicit explanations of thinking processes and the ability of teachers to facilitate student discussions where students form joint interpretations of text and gain a deeper understanding of the processes involved in comprehension. While The Direct Explanation approach focuses on the teacher's ability to explain explicitly the reasoning and mental processes involved in successful reading comprehension. Rather than teach specific strategies, teachers help students:

1. to view reading as a problem solving task that necessitates the use of strategic thinking, and
2. to learn to think strategically about solving comprehension problems (NRP, 2000).

Considering the empirical findings, absence of any contradictory data, the many related studies documenting that struggling readers benefit from explicit teaching (for instance, Baumann, 1984; Dole, Brown, & Trathen, 1996; Paris & Jacobs, 1984; Pressley, 1994), it is hard to resist the benefits of Direct teaching of strategies.

Direct explanation of strategies is quite demanding for teachers as they have to spontaneously adapt their plans based on the cues from students during lessons. Teacher's lesson plans are temporary documents that must be modified as the dynamic and responsive instructional exchange unfolds (Duffy & Roehler, 1989, p. 27) and that explanations unfold in unpredictable ways depending on how students restructure what teachers teach. In short, "explaining comprehension strategies is not like lecturing or any rigid forms of explanation. To the contrary, explanation involves subtleties not normally associated with traditional views of explanation where information is presented in a one-way, teacher-dominated lecture" (Duffy & Roehler, 1989, p. 29).

The instructional approach in this study also was based on the Direct Explanation method whereby the teacher explained the reasoning and mental processes involved in successful reading through think-alouds.

### **2.3.2 Context for Strategy Development**

Brown and Palincsar (1982) state that strategy instruction helps students who struggle with text become aware of their use, and develop control over learning

strategies. Winograd and Hare (1988) suggest that teachers should first explain strategies to students meaningfully and then motivate them by informing them how strategy use can benefit their performance. They should then explain how to use strategies step by step through modeling (Collins, 1989), and think-alouds (Roehler & Duffy, 1991). More importantly teachers should help students understand the situations where certain strategies are appropriate by exposing them to a wide range of materials. Finally, teachers need to show students how to monitor and evaluate their own strategy use.

Strategies instructional model-scaffolding- also includes instructional actions that are designed to shift responsibility for strategy use from teachers to students (Paris et al., 1991; Roehler & Duffy, 1991). Scaffolding requires teachers to help students use strategies independently and to eventually succeed with proper practice and feedback.

To Guthrie, Wigfield, and Perencevich (2004) learning cognitive strategies is a challenging enterprise. To learners, the strategies are abstract. For teachers, the process of modeling and scaffolding strategies requires time and care. Intervention with experimental teachers emphasized six interrelated instructional actions (Duffy, Roehler, Meloth, & Vavrus, 1986):

- First, teachers introduced the selection to be read.
- Second, teachers made an explicit statement about what strategy needed to be learned, and when it would be needed to be used in the upcoming selection.



- Third, teachers provided students with a model of how to think when using the strategy, which is described as “mental modeling” because it involved “thinking out aloud” about the mental processing one does when using strategies.
- Fourth, scaffolded practice was provided in which students practiced using the strategy with gradually diminishing amounts of coaching assistance from the teacher.
- Fifth, teachers had students read the selection for two purposes: for text content and for application of the newly learned strategy.
- Finally, lesson closure included explicit statements about the strategy, its use in understanding text in other settings, and how to implement it.

Also Keene and Zimmermann (1997) point out that students’ meaning making from text can be improved by teaching them to use comprehension strategies used by good readers:

- Teach comprehension strategies one at a time. Model the use of each strategy with a wide variety of texts. Students should then practice each strategy as the teacher encourages student self-regulated use of the strategies by transferring the responsibility of the strategy use from the teacher to the student (Pearson & Gallagher, 1983).
- By learning to use the strategies, teachers become aware of the positive effects of using comprehension strategies.
- Meaning of text can be socially constructed when readers talk about it.

In line with this literature, **Righeimer and Therriault (2001)** suggest the following for effective explicit instruction:

- Select appropriate materials.
- Teach the strategy explicitly.
- Model the strategy.
- Ask good questions and conduct focused discussions.
- Choose effective activities that promote this strategy, particularly activities involving graphic organizers.
- Create helpful student aids. (p. 22)

Persistence, uninterrupted attention, and cooperation are challenging for young learners. Therefore, in the Reading Apprenticeship Framework of this study reading strategies were taught in a context of inquiry. Such a context affords teachers the opportunity to support motivation with the principles of: (a) having knowledge goals in reading instruction, (b) providing hands-on activities related to reading, (c) giving students realistic choices, (d) using interesting texts for instruction, and (e) weaving collaboration into students' classroom lives (Guthrie, Schafer, et al., 2001).

### **2.3.3 Concerns with Instruction of Reading Strategies**

Researchers have conducted a large number of studies evaluating the effectiveness of the comprehension strategies instruction model. These studies seem to indicate that comprehension strategies instruction helps students improve their comprehension performance-especially among students with learning disabilities

(Swanson & Hoskyn, 1998). The ways students think about strategies instruction may influence what and how much they learn. The effectiveness of strategy instruction may rest on the type of strategies taught. Gallini, Spires, Terry, and Gleaton (1993) investigated the effect of teaching macro processing or micro processing strategies on struggling adolescent readers' comprehension and found the macro processing strategies to be more effective. Gallini et al. were concerned that "it is possible that the students direct their attention toward learning the strategy at the neglect of also utilizing the detailed cues to promote comprehension" (1993, p. 175).

The concern that strategies instruction itself may draw too much of students' attention away from comprehension has been expressed by other researchers (Beck & McKeown, 1996). Beck and McKeown noted that "a potential drawback of strategy instruction is that attention may become focused on the surface features of the strategies themselves rather than on reading for meaning" (p. 386). As an alternative 'Questioning the author' has been suggested. Questioning the author encourage students to reflect on what an author is trying to say in order to build a representation of the text (Beck & McKeown, 1996, p. 387) as it promotes a general disposition toward text comprehension as a problem-solving process.

Brown and Day (1983) recommend that students do not exceed their word identification abilities. Frustration-level texts direct students' attention to the word level. As a result, students are likely to have insufficient resources available to handle basic comprehension (Van den Broek & Kremer, 2000); thus, it is best to prioritize the strategies and to ensure students are provided with texts suitable for their level.

### **2.3.4 Impact of Reading Strategies on Reading Comprehension**

An impressive number of empirical investigations have established a positive relationship between strategies and reading comprehension (Tercanlioglu, 2004). Studies conducted by Brookbank, Grover, Kullberg, and Strawser (1999) have found that the use of reading strategies improved the students' reading comprehension. Other similar studies have shown that reading comprehension can be related to the effective use of reading strategies (Braum, 1985). Sheorey and Mokhtari (2001) report that "skilled readers are more able to reflect on and monitor their cognitive processes while reading. They are aware not only of which strategies to use, but they also tend to be better at regulating the use of such strategies while reading" (p. 445).

Anderson (1991) highlights that "strategic reading is not only a matter of knowing what strategy to use, but also the reader must know how to use a strategy successfully and orchestrate its use with other strategies. It is not sufficient to know about strategies; a reader must also be able to apply them strategically" (pp. 468-469).

On the basis of the current literature, Sheorey and Mokhtari (2001) believe that teachers in charge of developing reading skills should:

- 1) assess students' awareness of strategy use;
- 2) raise awareness of the importance of strategic reading;
- 3) raise awareness of the array of strategies available to aid reading comprehension; and
- 4) provide strategy training integrated with normal language work. Thereby students could be taught how to choose and apply strategies appropriately.

It is important to help students learn strategies that they can use independently. Some of the strategies that have proven effective in helping students include K-W-L (Ogle, 1986), summarizing (Brown & Day, 1983; Hare & Borchardt, 1984; Winograd, 1984), outlining and the use of graphic organizers (Devine, 1991) and self-questioning (Anderson & Armbruster, 1984) which can help students build the knowledge required for better comprehension.

In teaching reading strategies, competence, awareness, linkage to understanding and self-initiation need to be fostered by teachers (Guthrie, 2004). Guthrie feels that competence is necessary because students need to feel they are capable of a particular reading strategy when it is requested. According to Guthrie (2004) awareness is also crucial as it enables students to use the strategies deliberately. He further believes that linkage of strategies to understanding is vital to realize that the strategy is not valuable in itself. Moreover, only through self-initiation will learners invoke a strategy when they are confused. Learning strategies are demanding plans oriented toward successful task performance (Pressley et al., 1990). Thus, unmotivated students will fail to initiate their usage. Effective teachers shall persist in implementing strategies widely.

The apprenticeship in this study is based on the expectation that students should become competent, aware, and self-initiating. As a result, it was necessary to begin with developing the competence. This Apprenticeship Framework emphasized guessing meaning of unknown words, identifying the main idea, questioning, searching for information, inferring, organizing text, interpreting graphs and structuring stories.

## 2.4 Apprenticeship

Educators' practice is informed by the beliefs and personal theories that they have about teaching and learning. Beliefs about what it means to be a teacher or how students learn are reflected in our practice. Bringing these beliefs to a more conscious level can help us challenge and communicate them or even replace them by new beliefs that we might decide to embrace. Often, our beliefs and knowledge about teaching and learning come from explicit, expert knowledge and theories that have influenced our thinking over time (Heylighen, 1993).

My attempt to use a particular theoretical framework or a model of findings will not explain all the facts. The theoretical framework is just one way of examining the research questions, pertaining to use of an apprenticeship framework in enhancing the literacy development of pre-university students.

### 2.4.1 The Origins of the Theoretical Framework of the Study

The shift in psychology from behaviorism to cognitivism has helped in designing more effective ways to facilitate learning which may influence our approaches to teaching and learning. Early theories maintained that knowledge exists independent of any subject and that teachers serve as pipelines who seek to transfer their thoughts and meanings to the passive student leaving little room for independent thought or interaction (Hanley, 1994). Later theories like *constructivism* however, emerged to maintain that

knowledge and reality do not have an absolute value and that they are a continuum (Murphy, 1999).

On one end is *radical constructivism* which proposes that reality is within the individual and knowledge is constructed from individual experience (Murphy, 1999). On the other end is *cognitive constructivism* as suggested by Jean Piaget, who proposed that knowledge is constructed through Assimilation (fitting a new experience into an existing mental structure), Accommodation (revising an existing schema because of a new experience); and Equilibrium (seeking cognitive stability through assimilation and accommodation) (Murphy, 1999). Cognitive constructivism focuses on the teacher's role to provide opportunities in which learners can be spontaneous and do research on their own. According to Auerbach (1993), authentic opportunities that challenge the apprentices, where they can assimilate and accommodate to achieve equilibrium, are in line with cognitive constructivist theories.

The apprenticeship approach to enhancing reading development is grounded in a view of learning as a social-cognitive interactive process. In this view, which is mainly based in the work of Vygotsky, cognitive development is socially constructed (Schoenbach, 2000). At this juncture different aspects of social constructivism that were found most intriguing for the aims of this study are presented.

### 2.4.2 Social Constructivism

*Social constructivism* has its origins in the theories proposed by Lev Vygotsky, who highlighted cultural and social contexts in influencing learning, the role of the community, the people around, significant adults, and culture and language (Murphy, 1999). Heylighen (1993, p. 2) explains that “social constructivism sees consensus between different subjects as the ultimate criterion to judge knowledge. “Truth” or “reality” will be accorded only to those constructions on which most people of a social group agree”.

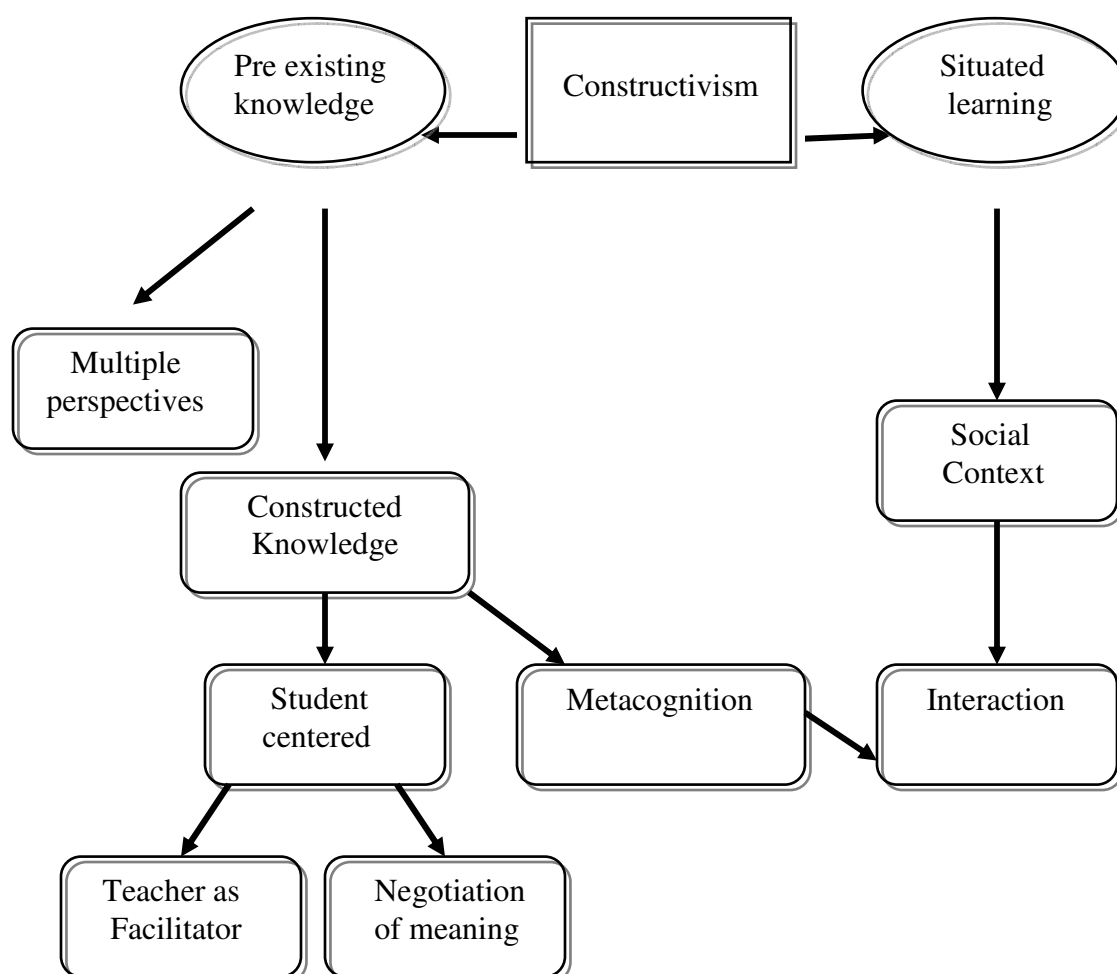
Acquisition of literacy is the need for socialization and interacting with texts that characterize particular discourse communities (Kern, 2000). In Maschke’s words, social constructivism places the teacher in an active role, with the learners developing their mental abilities through a discovery process. To von Glasersfeld (1995) teachers play the role of a “midwife in the birth of understanding” as opposed to being “mechanics of knowledge transfer”. Their role is to provide students with opportunities and build knowledge. Vygotsky sees learning as a social and collaborative activity, where the teacher acts as facilitator and students are responsible for constructing their own understanding. Gergen (1995) also believes that teachers are coordinators, resource advisors, tutors or coaches. Understanding the role of the teacher in the constructivist classroom provides a point from which to grasp how the theory influences practice:

The role of the authority figure has two important components. The first is to introduce new ideas or cultural tools where necessary and to provide the support and guidance for students to make sense of these for themselves. The other is to listen and diagnose the ways in which



the instructional activities are being interpreted to inform further action. Teaching from this perspective is also a learning process for the teacher. (Driver, Aasoko, Leach, Mortimer, & Scott, 1994, p. 11)

Viewed from a social constructivist perspective (Chang-Wells & Wells, 1993), learning is seen as internalized through interpersonal interaction, with cultural ways of thinking becoming transformed from social phenomena to one's own intrapersonal functioning. Thus, given opportunities involving critical dialogue, learners may develop skills which can be transferred to thinking and communicating and as the interaction level is high, learners will become more engaged in the literacy tasks. For educators, the challenge is to be able to build a model of the conceptual worlds of students since they could be very different from what is intended by the educator (von Glasersfeld, 1996). The above-mentioned can fit in to Figure 2.1.



*Figure 2.1. Constructivism and Reading Apprenticeship Framework.*

Different perspectives on constructivism do exist; however there are common themes in the literature on constructivism that allow the derivation of instructional models of constructivist learning and teaching (Murphy, 1999) which can assist teachers by providing them with a guide for the design of learning activities. According to Jonassen (1991) many educators have applied constructivism to the development of

learning environments and instructional designs. From these applications, a number of principles that guide the design of the Apprenticeship Framework for the instructor are:

- Be a coach and analyzer of the strategies used to solve problems;
- Focus on knowledge construction, not reproduction;
- Foster reflective practice;
- Support collaborative construction of knowledge through social negotiation (Jonassen, 1991)
- Embed learning in authentic problem-solving environment;
- Provide for authentic versus academic contexts for learning; (Wilson & Cole, 1991)
- Conduct diagnostic teaching to remedy learner errors and misconceptions;
- Pay attention to metacognition and strategic self-regulation by learners; (Ernest, 1995)

There is no doubt that many teachers implicitly rely on many principles of constructivism to guide their practice. Von Glasersfeld (1995) comments on how teachers often rely on official theories without being aware of their existence: “Constructivism does not claim to have made earth-shaking inventions in the area of education; it merely claims to provide a solid conceptual basis for some of the things that, until now, inspired teachers had to do without theoretical foundation” (p. 15).

A framework that lends itself well to providing explicit support for knowledge development and strategy learning which as mentioned above can

affect the engagement level and reading comprehension of the students is the Reading Apprenticeship Framework (REF). This is why it was felt that social constructivism can shed some light on the problem in this study.

The notion of apprenticeship has always characterized student and teacher roles in foreign language classroom. However, in the days of grammar-translation methods, students were apprentices to linguists or philologists and in today's literacy-based language teaching, students are apprentice intercultural explorers (Kern, 2000).

In Schoenbach's (2000) words an apprentice learns a skill by observing and modeling the work of a master. A cognitive apprenticeship occurs when teachers and students develop a novice-expert relationship in a situated learning environment. The focus of the apprenticeship is on knowledge and strategies for thinking. Teachers model and provide scaffolding for students (Schoenbach, 2000).

Reading apprenticeship is a partnership of expertise, drawing on what teachers know and do as readers and on adolescents' often underestimated strengths as learners. In any apprenticeship, a mentor models, directs, supports and shapes an apprentice's growing repertoire of practice (Schoenbach, Braunger, Greenleaf, & Litman, 2003). The apprentice engages in the task and learns by doing with appropriate support which is gradually removed. Gee (1996) also argues that the process of becoming literate means more than apprenticeship with texts -- it means apprenticeship in particular ways of being.

The metaphor “cognitive apprenticeship” is used to describe a type of teaching designed to assist students in acquiring more proficient cognitive processes. If students are to become skilled readers, the invisible processes that are involved in comprehending texts should be made visible to them through engagement in meaningful literacy activities (Schoenbach, 2000).

### **2.4.3 Dimensions of Reading Apprenticeship Framework**

The Reading Apprenticeship Framework involves teachers in integrating four interacting dimensions of classroom life that support reading development (Schoenbach, Braunger, et al., 2003). These dimensions are combined through “meta-cognitive conversations”-investigations into the thinking processes that students and teachers adopt as they read:

*1. The social dimension: building a reading inquiry community.* The social dimension involves developing a sense of safety in the classroom and making good use of adolescents’ interest in peer interactions. As students share confusion about the difficulties with texts, they learn that confusion is a starting place for making meaning with text.

*2. The personal dimension: creating a sense of agency.* The personal dimension involves addressing adolescents’ interest in exploring new aspects of their identities. Teachers help

students recognize and work with the skills they use in out-of-school settings and support them as they strive to become more strategic and purposeful about their reading.

3. The cognitive dimension: developing a comprehension toolkit. The cognitive dimension involves developing student's repertoires of specific comprehension and problem-solving strategies, with an emphasis on group discussion of when and why particular cognitive strategies are useful (Schoenbach, 2000, p. 22).

The cognitive dimension focuses on increasing students' repertoire of cognitive strategies they use to make sense of texts. As Schoenbach, (2000) puts it, through personal and social activities that engage students and teachers in thinking about and sharing their reading processes, the different ways readers approach reading begin to emerge. In the cognitive dimension, the goal for the class is to expand the repertoire of strategies for students to be able to use independently in order to control their own reading processes.

Since the 1970s a great deal of research has identified many cognitive strategies that good readers use. According to Schoenbach (2000) once students learn these strategies and use them for their own reading purposes, they gain a sense of control over their reading processes. Teaching students a set of cognitive strategies can help students live with ambiguity and confusion which helps them understand that they do not have to comprehend everything (Schoenbach, 2000). These strategies provide students with the confidence they need to approach texts they may otherwise feel are too difficult to handle. Through modeling teachers guide students in practicing ways of approaching difficult texts.

*4. The knowledge-building dimension: tapping and extending knowledge of content, text and discourse.* The knowledge-building dimension involves identifying and expanding the knowledge students bring to a text, including knowledge about text structure, about topics and content, about discourse patterns and signals and the way ideas are organized and expressed in different disciplines and the various genres within each discipline (Schoenbach, 2000, p. 22).

These dimensions are in line with instructional design derived from social constructivism. The emphasis on peer interaction, teachers helping students becoming more strategic and independent, negotiation of meaning in groups of mixed abilities, all form a practical instructional design based on social constructivism.

#### **2.4.4 Development of an Apprenticeship Framework**

Based on the goals of IALS (International Adult literacy Survey) 2001, in developing of a literacy framework, certain components should be considered:

- A framework should begin with a general definition or statement of purpose which can guide the rationale for the survey.
- A framework should identify various task characteristics and indicate how these characteristics will be used.
- Variables associated with each task characteristic should be specified, and research should be conducted to show which of these variables account for large percentages of the variance in the distribution of tasks.

Besides the main benefit of constructing and validating a framework for literacy a number of other potential benefits are also highlighted in IALS:

- A framework provides a common language and a vehicle for discussing the definition of the skill area.
- An analysis of the kinds of knowledge and skills associated with successful performance provides a basis for establishing standards or levels of proficiency.
- Identifying and understanding particular variables that underlie successful performance further our ability to evaluate what is being measured
- Linking research, assessment, and public policy promotes the continued development and use of the survey and understanding of what it is measuring.

Keeping the above in mind, the framework of this study was designed hoping to help the development of academic reading literacy of pre-college/university students.

#### **2.4.5 Scaffolding Role of Teacher in the Apprenticeship Framework**

The teacher's role can be thought of in a metaphorical way as instructional scaffolding" (Schoenbach, Braunger, Greenleaf & Litman, 2003, p. 136). Many students have trouble facing the conceptual demands in reading material when they are to read independently. They lack the required prior knowledge, interest, attitudes, cultural background, language proficiency, and learning ability. Instructional scaffolding allows teachers to support readers' efforts to make sense of texts while showing them how to use the strategies independently (Schoenbach, Braunger, et al., 2003).



To Applebee (1991), scaffolding in teaching and learning contexts means helping learners to do what they cannot do at first. Applebee (1991) explains that instructional scaffolding provides the necessary support that students need as they attempt new tasks; A key feature of instructional scaffolding is the demonstration and modeling of strategies that students need to be successful with texts.

How we teach literacy is significant if students are to understand the acts of reading. If students are to become literate, teachers must move beyond testing for comprehension. They must act as guides to support the learners' understanding.

A classroom that teaches literacy should be truly diverse and would create a climate that acknowledges “cognitive pluralism” (John-Steiner & Mahn, 1996). In such a classroom, students would be free to read in various forms (Tishman & Perkins, 1997). This more contemporary teacher role is represented by the motto, “the teacher is the guide by the side, not the sage on the stage” (Kern, 2000). That is why in the Reading Apprenticeship Framework of this study the researcher/teacher took up the instructional scaffolding role suggested above hoping that through constant modeling of reading strategies and think-alouds she could guide the apprentices to independent effective reading.

#### **2.4.6 Apprenticing Young Adult Readers to Academic Literacy**

Instead of remedial reading courses Greenleaf, Schoenbach, Cziko, and Mueller (2001) advocate an alternative instructional framework called Reading Apprenticeship that is based on a socially and cognitively complex conception of literacy. They argue

that struggling adolescent readers are not in need of remedial instruction but they are inexperienced readers who need help in gaining the complex comprehension processes that underlie skilled reading. Reading Apprenticeship is an approach to reading instruction that helps young people develop the knowledge, strategies, and dispositions they need to become more powerful readers. In brief, the aim of Reading Apprenticeship is to help students become better readers of a variety of texts by:

- engaging students in more reading;
- making the teacher's discipline-based reading processes and knowledge visible to students;
- making the students' reading processes and the social contexts, strategies, knowledge, and understandings they bring to the task of making sense of subject-matter texts visible to the teacher and to one another;
- helping students gain insight into their own reading processes; and
- helping them acquire a repertoire of problem-solving strategies with the varied texts of the academic discipline (Schoenbach, 2000, p. 23).

Teachers would no longer resist the teaching of reading when they are aware of the new conceptions of reading, their own expertise, and new perceptions of students as strategic and resourceful readers. Greenleaf et al. assert that the Apprenticeship Framework demonstrates how investing in resources and demystifying academic reading through ongoing, collaborative inquiry into reading and texts can move students to the independent reading and thinking required to succeed in academic courses (Schoenbach, Greenleaf, Cziko, & Hurwitz, 1999).

### **2.4.7 Reading Apprenticeship Classroom Studies**

Greenleaf et al. (2001) report on the implementation of the Apprenticeship Framework in a course offered to ninth graders in a poor area in San Francisco for the 1996-1997 school year. The purpose of the study was to learn how teachers who participate in inquiry-based professional development incorporate Reading Apprenticeship approaches into their instruction, and how these literacy experiences in turn affect student reading achievement and engagement.

Assessments of student reading development were statistically significant, as students made gains of two years in reading proficiency in seven months of instruction. Follow-up studies indicated that students maintained their reading development and continued their growth as readers (Greenleaf et al., 2001).

In another study, researchers took an in-depth look at teacher learning, classroom practice, and student learning in eleven middle and high school classrooms.

The Reading Apprenticeship Classroom Study took place in the context of ongoing professional development activities of SLI in California where high school students are highly diverse and have experienced a great amount of school failure. SLI's research team identified 11 subject-area teachers for a study tracing their participation in the Continuing Network, their classroom implementation of Reading Apprenticeship, and their students' learning opportunities and outcomes during the 2001–2003 school years.

Close documentation of classroom talk was a major source of evidence of teacher knowledge, student learning opportunities, and student knowledge. Data collection and analysis methods were designed to document the types of literacy practices and learning

environments offered to students in classrooms of participating teachers. In these classrooms, close study of the reading of individual students corroborated the case studies of ninth grade students (Greenleaf et al., 2001).

The SLI research team analyzed the performance of students in these classrooms on the Degrees of Reading Power standardized test of reading comprehension. Analyses prove that students did make gains in reading achievement.

According to Greenleaf et al. (2001) this study has helped to identify features of classroom instruction that show fidelity to the practices of Reading Apprenticeship, as well as to characterize some of the “less than optimal” implementation of Reading Apprenticeship practices. Some characteristics of “less than optimal” implementation are:

- a focus on declarative knowledge about reading rather than demonstration of procedural knowledge during reading tasks;
- implementation is sporadic, non-routine, with no continuity across the school year
- routines and strategies are not scaffolded to move students towards independent ownership;
- instructional practices are not equitably distributed to all students;
- reading does not occur in class, where opportunities to provide support and mentoring may emerge;
- reading tasks remain individual, rather than social and collaborative; and
- reading instruction is not embedded in authentic curricular tasks and texts.

Even though the above-mentioned studies were conducted in the United States the findings can still be considered noteworthy for the purpose of this study. The contexts may seem different but the subjects in all cases came from different ethnic backgrounds

who were reading below their levels. In the RAF of this study, all the practices that have proved inefficient were avoided, hoping that in the context of this study more impressive gains would be observed.

#### **2.4.8 Metacognition in the Apprenticeship Framework**

The Reading Apprenticeship framework of this study involves the teacher in integrating different dimensions of the classroom activities that support reading development. These dimensions are entwined into teaching through “meta-cognitive conversations” that students and teacher/researcher employ as they read. In this manner, metacognition fosters independent reading which is the ultimate goal of this study.

Metacognition can be defined simply as thinking about thinking (Anderson, 2002). It is the ability to make your thinking visible. It is the ability to reflect on what you know and do and what you do not know and do not do. Metacognition enables critical reflection and evaluation of thinking that may result in making specific changes in how you learn. Vygotsky’s emphasis on instruction involves thinking and meaning-centered learning (Resnick & Klopfer, 1989). To Flavell (1976) the concept of metacognition refers to one’s knowledge about one’s cognitive processes or anything related to those processes. It includes monitoring and regulation of these processes. The use of cognitive and metacognitive strategies enhances learning and those who do not perform as well as they should are lacking in metacognitive awareness about their capabilities and demands of the situation (Brown, Bransford, Ferrara, & Campione, 1983; Flavell, 1979; Paris, 1988).

According to Hudson (2007), metacognition in reading represents the planning, monitoring, and evaluating of the reading process, where planning involves identifying a purpose for reading and selecting particular actions to achieve the reader's goals, monitoring involves regulating the readers' efforts during the course of reading to accomplish that goal, and evaluation involves the reader assessing the cognitive ability to carry out the task; hence metacognition acts as a control over the application of the particular reading strategies. Schoenbach (2000) advocates that metacognition is thinking about thinking. Metacognition refers to one's knowledge concerning one's own cognitive process and that it is through metacognitive conversation that participants become aware of their mental activity and are enabled to describe it and discuss it with others which ultimately enables teachers to make their invisible cognitive activity visible and allows students to analyze the impact of their thinking processes.

Language use is always embedded in socio-cultural contexts, draws on cultural as well as linguistic knowledge, involves apprenticeship, and requires declarative and procedural knowledge (Schoenbach, 2000). This view of literacy combines a focus on language use in social context with reflection on how meanings are constructed in acts of communication. Schoenbach divides metacognition into five main components: (a) preparing and planning for effective reading, (b) deciding when to use particular reading strategies, (c) knowing how to monitor reading strategy use, (d), learning how to orchestrate various reading strategies, and (e) evaluating reading strategy use.

Each of these five metacognitive skills interacts with the others. As metacognition is not a linear process, more than one metacognitive process may be happening at a time during a learning task (Schoenbach, 2000).

Recent trends within the domain of reading comprehension emphasize the role of metocognitive and motivational processes during the act of reading. Awareness and monitoring of one's comprehension processes are critically important aspects of reading (Hudson, 2007)

Recent studies on the reading process emphasize that fluent, proficient reading is rapid, purposeful, motivated, interactive, comprehending and flexible, and that it develops gradually (Alderson, 2000, p. 149). Interactivity refers to the "interaction of many component skills potentially in simultaneous operation" (Grabe, 1991, p. 383). It may be impossible to rank order the component skills that are proposed to make fluent reading (Grabe 1991, p. 379). Yet metacognitive knowledge and skills are considered to be critically important components of skilled reading (Auerbach & Paxton, 1997).

Metacognitive knowledge is knowledge about cognition, including knowledge of language, which involves, in the context of reading, metacognitive skills activated to enhance comprehension (Grabe 1991, p. 382). A number of studies have found a positive correlation between effective use of metacognitive skills and fluent reading. The main difference between skilled and unskilled readers is believed to lie in the ability of the former to "engage in deliberate activities that require planful thinking, flexible strategies and periodic self-monitoring" (Paris & Jacobs 1984, p. 2088).

Metacognition is now firmly established in theories of reading and learning and social interaction is found to be an important mediator of metacognition development

(Baker, 2002). According to Paris and Winograd (1990) teaching thinking is based upon a social constructivist perspective: learning and understanding are inherently social activities, in which most learning and higher order thinking are dependent on talk and interaction. Paris and Winograd (1990) believe that metacognition can promote academic learning and motivation. They state that students can enhance their learning when they become aware of their thinking as they read. Teachers can promote this awareness through informing students about effective problem-solving strategies and discussing cognitive and motivational characteristics of thinking. This notification has dual benefits: it both transfers the responsibility for monitoring learning from teachers to students, and also promotes positive self-perceptions and motivation among students.

Many theorists believe that the origins of metacognitive skills lie in expert-novice interactions (Rogoff, 1995; Wertsch, 1991), whereas others emphasize the important role of peer interaction (Almasi, McKeown, & Beck 1996). The first view comes from Vygotsky (1978), who proposed that children first learn how to engage in cognitive tasks through social interaction with more knowledgeable others. The expert takes the responsibility of regulating the novice's activities and gradually the expert giving more responsibility to the novice as the novice becomes capable of internalizing the regulatory mechanisms and can perform without assistance. This notion is the framework for almost all instructional programs in which the goal is to enable students to take responsibility for their own learning (Pressley, 2000) including the framework in this study.

The metacognitive strategies play a significant role because once learners understand how to regulate their own learning through the use of strategies, language acquisition should proceed at a faster rate. Vandergrift (2002) emphasizes the essential



role of metacognitive strategies: “Metacognitive strategies are crucial because they oversee, regulate, or direct the language learning task, and involve thinking about the learning process” (p. 559).

O’Malley and Chamot (1990) also highlight the important role of metacognitive strategies: “students without metacognitive approaches are essentially learners without direction or opportunity to plan their learning, monitor their progress, or review their accomplishments and future learning directions” (p. 8).

The National Research Council (Snow et al., 1998) have also concluded that training in metacognitive skill is effective for improving comprehension and that comprehension monitoring skills can improve with training. In so hoping this study was undertaken.

In a RA classroom, the metacognitive conversation is the focal dynamic that joins the four dimensions of the Reading Apprenticeship framework. In the metacognitive conversation, teacher and students discuss the cognitive strategies they use to solve comprehension problems, the structure and language of particular types of texts, and the kinds of knowledge required to make sense of reading materials (Schoenbach, Braunger, et al., 2003).

Schoenbach (2000) states that Reading Apprenticeship teachers normally incorporate a variety of cognitive strategies to help students develop a repertoire of comprehension problem-solving tools. This metacognitive conversation is carried on internally when teacher and students individually read and consider their own mental processes, and externally, when they talk about their reading processes (Schoenbach,

2000). Through metacognition, apprentice readers begin to become aware of their reading processes. Nevertheless, no single strategy or mix of strategies provides the key to increase students' engagement. It is inquiring into reading as a shared topic of conversation that proves helpful (Schoenbach, 2000).

For studying such a changing situation from the inside, the researcher must necessarily be involved and not detached from the participants in the research and hence for the purpose of this study the role of teacher as observer was adopted.

## **2.5 Teacher as the Researcher in RAF**

The significant changes in the professional learning activities in the West since the 1970s indicate that schools themselves now largely manage and design professional learning activities for teachers to undertake as many researchers agree that teacher learning should be situated in an environment where teachers teach (Wong & Tsui, 2007).

Shalaway (1990) maintains that in addition to developing intellectual and technical skills, conducting research creates new opportunities and roles for classroom teachers and thus its significance should not be overlooked.

Taking up the role of teacher researcher can help teachers to re-imagine their role in a more collaborative fashion. Educational research conducted by teachers needs to be highly valued. It is highly informative for classroom practice and student learning. Conducting teacher research can have powerful consequences in awakening teachers and students to possibilities.

In education literature several terms are used in reference to the teacher as researcher including: practitioner research, teacher-as-scholar, practical inquiry, interactive research, classroom inquiry, and practice-centered inquiry (Downhower, Melvin, & Sizemore, 1990; Williamson, 1992). Although these terms may not be completely interchangeable, the common concept is that the teacher is an active constructor of knowledge rather than a passive consumer of it (Miller & Pine, 1990; Williamson, 1992).

Some have questioned how the researcher can remain unbiased in the evaluation and interpretation of data. It is argued that a social science researcher is the outside observer who is detached and unbiased. In all such arguments the spirit of teacher as researcher has failed to be understood as it is being judged from a conventional social science point of view:

...(the) researcher's desire for detachment, for large data samples, and for interpretations with status of general laws, must be seen as fundamentally misplaced...the most significant knowledge of educational processes cannot be of a law-like general nature, but will always be intimately related to specific contexts, that it can never be based on "pure" observation but will always be bound up with contextual, here, and now judgments and that it can never be established, finalized and codified in abstract theories, because it will always be developing alongside professional practice. (Winter, 1989, p. 29)

Systematic inquiry is the basis of teacher research (Shalaway, 1990). A variety of approaches are employed, including: experimental designs, systematic observation, descriptive research, and case studies (Downhower et al., 1990; Eisenhart & Borko, 1993; Neubert, 1989; Wessinger, 1992). It is for these reasons that it was decided to carry out the study in the very classroom that the researcher was teaching.

### **2.5.1 Benefits of Teacher as the Researcher**

Effective teacher research gives teachers the power and confidence to promote change (Downhower et al., 1990; Nihlen, 1992). In addition, conducting research often creates new opportunities and roles for classroom teachers (Shalaway, 1990).

Downhower et al. (1990) and Nihlen (1992) indicate that teacher researchers become more critical and responsive readers and users of research.

Miller and Pine (1990) mention that when teachers are the inquirers, the center of knowledge about teaching shifts to sources of practical classroom experience. This shift develops the professional status of teaching as teachers help to shape the knowledge base of teaching themselves (Johnson, 1993). The main objective for teacher research is the desire to improve one's practice with respect to a specific problem (Shalaway, 1990; Williamson, 1992).

According to Taylor, Pearson, Clark, and Walpole (2000) teachers' continuous professional development is an essential aspect of effective schooling. In addition "teacher professional development, stressed as an important key to improving students' reading achievement (Lyon, 1998; Snow et al., 1998), may be more realistic than finding the 'right' method" (p. 21).

The need is felt as how to integrate teachers' voices into the teacher-learning enterprise. In an apprenticeship framework teachers are adaptive professionals who control their own work and are analytical, creative, and flexible problem solvers. Teachers must live these characteristics with professional decision-making, even when student thinking diverges from their favored way of doing things (Afflerbach, 2000).

## **2.6 Building a Reading Framework Based on this Knowledge Base**

Studies have shown that for effective teaching teachers are required to explain what they are teaching, model their thinking processes, encourage student inquiry, and keep students engaged. Hence, formal instruction in reading comprehension seems inevitable.

Nevertheless, more information is needed on ways to train teachers on how to use the promising approach. The literature suggests that teaching comprehension in the context of academic areas is more effective. However, according to Walpole and McKenna (2004) findings on which strategies are most effective for which age groups are still lacking and more research seems necessary to determine whether such strategies apply to all types of text genres and whether the level of text difficulty influences strategy effectiveness.

Cognitive strategies are suggested but we do not know how many of them to teach, how to sequence them, whether they should be taught in isolation or in combined patterns, or whether they should be used with multiple genres (Guthrie, 2004). These issues have not been adequately explored. A set of valuable ingredients do exist, but there is little evidence on how to combine them into curricula. Besides, most of the existing literature is based on students whose L1 is English and in content area reading classrooms. This study hopes to contribute to the body of knowledge on RAF in English language classrooms by merging these ingredients and expanding the literature on how to build a Reading Apprenticeship Framework that is able to enhance reading literacy of EFL pre- university students.

Another shortfall in the existing literature is the lack of knowledge about engagement support. Any strategy instruction activity depends on a dynamic context (Guthrie, 2004). A successful lesson depends on content that has optimal levels of familiarity, complexity, organization, connections to students' experience, and the presence of interesting features (Edelson & Joseph, 2001). The nature of the texts for strategy instruction has not been investigated enough either. Whether the text is long, short, illustrated, unillustrated, or connected to other texts that students have read, its presentation can affect strategy instruction success (Guthrie, 2001). This study attempted to add to this body of literature through a case study on the apprentices.

Many teachers sense that without some student input into the direction of the class, lessons become disaffecting. However, the research base of this issue is vague. Guthrie, (2001) adds that if no social interchange is allowed in the social environment of a classroom, students' efforts to read and understand will fail. These ingredients of text, students' self-direction, and collaborative social structures are necessary for comprehension instruction because they are indispensable to engagement in reading (Guthrie, 2001). There is also little data on how much engaged reading is to take place for the development of reading literacy level.

The research gap is that there is little knowledge basis to guide long-term instructional design to help sustain engaging reading activity that can eventually improve reading comprehension (Guthrie, 2004).

Thus, hoping to fill the gap, in this study it was attempted to find out how approximately 40 hours of instruction in 8 weeks of engaged reading affected the pre-university learners' reading literacy development.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **Methodology**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

The main aim of the present study was to examine how the Reading Apprenticeship Framework can help the adolescents' reading literacy in an ESL context. More specifically, to explore the strategies that can make the framework efficient, effective and appealing; also to explore how the framework affects the students, and how the teacher can best utilize the framework. In other words, the study was aimed at examining both product and process components of the RAF hoping that a more comprehensive understanding on the usefulness of apprenticeship framework would be provided.

According to Guthrie, Wigfield, Barbosa, Von Secker, and Richardson (2001), the empirical literature on comprehension strategy instruction consists mainly of studies that were short term (1-10 hours), focused on a single strategy, intended for a small group, taught by an outsider (not the classroom teacher), independent of curriculum content (not integrated), and isolated from school pressures. Previous studies seem to have been designed to optimize experimental control. However, there is a need to investigate whether more elaborate instructional designs can be implemented and sustained over time. Reading comprehension instruction that is scalable and sustainable should be long term (about 12 weeks), multiple-strategy oriented (4-8 strategies),



curriculum-integrated, whole-class managed, teacher-taught, school-situated and responsive to school pressures (Guthrie, Wigfield, Barbosa, et al., 2001).

The Apprenticeship Framework in this study possessed these characteristics, and since college and university students need to cope with a large amount of academic reading tasks, the extent to which it could be scaled up successfully was examined.

Hence the main aim of this study was to see how the reading apprenticeship framework could enhance the reading literacy of a group of adolescent ESL learners. After conducting a pre-test a few specific learners were selected using qualitative/case study methods to better understand the dynamics of the apprenticeship framework and its impact on learners at different levels of proficiency. Here, the taken steps are demonstrated. First, the research design will be explained. The subject section details the population. The instrumentation section deals with data-gathering devices. The procedure section outlines the research plan, the method of data collection and a description of how the data were analyzed.

### **3.2 Research Design**

Relating to the aim of this study, which was a deeper understanding of how the Reading Apprenticeship Framework (RAF) can help pre-university learners' literacy, it was felt that qualitative method would better afford the observation of different variables and take note of the participants at different proficiency levels. To this end, although in this study both quantitative and qualitative data were analyzed, the research was mainly qualitative. Quantitative data yielded specific numbers that could be statistically analyzed

(Creswell, 2002). However, qualitative data offered many different perspectives on the study topic and provided a complex picture of the situation (Miles & Huberman, 1984). While the pre and post-test results constituted a necessary component, qualitative data from sources such as learners' reflections was needed to investigate a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context. Merriam (1998) advocates that a qualitative case study is an intensive description and analysis of a social unit.

Analysis of qualitative data requires sensitivity to detail and context. In this study the researcher took up the role of the teacher and was the primary instrument for data collection and analysis while being responsive to the context which gave her the benefit of being able to process data immediately, as well as clarify and summarize as the study evolved (Guba & Lincoln, 1988). Most studies evaluating the effectiveness of strategy training for EFL learners have been product-oriented, that is, they have quantitatively measured improvements in learners' test scores following the completion of a strategy training program (Chen, 2007). However, such evaluation methods are only partial and they must be supplemented by a qualitative analysis of the impact that strategy training has on the learning process.

To collect both quantitative and qualitative data, merge the data, and use the results to understand the case of an attempt to use RAF in an EFL context, *triangulation* was used. The triangulation of data was employed to confirm and verify the findings. It helped minimize the possibility of bias in the study while giving confidence in the findings as the data were analyzed later (Freeman, 1998). More significantly, having data from differing sources provided a better understanding of the situation under study:

Triangulation may be defined as the use of two or more methods of data collection in the study of some aspect of human behavior. Triangular techniques attempt to map out, or explain more fully the richness and complexity of human behavior by studying it from more than one standpoint. (Cohen & Manion, 1994, p. 254)

In this study, quantitative scores on the instrument helped to select the focal cases. Alternatively, qualitative, in-depth observation and reflection notes provided adequate information about the context. As far as the sequence was concerned, quantitative data were collected to look for representative cases to be followed up in the qualitative phase.

As case study evaluations can cover both process and outcomes and as case study is seen to satisfy the three tenets of the qualitative method: describing, understanding, and explaining (Winston & Tellis, 1997), in order to give special attention to completeness in observation and analysis of the cases under study (Zonabend, 1992), this method was adopted.

### **3.3 Rationale Behind Selection of Subjects**

The number of second language speakers is of growing importance. The English language provides the lingua franca to deepen the integration of global economies (Graddol, 2006). It facilitates transactional encounters and allows nations, and individuals in any part of the world to communicate their views of the world and identities. To Graddol, extensive curriculum reforms are taking place as economies strive to operate in a globalized world. Improving national proficiency in English forms a key part of educational strategy in most countries. In our changing world, English seems to have joined the list of basic skills that schools should educate their students on. Around two-thirds of the world's top universities are in English-speaking countries (The Economist,

2005). This is why English is increasingly used as a medium of education in universities across the world. English proficiency has made a lot of university graduates around the world employable by multinationals (Business Week, 2005).

The number of international students coming to English-speaking countries seems to be ever-rising. According to Graddol (2006), between 2-3 million students each year travel to other countries to study and interestingly major English-speaking countries account for 46% of this population. More countries in Europe and Asia are attracting international students by offering courses taught in English. Singapore and Malaysia are among those establishing themselves as 'education hubs' as joint ventures and overseas branches are replacing the 'onshore' American, British and Australian provision (Graddol, 2006). According to Tang, ELS/ICT Marketing Manager, in Malaysia 120,000 students yearly go into colleges/universities to further their studies (Personal communication, February 2007). ELS, Malaysia, an American franchise addresses 12,000 of this crowd each year. As there is a large ESL market in Malaysia, there are other English language schools as well; for example, Erican has about 30 centers in Malaysia, while IH, Cambridge and the British Council are processing a few thousand each year as well. However, ELS plays a more significant role in this respect as it addresses mainly international students, compared to the other chain schools that focus mostly on local students. According to Chee, Vice president of ELS Training and Curriculum, students from a variety of 50 nationalities are registered at ELS (Personal communication, October, 2006). Therefore, as this study wished to see how the RAF works on different ESL learners regardless of their racial and cultural differences, the cases were selected from ELS students.

The issue of confidentiality and anonymity of the context which in most qualitative research proves problematic was not a factor in this research. Generally, readers of a research report should not be able to identify which company or participants took part in the research (Flick, 2005); however, as anonymity was not desired by the school and as an informed consent existed between both parties the name of the school was revealed. Moreover, the focus of this study was only on the training module prepared by the researcher and the apprenticeship method of instruction that was adopted. Also since selecting ELS as a private language school which addresses the most number of international students in Malaysia was significant to the sampling of this study no pseudonym was adopted. Despite the need for confidentiality, qualitative research needs credibility and as identifying details had to be stripped for anonymity to be achieved, opting for a pseudonym seemed unnecessary (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993).

The type of *Purposeful Sampling* adopted in this study is *Typical Sampling* which, according to Creswell (2002), is a sampling in which the researcher studies a person or site that is “typical” to those unfamiliar with the situation.

In the Project STAR study (1985–1990) on small-class size, Finn and Achilles (1999) found that students in classes of fewer than 17 had statistically significant literacy achievement gains in all subject areas and at every level. In this study for better achievement results, it was tried to keep the number of learners fewer than seventeen. The subjects who participated in both the pilot and the actual study were language learners attending an intensive course of English at ELS language center at intermediate level of proficiency. The subjects came from a variety of native language backgrounds:

Malay, Chinese, Indonesian, Japanese, Arabic and so forth. Most of the learners were secondary school leavers who wished to pursue their education at a college or university in or outside Malaysia but lacked the required English proficiency. All the students at ELS sit for a written and oral placement test upon registration. Therefore, those sitting in one class might be assumed homogeneous; but the fact that the pre-test of the study showed otherwise was cherished, as the heterogeneity factor helped to see how the framework worked for learners at different levels of proficiency. Yin (1994) asserts that selecting cases must be done so as to maximize what can be learned, in the period of time available for the study. Multiple cases were selected to represent students at different proficiency levels.

### **3.3.1 Justification of Level Selection According to ELS Curriculum**

At this juncture, it is worth explaining that ELS intensive classes are divided into 9 levels, starting from 101 to 109: 101-103 are considered elementary levels, 104-106 intermediate, and 107-109 advanced. After exit levels (being 103, 106 and 109) learners are given certificates. Each level consists of 100 hours of instruction and takes 4 weeks to finish. Learners come to class 5 days a week, 6 hours a day. Unlike many other English classes, at ELS each hour is dedicated to one component: reading, writing, structure, listening, and conversation, and one hour of self-study is spent in a multimedia lab. Therefore, each component is taught for 20 hours per semester.

As the 106 level certificate stands as adequate proof of proficiency in English, most colleges admit learners who hold this certificate to their diploma/degree courses. Therefore, very few learners would continue studying at ELS after level 106; so needless to say from level 107 to 109, the number of learners keeps shrinking from a typical 10-12 to 5-6.

Most foreign learners start at ELS at lower levels, so it is too much to expect that a learner whose exposure to English has been only 6 months can be considered an advanced level learner. Therefore, most advanced level learners at ELS have intermediate proficiency. The reason behind selecting learners at “advanced” level was that students at lower levels could not be expected to tackle authentic materials from university course books. It was for the above mentioned reasons that a class at level 107 was selected hoping that, as learners who have stayed with ELS this far, are looking forward to the 109 certificate, they would probably not drop out after this level, and the study could be continued with the cases for the intended two successive sessions.

### **3.4 The Duration of the Study**

The duration of the study was two months and constituted forty 55-minute lessons; the class was held five days a week. Of course, forty hours of instruction would be ideal, but on the last two days of each semester learners had to sit for the schools’ final exams; also, the first two sessions were spent on orientation and pre-test and the third last session was spent on the post-test. To make a long story short, the actual study was conducted for 33, 55-minute sessions. The class met five times a week. The study could not be

conducted for a longer duration because two semesters was the maximum that the management could cooperate with the study while the school's original syllabus was put aside for the sake of the research and outside material was used in the classroom. Another limitation was that most learners were about to drop out of the school as they believed they had acquired the necessary English proficiency to be able to attend college/university classes. Had the study continued for a third semester most cases would have been lost and thus their progress could not be monitored. Therefore, it was decided to terminate the study after two semesters or two months.

### **3.5 Instrumentation**

#### ***3.5.1 Pre and Post Test***

In response to the need for internationally comparable evidence on student performance, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) launched the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA). PISA represents a new commitment by the governments of OECD countries to monitor the outcomes of education systems in terms of student achievement on a regular basis. PISA aims at providing a new basis for policy dialogue that reflect judgments about the skills related to adult life. PISA is aimed at stimulating the kinds of tasks encountered in real life. The five aspects of reading assessed in PISA are:

1. forming a broad general understanding
2. retrieving information
3. developing an interpretation
4. reflecting on the content of a text



5. reflecting on the form of a text.

Therefore, the RAF in this study focused on the strategies that would enable the subjects to carry out the same kinds of tasks encountered in authentic reading situations by employing the National Reading Panel's (NRP) seven identified kinds of text comprehension instruction.

As the instruments for PISA 2000 are the product of several years of development process and as the copyright expired at the end of year 2004, they were opted with no further validity and reliability testing for the pre and post tests of the study. Of course considering the time limitations the learners did not take the whole test and 4 of the reading passages were omitted (see Appendix A).

### ***3.5.2 Lesson Plans***

For planning the lessons, the 8-step, Madeline Hunter lesson design model (1991) which many believe to have stood the test of time was considered:

1. *Anticipatory Set (focus)* - A short prompt that focuses the students' attention before the actual lesson begins.
2. *Purpose (objective)* - The purpose of lesson of the day, why the students need to learn it, what they will be able to do, and how they will show learning as a result.
3. *Input* - The skills and concepts the teacher will impart to the students.
4. *Modeling* - The teacher shows or demonstrates what the finished product looks like.

5. *Guided Practice* - The teacher leads the students through the steps necessary to perform the skill.
6. *Checking For Understanding* - The teacher uses a variety of questioning strategies to determine students' understanding and to pace the lesson - move forward?/back up?
7. *Independent Practice* - The teacher releases students to practice on their own.
8. *Closure* - A review or wrap-up of the lesson – “Tell me/show me what you have learned today”.

As the class duration was only 55 minutes, the Madeline Hunter design had to be adopted and adapted to best fit the objectives.

### **3.5.2.1 Strategy Instruction in the Lesson Plan**

In the creation of the lesson plans, the following strategies based on different studies in the area of reading comprehension (National Reading Panel, 2000; Pearson, Peterson, & Rodriguez, 2005; Pressley, 2000; RAND Reading Study Group, 2002) were taken into account: determination of a reading objective; activation and use of one's own knowledge with regard to the content of the text; drawing of connection or relations between words, prediction of information; exploration of the nature and structure of different types of texts; discovery of the theme and the main ideas in a text; planning,

monitoring and evaluation of texts for their values; and reflection on the reading activities which have been executed and their results.

In the 2005 National Assessments of Educational Progress (NAEP), researchers identified key elements of effective adolescent literacy programs. The elements of actual instruction were: direct, explicit comprehension instruction; effective instructional principles embedded in content; motivation and self-directed learning; text-based collaborative learning; strategic tutoring; diverse texts; and ongoing formative assessment of students (Jones, 2007). Again it was tried to consider these factors together with the following dimensions of reading defined by PISA in the construction of the lesson plans which will be portrayed in the *Procedure* section:

- Processes: the various reading tasks required of readers (such as retrieval of information or interpretation of text) used in PISA to simulate the types of tasks that students will encounter in real life.
- Content – types of text: the form in which written material is encountered and needs to be understood (many and varied forms such as narrative prose, or graphic presentation), a wide selection of which is represented in the PISA assessment tasks.
- Context: the situation in which reading takes place (for private or occupational use), defined in PISA according to how the author intended the text to be used.

### 3.5.2.2 Selecting Reading Materials

At the heart of the organization of the PISA reading assessment is a distinction between *continuous* and *non-continuous* texts. Continuous texts are typically composed of sentences that are, in turn, organized into paragraphs, while non-continuous texts present information in a variety of different ways, such as forms, graphs and maps.

Therefore, the following types of texts were included in the apprenticeship framework.

Continuous: Description, Narration, Exposition, Argumentation, and Instrumentation.

Non-continuous: Forms, Calls and advertisements, Charts and graphs, Diagrams, Tables and, Maps.

Moreover, it is often recommended that texts be chosen that deal with familiar topics in the learners' culture, so that background knowledge can compensate for linguistic difficulty (Kern, 2000). However, as academic language learners need to focus on texts which may present unfamiliar information, it was tried to encourage the learners to interpret authentic texts as cultural outsiders and assure them that their incomplete knowledge of the L2 did not invalidate their readings and to motivate them to share their varied interpretations. As Kern (2000) puts it, the whole problem of literacy for native as well as foreign language readers is that the uniform competence is a fiction.

There were cases where text simplification seemed desirable, as a way to boost learner motivation and to broaden the scope of their reading. However, this was not a viable solution for students who must be prepared to read texts written for native

speakers. A basic principle of teaching reading in a literacy-based language program is that students need controlled tasks, not controlled texts (Kern, 2000).

Selecting appropriate materials is considered a demanding task. However, as it plays a crucial role in the establishment of a productive reading, the factors suggested by Griffiths (1995) when selecting materials were taken into account:

(a) The materials should match learner objectives (Krashen & Terrell, 1983), (b) The materials should be learner-centered, (c) The materials should facilitate interactive learning, (d) The materials should be up-to-date, (e) The materials should be age-appropriate, and (f) The materials should be relevant to real life.

Regarding the choice of topics to increase interest and motivation, it was tried to maneuver the topics around what is suggested by Brinton and Brumfit (1989) and Mohan (1986) even though most reading excerpts were taken from university/college course books:

1. Self, personal background and daily life
2. Daily life
3. Schooling
4. Family
5. Personal interests and activities
6. Personal beliefs

In most situations, there were similar interests among the learners, and such commonalities created a bond of better understanding. Materials used during the training sessions were basically adapted from four sources which were (a) Exercise your College

Reading (Elder, 2004), (b) Text & Thought (Lester & Resnick, 2003), (c) Painless Reading Comprehension (Jones, 2004) and selected articles from (d) Just English magazine which is created by Just English Sdn. Bhd. (ELS sister company) in collaboration with U.K. writers in keeping with standards of excellence in English. It is an 'edutainment' magazine with 8 issues per year, and about 15000 copies per issue are circulated to secondary schools in Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, Korea, Japan, Indonesia, Saudi Arabia, and Australia. It includes articles on lifestyle, language, business, famous personalities, science and even the latest news. Its target audiences are teenagers and adults.

The use of passages from the magazine became deliberate after the pilot study when most students felt that they could benefit from more practice on strategies and as the articles in the magazine were closer to their comfort level, they were used mostly for extensive reading purposes and quite often as homework reading.

### **3.6 Procedure**

This study was carried out over an eight-week (two semesters) period. Guthrie and Cox (2001) have suggested 12 weeks of instruction for scalable and sustainable reading programs in their 2001 study. Because the class in this study was held 5 days a week and considering the delimitations, this study was carried out in the duration of two months and in 36 sessions, two of which were dedicated to pre and post test and one to briefing the learners about the objectives of the study. There were two phases involved in both the pilot study and the actual study. Phase 1 of the study included the briefing of the learners on the aims of the study, administration of the pre-test, selection of subjects, instruction

of five of the strategies, and 2 peer observation sessions. On the very first session, learners sat for the pre test, adopted from PISA 2000 (see appendix A). The mean, and standard deviation were calculated. Six learners, two who scored the highest, two who scored the lowest and two whose scores were closest to the mean were selected for the case study phase to represent better, weaker and average students. Qualitative data in the form of teacher's reflexive notes, students' written reflections and peer feedback notes was also collected and simultaneously analyzed.

As shown in Table 3.1, phase two of the study started after the end of the first semester when a much smaller class was left (due to failing or quitting of some of the students) but fortunately the focal cases remained. In this phase, five other strategies were instructed, while the already covered strategies were simultaneously recycled hoping that they would become internalized. Phase 2 involved another peer observation session, and the post-test following a final in-depth interview with each of the cases. At the same time, for triangulation purposes similar to Phase 1, students' written reflections and teacher observation notes were collected and analyzed.

Table 3.1

*Phases of the Study*

<b>Phases</b>	<b>Duration</b>	<b>Procedures</b>	<b>Instruments</b>
<b>P1</b>	4 weeks  (18 hours)	- Students' briefing	- Pre-test (PISA)
		- Administration of pre-test	- Teacher's observation protocol
		- Selection of cases	- Peer observation checklist
		- Strategy training	- Open-ended questionnaire for
		- 2 peer examinations	students' reflections
		- Qualitative data collection	- RA Module
<b>P2</b>	4 weeks  (18 hours)	- Strategy training	- Post-test (PISA)
		- 1 peer examination	- Teacher's observation protocol
		- Qualitative data collection	- Peer observation checklist
		- Administration of post test	- Open-ended questionnaire for
		- Conducting a final in-depth	students' reflections
		interview session	- RA Module
			- Semi-structured interviews

**3.6.1 Designing Case Studies**

It is typical in qualitative research to study a few individuals or a few cases. According to Creswell (2002) this is because the overall ability of the researcher to provide an in-depth picture diminishes with the addition of each new individual. On the other hand, validity is especially problematic in case study research. It has been a source



of criticism because of potential subjectivity. Yin (1994) proposed three remedies to counteract this: using multiple sources of evidence, establishing a chain of evidence, and having a draft case study report reviewed by key informants. In this study, multiple sources of data were used, thus increasing confidence in the results.

Yin (1994) asserts that selecting cases must be done so as to maximize what can be learned in the period of time available for the study. For this study, case selection was conducted at two levels: at one level, a typical, international EFL class at a private language school was selected, and at the other level, 6 cases at different proficiency levels to maximize what could be learned from the context were selected. In case examination it was tried to stay selective, focusing on the few issues that were fundamental to understanding the framework being examined.

### **3.6.2 The Instruction/Apprenticeship**

In light of the requirements for increased reading literacy, Reading Apprenticeship puts the teacher/researcher in the role of expert and students were “apprenticed” into the ways reading is used and the strategies and thinking that are particularly useful. In Reading Apprenticeship classrooms, *how* and *why* we read became part of the curriculum accompanying a focus on *what* we read (Schoenbach, Braunger et al., 2003). Rather than offering a sequence of strategies, this RAF focused on creating a classroom where learners became active and effective readers. It should be noted that, although reading strategies have been placed under the categories of pre-reading, while-reading and after-

reading (e.g., Auerbach & Paxton, 1997; Maria & Hathaway, 1993), the focus in the RA Module (Appendix B) was on ‘while-reading’ strategies.

From the beginning, reading apprentices were engaged in the whole process of problem solving to make sense of written texts, even if they were initially unable to carry out problem solving on their own. The hidden, cognitive dimensions were made visible to the students. To begin to build a repertoire of activities for reading comprehension, learners needed to have the reading process demystified (Schoenbach, Braunger, et al., 2003). The teaching and learning environment required the interaction of students and teacher in multiple dimensions of classroom life to develop learners’ confidence and competence as readers. Making it safe for learners to discuss reading difficulties mitigated their potential embarrassment. Everest (2003) contends that some see differentiation among learners as another mandate on teachers’ already burgeoning workloads and that matching teaching to the needs of each learner is an ideal way to help learners’ diversity thrive. Thus, strategies that address individual needs involved:

- Offering personalized scaffolding.
- Using flexible means to reach defined ends.
- Creating a caring classroom in which differences were seen as assets.

Multiple paths and flexible means do not mean that students are given free rein; it means that teachers must find that sweet spot between structure and choice that makes student learning possible (Carolan & Guinn, 2007).

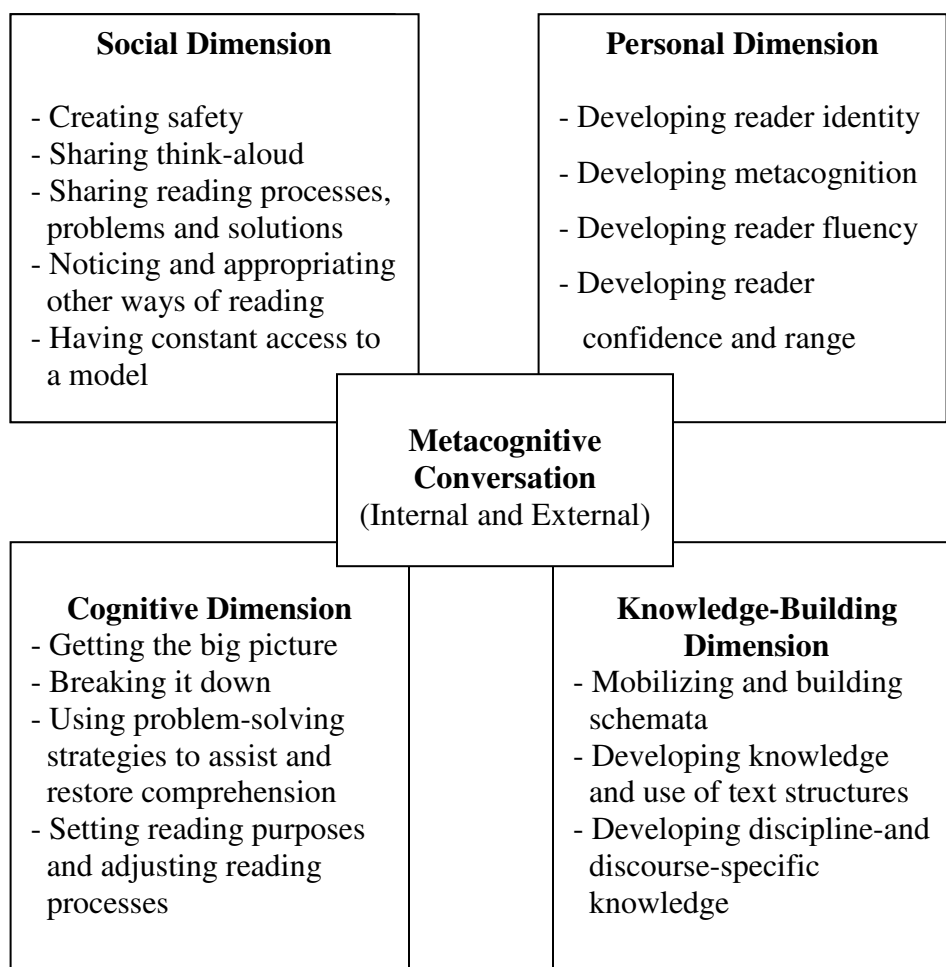
The overarching practice in this RAF was building ample one-on-one time into the class structure.

In the first half of the framework, the strategies were introduced one at a time. To some of the more complex strategies, more than one session was dedicated. Single strategy instruction enabled lower-achieving learners to understand, to gain command, and to transfer the strategies to a variety of texts (Guthrie, Wigfield, Barbosa, et al., 2001). In the second half of this 8-week framework, the strategies were combined. Learners were first instructed in combining background knowledge with questioning and progressively combined the strategies. Learners are normally not trained in the types of reading that teachers expect them to do. Reading to identify patterns or to infer bias, for example, is not a well-practiced habit of most students. Learners need to be shown what teachers mean by those things before they can effectively do what they are asked to do. Kern (2000) advocates that “were reading to be more brought into the mainstream of classroom activity, made to be collaborative as well as individual activities, more integrated with speaking and with one another, it would not seem so difficult.” Think-aloud by both the teacher and the learners while reading and also meta-cognitive conversation were crucial aspects of the class. Another consistent feature in the reading lessons was the encouragement of learners to read and think aloud to increase learners’ conscious awareness of the various problems faced and strategies used during reading. Although it was not expected from all the learners to be equally competent, they were expected to follow the modeling of the strategies despite their proficiency differences. Some learners might have required more time and scaffolding from either the instructor or the better peers due to differences in their proficiency levels, learning styles and maybe even personality traits (introversion vs. extroversion) (Goh, 2004) but even though

reading and thinking aloud presents a high cognitive load for L2 readers they are not impossible (Janzen & Stoller, 1998).

Besides the use of think-aloud, metacognitive discussion was another prominent feature of the reading sessions. Most of the discussion whether instructor-led at the first level of apprenticeship, or peer-led at the second level of apprenticeship, revolved around the detection of what was hindering comprehension, awareness and use of learned strategies and finding contextual clues for resolving reading problems.

The description above provides a general view of the dimensions of the RAF. While each reading session differed somewhat from one another depending on the specific objectives of each lesson, the dimensions of RAF in Figure 3.2 adapted from Greenleaf, Schoenbach et al. (2001) overshadowed a typical reading session.



*Figure 3.1. Dimensions of the Apprenticeship Framework.*

### 3.6.3 The Curriculum

There has been intensive research on effective literacy instruction. Most of the research supports teachers' use of a variety of approaches based on their informed judgment in working with learners (Au, 1998; Snow et al., 1998). The programs these and other scholars identified as effective for reading instruction involve some

combination of individual and small-group instruction, on-going and intensive individual assessment, and experience with a wide variety of reading materials (National Reading Panel, 2000).

The curriculum in this study was designed with routines for scaffolding learners' strategic repertoire and increasing ability to use strategies appropriately and independently and integrate Silent Sustained Reading with metacognitive logs as a key routine. The framework used texts in varied genres and disciplines. Learners were provided with texts which consisted of articles from university course books at different levels of difficulty or Just English magazines with an optimal mix of texts, headings, and formatting. These texts were interesting to learners when learners thought they were readable, inclusive of amazing facts, and readily accessible which provide situational interest (Hidi & Harackiewicz, 2000). Interesting texts immediately command attention and call for engagement and this was used to facilitate strategy learning in reading.

The framework also fostered conversations focused on comprehension as well as on content. And finally a climate of collaboration and curiosity about everyone's thinking was developed in the framework.

### **3.6.3.1 The Order of Strategies Taught in the Curriculum**

A fundamental concern in second language reading involves the identification and nature of reading strategies and whether these strategies are situated within an ordered hierarchy (Hudson, 2007). In a strategic-reading curriculum, it is beneficial to isolate a strategy so students can comprehend and practice it. However, strategies, once

understood, work together, and good readers naturally integrate the strategies needed to explore the meanings in a text without consciously thinking of them (Vacca, Vacca, & Gove, 2000). Students have to be actively involved in understanding, using, and evaluating the effectiveness of reading strategies.

In this RAF, the following ten strategies were instructed, based on the aspects of reading highlighted by NRP (2000) using problem-solving strategies to assist and restore comprehension, setting reading purposes and adjusting reading processes, monitoring comprehension, breaking the text down, developing knowledge and use of text structures and so forth. Strategies were introduced one at a time, but the covered strategies were recycled as the need arose. Based on learner feedback, a different number of sessions were devoted to different strategies. By the end of the first half of the study, the first two aspects of reading assessed in PISA had been covered. In the second half, recycling strategies like determining the meaning of unfamiliar words, identifying the topic and main idea, and scanning was inevitable for more advanced reading and higher-level strategies usage.

Generally, reading skills are represented in categories representing (a) word attack skills, (b) comprehension skills, (c) fluency skills, and (d) critical reading skills (Hudson, 2007). Discussions of reading skills frequently discuss *lower-level* skills and *higher-level* skills. The lower-level skills tend to be related to word-attack skills, while the higher-level skills tend to be linked to comprehension skills. Hence, the module started with “*determining meaning of vocabulary using context clues*”.

In terms of any other implicational hierarchy order of comprehension skills, Barret (1968), influenced by Bloom (1956), developed a processing taxonomy:

1. Literal Comprehension
  - 1.1 Recognition
  - 1.2 Recall
2. Reorganization
3. Inferential Comprehension
4. Evaluation
5. Appreciation

The taxonomy assumes that the lower-numbered levels are more basic than those with higher numbers which built my confidence in keeping “*Making Inferences*” and “*Evaluating author’s argument*” at the end of the module.

One of the first language researchers who proposed that there are separable processes involved in reading comprehension is Davis (1972). Davis determined four unique strategies among mature readers:

1. knowledge of word meanings
2. drawing inferences
3. finding answers to questions
4. drawing inferences about the meaning of words from context.

His findings, however, do not show evidence that strategies can be arranged in a clear-cut order.

There have been several other attempts to develop strategy lists and hierarchies in literature (Hudson 1993; Lennon, 1962; Lunzer, 1979; Koda, 1997; Spearritt, 1972).



However, there appears to be scant evidence that the identified skills have been hierarchically ordered in any way other than the basic letter-decoding skills which are necessary for application of all other reading skills (Hudson, 2007). Thus, it was concluded that there are no clearly defined ordered levels of strategy training hierarchy and as literature argues against the existence of such order, the strategies were ordered as seen fit for the Framework. The following is a brief description of the apprenticeship that occurred during the strategy instruction, summarized from researcher's reflexive notes:

- ***Determining meaning of vocabulary using context clues***

*Determining meaning of vocabulary using context clues* aroused enthusiasm in learners. Learners were all unanimous in their agreement on the significance of the strategy. Three to four days were allocated to it and of course it kept being recycled. They showed great improvement, specially the more competent students; but they could obviously benefit from more modeling and problem-solving practice.

- ***Determining topic***

*Determining topic* of the reading materials became very interesting to them, once learners themselves experienced how such identification can activate their schema to help their comprehension. Most of them admitted that quite often they had been neglecting to even read the title of the passage in order to save time.

- ***Identifying and formulating the main idea***

It was at this juncture that learners began to realize that it is fine not to understand everything in a text and to live with ambiguity. They realized how using this strategy can help them comprehend and recall the main ideas faster and with more ease. Their

confidence level was suddenly boosted as they realized that for most reading purposes it would suffice to just get the main idea being stated.

- ***Scanning***

The class really enjoyed the *scanning* sessions, probably after they realized the usages of this strategy in daily life, they could connect to it more easily. Once it was modeled how one should program the mind and the eye to work together and look for specific information, they became really competitive and motivated to find the words in their dictionaries or other information in timetables and other non-continuous material. It was not until later that they started practicing this strategy on continuous texts.

- ***Understanding graphics***

*Understanding graphics* was what they all dreaded at the beginning as they had scored the lowest in this part of the pre-test. They were very pessimistic and lacked the confidence of ever being able to retrieve information from charts, tables, bar graphs, pie charts and so forth. Once they saw the modeling, they looked more interested, seeing it was not as difficult as they had always thought. By the time they formed their groups to interact and do the tasks, they all looked very motivated and engaged, specially the weaker half of the class, as they never thought they could handle such complicated-looking tasks. This strategy instruction seemed successful for all their answers were correct and they needed minimum scaffolding.

- ***Identifying writing patterns***

*Identifying writing patterns* did not arouse that much of a “buzz”. They did not have a clue about the usefulness of the strategy. After hearing how it can simplify the comprehension and the recall of the given text, they became more willing to do the

tasks; still, the weaker ones dragged behind. Even the scaffolding and the support of the more competent peers did not prove that effective. Probably materials that they had enough schema about could aid their strategy use.

- ***Determining author's purpose, tone, audience***

*Determining author's purpose, tone, audience* was everybody's least favorite as they did not agree that this strategy was as useful as the rest had been. Maybe because of the lack of motivation or maybe because they found the materials above their comprehension level, they did not shine in the tasks. The author's purpose and audience was clearer but even the more competent ones failed in identifying the tone, probably because their exposure to English reading materials had been very limited.

- ***Making Inferences***

As much as they found *Making Inferences* interesting, they found it difficult. But it came as no surprise, as they were not used to this kind of critical reading, and reading between the lines. Even though 2 weeks were spent on reading different materials, they still could use more practice with different genres of material. However, they all showed some progress, specially, the more competent ones.

- ***Evaluating author's argument***

*Evaluating author's argument* was the last strategy practiced and because of the time constraint, not sufficient time was spent on it. They felt rather proud of themselves to even be asked to evaluate a piece of writing and this motivated them enough to give the tasks their all. Hopefully, in another framework, with longer sessions, more time can be dedicated to it to see better results from the students.

Table 3.2

*Instructed Strategies*

<b>5 Reading Aspects Assessed in PISA</b>	<b>Taught Strategy</b>
1. Forming a broad general understanding	Determining meaning of vocabulary Determining topic Identifying the stated main idea Formulating the implied main idea
2. Retrieving information	Scanning Understanding graphics
3. Reflecting on the form of a text	Identifying writing patterns Determining author's purpose, tone, audience
4. Developing an Interpretation	Making Inferences
5. Reflecting on the content of a text	Evaluating author's argument

**3.6.4 Typical RAF Class**

Adapting Hunter's (1991) lesson design mode, every day the lesson started by trying to elicit from the learners themselves how that very strategy could help them in real life and why it was important to know how to use it (*Purpose*). It proved helpful, as the increase in the enthusiasm level of the class could be witnessed. Then directly instructing the strategy and giving examples for its actual usage would follow (*Input*).

Using think-aloud, an example or two was modeled for them to see what a more proficient reader would actually do in the face of a reading problem (*Modeling*).

As Smith (1988) stresses the importance of learner's personal sense of group membership, they were then assigned to groups to do the tasks together. Learners acted upon cues from what they read, experimented with multiple literacies and received feedback from peers and the "expert reader". For grouping purposes the order of the seats was changed so that in each group there was a balance between more proficient learners and weaker ones. They looked a bit bewildered, as they were quite used to doing the pair work with their "buddies". However, by the end of the first week, they had already gotten used to the idea and could somehow guess the logic behind it. They were given reading tasks to do in small groups, so that through interaction they could help their peers to manage the task and not just sit idle, waiting for the class to read out the correct responses (*Guided Practice*). Working in small groups allowed for participation of everyone as they felt more comfortable and able to reach consensus. Research recommends no fewer than three and no more than five for small group discussions to ensure the involvement of all (Miller, 1997); thus, learners were asked to sit in groups of 3-4 for the desired peer support.

A risk with any kind of scaffold is that it becomes habituated. When the provided support is fixed and constantly expected, students are not given the opportunity to ever become independent (Silver & Kogut, 2006). Thus, after relative assurance was gained of their ability to handle the tasks, they were given more reading tasks and asked to try their best to handle them independently (*Independent Practice*). Of course they were not

totally left on their own and were still monitored, and if they were really stuck, they would be offered some more scaffolding. At the end of the session, learners were asked to write their open-ended answers to questions regarding their reflections about the lesson of the day, the teaching method, and the given materials. They were also asked for suggestions for a more effective class. A sample lesson plan of the module is given in Figure 3.2.

Instructor/ Trainee	Observer	Class/Level	Date	Time
Noosha		107		50 minutes
<b>Lesson Objective</b>				
<b>Materials</b>				
Stages	Interaction	Procedure	Time	
<b>Warm-up:</b>	T-Ss	Try to elicit from the students themselves how the strategy could help them in real life and why it is important to know how to use it ( <i>Purpose</i> ).	5 min	
<b>Pre-reading:</b>	T-Ss	Start with directly instructing the strategy and giving examples for its actual usage ( <i>Input</i> ). Using think-aloud, model an example or two for them to see what a more proficient reader would actually do in the face of a reading problem ( <i>Modeling</i> ).	10 min	
<b>While-reading:</b>	Ss-Ss	Give Ss reading tasks to do in small groups and help their peers to manage the task. Walk about to monitor which groups need more scaffolding ( <i>Guided Practice</i> ). Check answers as a class. Use intra-group discussions incase different groups have come up with different answers. Conclude by highlighting the clues.	15 min	
<b>Post-reading:</b>	Ss-Ss	After gaining relative assurance of Ss' ability to handle the tasks, give them more reading tasks and ask them to try their best to handle them independently and to check their answers with a peer only after individual completion of the task ( <i>Independent Practice</i> ) while monitoring and offering support. Check answers as a class. Encourage discussions in case different students have come up with different answers. Get a student to conclude by highlighting the clues.	15 min	
<b>Wrap:</b>	Ss	Ask Ss to write their open-ended answers to questions regarding their reflections about the lesson of the day, teaching method, and the given materials and suggestions for a more effective class.	5 min	

Figure 3.2 Lesson plan format.

### 3.7 Data Collection Procedures

There is no ethical alternative to being as nonbiased as is humanly possible. Therefore, following the literature in qualitative research for enhancement of the internal validity, the following basic strategies were adopted:

1. *Triangulation* of multiple sources of data - in this study being, researcher's reflexive journal, the learners' written reflections, final in-depth interview with the subjects to confirm the emerging findings, peer-filled observation sheets, *member checks*- taking data and tentative interpretations back to participants and checking the plausibility with them (Creswell, 2002; Merriam, 1998) and the lesson plans of the training module.
2. *Long term observation*- gathering data over a period of time to increase validity of findings (Merriam, 1997).
3. *Peer examination*- asking three uninvolved expert colleagues to comment on the findings as they emerge (Merriam, 1998; Creswell, 2002).
4. *Participatory or collaborative modes of research*- involving participants in all phases of the study (Merriam & Simpson, 1995).

#### 3.7.1 Researcher's Reflexive Journal

Fieldnotes were one of the main sources of data in the study. As Piantanida and Garman (1999) point out, field notes create a stable record of one's thought processes and tentative speculations that occur in a study and they can prove extremely helpful when it comes to recollection and reconstruction of the inquiry.



In each session, the learners' interactions were observed and notes were taken on how engaged the learners were and how successfully they grasped the strategies and carried out the tasks.

To Creswell (2002), observation is the process of gathering open-ended, firsthand information by observing people and places at a research site. The teacher/researcher had the advantage of recording information as it occurred in the setting and studying the actual behavior. To truly learn the situation, the role of a participant observer was adopted: teaching, interacting, observing and recording information at the same time. This offered excellent opportunities to see experiences from the viewpoints of participants. However, as the researcher had the role of the teacher as well, she would have had to sacrifice her one-to-one scaffolding if she were to properly do the write-ups inside the classroom. Therefore, most often only thoughts were jotted down on little scraps of paper and only later on were the write-ups done.

Some might argue that the fieldnotes written by the researcher would tend to be subjective as they are based on the perspective of one participant observer. Yet fieldnotes are widely used and universally accepted as a means of data collection in qualitative research and as personal observations were triangulated with other data sources, a degree of certainty could be reached that the findings are not subjective nor biased.

An observational protocol designed before data collection was adopted that was used for taking field notes during observation, in which a chronology of events, a detailed portrait of individuals, and verbatim quotes of individuals were mentioned to ensure that an organized means of recording observational field notes was at hand (Creswell, 2002).

The protocol contained a header where information about the time, place, setting and the observational role was detailed. Following the header, there were two columns dividing the page into two types of data. Both *descriptive* (description of the events, activities, and people) and *reflective field notes* (personal thoughts that relate to researcher's insights, hunches or broad ideas or themes that emerge during the observation) were recorded. (Appendix C)

The observation journal notes were analyzed to see how the framework had helped the subjects, how it could be improved and what strategies used by the teacher had been most effective.

### **3.7.2 Students' Written Reflections**

After each session all subjects were expected to write, using a semi-structured format, their reflections and evaluate the effectiveness of the lesson of the day for them, how they had found the reading materials of the day, usefulness of the taught strategy, the way the teacher had delivered the strategies, how beneficial they had found peer interaction, their ability to do the tasks independently towards the end of the lesson. they also were asked for suggestions for a more effective lesson in an open-ended format to allow them options for responding (Appendix D). Yet, of course only responses from the selected cases were analyzed. This method had the advantages of both permitting the participants to describe detailed personal experience as well as allowing a sense of control over the received information since specific questions could be asked to elicit information (Creswell, 2002).

As they were at intermediate level of language proficiency, it was assumed that they could express their reflections on the lesson of the day. Since they were at different proficiency levels, it was assumed that their comments could to some extent represent the rest of the class as well. The reflections once written were collected from the learners to ponder and constantly compare.

After each strategy, the learners were all expected to write, using a semi-structured format, their reflection to allow them to have options for responding as well as allowing the researcher a sense of control over the received feedback.

If after each and every session the learners were asked to write their thoughts, it would become so mundane that they would probably lose the sense of dedication to their writings. Therefore, they were asked for their reflections only after working on each strategy was finished. Thus, instead of imposing 30 writings on them, 10 reflections from each learner was compiled.

### **3.7.3 Final In-depth Interview**

At the end of both the pilot study and the actual study, an informal, semi-structured interview was conducted with the cases. The fact that the cases might be less forthcoming if they were interviewed by the researcher was measured against the disadvantages and it was concluded that teacher/researcher could make better informed decisions. Michelle (2002) also states that data is richer when teacher/researcher is always present.

The interviews each took about 15 minutes, which after being transcribed, were returned to the subjects for verification; the transcripts were later analyzed using the constant comparative method.

### **3.7.4 Peer Examination**

In order to receive more reliable feedback from peer observation sessions, the observers were well-briefed on the aims of the module. Therefore, the key factors of Apprenticeship Framework, highlighting the role of scaffolding, student's interaction and metacognitive talk were summarized and given to them prior to stepping into the class.

At ELS, it is a routine procedure for teachers to be observed, whether by senior teachers or by external audits, and each party has its own observation criteria. As it was wished to be evaluated based on the key factors in the RAF, a new observation sheet was designed. By answering eight questions, the class would be assessed regarding the modeling of the strategy, effectiveness of the scaffolding, the degree of success in making the cognitive activity visible to the learners through metacognitive conversation, making good use of peer interaction, lesson's helpfulness for developing learners' comprehension strategies, appropriateness of the materials, learners' ability to use the strategies and motivation level of the class (Appendix E).

The observation sheet was an open-ended checklist to be filled out by the peer observers who sat at the back of the classroom and took up the role of a non-participant observer for three of the sessions. One of the observers was the academic director of the ELS center, and the other two were both senior teachers, assistants to the academic

director. They all are involved in new teacher recruitment, evaluation of new teachers' demo lessons and ongoing observation of the staff. Thus, their comments could be reliable enough to be used for triangulation with other data sources.

### **3.7.5 Training Material/Lesson Plans**

Introduction to the key points of my RAF, lesson plans, all the instructed strategies, think-aloud modelings and ample practice on each strategy have been explained in full detail in the Training Framework (Appendix B), so that this framework can be utilized by other teachers as well. The Framework was modified after the pilot study, making all the necessary changes for a more efficient and effective instruction for the actual study which is explained in full detail in the next chapter.

### **3.7.6 Pre and Post Tests**

Many believe that the best assessment of learning should occur within the context of daily instruction and situated literacy activities (Brozo & Simpson, 2003; Hargis, 1999); however, it is also believed (Stiggins, 2002; Brozo & Hargis 2003) that if assessment results can inform teachers and learners in ways that lead to improvement of the teaching and learning process, then a range of assessment options become unignorable. One of these options- PISA- provided important data for the purpose of data triangulation.

In the very first session of both the pilot study and the actual study, the learners took a pre test adopted from PISA 2000; at the end of the 8th week, learners took a post-test, again adopted from PISA 2000. The practice effect was not considered in this study mainly because there was a long interval between the pre and the post test which allows forgetting of the test's content, and therefore reduce the magnitude of the practice effect (Kaufman, 2003).

The results from the pre and post tests were analyzed to find out if the apprenticeship framework had developed the literacy of the ESL adolescent learners and if the probable difference in results is significant. Of course, due to time limitations, the given test was not a complete one and it was shortened to 4 reading passages.

Table 3.3 summarizes the various sources of data collected from different perspectives and briefly describes the above-mentioned:

Table 3.3

*Various Data Sources, Adapted from Freeman (1998)*

<b>Perspective</b>	<b>Data source</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Teacher-researcher</b>	Field notes	Daily accounts of learning activities, occurrences, including personal hunches, reactions and explanations.
	Lesson Plans	Objectives, used resources and procedures.
	Observation	Objective noting of classroom events and interactions.
	Transcription	Representation of verbatim quotes.
<b>Peer observer</b>	Observation notes	Reflections on the event and interactions in the classroom according to the key concepts of the RAF and in line with the Research questions.
<b>Students</b>	Written reflections	Students' reactions to open-ended questions, thoughts and feelings on materials and instruction methods.
	Interview scripts	Semi-structured in depth interview at the end of study.
	Pre, post- test results	Students' achievements in identical pre and post tests.

To sum up, it can be said that the key components of this framework are:

- Sustained Silent Reading
- Metacognitive talking about reading processes; in particular:
- “Think Alouds” modeling and practicing reading and problem-solving with texts,
- A focus on taking control of one’s own attention and reading process(es)

- Explicit comprehension instruction and opportunities for extensive practice reading and applying cognitive and knowledge-building strategies.

### **3.8 Trustworthiness of the Findings**

The aim of trustworthiness in a qualitative inquiry is to support the argument that the inquiry's findings are "worth paying attention to" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 290). In this study, trustworthiness was enhanced through the strategies detailed by Johnson (1997):

- Extended fieldwork: Collecting data over an extended period of time
- Low inference descriptors: The use of description phrased very close to the students' accounts and researchers' field notes
- Data triangulation: Use of multiple data sources
- Methods triangulation: Use of multiple research methods
- Investigator triangulation: Use of peers as auditors
- Theory triangulation: Use of multiple theories and perspectives to help interpret and explain the data
- Participant feedback: Feedback and discussion of the interpretations and conclusions with the actual participants
- Negative case sampling: Locating and examining cases that disconfirm the researcher's expectations and tentative explanation

Having adopted all the above strategies it was hoped that the study is free from bias.



### 3.9 Data Analysis

Analysis of each of the data sources in the qualitative phase of the study involved coding via constant comparative method of analysis.

In the qualitative phase:

- The teacher's observation notes

The raw notes from the journal were converted into write-ups for themes to emerge from the contents. The themes were around the difficulties and successes the teacher experienced, professional development experiences, activities, and resources that were most helpful, how the offered literacy learning opportunities affected students' reading development and how the students interacted with the delivered strategies. It also included verbatim quotes and my personal hunches and assumptions.

- Students' written reflections

The collected written reflections of the learners were constantly compared and finally coded according to the following issues:

- effectiveness of the lesson of the day
- how they felt about the reading materials of the day
- how they felt about the way the teacher had delivered the strategies
- usefulness of the taught strategy
- usefulness of peer interaction
- their ability to handle the task independently toward the end of the lesson
- and suggestions for a more effective lesson.

- Final in-depth interview

The recorded interview sessions, which were conducted at the very end of the session with all the cases, were transcribed and analyzed to again be used in triangulation with other data sources. The interviews allowed access to the students' perceptions regarding the effects of the RAF in greater detail that was not possible through the daily written reflections. Hence, the interviews were used to verify the collected reflections from learners. The interview had a semi-structured format and some of the questions were similar to the questions addressed in the daily reflections. At ELS, towards the end of the session, an anonymous student survey is administrated. Out of a total of 9, the reading class being studied had scored the average of 8.2 which is considered quite high against ELS criteria (teachers with consistent results above 7 are given incentives). Some of the students' comments included:

- "I like the teacher",
- "I like everything about our class",
- "I like the reading class a lot",
- "keep up the good work".

Therefore, it could safely be assumed that the students would not be intimidated by the researcher asking them questions.

- Peer observation notes

Peer observation sheets were also analyzed to look for thematic corroborations. Even though there were only three of them, considering their experience and qualifications in identifying effective classrooms, the corroborations could be relied on.

In the quantitative phase:

- Pre- and post-tests results

The number of the subjects who took the pre-test being so small, it would not have been statistically significant to conduct a *t*-test and ANOVA. Thus, only the mean and the variance and the standard deviation were calculated to select the cases, two who scored the highest, two who scored the lowest and two who scored closest to the mean.

Moreover, the post-test results were compared against the pre-test results to quantitatively show any probable improvement in the cases' reading literacy abilities.

This study hoped to identify features of classroom instruction that can improve the reading literacy of adolescents using the core practices of Reading Apprenticeship, as well as to characterize some of the less than optimal implementation of Reading Apprenticeship practices. Thus, to answer the specific research questions the following data sources were triangulated:

Table 3.4  
*Analysis of Data Sources to Answer the Research Questions*

No.	Research Question	Data Source	Analysis	Participants
1.a	What is the impact of the Reading Apprenticeship Framework on adolescents' reading literacy in terms of engagement?	Learners' written reflections Researcher's observation notes Peer observation notes In-depth interview	Constant Comparative method	Selected cases
1.b	Strategy use?	Learners' written reflections Researcher's observation notes Peer observation notes In-depth interview	Constant Comparative method	Selected cases
1.c	Comprehension?	Learners' written reflections Researcher's observation notes Peer observation notes In-depth interview Pre and post tests results	Constant Comparative method + Calculation of mean	Selected cases
2.	What teaching strategies are useful in facilitating the delivery of the RAF?	Learners' written reflections Researcher's observation notes Peer observation notes In-depth interview	Constant Comparative method	Selected cases

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **Findings**

#### **4.0 Introduction**

This chapter presents the results and findings of the study based on the analyses of the data obtained. It is organized into three main sections. The first section describes the pilot study and its preliminary findings. The second section describes the actual study and the third section presents the findings based on the data collected. The third section is organized based on the research questions that the study set out to answer.

#### **4.1. Pilot Study**

A pilot study was conducted to test out the instruments and gain experience to help in the actual study. It is acknowledged that within another context, other variables might be at stake and consequently adjustments would have to be made, but as attempting to generalize the findings onto the actual study was not the plan, it was tried to learn from the similarities in the contexts and to anticipate what sorts of things are likely to happen and to know how to handle the potential problems (Stenhouse, 1975).

To minimize the likelihood of bias, data triangulation was adopted to verify the findings: “Triangular techniques attempt to map out, or explain more fully the richness and complexity of human behavior by studying it from more than one standpoint” (Cohen & Manion, 1985, p. 254).

Thus, the collected data consisted of students' written reflections, an in-depth final interview with them, researcher's observation notes, peer observation notes and pre-post test results. Other documents which served as data included the lesson plans of the training Framework.

Similar to any other class in ELS, the sixteen learners at this 106 level being of varied nationalities and mother tongues formed a typical international class, 6 males and 10 females, 17 to 23 years of age. On the very first day they were given an overview of the program and told about its purpose and its approach and how it was hoped that if they stayed with the school for another semester, there would be a good chance of their developing their reading abilities. Then inquiries about their intentions for continuing studying at ELS for another successive month were made. Ten confirmed that they were planning to continue. There was of course the probability of their failing the level and not being able to move up to a higher level, but at least it could be made sure not to select those quitting 6 as the cases for the more focused study. It turned out that out of ten, 7 were left for the second phase of the study, which was still eye-opening enough to facts that could prove helpful in the real study.

On the second day of the first semester, they were given a pre-test adapted from PISA to help in selecting the cases. Two with the lowest mark, two closest to the mean and two who scored the highest were selected, among those who had already shared their intention of continuing their studies for a second month for closer observation.

Table 4.1  
*Information on Students in the Pilot Study*

Female	Male	Nationality	Pre-test score out of 30
<b>HB</b>		<i>Chinese Malaysian</i>	25
<b>Tan</b>		<i>Chinese Malaysian</i>	24
<b>Maya</b>		Malay	23
<b>Rose</b>		Malay	23
<b>Desy</b>		Indonesian	22
<b>Aida</b>		Malay	22
	<b>Garic</b>	<i>Taiwanese</i>	18
<b>Naomi</b>		Korean	17
<b>WS</b>		<i>Chinese Malaysian</i>	16
	<b>Ahmad</b>	Saudi Arabian	13
	<b>Alex</b>	<i>Chinese Malaysian</i>	15
<b>Coco</b>		<i>Chinese</i>	11
	<b>John</b>	<i>Chinese Malaysian</i>	11
	<b>Sean</b>	Chinese Malaysian	9
<b>Mika</b>		Japanese	8
	<b>Riadh</b>	Arab	6

$$\bar{X} = \frac{\sum X}{N} = \frac{263}{16} = 16.3$$

The 10 strategies for instruction were selected based on the reading aspects assessed in PISA. Thus, in line with ELS course objectives, and following reading skills highlighted by NRP and PISA, the following 10 chapters were instructed throughout the framework:

Table 4.2

*Instructed Strategies over the Period of 2 Months*

5 Reading Aspects Assessed In PISA	Taught Strategy	February 06				March 06			
		W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W
		1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
1. Forming a broad general understanding	Determining meaning of vocabulary								
	Determining topic								
	Identifying the stated main idea								
	Formulating the implied main idea								
2. Retrieving information	Scanning								
	Understanding graphics								
3. Reflecting on the form of a text	Identifying writing patterns								
	Determining author's purpose, tone, audience								
4. Developing an Interpretation	Making Inferences								
5. Reflecting on the content of a text	Evaluating author's argument								



#### **4.1.1 Preliminary Findings and Issues Faced in the Pilot Study**

- ***Writing reflections***

It could be because the learners were already feeling very tired at the end of a high-paced class, that they did not receive the questions well, or whether having to answer the same questions every day had become so dull and routine to them, that their replies were not as comprehensive as it was hoped they would be. The wording of the questions was changed every few days to see how they would react, without much gain. Giving scale sheets to learners to simply circle their evaluation of the lesson of the day was even considered.

- ***Time shortage***

Another factor was that in some classes there was too much to cover and the class duration was only 55 minutes, out of which 5 minutes was usually wasted on late comings and the remaining 50 minutes had to be dedicated to the instruction, and practice as well as reflection on the lesson of the day; inevitably some classes were too rigid and tiring to some extent. Thus, practical solutions to entertain the learners' desire for a more fun-filled class had to be thought of for the forthcoming study.

- ***Peer observation***

For the observation session, the class was observed by a highly qualified auditor, who was the program coordinator of another ELS branch, thus acquaintance would not have stood in the way of her giving honest feedback. For the purpose of the observation she used the standardized form used for all formal audits at ELS. In her report she had taken note of the class effectiveness. However, some of her comments were too general as the form was not sensitive to some of the particularities of the RAF. She had mentioned that:

“the activities fastened students’ performance in the strategies of guessing meaning from contextualized clues, scanning for information and identifying main ideas; students, while being comfortable with the teacher, are serious in doing the activities assigned and work in close cooperation with their peers while the teacher goes around, monitoring and offering help without being intrusive” (P.O.1);

Nevertheless, other key factors in the RAF, namely modeling or metacognitive talk were not addressed.

- ***Use of Authentic Materials***

When older learners are still acquiring fundamental knowledge about literacy, teachers may feel torn between trying to respond to two disparate academic needs. To Ivey and Broaddus (2001), on one hand, teachers know that struggling readers will not grow from literary experiences that are too hard and that require a level of reading expertise that they have not achieved. Yet on the other hand teachers are keenly aware that older learners must develop their abilities to think critically about a range of sophisticated concepts, even while they are still learning to read and write.

It is difficult to imagine literary experience that uses accessible text yet brings sophisticated concepts to students. In selecting the materials, it was kept in mind that for students to develop communicative competence in reading, reading activities must resemble real-life reading tasks that involve meaningful communication and that simplifying a text by changing the language would remove its natural redundancy and make the organization difficult for learners to predict. Thus, rather than simplifying the texts by changing the language, it was tried to make them more approachable by eliciting

learners' existing knowledge in pre-reading discussion, and asking students to focus on performing the tasks using the directly instructed strategy, hoping that it would be within their competence. Still, the less competent learners did not feel comfortable with the idea of living with ambiguity and would fail to concentrate their thoughts on performing the task using the strategy. In order to motivate the learners more and to broaden the scope of their reading, there were cases where text simplification seemed tempting. However, this was not a viable solution for students who had to be prepared to read texts written for native speakers. Thus, the need for a sound solution for this critical issue was felt.

#### **4.1.2 Impact of the Module on Different Learners**

On the last day of the session learners were given the post-test. They were given the same 50 minutes to answer 29 questions. Compared to the pre-test when everyone was hanging to his or her paper until the very last minute, this time, more than half had already submitted the paper by the 40<sup>th</sup> minute.

As shown in Table 4.3 as far as the low proficiency learners were concerned, John did not take the final post-test, so besides Coco, Alex whose score was closer to the mid proficiency learners was considered. John failed to sit for the post-test so the only case representing the lower proficiency students was Coco. Alex, Ws and Garic, representing the mid-proficiency students, showed good progress. As for the higher proficiency students, Tan showed less progress while HB's result showed a little decrease.

Table 4.3

*Comparison of Pre vs. Post- test Score of Pilot Study Cases*

<b>Name</b>	<b>Pre test score</b>	<b>Post test score</b>
	<b>out of 30</b>	<b>out of 30</b>
<b>Coco</b>	11	13
<b>John</b>	11	-
<i>Alex</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>22</i>
<i>WS</i>	<i>16</i>	<i>23</i>
<i>Garic</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>21</i>
<b>Tan</b>	24	25
<b>HB</b>	25	24

After revealing the post test results to the learners, they were invited for a group interview. They were addressed one by one and asked for their thoughts on the Framework and their overall performance. Comments from other learners were also welcomed as it was wished not to miss anything that they had to say. Thus, it was more like a group interview rather than an individual one. The same themes as those emergent in my field notes and learners' reflections came up:

Coco, LP: "...can understand more now, in the past I had no clue. Even though my test result increased by 1 only, I have lost my fear of reading and I don't feel nervous when I face long articles. Class was a little routine, maybe could have more variety."(P.I.1)

Alex, MP: “The course was very helpful. There was nothing I didn’t like, maybe it was a little fast-paced and tight-timed.”(P.I.2)

WS, MP: “Before this course I never cared about title, headlines, and introductions; I straight away went to the text and start reading, now I know previewing is very important. My favorites were “scanning” and “understanding charts, tables...”. (P.I.3)

Garic, MP: “My reading has definitely improved. Now I first preview-scan, then I read so I can adjust my time with my reading speed. Last month I had no confidence in reading passages, especially long ones. I found “Understanding chart, graphs, ...” most helpful. The course was not boring at all but a little tiring because of fast speed of class”. (P.I.4)

Tan, HP: “I got that previewing is very important, can save a lot of time through scanning, guessing vocabulary was very useful, inference invited me to think. I loved the group interactions, good to see how others think. Maybe a little fast-paced.” (P.I.5)

HB, HP: “I am sure my reading skill has improved, I had headache during the post-test and was very tired after sitting for another test. I got that previewing is very important, I used to skip the title and..., lessons were very good, with a little more competition could be better. I had

started reading a novel called “Angels and Demons” two months ago which I found too difficult and quit, I have started reading it again and it’s much easier to understand now”. (P.I.6)

As shown in Table 4.4, those with high, mid and low proficiency alike were happy with the materials and the instruction method. In different ways they had all benefited from peer interactions and “thinking together”. All 7 of them were unanimous in saying that they found themselves better able to use the practiced strategies independently. Of course, the low proficiency (LP) learners were not that accurate in their strategy usage but the fact that they had shown improvement was cherished.

Table 4.4

*Overview of the Emerging Themes from the Data*

<b>Learners at different proficiency levels</b>	<b>Emerg ed Themes</b>				
	<b>Ability to use the strategies at the end of the lesson</b>	<b>Peer interaction</b>	<b>Materials</b>	<b>Teaching method</b>	<b>Suggestions</b>
<b>LPL</b>	Some only, need to improve more	Needed support from friends	Interesting helpful	Very good, helpful, clear	More exercise
<b>MPL</b>	Can handle most easily	Needed support from peers at first	Very interesting fun, likable	Interesting clear, easy	More discussion
<b>HPL</b>	Can handle, easily, quite well	Love thinking together	Beneficial useful	Enjoyable, modeling is very useful	More authentic reading

Regardless of proficiency level, when asked for suggestions for improvement, all believed that they could benefit from more exercises which was a fact that had to be addressed for the actual study.

#### **4.1.3 Adjustments Made Based on the Preliminary Findings of the Pilot Study**

##### **4.1.3.1 Writing Reflections in response to Open-ended Questions**

Without doubt, learners' thoughts on the lessons had to be heard to allow the data triangulation with the researcher's observations, but as mentioned above, the responses were not as thorough as it was hoped; providing them with a scale was considered, which still would not have given them the freedom to describe their feelings and reflections. When asked about the effectiveness of the modeling or the usefulness of the strategy, even from the more proficient ones, responses like *'Nothing to say'* or *'Same as yesterday'* were received.

Thus, instead of imposing similar questions on them daily, and collecting not-so-useful data, it was decided to ask for their reflections after covering each strategy. This would save precious class time and prevent the procedure from becoming so mundane.

Another factor was the choice of words for the open-ended questions which were given out. At first two very general questions were asked:

- "What were the things that you liked about this lesson?"
- "How do you think the lesson can be improved?"

However, as the questions were not focusing on the factors that were significant, the right kind of data could not be collected. Thus, questions were changed to:

- “How motivating was today’s lesson?”
- “How much do you think it can help you in reading?”
- “How did the teacher deliver it?”

It was then decided to inquire about their thoughts on the material as well, so the questions were reworded:

- “How motivating was today’s lesson?”
- “How much do you think this strategy can help your understanding of the material that you read?”
- “How did you find the material?”
- “How did the teacher deliver it?”

It was then realized that still no data on their ability to handle the tasks individually was being collected. In addition, it appeared that it would be best not to inquire about lessons being motivating so explicitly. It was also noticed that even though one of the significant factors of the RAF is peer interaction, no inquiries about students’ thoughts on it were made. Therefore, after much deliberation for the forthcoming study the questions were reworded to:

- “How clear was the teacher’s instruction?”
- “How effective was the teacher’s support during your reading?”
- “How did you find the teaching material?”
- “How useful was interacting in groups to do the tasks?”
- “Could you handle the tasks independently towards the end of the lesson?”
- “Do you think that today’s strategy can help in your out-of-school reading?”



#### **4.1.3.2 Peer Observation Checklist**

There was no doubt that a peer perspective could benefit the triangulation and the plan was to include peer observation for every lesson for data triangulation purposes, but it seemed impossible to arrange except for once. As for that one observation session, with the standard ELS audit form used, the collected data was rather too general. Therefore, it had to be made sure that for the actual study, in order to benefit more from a qualified peer's view on the module an observation checklist for the peer observation sessions had to be designed that was sensitive to the key factors of the RAF rather than relying on what was already being used at ELS by the auditors.

A short briefing on the concept of the RAF to raise the sensitivity of the observer to the key dimensions of the framework was also prepared.

#### **4.1.3.3 More Practice on the Instructed Strategies**

Another factor evident in the learners' final words as well, was that they could really connect to the methodology and it was quite fruitful. Typical reflections on the way the class was instructed were: "very interesting", "awesome", "helped me understand", "useful and easy to follow", "helpful", "impressive".... However, they kept asking for more practice on each strategy. Three options seemed desirable: either the framework had to be lengthened to three months instead of two, the two strategies that the students did not really connect to had to be eliminated from the Framework or somehow the learners had to be provided with more practice.

### ***Rationale against option 1***

If the class could be instructed for another semester (another 20 hours), the pressure of time constraint would be removed and the learners could definitely benefit more compared to a packed, high-paced curriculum; however, after much reflection, it was concluded that the first idea could be highly risky. The chances of ELS learners staying for three sessions in a row in advanced levels are quite low and the researcher could have ended up with none of her cases left.

A more fun-filled syllabus could have been thought of, but considering the time limitation, the same method had to be stuck with and probably spiced up a little with added competition.

### ***Rationale against option 2***

As for the *evaluating author's argument* and *determining author's tone, audience, purpose*, it was decided not to exclude them from the framework to buy more time, as these strategies are also implied in PISA and instead include reading passages that they would have more schema about and therefore would comprehend better and engage with more enthusiastically.

### ***Rationale for option 3***

What was done in class was mainly intensive reading which according to Harmer (2005) is reading texts chosen by the teacher with accompanying activities designed to teach and practice specific reading skills compared to **extensive** reading which is reading large amounts of text with content that appeals to students. Ideally, the chosen texts should be of a lower linguistic level than the student's own ability so that the student is

not unnecessarily hindered. It provides a rich source of language input but should ideally not be accompanied by any reading tasks other than possibly asking students to report on / review what they have read (Harmer, 2005).

At ELS, every month students are provided with a copy of a Just English magazine. Just English, which as explained in chapter three, is a digest of articles of all types, such as: narratives, expository, and so forth. Both native speakers and local writers contribute articles to this magazine. Language-wise, it is considered authentic, but as all writers are aware of the audience of the magazine, it is tried to keep the topics interesting for young adults. Therefore, it was decided to make use of what was already available to the students, by assigning homework reading from the magazine to make up for the lack of practice on each strategy.

#### **4.1.3.4 Usage of Authentic Materials**

Regarding text selection and the temptation to simplify the authentic materials for the intensive in-class reading, as the goal of the module was to develop students' literacy to enable them to handle college/university books written for native speakers, it was decided not to touch the authenticity and bear in mind that the level of difficulty of a text does not have to be the same as the level of difficulty of a reading task and probably consider the factors proposed by Chamot and Keatley (2004) to relatively match the difficulty level of the text with the learners' proficiency:

- How is the information organized? Does the story line, narrative, or instruction conform to familiar expectations?
- How familiar are the students with the topic?
- Does the text contain redundancy? Students with higher proficiency benefit from the natural redundancy of authentic language.
- Does the text offer visual support to aid in reading comprehension?

On marrying more practice and usage of authentic material, it was decided to include a bit of extensive reading in the module. In the pilot study, for both in-class reading and practices assigned for homework, intensive reading was given weight to. Thus, it was decided to include more extensive reading to expose the apprentices to more kinds and genres of reading material.

#### **4.1.3.5 More Focused Scaffolding**

Another noticed factor was that the framework had helped those with mediocre language proficiency the most. Even though they were unanimous in saying they had all benefited from the module, from the post-test results, as well as researcher's daily observations, it was evident that the framework had helped those with middle language proficiency to cross the bridge between mediocrity and advanced literacy in handling authentic texts. Thus, for the actual study more scaffolding had to be given to the weaker

students, hoping to witness better achievements on their side as well. Enriched by the experience, keeping the above in mind, modifications were made for the actual study.

#### **4.2 The Actual Study**

By the time the training module was modified, the open-ended questions were re-phrased, the tasks for learners' practice were polished and the reading material was confirmed, six months had passed. The school was awaiting a big crowd to register at the level 106 so that, considering the likelihood of losing a few learners after the first semester, the study would still be left with enough learners to carry on. However, most classes held at intermediate and upper-intermediate levels were no bigger than 7-8 apprentices. As the pilot study had received positive feedback from the students, the Program Coordinator was willing to cooperate. She highlighted the fact that as there were not so many advanced level students registered at this branch, and as a few of them were likely to fail that semester, some of the cases might drop out and then there will not be enough students to continue to a second semester. Therefore, the researcher was referred to the ELS branch in Kuala Lumpur. Being located in the center of KL and having a much bigger campus, the number of students has always been higher at this branch.

As ELS receives a lot of students from the Middle East, and as Ramadan was approaching, the concern that some of the subjects might go back to their home countries for the fasting month existed.

#### **4.2.1 The Context: ELS Language School, KL Branch**

As mentioned in the previous chapter since an informed consent existed and since the cloak of anonymity would not work for the insiders it is believed that revealing the context of the study would not prove unethical. Nevertheless, the subjects' names are still kept confidential and they are referred to by their pseudonyms.

Kuala Lumpur's ELS branch is located on three floors of a commercial building in the vicinity of Kuala Lumpur City Centre (KLCC).

The assigned class was a Reading /Writing 107. It was a big co-educational class of seventeen that, similar to Subang, were sitting in a large U shape.

It was interesting to walk into a big class of seventeen. It is quite a routine pattern at ELS to dedicate the first session to getting to know the students and stating the objectives of the course. A few more questions were included than the norm for the study purposes. Students often mention their name, nationality, age, hobbies, and purpose of joining ELS. They were also asked to share a little about their English background, and also to state how many more months they were planning to stay with ELS, hoping that this would help in the selection of cases thinking that even though they might change their mind after a month, it could still help to avoid those who were planning to leave after the first month, as the focal cases.

The class was quite an international, multi-racial mix. As shown in Table 4.5, out of seventeen, 5 were Arabs, 3 were local Chinese, 3 Koreans, 2 Chinese, 1 Austrian, 1 Japanese, 1 Turkish and 1 Tajik. Three of them were females and the rest were males; the ages ranged from 16-25. Five of them were planning to stop after the first month.

The researcher then introduced herself and stated the objectives of the course. She then shared that they would be focusing on different strategies every few sessions, and that whatever reading materials they were provided with were authentic extracts from college/university books. Their motivation seemed to have been aroused, as those who had earlier stated would be leaving after 107 were asking if they could also be given a full copy of the materials and whether or not attending only one month would still be fruitful for them. Most students were giving affirming smiles even though a few were looking skeptical.

Table 4.5

*Information on Learners in the Actual Study*

<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Nationality</b>
	Javad	Saudi Arabian
	Gehad	Lebanese
	Dieter	Austrian
	Shabi	Palestinian
Moon		Malaysian Chinese
	Paul	Korean
	Khalid	Yemenis
	Sook	Japanese
	HM	Korean
WQ		Chinese
	CL	Malaysian Chinese
	Keita	Japanese
	Shanti	Turk
	Yahya	Jordanian
	Alex	Malaysian Chinese
	DH	Korean
Algerim		Tajikistani



### **4.2.2 The First Phase**

As mentioned earlier, each component at ELS is supposed to be taught for 20 hours; However, as the advanced level learners have to attend a workshop on the last two days of the session and as the first session had already been dedicated to an introduction 17 hours was left for the first semester. On the second day, they took the pre-test, adapted from PISA 2000 (Appendix A), to allow the selection of the focal cases without further delay.

#### **4.2.2.1 Pre-test and Selection of the Cases**

The students were not very pleased to be given a test at the very beginning of their new level; But they were reassured that the purpose of the test was just to get a general idea of their proficiency in reading.

At ELS, 50 minutes is the given time for reading tests of 30-40 questions. They were given 50 minutes to answer 30 questions. Except for one learner, all the rest were hanging on to their papers until the very last minute. The marks ranged from 6-22 out of 30. The intent was to select six cases for more detailed focus. According to Yin (1994) cases must be selected so as to maximize what can be learned. Six learners were selected from different proficiencies and at extreme ends to represent the rest of the class and thus increase confidence in the robustness of the results of the study. The highest scores were Alex's (Malaysian) and DH's (Korean) who, since they had already shared their willingness to continue to the next level, were safe to be selected.

Two who scored closest to the mean (16.6) were to be selected to represent medium proficiency readers. The two closest ones had also shared that they were planning to stay with ELS till 109; therefore, WQ (Chinese) and CL (Malaysian) were safely selected. These particular learners were selected to exemplify learners at different proficiency levels.

The lowest score (6) was an anonymous paper, but since all the other answer sheets were named, it was easy to figure out whose it was. It did not make much difference, as he had mentioned with regret that he was going to drop out after that session and how he wished he was able to benefit from the module. It did not appear wise to select the second lowest score as one of the cases, since not only had he come to class late for the past two sessions, but he also was very playful and constantly excusing himself from the class for long periods. He had a reputation for bad attendance. Apparently, he was on an Austrian scholarship and was paid pocket money to come to class and thus not much dedication to class could be expected from him. If he was going to lose 20 minutes of a 55-minute class every now and then, he would not be that “observable”. As mentioned earlier, based on the class discussion on the first session, the teacher/researcher had been informed that Gehad, Shabi, Khalid and Paul were also planning to go back to their countries after completion of 107, thus they could not be selected either. Therefore, the third and the fifth lowest scores being Moon’s (Malaysian) and HM’s (Korean).

It was of course likely that any of these 6 learners would either change their mind and drop out or fail on any of their components and not be able to attend the following session. However, having selected two cases from different proficiency levels, there was room to be hopeful that enough data could be collected to proceed.

Table 4.6

*Pre-test Results of Students in the Actual Study*

<b>Name</b>	<b>Pre-test score</b>
1. anonymous	6
2. Gehad	9
3. Dieter	12
4. Shabi	12
<b>5. Moon</b>	<b>13</b>
6. Paul	14
7. Khalid	15
8. Sook	15
<b>9. HM</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>10. WQ</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>11. LC</b>	<b>17</b>
12. Keita	17
13. Shanti	20
14. Yahya	20
<b>15. Alex</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>16. DH</b>	<b>22</b>
17. Algerim	Absent

$$\bar{X} = \frac{\sum X}{N} = \frac{249}{17} = 16.6$$

#### 4.2.2.2 Description of the First Session of RAF

Each learner was given a copy of the module. The first strategy was “*guessing the meaning of unfamiliar words*” which was thought to be crucial to making language learners more independent in their readings.

The class was sitting in a U-shape. The importance of the lesson of the day in real life was elicited and their brainstorming was concluded. Then the class went through different textual clues that can help in guessing the meaning of words and examples that students could relate to were provided. Then, using think-aloud, the strategy was modeled for them as a crucial part of the RAF is providing students with the necessary scaffolding for accomplishing independence in reading tasks. They were divided into different groups bearing in mind their proficiency to have an even mix of weaker and stronger students in each group. They mostly looked a bit puzzled, wondering why they had to rearrange their seats. They were given 6 short paragraphs (Appendix B) to read and guess the underlined words. Learners read the sentences individually, then tried to imitate *thinking aloud* and interacted with each other to guess new words. The weaker ones were not very confident; they kept looking up to the more proficient ones to share their thoughts. The teacher/researcher walked through the groups to provide any needed support, and bring to their attention the clues they were neglecting.

The answers were then checked. The answers they came up with as groups were better than satisfactory, but of course not everyone could contribute at this stage.

The fact that the paragraphs were all authentic really boosted their motivation, as a few of them had to double check the authenticity of the paragraphs:

OF3: “ ...level of interaction is high except for Dieter who is very indifferent towards what’s going on. WQ is not contributing to her group but is really on-task. The fact they were made aware that they are dealing with authentic materials from university books really motivated them as Moon and Alex had to double check the sources of the paragraphs with me: “teacher, are all the paragraphs from university books? Really?” the proud smile on their faces couldn’t be missed.”

#### **4.2.2.3 Apprenticing Learners at Different Proficiency Levels**

The subsequent sessions followed a similar format except that learners had to be put in different groups and pairs to enable them to benefit from each others’ skills and apprenticeship. The students worked in heterogeneous groups. The better learners had to explain to the weaker ones how a particular strategy could best be applied and the weaker learners thereby had continuous access to a model. The ones in need of more scaffolding were identified so that the teacher/researcher could spend more time with them. Luckily enough, the better readers, Alex, DH and Yahya, were also very nice and helpful towards their peers. They could be heard sharing their think-alouds which could provide a good pattern for their group members. Thus, the teacher/researcher managed to spend time with groups that could not benefit from such strong readers. The strategy was remodeled and the missed clues were highlighted to reassure them of their guesses.

Both Alex and DH were very keen and engaged with the tasks. DH, being young and greatly humble, lacked the confidence to stand behind his answers. He would always say: “this is what I think, but I am not too sure,” “my answer is b, but I can be wrong.”

However, going through the answers in the first few classes, when he got to see that most of his answers were correct, he became a little more assertive. He would always appreciate a confirming nod and from the first tasks on, he would help out his peers.

Alex, on the other hand, was the exact opposite. He took classes very seriously and if it were up to him, he would like the teacher to sit with him and confirm all his think-alouds. He would constantly double-check the clues from text. However, after gaining confidence in the first task, he would evidently become more efficient and tackle each task as a challenge.

Apprenticing WQ and CL was a different story. Both being timidly introvert, they would not contribute to their groups and very seldom would they ask for help. Thus, the teacher/researcher had to sit down with them, go through their answers, try to figure out where they had gotten it wrong, and from there offer scaffolding. Quite often when they checked their answers with their peers and noticed any probable differences, CL was stubborn enough not to change his answers, nor would he argue and ask for the rationale of others' choices. Nevertheless, as soon as WQ noticed that her answers were different from her group mates', silently she would erase her answers and replace them with the choice of the majority. There, the teacher/researcher would step in again and ask her why she had changed her answer and whether she agreed with the choice of the group or not. Then either she or one of the peers would bring the rationale to her attention.

Apprenticing HM and Moon was interesting as they were very keen. HM was quite comfortable with DH, probably because they were both Korean and of the same age. In a way he idolized DH and would look at him in awe when DH shared his think-alouds with his group. He really connected to the idea of the RAF which, according to his reflection,

was brand new to him and very different from what he was used to. This sort of motivation worked in his favor as he could be observed being more independent in doing the tasks.

Moon had established the same kind of relation with Alex. She could be observed frequently asking Alex for justifications of his choices. Thus, it was relieving to know that she would constantly have access to a model even while the teacher is busy with other groups.

Improving English proficiency was not everyone's top priority. Some were just there for the sake of new experiences and fun. As in lower levels teachers tend to play language games, one concern was disappointing the students with the fast, strict pace of the class but, to the researcher's relief, no mention of such boredom in the cases' written reflections ever appeared, though other weaker learners would every now and then mention that they would appreciate more fun in the classroom. Nevertheless, time was short and a lot of practice and authentic exposure was required. It was tried to use interesting topics to arouse more motivation but anyhow not all topics were appealing to all individuals.

Making use of text excerpts from different university course books and full articles from Just English magazine, the following ten strategies were practiced during the course of this study:

Table 4.7

*Instructed Strategies over a period of 2 months*

5 Reading Aspects Assessed in PISA	Taught Strategy	October 06				November 06			
		W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W
		1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
1. Forming a broad general understanding	Determining meaning of vocabulary								
	Determining topic								
	Identifying the stated main idea								
	Formulating the implied main idea								
2. Retrieving information	Scanning								
	Understanding graphics								
3. Reflecting on the form of a text	Identifying writing patterns								
	Determining author's purpose, tone, audience								
4. Developing an Interpretation	Making Inferences								
5. Reflecting on the content of a text	Evaluating author's argument								



### **4.2.3 The Second Phase**

In the second phase of the study, the class had shrunk to 7. Due to the arrival of Ramadan, most Arab students had left to spend the “Eid” with their families. A few had failed the level; thus, 7 students were left, 6 of whom were the cases. In terms of class management, it would definitely be easier to handle 6-7 students who were really willing to learn. Moon, WQ, and HM had even had to double check whether or not the same teacher would be teaching them the following month. They actually stated that only if they have the same teacher would they register, which was proof enough of their motivation. On the other hand, with 7 students, one of whom was normally absent, group work would be meaningless. The study had to be content with 2 groups of 3.

Towards the end of this phase learners were given a full article to read in class to check their speed of reading, in-depth comprehension and strategy use. As expected, DH and Alex were the first to finish and hand in their papers. CL and HM finished next, followed by WQ and Moon was the last. Except for the inference part, which CL, Moon and WQ failed to answer, other answers were correct and it was a very pleasing day. Those who finished earlier were handed out a copy of a 7-page narrative story so they need not sit idle, which surprisingly did not intimidate them at all and by the end of the hour they had managed to finish it.

### **4.2.4 Post Test Results**

On the last day of the semester, they were given the post-test. Since no coaching was given on the pre test and since there was a long time lapse the practice effect was not considered.

The given time, similar to the pre-test, was 50 minutes. They were all hanging on to their papers until the last minute in the pre-test. It was a nice surprise to see that after 40 minutes all had handed in their papers. The fastest, being Alex, finished in 35 minutes.

Prior to sitting down with them for an in-depth interview, both their pre and post test results were revealed to them. With the exception of WQ, they were all ecstatic.

Table 4.8

*Pre vs. Post-test Results*

<b>Name</b>	<b>Pre-test score</b>	<b>Post-test score</b>
	<b>out of 30</b>	<b>out of 30</b>
DH	22	28
Alex	22	25
CL	17	20
WQ	16	16
HM	15	19
Moon	13	17

#### 4.2.5 Final In-depth Interviews

Researchers in education now commonly use interviews to comprehend learners' understandings (Heid, 1999). The interview was approached by informing the students that the goal was to understand how they thought instead of assigning a grade. They were generally quite ready to share their thinking and even seemed fairly pleased that this kind

of interest was taken in them. The primary purpose of the interviews was the enhancement of understanding of learners' scores and their thoughts on the framework which could lead to subsequent improvement of the framework.

With the exception of Moon, who was absent, everyone was interviewed for about 15 minutes to further enhance understanding the improvement they made. Interviews were then transcribed and content was analyzed for semantic information (Bauer, 2000). Content items were grouped thematically.

#### **4.2.6 High Language Proficiency (HLP) Apprentices**

##### **DH**

DH was 16 and from Korea. He had started studying English at elementary school and after that “occasionally at school” but had never attended any extra curricular English classes. He was son to a scientist and he himself had the ambition of becoming a “great scientist discovering facts”. This problem-solving attitude was evident in his handling of the reading tasks as well. Almost every day in the observation notes DH’s level of enthusiasm and dedication was noted down:

“I noticed that lack of background knowledge did not affect DH’s performance and maybe even boosted his motivation as he always welcomes challenges.” (OF.16.2)

Comparing his pre and post-test results, he showed good improvement which supports his stating that overall he had found the RAF useful.

“In other reading classes, at first the teacher just come in to the class and ask somebody to read it and if somebody does not know the word or the

meaning he just talked and teach the words and always said read again, read again and understand, so its not that useful or productive, ummm, so I think the way you have taught is more better.” (FI.5.3)

As observed, he really connected with the module and liked the material and way of instruction. He would consistently write in his reflections that the teaching material is “interesting” or “different in a good way”. In the final interview he also mentioned:

“Some of them (reading material) was hard, some easy for me, some parts the materials were challengeable, but overall was good.” (FI.5.2.1)

As far as the modeling of the strategies was concerned, he was always very keen and attentive and as he had proved his good ability in reading which made one wonder whether or not he could perform just as well without the modeling and scaffolding. Yet, after covering each strategy in his reflections he would comment on the instruction and the teacher support as “very effective”, “helpful”, or “enjoyable and clear”. In the final talk he again confirmed his earlier comments by saying:

“The modeling was very useful, because for the first time, I heard the instruction, it was not very clear for me, like a vague idea, but after going through modeling and bubble speeches it very helped me.” (FI 5.2.2)

In group work, he would subtly take on the role of the mentor, sharing his think-alouds with his other peers and highlighting the clues from text to them. Quite often it was monitored how, using a very comprehensible language for his peers, he would justify his choice of answer in a reading task. At the same time he would not dominate the group nor would he impose his answer on them. He would humbly invite others to comment on his choice of answer:

“DH very patiently helped his team mates out and highlighted the clues to Dieter and HM, while I listened from a distance and not interfered as he was doing a good job.” (FN. 19.2)

In his daily reflections, he was quite pleased with the idea of working in groups and would state that such interaction would “make the tasks easier”. He only found the interaction ineffective on *retrieving information from graphs* which was predictable as two of his team mates were absent and the others had not done the preparation they were asked for. Thus, he was the only one who had something to contribute. He also nominated a “minimum of three” for group discussions.

Comparing the results of his pre-test with his post test revealed that he has become more competent in *retrieving information* from both continuous and non-continuous texts as well as *interpretation* but he was still struggling with *evaluating* the text, most probably because that was the only strategy that he had doubts about its usefulness in his life outside the school.

Overall, it could be concluded that at the end of the session he had become more confident in his reading as he was aware of how to use the strategies and he had learned to live with ambiguity:

DH: “The training changed me a lot. Before I was afraid of reading. Because I was not confident whether my understating was right or wrong but now I feel more confident than before. Now I can figure out words that I don’t know, by reading the passage and I can read between the lines and I am more competent than before.”

R: “Do you use the strategies in outside the classroom reading? For

example the magazine I gave you to read? Or today's ELS final?"

DH: "I try to use all the strategies. When I read the magazine, I try to figure out the words without finding them in dictionary. I am mostly correct. But not always. When I get confused during my first time reading, I just skip it and when its my second time I try to read again and figure out." (FI.5.2.3)

### **Alex**

Alex was a 23-year-old local Chinese. He was a college graduate and wished to further his studies in Australia, for which he needed to take IELTS. He was paying for his tuition fees from the money he earned from his part-time job. He was mature enough and following an ambition, thus, he could not be more motivated to make the most out of the class. He was a team player and very sharing of his knowledge. This attitude really helped in his progress. His pre-test score being 22, and his post test score being 25, he showed good progress in his reading. From his written reflections and in-depth interview at the end of the study, it could be concluded that he could really connect with the RAF.

"I can understand more faster, I can get the main points easily and some words that I don't understand, I don't need the dictionary, sometimes I can guess the meaning, if I really can't then only I will go to dictionary. Ummmm, the class and the exercises that you gave us, the techniques that you taught us, I think that's helped my confidence." (FI.3.1)

He was generally satisfied with the instruction and found the modeling useful. Most often in his reflection he would state that he "couldn't do the task without the

modeling”, or “I think it (modeling) is quite a good reference to know how your brain is working and I tried that, I tried on some of the articles and it works.” (FI.3.2)

As far as the training framework was concerned, he found it interesting and useful, but of course for more difficult strategies he would ask for extra practice, namely *evaluating arguments*.

This was evident in the comparison between his pre-and post-test results. His 13% improvement was in *retrieving information* and *interpretation* strategies, while he made the same mistakes in *evaluating arguments* questions.

As he was normally the better reader in his groups, he felt at times there was too much reliance on him, but he still felt that in groups of 2-3, they could handle tasks better due to the interaction. There was of course, one particular Austrian student who did not get along with most of the students. Alex, being one of the more mature students in the class could not help criticizing his behavior which would most of the time lead to his distraction:

A: “Sometimes I felt that group work was good but sometimes not.”

R: “What were those times?”

A: “For example, sometimes, you, know, when we were put to groups, some rely on you, sometimes when you try to focus and pay attention on your work, they will distract your attention to some other thing... you know who I mean, huh...?” (FI 3.2)

Toward the end of the lessons he could mostly handle the tasks on his own, but he still doubted his proficiency in *determining the tone, audience* and of course *evaluating arguments*.

He differentiated the RAF class with his past reading classes by saying that:

“...in other reading classes, teachers ask students to read aloud and probably some general techniques, not like your class to learn how to handle different reading problems.” (FI 3.4)

By the end of the session, he could read more easily, comprehend faster, get main points easily, be more confident and read more purposefully.

Four months later, he contacted the teacher/researcher from Australia, admitting that he was actually using some of the strategies outside the reading classroom, like scanning, guessing the meaning of unfamiliar words and identifying main ideas. To the researcher's satisfaction he did mention that the framework was helping him save a lot of time in his studies.

#### **4.2.7 Middle Language Proficiency (MLP) Apprentices**

##### **CL**

CL was 19 years old and a local Chinese. He had finished high school a year ago and was not sure whether or not he wanted to join college or start working, which did affect his intrinsic motivation to a certain extent. He was a very introvert boy who kept to himself.

He normally paired up with Alex but did not contribute much to the group discussions nor would he change his answers after having heard his peers' think-alouds and justifications of their choices of answers. Nevertheless he found working in small groups “helpful” and “better than working alone”. He did not show any sign of great



enthusiasm throughout the whole session. Yet, he was always on task and quite engaged with the reading tasks. More often than not he would do the assigned homework as well.

His post test score compared to his pre-test score, showed improvement in the areas of *retrieving information* from text, *interpretation* and *general understanding* of the text. However, similar to the better readers he showed the least improvement in *evaluating the texts*.

Even though there was an air of indifference around him, quite often he could handle the reading tasks at the end of the session. In his daily reflections, except for *evaluating arguments* and *identifying the form of the text*, he confirmed the observations notes.

When it came to his thoughts on the RAF and the material used, the researcher had to only depend on his reflections and his words during the final interview as, due to his expressionless face, any sort of keenness towards what was done in the classroom could not be noticed. He did state that he really “liked the material” and “benefited” from the offered scaffolding but could not follow the instruction and the modeling in the last practiced strategies:

“I liked the materials, it’s made me more understand the practice, and forced me, no not mean force, and helped me to like to read more. Before that I don’t like to read English writing or stories, because when I saw the writing in English book I felt confused and was lazy to read and gave up.”

(FI.2.2)

Moreover, even though he would mostly contribute the least to his group, he found the interaction “useful”:

“...It’s better than working alone. When we find out that our answers are not the same, we can discuss and ask why they chose that answer. Actually when I ask I don’t like to correct my answer, I want try my answer. (FI.2.3)

Overall, it can be concluded that as he was not sure about furthering his studies at tertiary level, he only gave his best and became totally engaged with the texts that he found interesting. He implies the same hunch in the talk we had:

“I just choose the topic which I like, so if I read the topic I choose, I just keep on reading I know what’s the topic talking about.” (FI.2.4)

## HM

HM was a 16-year-old, from Korea who was attending ELS classes during the international school holiday. Like most Korean students he was very attentive and respectful toward the class. Unfortunately, due to visa issues, he had to miss five sessions, but he was keen enough to catch up with the class once he came back and showed improvement in his post-test. He was highly motivated during the class hour, and almost every time in his written reflections he would add an entry regarding how much he enjoyed the class: “... I love the *informatic* materials”, “I love reading class”, “ I love your instruction”...

He was satisfied with the instruction and found the modeling very effective to an extent that he actually wrote in his reflections that he “... couldn’t do the task without the modeling” and that he was well able to follow the modeling, or in his own words: “ it happens in my brain also.” (FI.4.3)

He was very enthusiastic about the materials and kept mentioning how useful he found them in many ways, or how “awesome” and “entertaining” he believed they were:

“ They (the material) are very interesting. So many different topics and they are interesting, while the passages entertain us we learn something, it’s very useful.” (FI.4.2)

He also benefited greatly from the interaction with his peers and thought that discussing in groups “would help the confusion” and believed that groups of 3 were ideal for sharing ideas.

Maybe not at the beginning, but on the final day dedicated to each strategy, he was able to handle the tasks on his own. Yet of course he did not shine in *evaluating arguments* and *determining tone, audience, and purpose*. This was probably because he failed to realize the importance of these two strategies in life outside the classroom.

Brozo (2006) believes that boys yearn for relationships with caring adults who can serve as mentors and that such relationships help them make the connection between their personal experiences and their literacy development. It is believed that this was the case with HM as in every single reflection he wrote, he was the most positive, loving everything that we did in the classroom.

Overall, the RAF helped him to learn to live with ambiguity in his reading which led to a boost in his confidence once he realized it is natural not to understand everything.

“For me, when I saw long passages, before I read, I get bored. The 7-page article you gave us, was very interesting. I can now concentrate better than

before. I think I've improved... it was no burden for me, I enjoyed reading it and I totally understand. (FI.4.3.2)

As for his use of strategies, he showed improvement in *retrieving information from text* and *general understanding of the text*:

“I don't think I need to understand everything. I first look at the questions; I can roughly understand about the passage. Just now, in the final test, I could answer some questions by only scanning the article.”  
(FI.4.3.1)

When asked to compare his experience in the reading class with his other reading classes, he echoed what the researcher has always believed to be wrong in the English teaching system of most countries:

“In international school what I learn was, they give passage, for example if the passage is about myself, the questions is “what is my name?” but they teach us how answer not how to read, but in your class we learn how to read the passage, how to understand, how to identify... those things, I think yours was much better, before answering questions, we must understand the passage!” (FI.4.5)

#### **4.2.8 Low Language Proficiency (LLP) Apprentices**

##### **WQ**

WQ was a 20-year-old girl from China. She had come to Malaysia a few months before with her cousin to study English and to go back to China. She was at that time uncertain about her plans to further her education. She was a very quiet girl who kept to

herself and did not bond with anyone. In the breaks between classes she was not seen mingling with anyone else except her cousin. This attitude led to her lack of contribution to the group discussions. She was even more timid in the first semester, but after the class got smaller and thus the groups became smaller, she could at least be seen peeking at her peers' paper or when she was really encouraged she would ask her questions. Still, after every single strategy in her reflections she wrote that she had found the interaction "useful" as she "can share ideas with others". She did mention this point again in the final talk and stated that groups of 3 to 4 would be ideal.

She was the only one who showed no improvement in her post test results and scored the same 55% as in the pre- test; when confronted with this issue she blamed the fact that she had moved the day before the post-test and was exhausted and suffered from lack of sleep. Moreover, a day before the post-test when a mock/revision test was given out, in which students could not discuss their answers with their peers to evaluate their own abilities in handling the tasks, she did surprisingly well and got 71% of the questions right which made her excuse about moving more credible. The revision test result would corroborate her reflections more, as she was one of the few students who after every single strategy would share her thoughts on the module, teaching material, way of instruction and scaffolding as "clear", "great", "useful", "help us easily", etc. yet, as she had shown how timid she was, there were doubts about her responses as she might have only tried to please the teacher. She was the only one who did not doubt the usefulness of *identifying the tone, pattern and audience* and *evaluating arguments*. Her only negative comment was about the way of instruction of *guessing meaning from context* in which she stated the method of instruction and modeling was "good but a bit boring".

Nevertheless, in the final interview she nominated this very strategy as her favorite: “I could follow [the modeling]. Guessing meaning of words was most useful.” (FI 1.1)

At the end of the session she summarized her progress by saying:

“I feel a bit changed, get more ideas easily and I am not afraid from long passages any more... Other teachers tell us just from book you taught us everything. In 107 identifying main idea and topic were very useful. Khalid told me these are also used in IELTS. He is going to IELTS class now. He asked me for a copy of everything you give us. He said you are a very good teacher; 108 materials also very good.” (OF.1.2)

## **Moon**

Moon was 19 years old and a local Chinese. She too had hopes of entering college to continue her education. She suffered from health problems and missed quite a few classes; she was often late to the class as well. Normally it would take her longer to finish the tasks than most of the class. Both on the pre-and the post-test she submitted her paper last. However, when she was in class, she was attentive, and as quiet and soft-spoken as she was, she would still raise her hand and ask the teacher or Alex for a re-modeling or to confirm her think-alouds.

A comparison between her post test result and her pre-test result showed good progress. She did fairly well on the revision test as well.

Unfortunately, she did not attend the interview session so her final comments on the session could not be recorded. Her reflections were quite brief as well, she tended to repeatedly use the word “great” to comment on the different aspects of the framework.

She found the modeling and the teaching material either “great” or “so clear”. As observed she found the peer interaction very “helpful” and beneficial. Only once she mentioned that it would be better for students to choose their group mates themselves, as she, like Alex, could not get along with Dieter.

Not surprisingly she also found identifying *tone, purpose, audience* and *evaluating arguments* the most difficult; yet unlike others, she did find them useful strategies.

#### **4.2.9 Improvement of Learners at Different Proficiency Levels at Different Strategies**

The five reading aspects assessed in PISA can be divided into two categories, *forming a broad general understanding* and *retrieving information* as lower level strategies and *reflecting on the form and content of a text* and *interpretation* as higher level strategies. As learners at the three different proficiency levels showed progress at *forming a general understanding* and *retrieving information* but were still struggling with *reflecting on the form of a text* as well as *evaluating the content*, it seems convenient to conclude that the RAF proves helpful in lower level strategies but not as much in developing higher level strategies. However, as all learners showed progress in developing interpretation, which is a higher level strategy, the earlier conclusion seems too convenient.

By referring back to students’ reflections it became evident that the above mentioned strategies were the only two that did not receive positive remarks in terms of strategy usefulness. Comparing remarks on the usefulness such as “very helpful”,

“absolutely helpful”, “certainly”, “so useful”, and so forth with comments such as “not sure”, “maybe”, don’t know”, and so forth, reveals the fact that when students, no matter at what proficiency level, do not see the immediate need for a particular lesson, they tend to become demotivated and low in morale and even though they received the same apprenticeship and scaffolding from the teacher’s side as in all the other strategies, their performance of these two strategies did not show much of an improvement. Again learners’ reflections at the end of the hours dedicated to these two strategies showed that all learners except DH, had doubts about their ability to handle the tasks on their own and without scaffolding.

When students’ performance of *developing an interpretation* in the post test, as well as the revision test, together with their reflections on the usefulness of the strategy and their ability to handle the tasks on their own, is compared against the other two higher-level skills, it corroborates the conclusion that if until the moment of instruction the students have not felt the need or the lack of certain knowledge and if the teacher fails to activate their sensitivity towards the lesson of the day, there is a good chance that the students will not achieve much in the lesson.

Moreover, the fact that DH, the only one who found *evaluating arguments* and *reflecting on the form* useful, evaluated himself as “able to handle the task” at the end of the lessons and managed to answer the questions in the revision and post test, is further proof of the above claim.

Table 4.9 demonstrates which students showed improvement in which strategies.



Table 4.9

*Improvement in Different Strategies*

<b>5 Reading Aspects Assessed in PISA</b>	<b>Showed improvement</b>
Forming a broad general understanding	DH, Alex, HM, CL, WQ, Moon
Retrieving information	DH, Alex, HM, CL, Moon
Reflecting on the form of a text	DH
Developing an Interpretation	DH, Alex, HM, CL, WQ, Moon
Reflecting on the content of a text	DH

**4.3 Answering the Research Questions****4.3.1 Research Question One**

The first research question was ‘What is the impact of the Reading Apprenticeship Framework on pre-college/university students’ reading literacy in terms of 1) engagement 2) strategy use and 3) comprehension?’

***Engagement***

In answering the first part of research question 1, the main sources of data were researcher’s field notes from 33 sessions of daily observations and peers’ observation notes on 3 sessions, one of which took place in the first half of the study and the other two in the second semester.

The sessions when peers observed the class are significant, because in their notes they did not focus on the engagement of individuals who were selected as the focal cases and evaluated the class motivation level as a whole and it was found that a few students in the first half of the study were quite indifferent to what occurred in the classroom:

“I have a feeling that this is not the best month, attitude-wise. I can divide the class into two: those who are planning to continue and have already developed a liking towards my module and those who will stop next month, who do not give their all to the tasks and sometimes are quite disturbing to others. Gehad, Shanti, Pual, Keita, Shabi are only a few out of 17 students but as inevitably 1-2 of them sit in each group everyday, they really play a distractive role. I really should give them a motivation talk.” (FN.10.2)

The peer observer also noticed this fact and in his notes he wrote:

“ ... there were not many signs of high motivation levels among all the students. Even though the teacher tried to encourage discussion about and reaction to topics read about, not all students were very enthusiastic. Maybe the topic of some of the texts was not immediately relevant to the student’s experiences/situations.” (CO.8)

However, in the sessions observed in the second semester, overall learners’ engagement level was evaluated as high by the two other peers and considering the fact that in the second semester 6 out of the 7 students were the actual cases for the more focused study, another factor could be nominated as responsible for the degree of

engagement with the tasks in the RAF. On the first day of the second semester it was written in the field notes:

“The general engagement level and performance was indeed what I was hoping for. As those who were not planning to continue have already dropped out, with fewer disturbances, the class was more homogeneous and thus the easier to maintain the motivation level. All cases were quite on-task but CL and WQ were not that focused. Relievingly they could manage most of the questions, even though Moon took quite long.”  
(FN.15.2)

Going back to the learner profiles and the observation notes, it was realized that CL and WQ were the only ones who were not sure of their college plans and thus cared more about improving their general proficiency in English. Verhoeven and Snow (2001) also believe that students who have a clear desire to read a text with understanding are thus engaged and also meet an important prerequisite for becoming good readers. Interest in the topic no doubt does play a crucial role in reader’s motivation and engagement level as well.

WQ: “I prefer short passages. Long ones are harder to concentrate and I feel so tired. I like only articles related to education.” (FI.1.3)

CL: “...before, I don’t like to read English writing or stories, because when I saw the writing in English book I felt confused and was lazy to read and give up. Most articles are boring. I like about the animals and natural life

and I don't like the articles in just English book. Cuz they talk a lot about story and have some words that I don't understand. (FI.2.4)

Moreover, in the daily observations the lack of engagement from CL and WQ was noticed as well:

"I noticed that CL doesn't ever change his answers, no matter how convincing his group mate may sound, and waits for the class to agree on an answer. I've found WQ very shy girl and not sure how interaction can help her if she is not willing to communicate." (FN.6.2)

In another entry it was written:

"Dieter still doesn't bother. I still have not been able to approach CL. He is never absent, does the hw, but I'm not sure if he enjoys the class, he doesn't look very enthusiastic." (FN.12.2)

Nevertheless, even on challenging topics other students who were academically motivated showed enthusiasm. Von Glasersfeld (1996) asserts that given opportunities involving critical dialogue and interaction, learners will become more engaged in the literacy tasks. The challenge is to build a hypothetical model of the conceptual worlds of students since these worlds could be very different from the educator's. According to Pressley et al. (1990), students who are not highly motivated are unlikely to be self-initiating without extensive prompting, encouragement, or requirements from the teacher.

As the objective of this framework was to improve pre-college/university learners' reading literacy to become better able to handle authentic texts at tertiary level, it is believed that it failed to entertain those who did not see the immediate need for such

literacy. Hung et al. (2004) state that students are engaged in authentic activities when they (a) experience uncertainties, (b) experience themselves as part of communities of inquiry, and 3) draw on the expertise of more knowledgeable peers or teachers. It appears that CL and WQ did not see themselves as part of such inquiry communities and that is why they were not as engaged as the others.

### *Strategy Use*

Wenden (1987) believes that the study of FL strategy training program evaluation is concerned with the question of how outcome of learner training is measured and he suggests that the changes in learner behavior during and after participating in a strategy training program is to be investigated from the perspective of task improvement, strategy maintenance and strategy transfer. Thus, in answering the second part of research question 1, the researcher resorted to her field notes, peers' observation notes, final in-depth interviews with the learners, and learner's written reflections.

Comprehension strategies instruction includes two components: direct explanation and scaffolding (Harris & Pressley, 1991). Strategy instruction helps students who struggle with text to become aware of use, and develop control over learning strategies (Brown & Palincsar, 1982). To provide direct explanation of reading strategies, the steps followed were in line with Winograd and Hare's (1988) suggested instructional actions as well:

First learners were motivated to learn by being informed of how strategies are useful and what performance benefits accrue from strategy use. Then strategies were explained sensibly and meaningfully to learners. Third, how to use strategies was

explained step by step through modeling (Collins, 1989), and think-alouds (Roehler & Duffy, 1991). Fourth students were helped to understand the situations under which certain strategies are appropriate by providing diverse contexts for strategy use.

Students at all proficiency levels stated in their reflections that by the end of the lesson they were able to use the strategies and handle the tasks without peer or teacher support except for *determining the tone, audience and purpose* and *evaluating content*. DH was the only learner who claimed to be able to use the additional above-mentioned strategies equally well, and of course his outstanding performance on the post test proved his claim to be true. In contrast, WQ's reflections on all strategies were not that promising. After each strategy her answers to the posed question of 'Were you able to use the strategy and do the task at the end of the lesson on your own?', was: "maybe yes", "maybe", "I try me best", "no idea", "I think", and so forth. Her post-test result showing no improvement concurs with her own doubts about her ability to use the strategies.

In the final interview, regardless of proficiency level, all students were unanimous in identifying *retrieving information from text* and *guessing meaning of the unknown words from context* as the ones they had benefited most from.

Data from peer observation notes corroborates the above finding. In his comments on *identifying the main idea* the observer wrote:

"Students definitely learnt some useful strategies for identifying the main idea in academic texts. They had ample practice during the lesson. By using the strategy, students were well able to handle the reading tasks. Most students seemed to use the strategies correctly and successfully."

(CO.6)

The other peers who observed the sessions on *inferencing* and *scanning* echoed Chris:

“Student’s acquiring the strategy could be seen even in practice stage where the students could answer most of the questions accurately.”

(RO.6)

“Students were able to finish the tasks assigned to them using the strategy taught to them.” (FO.8)

From the final in-depth interview, it could be concluded that overall the framework had taught the students to be more purposeful in their reading, focusing on the purpose of the reading and living with ambiguity regarding what is not significant to the reason of reading:

Alex: “I can understand more faster, I can get the main point easily and some words that I don’t understand, I don’t need dictionary, sometimes I can guess the meaning. It helps in outside class reading. Uhmnnnnnn, sometimes I can judge, like the inference, I can judge and see if the author has bias, something like that and sometimes I can understand the articles faster. You know some of the stories they talk a lot, things that are not related to the topic, I will know, okay, this paragraph is only introducing the topic, it’s not the main idea and get what the whole article is talking about. (FI.3.4)

HM: “the strategies are very useful, in outside school... Now I don’t think I need to understand everything. I first look at the questions; I can roughly understand about the passage...I can now concentrate better than before. I think I’ve improved.” (FI.4.5)

Motivation is of critical importance for the acquisition and application of reading strategies (Pressley, 1998). The study also found that there exists a reciprocal relation between reading motivation and strategy use. In the case of DH, for example, the most engaged student, greater improvement was observed and he was better able to utilize the strategies. Reading motivation influences the use of reading strategies and the use of reading strategies influences reading motivation (Van Kraayenoord & Schneider, 1999).

### ***Comprehension***

All learners' post-test scores, except for WQ's, showed improvement compared to their pre-test results. On average, the mean progress of the 6 learners was 14.4%. Even WQ could handle some sophisticated questions on the revision test. Moreover, looking at the correct and incorrect answers in the tests reveals that whatever questions were on testing the *broad general understanding of a text* were answered correctly by all learners. There is no scarcity of evidence that strategy use enhances reading comprehension (Braum, 1985; Brookbank, Grover, Kullberg, & Strawser, 1999; Dermody, 1988; Sheorey & Mokhtari, 2001).

The transcript of the final interview provides further insight. They all stated that they have become "more confident" and "can comprehend faster/better".

Alex: "I think the material was quite good, I mean, can lead us to a way to understand and the way to read things more better. You know, in this two months I just found that before this I just couldn't read the passage very well and after this 2 months, we have gone through a lot of reading, uhhmm, this and that, I feel, nowadays its very easy for me to read short



articles, at least like 2-3 pages articles are very ok for me...: I can understand more faster, I can get the main point easily...” (FI.3.1)

DH: “Before I was afraid of reading. Because I was not confident whether my understanding was right or wrong but now I feel more confident than before. Now I can figure out the words that I don’t know, by reading the passage and I can read between the lines and I am more competent than before.” (FI.5.4)

The observers’ notes were in agreement:

“It was clear when the teacher elicited the answers to the exercise that students had successfully understood the main ideas.” (CO.8.6)

“Students’ performance showed that the lesson was helpful in developing learner’s comprehension strategies.” (RO.7)

#### **4.3.2 Research Question Two**

The second research question that was set in this study- ‘What teaching strategies are useful in facilitating the delivery of the Reading Apprenticeship Framework?’ - was intended to provide insights into what went on during the apprenticing in the framework. The observation field notes, learners’ reflections, insights from the final interview and feedback from the peer observation sessions all complemented the findings on the efficacy of the apprenticeship. Referring to the theoretical framework of the study approaching the literacy acquisition process as a “social construction”, rather than strictly as a cognitive process, has a number of instructional implications for literacy programs

(Schoenbach, 2000) in general and the RAF in particular. This perspective suggests that instruction must provide the context for individuals to engage in activities in which written language is used and that learners acquire literacy practices in collaborative settings in which knowledge of participants develop through sharing and dialogue; thus, transforming the traditional transmission-oriented mode of teaching to one that is facilitative of learning and literacy acquisition (Auerbach, 1993).

### ***Modeling***

First and foremost, modeling the strategy played an important role in the RAF. For each strategy, a sample paragraph was given out, read out loud and metacognitive think-alouds were shared with the students; the teacher/researcher would share her hunches, her doubts, reread and correct her initial guesses and move on. Only then would she ask the learners to get on task with their group mates.

In learners' reflections on the effectiveness of the modeling and instruction, responses such as "clear", "understandable", "superb", "great", "very good", etc were consistently received. It is important to note that in addition to positive feedback, difficulties and frustrations in following the modeling were also reported. For example, CL's reflection were not that positive; most often he would write "a bit blur", or "confused". In the final interview, his inconsistency perplexed the researcher as he mentioned "he couldn't follow my modeling", yet when asked for suggestions, he proposed that the teacher should "speak faster". This raised the question, if he was already having a hard time following the modeling, how would the added pace have come to his aid? Aside from him, all the other students found the modeling "helpful", and

“a good reference”. Similar comments from students with different proficiencies helped to conclude that the modeling was actually helpful. DH mentioned that he “couldn’t do the tasks without it”. HM also wrote that “it happened in his brain as well.” The feedback from the peer observers revealed the modeling had been “very clear”, “step by step” and “useful”.

The demonstration and modeling of strategies is a key feature of instructional scaffolding that students need to be successful with texts. Learning is mediated through language by differences in perspectives among co-participants (Bakhtin, 1984; Habermas, 1984).

### ***Peer Interaction***

The idea of group work was to support the social dimension of the RAF and to help learners build confidence. Yet, as students at different proficiency levels sat together, there existed an even mix of different proficiencies in different groups. Groupings that are required to discuss topics require a range of perspectives that are likely to be enhanced in mixed-ability groupings (Web, 1989). With respect to the dialogue that occurs when students are working together, Wells (2002) notes:

“It is not necessary for there to be a clear difference in expertise for participants to assist each other...whenever the dialogue that occurs in joint activity leads to an increase in individual as well as collective understanding, there is an opportunity for each participant to appropriate new ways of doing, speaking, and thinking, and thus to augment

the...resources they can draw on, both in the present and in their future activities” (p. 61)

Smith (1988) also stresses the importance of apprenticeship and the learner’s personal sense of group membership, which leads to a literate identity. There was a more competent learner in each group who subtly took on the role of the “expert” and shared his think-alouds with his other peers. Thus, apprenticeship happened at two levels: At one level, teacher as the expert and all learners as apprentices and at the second level, the more proficient readers in the groups as the mentors allowing the less proficient readers constant access to a model.

Regardless of the proficiency level, all students unanimously agreed that working with peers and sharing think-aloud proved fruitful and they all thought a maximum of 3 is ideal for such interaction. Studies conducted largely in the USA, have shown positive effects of cooperative, collaborative and mastery learning for small-sized groupings (Slavin, 1990) as well.

The feedback from the peer observations corroborates the effectiveness of the interaction:

“Students enjoyed pair work/group work during the lesson. It helped them to understand the topic better through discussion.” (RO.5)

or

“doing practices in groups helped in building students’ confidence.”  
(CO.4)

### *Scaffolding*

Another factor essential to the effective implementation and delivery of the RAF was scaffolding or in the words of Graves and Braaten (1996), “temporary supports that help a learner bridge the gap between what he or she can do and what he or she needs to do to succeed at a learning task”. Paris (1988), Roehler and Duffy (1991), and Applebee (1991) all agree that a key component of a strategies instructional model is scaffolding and it has to include instructional actions designed to shift responsibility for strategy use from teachers to students as a diverse learner needs not only exhortation but also a good model.

In each session, after modeling the strategy, the teacher/researcher would move around the classroom and spend some time with each group. She would ask the more extrovert learners if they were facing any sort of trouble. If not, she would monitor the way they were handling the tasks and listen to their metacognitive talks, and then offer support if they were not on track or if anyone was left behind either by remodeling the strategy or by highlighting the textual clues. She had to make sure that at the moment of need, she would make her support available and if she was already busy with one group, would pass the burden to the better readers of the groups. Then with time, practice and feedback, learners would gain the knowledge and motivation to use independently what they have learned. The goal was for students to become self-regulated in their strategy use (Vygotsky, 1978).

Two levels of apprenticeship took place in the form of expert-novice relationships- one the teacher-student level, the other the at the peers level. With the 2-

level apprenticeship, as she was offering support to one group, she could see similar expert-novice relationship going on in other groups.

“I could feel the buzz from all the groups and heard them constantly asking the better readers of their groups: “you think so?”, “why do you say this?”, “why not this?”... (FN.6.2)

On another day it was written:

“it was a very satisfying day. To my surprise, very successfully they brought to each other’s attention the clues that they could use and have gotten much more independent from me. Even WQ and Moon were more confident today...” (FN.7.2)

The students’ reflections on the issue of scaffolding were consistent with the researcher’s observations. For every single strategy, the whole class found the offered scaffolding “easy and fast to understand”, “good to improve reading”, “effective”, “makes understanding better”, and so forth.

Not only the weaker students, but also the better readers benefited from the 2-level apprenticeship. In DH’s words “when you hear yourself explain something to your friend, you understand it better also”.

Feedback from my peers on the scaffolding factor was just as positive.

“The scaffolding provided was effective. It had been carefully and systematically prepared in advance. It was progressively removed once students were ready.” (CO.2)

At this juncture, the aims of the Reading Apprenticeship are matched against the research questions. As mentioned in chapter 2, the aim of the Reading Apprenticeship is to help students become better readers by:

- a) engaging students in more reading;
- b) making the teacher's discipline-based reading processes and knowledge visible to students;
- c) making the students' reading processes and the social contexts, strategies, knowledge, and understandings they bring to the task visible to the teacher and to one another;
- d) helping students gain insight into their own reading processes; and
- e) helping them acquire a repertoire of problem-solving strategies with the varied texts of the academic discipline (Schoenbach, 2000).

With 33 hours of in-class reading plus an approximate 30 minutes of reading for homework everyday, a good amount of both intensive and extensive reading took place. Through the modeling of each strategy and sharing of think-aloud, teacher's discipline-based reading processes were successfully made visible to the learners. What is more, working in small groups, benefiting from a second level of apprenticeship, thinking together and having constant access to a model (either the teacher or the better reader of the group), made learners' reading processes visible to themselves and to each other; and finally with direct strategy instruction, gradual removal of scaffolding and learners'

growing of confidence, learners at different proficiency levels became more capable of handling authentic texts and more enabled to “break the code” (Shoenbach et al., 2003) of academic language.



## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **Discussion and Conclusion**

#### **5.0 Introduction**

This study was designed with the aim of investigating how using an RAF can develop pre-college/university student's reading literacy. It was noticed that although some important constituents of reading instruction have been identified, there is lack of knowledge about how to sustain reading activity that enables students to perform the reading that is required for adult life. Based on its aim, hoping to fill the research gap and in an attempt to provide a comprehensive understanding of the impact of the delivery of the apprenticeship, a qualitative research design was used.

After reviewing the pre-test scores 6 cases were selected for the more focused part of the study. The qualitative approach provided insights into how learners interacted and benefited from the instructional procedure of the RAF.

Greater interest has been shown in quantitative data that measures learner's improvement. Fewer studies have attempted to investigate the learning process itself. McDonough (1995) believes that quantitative experiments can only provide a partial picture. Chen (2007) supports that a quantitative approach can only measure the final product of learning and that it is by understating the learning process that educators can find ways to improve the effectiveness of teaching. Weir and Roberts (1994) also point out that qualitative data can provide information on how teaching and learning processes actually take place. This study thus adopted a mainly qualitative approach to examine the

impacts of the RAF on learners' reading literacy development to discover potentially effective methods of strategy instruction.

The results and findings presented in chapter four will be discussed in this chapter followed by a discussion on implications for teachers, policy makers and curriculum developers. Thereafter, limitations of the study will be acknowledged and subsequently directions for future research will be proposed.

### **5.1 Impact of the RAF on Learners' Reading Literacy**

One of the main concerns of this study was to investigate the impacts of the RAF on reading literacy of pre-college/university students at intermediate level of proficiency. Findings from triangulating different sources of data suggest that in terms of engagement, strategy use and comprehension, the RAF contributed to developing learners' reading literacy. Schoenbach, Braunger, et al. (2003) also advocate that subject area teachers, using apprenticeship, have made significant difference in attitudes and outcomes for many students who were reading below grade level.

#### ***RAF Enhancing Comprehension Strategies***

A wealth of research findings in the last two decades support the teaching of reading comprehension strategies (National Reading Panel, 2000). Specifically, Palincsar and Brown's reciprocal teaching approach is an application of multiple strategy instruction based on an apprenticeship model of learning (Palincsar & Brown, 1984). Chen (2007) also found that strategy training leads to the improvement of language proficiency.

### ***RAF Enhancing Comprehension***

Most studies in second language learning indicate that lower-proficiency readers tend not to recognize the need to employ reading strategies to resolve problems they encounter with text (Padron & Waxman 1999; Zhang, 2001) and that teachers who use strategic training can have an effect in the L2 classroom (Hamp-Lyons, 1985). In the same vein, Kern (1989) also found that strategy instruction affects comprehension, but the degree to which it is differential depending upon the reading ability level was not clearly answered. The fact that this study lacks representative quality is acknowledged; however, the significant pattern of improvement in the post-results indicated that those who were academically more motivated showed greater improvement.

### ***RAF Enhancing Think-aloud***

On marrying strategy instruction and think-aloud, the findings are in line with studies by Oster (2001) who advocates the use of think-aloud in reading instruction, as well as Baumann, Jones, and Seifert- Kessel (1993), who examined the effects of think-aloud on reading strategies and comprehension. In literature, reading teachers have been encouraged to think aloud as a form of modeling cognitive processes and by the students as a form of practice and learning (Baumann et al., 1993; Davey, 1983; Nist & Kirby, 1986; Oster, 2001; Womack, 1991). Empirical studies have also proved the effectiveness of using think-aloud to improve reading (Liaw, 1995; Womack, 1991).

### ***RAF Enhancing Small Group Metacognitive Talks***

A related finding on the use of the RAF pertains to how strategies were employed as an effort of a small group. As far as the element of peer interaction is concerned, the findings support Palincsar and Brown's (1984) and Anderson and Roit's (1993) studies that provide evidence on the usefulness of combining the elements of think-aloud with collaboration. In Driscoll's words (1994), the learner's interactions with peers are an important source of cognitive development as they become aware of the inconsistencies in their thinking; this again is in line with Piagetian peer teaching and social negotiation.

In small groups, students were able to pool their resources and through metacognitive talk resolve the reading problems. A second level of apprenticeship occurred in small groups as the better readers mentored the less proficient students and constructed "a scaffold for each other's performance" (Donato, 1994). This notion corresponds to the theoretical framework of the study as in social constructivism importance is placed on the role of social interaction to develop one's cognitive development. Mercer (2000) also found that the think aloud and negotiation of meaning allows for such social interaction. Anderson (1991) and Kamhi-Stein (1998) advocate such collaboration among the L2 readers considering the limited vocabulary and linguistic resources that they possess. Working collaboratively allows students to compensate for each others' lack of resources in the face of reading problems (Goh, 2004).

### ***RAF Enhancing Engagement***

Such interaction and collaboration calls for the engagement of all group members and even though the less proficient ones might contribute less to the pooling of think-aloud, analyzing individual students' profiles showed that the RAF can to some extent prevent passiveness during the comprehension process. The findings by Anderson and Roit (1993) and McKeown, Beck, Omanson, and Perfetti, (1983) echo the fact that requiring students to think aloud make them more engaged with the text. Peer interaction and the sharing of think-aloud in small groups helps develop engagement, strategy use and thus comprehension; this conclusion is in line with findings in studies that combined collaborative reading and think-alouds. Being in the security of a small group was seen as advantageous by all learners as a more proficient learner was always at hand to offer scaffolding. There is no doubt that personality traits affect the interaction among peers. As in the case of this study, certain individuals might not get along, or better readers might not be comfortable if there is too much reliance on them. Less proficient readers might lack the confidence to contribute (Cohen, 1998) or even choose not to ask for support from their peers.

### ***RAF Enhancing Scaffolding***

The significance of scaffolding in the RAF is in tune with Vygotsky's (1986) zone of proximal development- what a child can do in cooperation today he can do tomorrow alone. One version of ZDP had attained influence in the UK's literacy policy. The teacher's role is to provide 'scaffolding' for the learner's linguistic development to support pupils' early efforts and to build confidence (DfEE, 2001). The important factor

in scaffolding is for the teacher/coach to be present at the moment of need to prompt the strategy use, or else the “teachable moment” (Moses, 1998) passes the student by.

Proctor, Dalton, and Grisham (2007), in their study on Universal Literacy Environment, also found that availability of a digital coach increases the students’ willingness to access the strategy coach.

The procedure of instruction in the RAF was (a) model the strategy, (b) do the first reading task together with the class, (c) on the second task, let peers help each other and discuss their think-aloud while the teacher monitored, observed and listened carefully to identify where, when and to whom ‘scaffolding’ should be offered and (d) have learners do the reading tasks with minimum support from both their peers and the teacher. Wray and Lewis (2000) proceed to redefine the ZPD as a four-stage process as well where expertise is transferred from expert to novice, which is the corner stone of apprenticeship: (a) demonstration, (b) joint activity, (c) supported activity, and (d) individual activity (p. 26).

At the end of the process, the expert can then withdraw because learners themselves have become the expert or in Greig’s (2000) words “teacher is positioned as expert and the process of learning as one that enables the replication of teacher’s expertise.”

As the findings show, the present study contributes to the expansion of literature on reading strategy instruction. The impact of strategy training on learners not only leads to the improvement of reading literacy, but also engages with the dynamic of internal changes in the learning process (Chen, 2007).

These dimensions are in line with instructional design derived from social constructivism. The emphasis on peer interaction, teachers helping learners becoming more strategic and independent, and negotiation of meaning in groups of mixed abilities all form a practical instructional design based on social constructivism.

## **5.2 Implications of the Study**

The findings of the present study offer several implications for reading instruction. Even though it was a small scale study the findings are significant because of its unique setting and the served population. The positive impact of the RAF implies that teachers potentially have a useful instructional technique to help learners improve their reading literacy and deal with various text types. However, most RAF studies have been conducted in countries where English is the first language and in content area reading. This study contributes to the body of knowledge on RAF in English language classrooms. The impact of the framework is in keeping with current research by Guthrie (1996) and Pressley (1998). It appears that an instructional program in which the direct instruction of reading strategies is integrated into a problem-oriented learning environment does have an effect.

### ***Reading instruction***

A number of educators have discussed characteristics of instruction designed to encourage learners to become more strategic (Baker 1994; Rosenshine & Meister, 1995;

Rhoder, 2002). First, instruction is most effective when the instructor (a) explains the nature and purpose of strategy, (b) models its use through thinking aloud, (c) provides ample practice, (d) lets peers remind each other of the benefits of strategy use through interaction, and (e) provides a content base embedded in authentic purposes. Instructional time for direct-strategy instruction and modeling must be made available.

### ***Reading strategies***

Another implication is that the strategies should be difficult for the students to apply, but not so difficult that they become frustrated (Hudson, 2007). If the strategies are too simple, students may not see the need for utilizing them. Strategies need to be taught over a sufficient period of time and should be presented over a variety of contexts and genres. To some strategies (most probably, the higher-level strategies) more time should be dedicated depending on learner performance and achievement. Therefore, the curriculum should be flexible and allow such adaptability for the teacher to see to the needs of her learners.

### ***Peer interaction***

A key factor in successful delivery of the RAF is good utilization of peer interaction. While peer interaction proves beneficial for most learners, there are some who are possibly not comfortable to ask for support in the face of a difficulty, especially if they sit in groups of learners with different proficiencies. Thus, as long as the teacher ensures the presence of at least one student of higher proficiency in the group who can play the role of the “coach”, it may be beneficial to allow the learners to determine who



they are willing to work with. According to Web (1989), group discussions require a range of perspectives that are likely to be enhanced in mixed-ability groups; however, interaction within groups may be affected by group composition. Group composition may vary by attainment/ability, friendship, gender and behavior. Thus, teachers should consider individual differences in composing small groups as it can play a deterrent role in maximizing the potential of the second level of apprenticeship.

### ***Metacognitive conversation and think-aloud***

The data shows that metacognitive conversation and think-aloud are other crucial aspects of the RAF. The underlying assumption is that teachers in the RAF are themselves proficient in carrying out the think-aloud, as any uncertainty on the side of the teachers will make them unable to help learners become comfortable with using the skill. Teachers are required to model reading strategies through think-aloud and to provide examples for their students to boost their motivation to use them (McEwan, 2004). Therefore, considering the benefits of being able to model thinking-aloud implies the need for trainee teachers to master the skill prior to stepping into the classroom (Goh, 2004).

### ***Teacher education***

Along the same lines, one of the implications of this study is for teacher education. Recent research using the PISA (2000) database has shown that students in countries with an unequal distribution of qualified teachers have lower scores than those from countries with a more equitable distribution of teacher resources (Chiu & Khoo,

2005). Researchers say the biggest impact on student literacy can be achieved by simply redirecting professional development money towards training teachers to use literacy-based strategies (Brozo, 2006). Serious challenges confront this demonstration. First, changing teacher practices in local schools is not easy (Boudah et al., 2001). Changing teachers' practices through classroom training is unlikely, but practices can improve with monitoring of actual classroom implementation accompanied by feedback to teachers (Boudah et al., 2001). Second, changing literacy instruction is often hampered by a lack of knowledge regarding exactly how to combine multiple effective practices into an instructional program (Baker & Smith, 2001). By sending trained teachers who can bridge the gap between research and practice to classrooms, and by helping English learners to perform more effectively at colleges or universities, societies as a whole will be strengthened and enriched (Brozo, 2006).

### ***Curriculum design***

A final implication of the study is for curriculum design. With increased literacy demands being placed on students, it is important that special needs of learners who differ from the average are addressed. Developing the literacies of struggling youth requires a curricular playfulness with students' ideas, biographies, and imaginations across media (Schofield & Rogers, 2004). Keeping up with technology advancements, learners may access comprehension-scaffolding features, using a digital approach to support reading. Pedagogical coaches who can model responses to strategy prompts, hyperlinked vocabulary and read aloud functionality (Dalton & Strangman, 2006; Rose & Dalton, 2002) will definitely not replace future teachers but can present information to

students considering the individual differences and in an effort to instill positive reading habits and supplementing teacher-student interactions.

Digital reading environments and programs to ensure access for all students can be designed to create a rich linguistic environment to build lexical and metacognitive skills crucial to English comprehension (Proctor et al., 2007).

Research findings of this study can provide noteworthy new ideas and guides for future planning and implementation which are in line with NRP's 2000 predominant themes:

(1) reading comprehension is a cognitive process that integrates complex skills and cannot be understood without examining the critical role of instruction and its development; (2) active interactive strategic processes are critical to the development of reading comprehension; and (3) the preparation of teachers to best equip them to facilitate these complex processes is critical and intimately tied to the development of reading comprehension. (p. 4-1).

### **5.3 Limitations of the Study**

The qualitative-case study design used for data collection and triangulating the data sources for analysis are deemed most appropriate considering the aims of the study. However, there were various limitations to the study arising during the course of the study.

The case study presented here is of a single class in a single private language school. The findings of the study do not claim to be generalizable, nor is the module claimed to be ideal. Therefore, the findings and implications discussed should be

considered in light of the limitations of the study. However, it appears that the Apprenticeship Framework has the potential to be used and adapted to meet the requirements of unique contexts of individual schools in both public and private sectors.

One of the limitations of the study was the number of peer audit sessions that could be arranged. The researcher was conscious of the fact that she needed to triangulate her observation with those of her peers; however, during the class hour, all the teachers had their own classes to teach and could not spare an hour, which made it quite difficult to arrange a peer observation session. The researcher finally managed to arrange one observation session for the pilot study and three sessions for the actual study with highly qualified peers. Two of them were the Academic Director and Program Coordinator of different ELS centers; and the other two were both senior teachers who help with training the new teachers and bi-annual teacher observations. Without any doubt, more observation sheets would have provided richer data for triangulation.

On the topic of richer data collection, another limitation of the study was that the use of recording equipment to better capture the class talk was not employed as it might have had reactive effects on the students. Nevertheless, the subjects were asked about how they would feel about being recorded and in their honest words they replied “we can’t be ourselves then”, “have to look nice”. In Draper’s words (2004), the recordings might cause the students to be aware that they were being researched and that kind of awareness could pose an external threat to the study. Another reason to avoid recording was, as learners were working in small groups one recorder had to be placed in each group, and as most of the class time was spent on silent reading and less time on sharing

the think-alouds, every day the researcher would be left with 5-6, 1-hour tapes with a few minutes of metacognitive conversation recorded on each.

Another limitation pertaining to data collection came from the fact that the researcher was the instructor of the class. Following Baumann, Seifert-Kessel and Jones (1993), it was found important that the researcher should carry out the instruction herself as she was most familiar with the concept of the RAF. This, as pointed out by Baumann et al. enhanced the internal validity but diminished the external validity (Goh, 2004). Even though data is richer and deeper when the teacher researcher is present (Mitchelle, 2002) and the teacher can make better informed decisions and implement more effective practices (Corey, 1953) sometimes the speed with which decisions had to be made limited the opportunity to draw on the literature. It is due to this rapid pace that in some cases the teacher outpaced the researcher (Gregson, 2003).

Additionally, considering the objective of this study, as the selected texts were all authentic excerpts from university course books, they failed to engage those who were not academically motivated. Having considered topic interest might have boosted the motivation level of more learners, regardless of their proficiency level and future ambitions.

Using the same post as the pre test is also a potential limitation. Although there was a two-month time lapse but new items could have been included in the post test to minimize the practice effect. However, as the study was a primarily a qualitative one the quantitative scores were mainly used to select the focal cases the practice effect was not considered.

Another limitation was the pressure of time constraint that if removed the subjects could definitely benefit more compared to a packed, high-paced curriculum; however, as the chances of ELS students staying for three sessions in a row were quite low and as it was unlikely for the school to cooperate with the study for another session, the researcher had to be content with a duration of two months.

#### **5.4 Suggestions for Future Research**

Some limitations of this study have implications for future research in this area. The small number of participants and short duration of the study were obvious deterrents to being able to draw causal connections between literacy gains and the RAF. Future research can target larger samples and students at different ages, namely students who have finished primary school and are on the verge of attending high school, to verify if the patterns detected result in similar achievement for other L2 readers as well.

This study did not seek to discover any long term effects of the strategy training. Thus, follow-up studies will be needed to determine if the learnt strategies will stay with learners for longer durations of time and if internalization of the strategies will occur. In the same vein, similar studies can be designed to be carried out by trained regular classroom teachers to see if the novice teacher can effectively model the think-aloud and facilitate the strategy use and comprehension of their learners. Future research can set out to determine if the results of a replicated study, carried out by the classroom teachers support the findings of this study.

Besides that, although this study did not seek to answer this issue, but surely students' comprehension, strategy use and engagement varied as a result of individual

factors. Cohen (1998) points out that strategies are closely related to one's learning styles and personality-related factors. Hence, future research can address variables that may affect students' performance.

## **5.5 Conclusion**

As mentioned in *Statement of the Problem* (Chapter one), due to the continued failures of the majority of high school students at literacy tasks, there is a growing concern among educators about this underperformance. Reading comprehension is essential to academic learning areas which later leads to professional success and lifelong learning. Levine et al. (2000) state that the ability to read academic texts is considered one of the most important skills that university EFL and ESL students need to acquire; thus it was decided to embark on a study that will better prepare struggling young adult readers for the academic tasks that they are to face. For the benefit of many, there was an opportunity to embark on a study which would look at the issues of utilization and implementation of a Reading Apprenticeship Framework as a partnership of expertise which totally opposes the common mode of teaching that allows students a passive role in the classroom. This would provide some insights into the processes which both teacher and students undergo when utilizing the materials.

Although research on comprehension strategies show that teaching strategies was worthwhile, such studies provide little guidance on how to supply students with effective strategies instruction in the actual classroom. Thus, in this study attention was shifted to identifying beneficial strategies and describing the nature of effective strategy instruction.

This study is of crucial importance to seeing how apprenticeship eventually leads learners to internalize not only strategies, but also principles of appropriateness that they would use on their own outside the class.

This agenda required close analyses of learners and teacher in a literacy-based classroom, including attention to learners' and teacher's respective roles, classroom interaction dynamics, and the formulation and framing of instructional tasks.

Although research has taught us much about what is needed to be able to read, it does not provide much knowledge about effective means of helping students learn how to read. Having said the above it is hoped that this study provides a rich description of how the strategies were modeled, how the learners were scaffolded, and how the materials were utilized by users. It is also hoped that a contribution is made to the body of literature on how to develop a comprehensive set of teaching and learning materials designed and delivered to enhance the literacy level of young adult EFL learners, and the findings will hopefully be useful for material developers or instructional designers to consider when designing and developing new batches of materials for learners at different proficiency levels. In brief, it is hoped that through providing a comprehensive description of the utilization of the Apprenticeship Framework, a tried and tested literacy framework is contributed to respond to this crisis.

In view of the discussed limitations, no large claims for the representative quality of this study are made. Nonetheless it appears that positive practices like RAF flourish in the classrooms of teachers who understand literacy acquisition and the richness of the young adult's mind. Although some researchers (Guba & Lincoln, 1988) consider the



issue of generalizability irrelevant for qualitative studies, the findings of this study can be generalizable to any reader who can identify with the circumstances of this study, as there is the potential of transferability from one setting to the other.

The suggestions for future research have only scratched the surface. So the researcher wishes to close with an invitation to teachers to find ways to maintain a thought-provoking curriculum for older struggling readers while also facilitating their reading improvement.

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## **Appendix A**

## Lake Chad

Figure A shows changing levels of Lake Chad, in Saharan North Africa. Lake Chad disappeared completely in about 20000 BC, during the last Ice Age. In about 11000 BC it reappeared. Today, its level is about the same as it was in AD 1000.

Figure A

### Lake Chad: changing levels

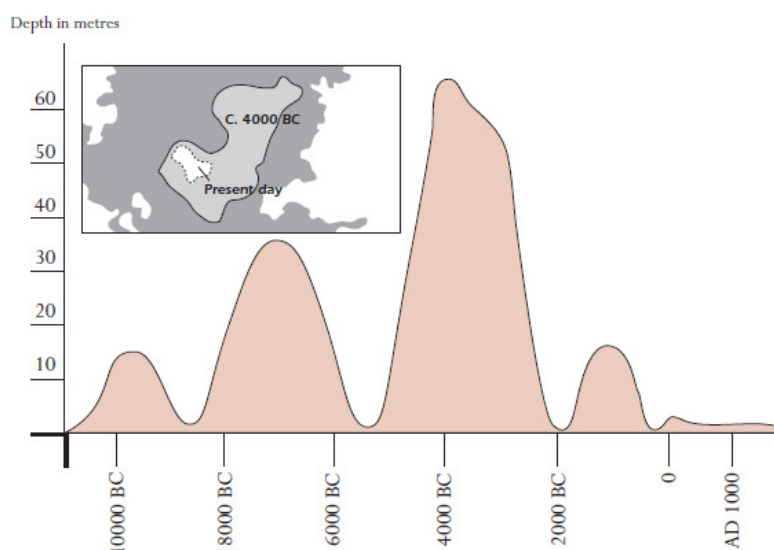
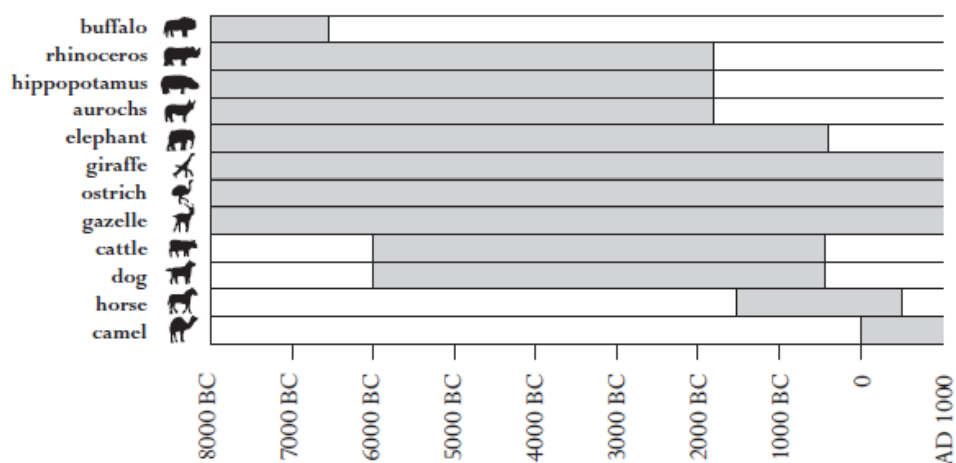


Figure B shows Saharan rock art (ancient drawings or paintings found on the walls of caves) and changing patterns of wildlife.

Figure B

### Saharan rock art and changing patterns of wildlife



1. What is the depth of Lake Chad today?
  - a. About two meters.
  - b. About fifteen meters.
  - c. About fifty meters.
  - d. It has disappeared completely.
  - e. The information is not provided.
  
2. In about which year does the graph in Figure A start?
  - a. 10,000 BC.
  - b. 8000 BC.
  - c. 0.
  - d. 20000 BC.
  - e. About 12000.
  
3. Why has the author chosen to start the graph at this point?
  - a. This is when the animals started to appear.
  - b. 11000 BC is when humans began to do rock art.
  - c. Then the lake reappeared after being gone for 9000 years.
  - d. 11000 BC was when the lake first appeared.
  
4. Figure B is based on the assumption that:
  - a. The animals in the rock art were in the area at the time they were drawn.
  - b. The artists who drew the animals were highly skilled.
  - c. The artists who drew the animals were able to travel widely.
  - d. There was no attempt to domesticate the animals which were depicted in the rock art.
  
5. For this question you need to draw together information from Figure A and Figure B. The disappearance of the rhinoceros, hippopotamus, and aurochs from Saharan rock art happened:
  - a. At the beginning of the most recent Ice Age.
  - b. In the middle of the period when Lake Chad was at its highest level.
  - c. After the level of the Lake Chad had been falling for over a thousand years.
  - d. At the beginning of the uninterrupted dry period.

## ACOL VOLUNTARY FLU IMMUNISATION PROGRAM

As you are no doubt aware, the flu can strike rapidly and extensively during winter. It can leave its victims ill for weeks.

The best way to fight the virus is to have a fit and healthy body. Daily exercise and a diet including plenty of fruit and vegetables are highly recommended to assist the immune system to fight this invading virus.



ACOL has decided to offer staff the opportunity to be immunised against the flu as an additional way to prevent this insidious virus from spreading amongst us. ACOL has arranged for a nurse to administer the immunisations at ACOL, during a half-day session in work hours in the week of May 17. This program is free and available to all members of staff.

Participation is voluntary. Staff taking up the option will be asked to sign a consent form indicating that they do not have any allergies, and that they understand they may experience minor side effects.

Medical advice indicates that the immunisation does not produce influenza. However, it may cause some side effects such as fatigue, mild fever and tenderness of the arm.

### WHO SHOULD BE IMMUNISED?

Anyone interested in being protected against the virus.

This immunisation is especially recommended for people over the age of 65. But regardless of age, ANYONE who has a chronic debilitating disease, especially cardiac, pulmonary, bronchial or diabetic conditions.

In an office environment ALL staff are at risk of catching the flu.

### WHO SHOULD NOT BE IMMUNISED?

Individuals hypersensitive to eggs, people suffering from an acute feverish illness and pregnant women.

Check with your doctor if you are taking any medication or have had a previous reaction to a flu injection.

If you would like to be immunised in the week of May 17 please advise the personnel officer, Fiona McSweeney, by Friday May 7. The date and time will be set according to the availability of the nurse, the number of participants and the time convenient for most staff. If you would like to be immunised for this winter but cannot attend at the arranged time please let Fiona know. An alternative session may be arranged if there are sufficient numbers.

For further information please contact Fiona on ext. 5577.

6. Which one of the following describes a feature of the ACOL flu immunization program?
  - a. Daily exercise classes will be run during the winter.
  - b. Immunization will be given during working hours.
  - c. A small bonus will be offered to participants.
  - d. A doctor will give the injections.
  
7. This information sheet suggests that if you want to protect yourself against the flu virus, a flu injection is
  - a. more effective than exercise and a healthy diet, but more risky.
  - b. a good idea, but not a substitute for exercise and a healthy diet.
  - c. as effective as exercise and a healthy diet, and less troublesome.
  - d. not worth considering if you have plenty of exercise and a healthy diet.
  
8. According to the information sheet, which one of these staff member should contact Fiona?
  - a. Steve from the store, who does not want to be immunized because he would rather rely on his natural immunity.
  - b. Julie from sales, who wants to know if the immunization program is compulsory.
  - c. Alice from the mailroom who would like to be immunized this winter but is having a baby in two months.
  - d. Michael from Accounts who would like to be immunized but will be on leave in the week of May 17.

## Graffiti

The two letters below come from the internet and are about graffiti. Graffiti is illegal painting and writing on walls and elsewhere. Refer to the letters to answer the questions below.

I'm simmering with anger as the school wall is cleaned and repainted for the fourth time to get rid of graffiti. Creativity is admirable but people should find ways to express themselves that do not inflict extra costs upon society.

Why do you spoil the reputation of young people by painting graffiti where it's forbidden? Professional artists do not hang their paintings in the streets, do they? Instead they seek funding and gain fame through legal exhibitions.

In my opinion buildings, fences and park benches are works of art in themselves. It's really pathetic to spoil this architecture with graffiti and what's more, the method destroys the ozone layer. Really, I can't understand why these criminal artists bother as their "artistic works" are just removed from sight over and over again.

Helga

Source: Mari Hankala.

There is no accounting for taste. Society is full of communication and advertising. Company logos, shop names. Large intrusive posters on the streets. Are they acceptable? Yes, mostly. Is graffiti acceptable? Some people say yes, some no.

Who pays the price for graffiti? Who is ultimately paying the price for advertisements? Correct. The consumer.

Have the people who put up billboards asked your permission? No. Should graffiti painters do so then? Isn't it all just a question of communication — your own name, the names of gangs and large works of art in the street?

Think about the striped and chequered clothes that appeared in the stores a few years ago. And ski wear. The patterns and colours were stolen directly from the flowery concrete walls. It's quite amusing that these patterns and colours are accepted and admired but that graffiti in the same style is considered dreadful.

Times are hard for art.

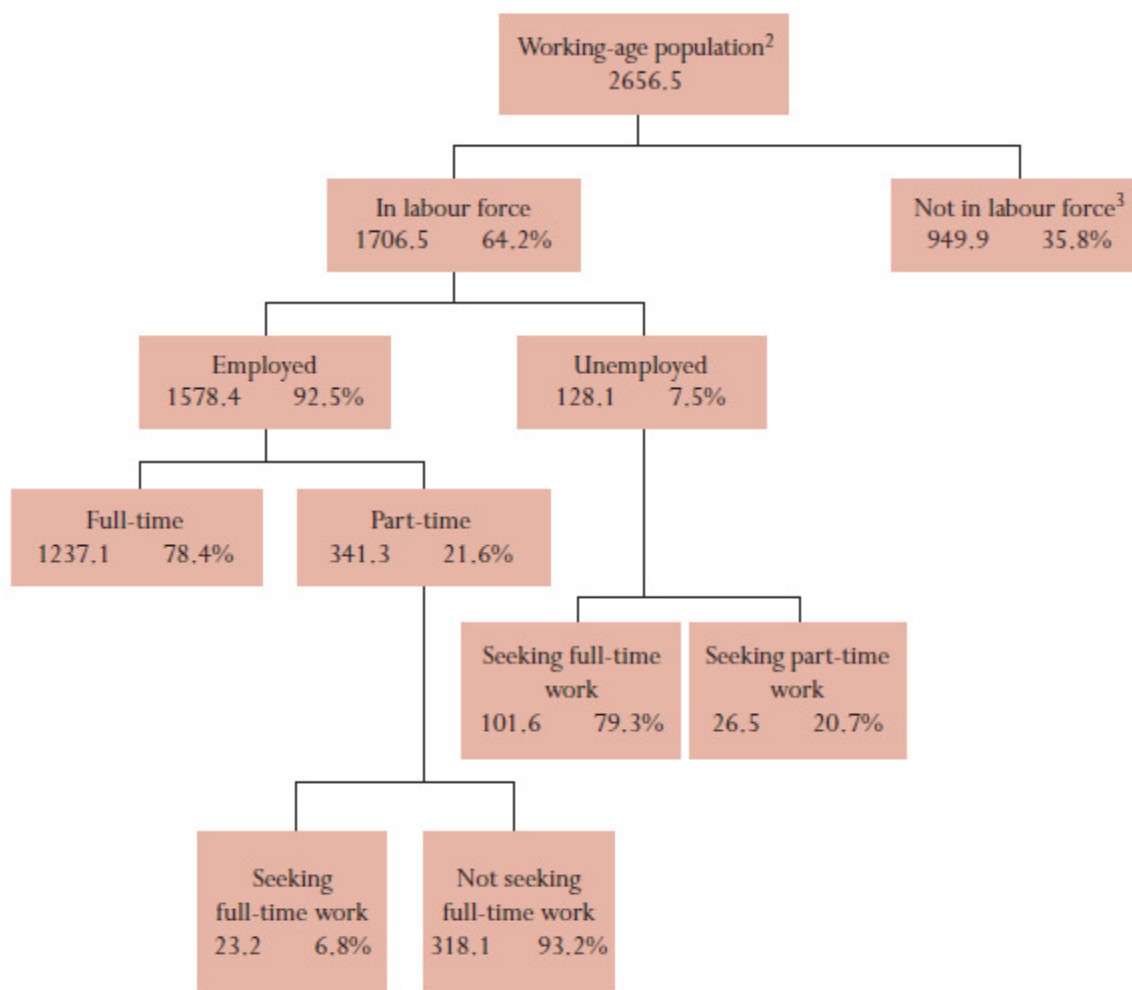
Sophia

9. The purpose of each of these letters is to
  - a. Explain what graffiti is.
  - b. Present an opinion about graffiti.
  - c. Demonstrate the popularity of graffiti.
  - d. Tell people how much is spent removing graffiti.
  
10. Why does Sophia refer to advertising?
  - a. She mentions it as an example.
  - b. It's her strategy.
  - c. She's saying that advertising is just a legal form of graffiti.
  - d. She's describing that graffiti are a kind of advertising.

## Labour

The tree diagram below shows the structure of a country's labour force or "working-age population". The total population of the country in 1995 was about 3.4 million.

**The labour force structure, year ended 31 March 1995 (000s)<sup>1</sup>**



1. Numbers of people are given in thousands (000s).

2. The working-age population is defined as people between the ages of 15 and 65.

3. People "Not in labour force" are those not actively seeking work and/or not available for work.

Source: D. Miller, *Form 6 Economics*, ESA Publications, Box 9453, Newmarket, Auckland, NZ, p. 64.



11. What are the two main groups into which the working-age population is divided?

- a. Employed and unemployed.
- b. Of working age and not of working age.
- c. Full-time workers and part-time workers.
- d. In the labor force and not in the labor force.

12. How many people of working age were not in the labor force?

- a. About 900 thousand.
- b. Almost a thousand.
- c. Just under 950.
- d. 7.5%.

13. In which part of the tree diagram, if any, would each of the people listed in the table below be included? Show your answer by placing a cross in the correct box in the table.

	In labor force: employed	In labor force: unemployed	Not in labor force	Not included in any category
1. A business woman, aged 43, who works a 60-hour week				
2. A full-time student, aged 21				
3. A man, aged 28, who recently sold his shop and is looking for work				
4. A woman, aged 55, who has never worked or wanted to work outside the home.				
5. A grandmother, aged 80, who still works a few hours a day at the family's market stall				

14. Suppose that information about the labor force was presented in a tree diagram like this every year. Listed below are four features of the tree diagram. Show whether or not you would expect these features to change from year to year, by circling either “Change” or “No change”.

Features of tree diagram	Answer
The percentage (e.g. 64.2%)	Change/ no change
The numbers (e.g. 2656.5)	Change/no change
The footnotes under the tree diagram	Change/ no change

15. The information about the labor force structure is presented as a tree diagram, but it could have been presented in a number of other ways, such as written description, a pie chart, a graph or a table. The tree diagram was probably chosen because it is especially useful for showing:

- changes over time
- the size of the country’s total population.
- categories within each group.
- the size of each group.

# PLAN International

## PLAN International Program Results Financial Year 1996

### Region of Eastern and Southern Africa

### RESA



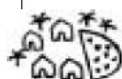
#### Growing up healthy

	Egypt	Ethiopia	Kenya	Malawi	Sudan	Tanzania	Uganda	Zambia	Zimbabwe	Totals
Health posts built with 4 rooms or less	1	0	6	0	7	1	2	0	9	26
Health workers trained for 1 day	1 053	0	719	0	425	1 003	20	80	1085	4 385
Children given nutrition supplements > 1 week	10 195	0	2 240	2 400	0	0	0	0	251 402	266 237
Children given financial help with health/dental treatment	984	0	396	0	305	0	581	0	17	2 283



#### Learning

Teachers trained for 1 week	0	0	367	0	970	115	565	0	303	2 320
School exercise books bought/donated	667	0	0	41 200	0	69 106	0	150	0	111 123
School textbooks bought/donated	0	0	45 650	9 600	1 182	8 769	7 285	150	58 387	131 023
Uniforms bought/made/donated	8 897	0	5 761	0	2 000	6 040	0	0	434	23 132
Children helped with school fees/a scholarship	12 321	0	1 598	0	154	0	0	0	2 014	16 087
School desks built/bought/donated	3 200	0	3 689	250	1 564	1 725	1 794	0	4 109	16 331
Permanent classrooms built	44	0	50	8	93	31	45	0	82	353
Classrooms repaired	0	0	34	0	0	14	0	0	33	81
Adults receiving training in literacy this financial year	1 160	0	3 000	568	3 617	0	0	0	350	8 695



#### Habitat

Latrines or toilets dug/built	50	0	2 403	0	57	162	23	96	4 311	7 102
Houses connected to a new sewage system	143	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	143
Wells dug/improved (or springs capped)	0	0	15	0	7	13	0	0	159	194
New positive boreholes drilled	0	0	8	93	14	0	27	0	220	362
Gravity feed drinking water systems built	0	0	28	0	1	0	0	0	0	29
Drinking water systems repaired/improved	0	0	392	0	2	0	0	0	31	425
Houses improved with PLAN project	265	0	520	0	0	0	1	0	2	788
New houses built for beneficiaries	225	0	596	0	0	2	6	0	313	1 142
Community halls built or improved	2	0	2	0	3	0	3	0	2	12
Community leaders trained for 1 day or more	2 214	95	3 522	232	200	3 575	814	20	2 693	13 365
Kilometres of roadway improved	1.2	0	26	0	0	0	0	0	5.34	80.6
Bridges built	0	0	4	2	11	0	0	0	1	18
Families benefited directly from erosion control	0	0	1 092	0	1 500	0	0	0	18 405	20 997
Houses newly served by electrification project	448	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	44	494

Source: Adapted from PLAN International Program Output Chart financial year 1996, appendix to Quarterly Report to the International Board first quarter 1997.

16. What does the table indicate about the level of PLAN International's activity in Ethiopia in 1996, compared with other countries in the region?
- a. The level of activity was comparatively high in Ethiopia.
  - b. The level of activity was comparatively low in Ethiopia.
  - c. It was about the same as in other countries in the region.
  - d. It was comparatively high in the Habitat category, and low in the other categories.
17. In 1996 Ethiopia was one of the poorest countries in the world. Taking this fact and the information in the table into account, what do you think might explain the level of PLAN International's activities in Ethiopia compared with its activities in other countries?
- a. Ethiopia does not need PLAN's help as much as the other countries.
  - b. Ethiopia might only need more help with community leaders than other countries.
  - c. Training community workers might be the only kind of aid they can give there.
  - d. PLAN gives the same amount to every country.

## RUNNERS

### Feel good in your runners

*For 14 years the Sports Medicine Centre of Lyon (France) has been studying the injuries of young sports players and sports professionals. The study has established that the best course is prevention ... and good shoes.*

#### **Knocks, falls, wear and tear...**

Eighteen per cent of sports players aged 8 to 12 already have heel injuries. The cartilage of a footballer's ankle does not respond well to shocks, and 25% of professionals have discovered for themselves that it is an especially weak point. The cartilage of the delicate knee joint can also be irreparably damaged and if care is not taken right from childhood (10–12 years of age), this can cause premature osteoarthritis. The hip does not escape damage either and, particularly when tired, players run the risk of fractures as a result of falls or collisions.

According to the study, footballers who have been playing for more than ten years have bony

outgrowths either on the tibia or on the heel. This is what is known as "footballer's foot", a deformity caused by shoes with soles and ankle parts that are too flexible.

#### **Protect, support, stabilise, absorb**

If a shoe is too rigid, it restricts movement. If it is too flexible, it increases the risk of injuries and sprains. A good sports shoe should meet four criteria:

Firstly, it must *provide exterior protection*: resisting knocks from the ball or another player, coping with unevenness in the ground, and keeping the foot warm and dry even when it is freezing cold and raining.

It must *support the foot*, and in particular the ankle joint, to avoid sprains, swelling and other

problems, which may even affect the knee.

It must also provide players with good *stability* so that they do not slip on a wet ground or skid on a surface that is too dry.

Finally, it must *absorb shocks*, especially those suffered by volleyball and basketball players who are constantly jumping.

#### **Dry feet**

To avoid minor but painful conditions such as blisters or even splits or athlete's foot (fungal infections), the shoe must allow evaporation of perspiration and must prevent outside dampness from getting in. The ideal material for this is leather, which can be water-proofed to prevent the shoe from getting soaked the first time it rains.

Source: Revue ID (16) 1-15 June 1997.

18. What does the author intend to show in this text?

- a. That the quality of many sports shoes has greatly improved.
- b. That it is best not to play football if you are under 12 years of age.
- c. That young people are suffering more and more injuries due to their poor physical condition.
- d. That it is very important for young sports players to wear good sports shoes.

19. According to the article why should shoes not be too rigid?

- a. to avoid injuries.
- b. they restrict movement.
- c. they can't support the foot.
- d. because they don't prevent you from running easily.

20. One part of the article says, "A good sports shoe should meet four criteria." Which of the following is one of those criteria?

- a. protect against knocks from ball or feet.
- b. cope with unevenness in the ground.
- c. to support the foot.
- d. keep the foot warm and dry.

21. Look at this sentence from near the end of the article. It is presented here in two parts:

"To avoid minor but painful conditions such as blisters or even splits or athlete's foot..."

"...The shoe must allow evaporation of perspiration and must prevent outside dampness from getting in."

What is the relationship between the first and second parts of the sentence? The second part:

- a. Contradicts the first part.
- b. Repeats the first part.
- c. Illustrates the problem described in the first part.
- d. Gives solution to the problem described in the first part.

## Technology creates the need for new rules

SCIENCE has a way of getting ahead of law and ethics. That happened dramatically in 1945 on the destructive side of life with the atomic bomb, and is now happening on life's creative side with techniques to overcome human infertility.

Most of us rejoiced with the Brown family in England when Louise, the first test-tube baby, was born. And we have marveled at other firsts – most recently the births of healthy babies that had once been embryos frozen to await the proper moment of implantation in the mother-to-be.

It is about two such frozen embryos in Australia that a storm of legal and ethical questions has arisen. The embryos were destined to be implanted in Elsa Rios, wife of Mario Rios. A previous embryo implant had been unsuccessful, and the Rioses wanted to have another chance at becoming parents. But before they had a second chance to try, the Rioses perished in an airplane crash.

What was the Australian hospital to do with the frozen embryos? Could they be implanted in someone else? There were numerous volunteers. Were the embryos somehow entitled to the Rioses' substantial estate? Or should the embryos be destroyed? The Rioses, understandably, had made no provision for the embryos' future.

The Australians set up a commission to study the matter. Last week, the commission made its report. The embryos should be thawed, the panel said, because donation of embryos to someone else

would require the consent of the "producers," and no such consent had been given. The panel also held that the embryos in their present state had no life or rights and thus could be destroyed.

The commission members were conscious of treading on slippery legal and ethical grounds. Therefore, they urged that three months be allowed for public opinion to respond to the commission recommendation. Should there be an overwhelming outcry against destroying the embryos, the commission would reconsider.

Couples now enrolling in Sydney's Queen Victoria hospital for in vitro fertilization programs must specify what should be done with the embryos if something happens to them.

This assures that a situation similar to the Rioses won't recur. But what of other complex questions? In France, a woman recently had to go to court to be allowed to bear a child from her deceased husband's frozen sperm. How should such a request be handled? What should be done if a surrogate mother breaks her child-bearing contract and refuses to give up the infant she had promised to bear for someone else?

Our society has failed so far to come up with enforceable rules for curbing the destructive potential of atomic power. We are reaping the nightmarish harvest for that failure. The possibilities of misuse of scientists' ability to advance or retard procreation are manifold. Ethical and legal boundaries need to be set before we stray too far.

22. Why did the Australian commission wait for 3 months?

- a. so that embryos could thaw better.
- b. to see public reaction.
- c. to find volunteers to donate embryos to.
- d. to get consent of the Rios family.

23. What did the Australian do to help them decide not to deal with the frozen embryos?

- a. They set up a commission to study the matter.
- b. They looked at similar examples in the past.
- d. They asked doctors at Sydney's Queen Victoria hospital for their opinions.

24. What did the commission decide to do with the embryos?

- a. Donate them to volunteer parents.
- b. Donate them to a fertility clinic for further research.
- c. Destroy the embryos.
- d. Send them to Rios relatives.



Appendix B

# **Training Framework**

**Adapted from**

**Exercise Your College Reading Skills  
(Elder, J. 2004)**

**Text & Thought  
(Lester, L., & Resnick, J. 2003)**

**Painless Reading Comprehension  
(Jones, D., 2004)**

## 1. Determining the meaning of an unfamiliar word by using context clues

*Context clues* are words in a sentence that enable readers to reason out the meaning of unfamiliar words. When you encounter an unfamiliar word ask yourself, "What would this word mean in order for it to make sense in this sentence? Then look for clues that enable you to reason out the meaning of the word. There are 5 types of context clues:

### Clue 1: Definition or synonym Clue

Sometimes there is a definition or a synonym in the sentence that serves as a clue. Authors often alert reader of this clue by using phrases as *is defined as, means, is known as, the term, is called* and also phrases like *in other words, or, that is, also known as, by this we mean*.

*Example:* "Victimless crimes" is the term for crimes in which the offender's actions do damage to themselves rather than others. (The definition follows the clue word: *is the term for*)

### Clue 2: Contrast Clue

A contrast clue consists of a word or phrase that means the opposite of the word you are trying to figure out. Common signals for it are: *but, however, on the other hand, nevertheless, in contrast* to name a few.

*Example:* A few advertisers are unscrupulous, but most of them are honest. (using *but* you can reason out that unscrupulous is the opposite of honest)

### Clue 3: Example Clue

Example clues consist of one or more examples the authors include, to illustrate the meaning of a word. They are normally introduced by *for example, to illustrate, for instance, such as, and like*.

*Example:* Many Americans include too many servings of potatoes, rice, bread and other examples of *carbohydrates* in their diet. (potatoes, rice, bread are given as examples of carbohydrates, therefore it should refer to "starchy foods".)

#### **Clue 4: General Sense of the Sentence**

When readers ask themselves "What does this word have to mean in order to make sense in this sentence?", they can usually use information they already know to help them answer that question.

*Example:* The *equestrian* center received 25 horses, saddles and other equipment for riding team. (From the reference to horses, saddles, and riding team, you can reason out that equestrian has to do with horse back riding.)

#### **Clue 5: Clue from another Sentence**

Sometimes authors include information in another sentence in the paragraph that allows you to determine the meaning of an unfamiliar word. So it is a good idea to keep on reading once you face an unfamiliar word.

*Example:* Mean-spirited people enjoy spreading *malicious* gossip. The rumors they spread damage the victim's reputation unfairly and cause pain and embarrassment. (If a gossip can damage the victim's reputation you can deduce that it is harmful.)

**Thus, when you come to a word you do not know, here is what to do:**

1. Read to the end of the sentence. Can you guess the meaning? Are there any clues in the surrounding sentences or paragraphs that help you? Does it make sense? If so, keep on reading.

If not,

2. Look at the parts of the word. Are there prefixes or roots that you know? Do the suffixes or inflections (plurals, past tense, etc.) help you? Combine this information with context information to arrive at a meaning. Does it make sense? If so, go right on reading.

If not,

3. Try to pronounce the word. When you hear it, does it sound like a word you already know? Combine this information with information from context. Does it make sense? If so, go right on reading.

If not,

4. Look for footnotes or margin notes. Check the glossary or a dictionary. Ask someone for help, a friend, the teacher, or anyone else. Combine this information with information from context.

### \* Applying the Skill

Domestic violence takes place in the home between family members. Hitting anyone in your family is a heinous act of violence. Recently, there has been a plethora or large number of reported incidents. Wife beating is a common form of domestic violence. Most men are reticent about their acts of violence because they do not want to be discovered or arrested. Therefore, the police can only speculate about the number of cases. Wives often come to the hospital with large numbers of contusions like bloody nose, broken arms, and marks on the scalp. These victims of domestic violence often lie about the cause of these injuries. The police seem skeptical about solving the problem since it is so widespread. Enough insouciance, we need more people to be come involved in the fight against domestic violence.

Word	Meaning	Context clue
Domestic		
Heinous		
Plethora		
Reticent		
Speculate		
Contusion		
Skeptical		
Insouciance		

## 2. Determining the Topic of a Paragraph

Determining the topic of a paragraph is the first important step in comprehending any paragraph. Knowing what exactly the topic is helps you understand how the pieces of information in a paragraph relate to each other.

### 1. Look for a heading or title

Brains like it when they get notice of what is coming next. A heading or a title can give you a great head start on determining the topic. Read a paragraph from a computer textbook that shows this clue:

#### Suicide among Young People

One of the major tragedies of our time is the high incidence of suicide. In the last year for 31,100 people in the United States killed themselves, including 5,100 under twenty-five years of age. Among young people, suicides follow accidents as the second leading cause of death, although in certain segments of the young adult population death from homicide and AIDS now exceed those of suicide and accident.

### 2. Look for words in special print, such as bold, italics, or color

Text books contain many important terms, so the author spends time explaining them and they frequently put them in special.

The most common form of joint inflammation is *osteoarthritis*. It is likely that as we age, all of us will develop osteoarthritis to some degree primarily in the weight-bearing joints of the knee, hip, and spine. In this form of arthritis, joint damage can occur to bone ends as the years of constant friction pass by.

### 3. Look for repeated words or phrases in the paragraph

Because a topic is discussed throughout the paragraph, it is logical that the topic would be repeated several times. When you read a paragraph, be alert for the repetition of a particular word or phrase or words in the paragraph that mean the same.

Of all humans creations language may be the most remarkable. Through language we share experiences, formulate values, exchange ideas, transmit knowledge, and sustain culture. Indeed,

language is vital to thinking itself. Contrary to popular belief, language does not only mirror reality.

### 3. Identifying the Stated Main Idea Sentence of a Paragraph

Just as every paragraph has a topic, every paragraph has a main idea. Most often it is located at the beginning of the paragraph. The end of the paragraph is the next most likely location of the stated main idea sentence. Being able to identify the main idea will enable you to 1) know what to highlight in your textbook, 2) Write correct summaries, and 3) remember the information easily.

All main idea sentences have certain characteristics in common.

1. The main idea sentence must always contain the topic
2. The main idea sentence must always make complete sense by itself
3. The main idea sentence must be a general sentence that sums up the details in the paragraph

Note: Read the entire paragraph before you decide what the author's main point is; and always watch for words and phrases that authors frequently use to signal their most important point like *To sum up, overall, thus, In general, etc.*

#### \* Applying the Skill

Which type of dog is the best one for you? It depends. You might want a small one if you live in an apartment. You might prefer a large one if you live in the country. Some folks just want a cute dog to keep them company. Others want a dog that provides protection. Still others want a dog to be trained for a disabled person. The point is, the best type of dog is the one that meets a person's needs and lifestyle.

Can't be a question

No. these don't contain the topic

It doesn't contain the topic

It doesn't contain the topic

This sentence it is. It has all the characteristics.

#### 4. Formulating the Implied Main Idea Sentence of a Paragraph

Even when authors do not state the main idea, they still *imply* it or provide enough information for the readers to reason out the main idea. By following three formulas an implied main idea sentence can be formulated:

**Formula 1:** Add essential information to a sentence in the paragraph that almost states the main idea:

Attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is the newest name applied to a complex disorder that has long puzzled professionals. Today it is believed that it is the most common behavioral disorder in the U.S. youngsters. Some experts say it afflicts 3.5 million youngsters, or up to 5 percent of those under the age of 18. It is two or three times more likely to be diagnosed in boys than in girls.

*Implied main idea :* Today it is believed that ADHD is the most common behavioral disorder in U.S. youngsters.

**Formula 2:** Combine into a single sentence two sentences from the paragraph that together express that complete main idea:

The risk of divorce is higher when wife works, particularly if she works in an unconventional (traditionally male) occupation. This does not mean that female employment by itself, cause divorce. Rather women who work have greater opportunity and choice both in marriage and divorce. Women in high-paying occupations do not have to consider potential earning power when choosing a spouse, nor do they have to choose between an unhappy marriage and poverty.

*Implied main idea :* The risk of divorce is higher when the wife works, but this does not mean that female employment by itself, causes divorce.

**Formula 3:** Summarize details into one general sentence or combine several important ideas into one sentence:

What kinds of changes might you expect in your own life that will affect your relationship with others? You may change your job. You may move. You probably will be married and have children. You will experience loss of family members. You have a spouse whose needs conflict with your needs. Other family members may view the world differently and challenge you. When your life appears to be most stable and calm, unexpected changes will occur.

Implied main idea : There are many kinds of changes in your life that will affect your relationship with others.

### \* Applying the Skill

On the basis of this one, I think it's about frustration in traffic

No. The 2<sup>nd</sup> one describes another situation

Other stressful situations

Everyone has experienced the frustration of being stuck in traffic when you're already late. We've felt the exasperation at being kept waiting for a long time in a doctor's office for example. We all know how stressful it is to have to deal with a difficult person or an impossible deadline. Trying hard and not getting the result can also create stress. An important key to reducing stress is to recognize things we have no control over and decide not to get upset over them.

More of the same

No need to formulate! Here it is the stated main idea. All the other were details, helping me to understand it.



## 5. Skimming

"PEF" : Preview everything first".

A good preview will:

- Arouse your interest in the content.
- Give you some minimum facts about it so that you do not begin reading it "cold".
- Tell you the main ideas and organization and your best strategy for comprehension.
- Double your reading rate, when you return to read carefully.

What shall you focus on when you are preview skimming?

- Title; sub-title, if any.
- Length: number of paragraphs or pages
- Graphics: photos, graphs, maps and the like
- Headings, boldface sub heads
- Structure: major divisions and link word/phrases
- Topic sentences and
- The whole concluding paragraph

## 6. Scanning

Scanning is "selective reading". When you scan print, you begin with a specific question in mind. In scanning, the information you are searching for is very limited. *How do the eyes and brain work during this kind of scanning?*

We make a mental image of the fact we are searching for. Then we cue our eyes to receive it when it appears. We skip over or ignore any other images.

### ❖ Practice

Look up the following bits of information in your dictionary.

1- Find the guide words at top of the page on which each of the following words is listed.

*adore* Guide word -----

*zone* guide word -----

*laugh* Guide word -----

*icon* Guide word -----

2- In pairs write the page number on which each word is found.

*passion* page -----

*mosquito* page -----

*symbolic* page -----

*honor* page -----

## 6.1 Less simple Scanning

Sometimes the writer may not have used the exact words that you have formed a mental image of. So you keep your mind *flexible* :

1. *Know your question.* Otherwise you may waste time and may even come up with the wrong answer.
2. *Preview your source material.* Before you search for specific information, you must have a map of the territory to be scanned.
3. *Keep a one-track mind.* Constantly repeat the question and the possible cues in your mind.
4. *Be flexible with synonyms and rephrasings of your question into other possible terms.*

## 7. Recognizing Author's Writing Patterns

Writing patterns are ways that authors organize materials they present. Recognizing these patterns helps you comprehend and remember more easily and efficiently. Each pattern reflects a certain type of relationship between the main idea and the details of a paragraph. The more common patterns are:

### 1. List Pattern

In this pattern the author presents a group of items in no particular order because the order is not important:

Elementary schools serve many functions. *First*, they teach specific cognitive skills. *Second*, schools inculcate more general skills such as paying attention, sitting quietly, and participating in classroom activities. *Third*, schools have come to share with families the responsibility for transmitting society's cultural goals and values. *In addition* schools meet a variety of needs not directly educational.

### 2. Sequence Pattern

The sequence pattern presents a group of items in a specific order because the order is important. Here *first* does not mean just first on a list. It means *do this first* or *this happened first*.

In some cases, relational maintenance may ultimately end in relational deterioration, the process by which relationship ends in four stages.

1. Differentiating occurs when two partners start emphasizing their differences instead of their similarities.
2. Stagnating suggests a lack of activities together.
3. Avoiding brings reluctance to communicate and can be even hostile.
4. Terminating occurs when the two people are no longer seen as a pair.

### 3. Definition Pattern

The definition pattern is the pattern authors use to present and discuss the meaning of an important term. The main idea sentence often include clue words such as *defined as*, *means*, *is known as*, *is called*, ...

Children **babble**- make speechlike sounds- from around the ages of 3 months through 1 year.

By the age of 2 years, the average child has a vocabulary of more than 50 words. At that time children can produce short sentences, although they use **telegraphic speech**-sentences that sounds as if they are part of a telegram in which words not important to the message are left out.

#### **4. Cause and Effect Pattern**

Authors use the cause and effect pattern to present reasons and results or both which appears frequently in history and science books.

If the numbers of poor children surprise you, the consequences won't. As in infancy, when families live with severe economic stress, their children suffer. Poor children get sick more often, achieve less in schools, and have more psychological problems than other children. Why? When parents are poor, they cannot provide nutritional meals, comfortable housing and support what children need. The effects are incredibly devastating.

#### **5. Comparison-Contrast Pattern**

A comparison-contrast pattern presents similarities and differences between two or more things. Authors use it when they want to explain or describe how two or more things alike or different.

Certain features distinguish Japanese from American schooling. One has to do with how the two societies view achievement. Americans think of each child as a unique individual and relate success in school to innate ability and opportunity. In contrast, the Japanese believe that all children are born equal. If some children achieve more than other, it is because of effort.

**\* Applying the Skill**

It seems as if it could be the stated main idea. I expect the rest of the paragraph to tell me what the "series" of mistakes is. I think this is going to be a sequence.

I think I was right because of the clue "first".

Companies that experience a crisis for which they are not prepared seem to make a series of mistakes. First, warnings about possible problems are ignored at different management levels. Then the crisis hits, under pressure, the company does the worst thing it could do: it denies the seriousness of the problem. Finally, the company is forced to face reality, it takes hasty poor action.

I see the word "then" and "finally". I am right. The first sentence is the main idea and it gave the clue about a series. There are three steps, and all are introduced by clue words.

## 8. Making Inferences

In reading, an *inference* is a logical conclusion from what the author has stated. A *conclusion* is a decision or judgment reached after consideration of material you have read. You must always *base* your inferences or conclusion on the information the author provides.

### \* Applying the Skill

3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> sentences tell some results. Crime reduced, addicts got jobs and got off

Other countries have dealt with heroin addiction differently than the United States. In 1994 Switzerland began the first large-scale controlled experiment, a three-year program under the supervision of the World Health Organization that provided heroin to a thousand users. Results showed that crime among the addicted people declined by 60 percent. Half of the formerly unemployed users were now working and a third who had been on welfare were self-supporting. Homelessness was eliminated. About 8 percent of the users gave up heroin altogether.

This is about heroin addiction and an experiment in

The last 2 sentences tell more results

The author doesn't mention any negative effects of the program. Based on the positive results, I can conclude that  
1: the program was a success 2: addicts can be better citizens and have happier lives if they don't have to get heroin illegally  
4: society as a whole benefits when heroin users were given heroin in a supervised program.

### 8.1 How To Read For Inferences

Critical readers of difficult materials use the following strategies to make inferences: (1) they analyze the terms of qualification that an author uses; (2) they are sensitive to the connotations of words as well as to metaphors; (3) they know how to evaluate statements.

## 8.2 Terms of Qualification

A *term of qualification* is a word or phrase that modifies the certainty of a writer's statement. Such terms suggest varying degrees of certainty toward a particular topic. Terms of qualification are divided into:

1. *Words and phrases that express no doubt:* all, surely, there is no doubt, never, precisely, plainly, definitely, without question, without a doubt, absolutely...
2. *Words and phrases that express little doubt:* most, seldom, it is believed, rarely, almost always, consistently, usually, almost never, one can safely say...
3. *Words and phrases that express some doubt:* many, it seems, may, might, likely, it is theorized that, one would assume, probably, the results imply,...

### ❖ Practice

*Statement 1:* Recently on a news report, a criminologist noted that teenage criminals are only slightly influenced by their peers.

The word slightly suggests that teenagers involved in crime are influenced only negligibly by their friends. Thus, you should read on, to find out what factors influence teenagers more.

## 8.3 Connotation

The *connotation* of a word is its suggested meaning. A critical reader can infer much about an author's unspoken attitude toward a topic by the connotation of the words he uses.

Many words in English fall into one of the three categories, each of which expresses an implied value: (1) a mildly positive or negative attitude, (2) a positive or negative attitude, or (3) a strongly positive or negative attitude.

"He was *perplexed* on hearing of the murder of his aunt and uncle."

The term *perplexed* is an unusual word choice here. *Sadness, grief, shock* are more expected. Perplexed is a mildly negative term where a strongly negative term would be more appropriate in this sentence. In this sentence a critical reader would ask, is the author suggesting that the he had bitter feelings toward his aunt and uncle? The connotation of a word can be so powerful that it forces you to rethink a character's motivation.

**Practice: Analyzing an advertisement**

Come To Malama: An Enchanted Island In the Mediterranean.

On the scenic island of Malama, you will be dazzled by the beauty everywhere. It has endless miles of sandy beaches and a calm blue sea that tantalizes even the novice swimmer.

Hotel accommodations are surprisingly inexpensive; most rooms have beautiful views of the ocean.

For those who want to know more about the history of this ancient island, bus tours leave daily for three archaeological sites on the island's north side. Tours may even begin from your hotel.

The cuisine is world-famous, and the people are warm and hospitable. Many islanders even speak English.

For further information, hurry to see your travel agent. Don't have another forgettable summer. This summer, be sophisticated!

1. In paragraph 1, locate five words that have positive connotation.
  2. What specific details are missing in paragraph 2?
  3. What specific information is presented in paragraph 3?
  4. A qualifier is used in the last sentence of paragraph 3, Find it and determine how it alters the meaning of the sentence.
  5. Locate two words in paragraph 3 with positive connotation.
  6. Does this ad contain mainly factual details or mainly generalizations? Give two examples for your answer.
-



## 9. Determining the Author's Purpose, Tone, and Intended Audience

### 9.1 Purpose

An author is usually writing for one the following purposes:

1. *To inform*- to give information
2. *to instruct*- to explain how to do something
3. *to persuade*- to convince readers to do or to believe something
4. *to entertain*- to present humor or other enjoyable material.

After you have read something ask yourself, *What is the author's reason for writing this?*

### 9.2 Tone

To help them accomplish their purpose, authors choose an appropriate tone. *Tone* refers to the author's use of words and writing style to convey his or her attitude toward a topic, much the same way that speakers use tone of voice.

It is important to understand the author's tone, or you may misinterpret the meaning. After you have read something, to determine the tone, ask yourself:

*What do the author's word choice and writing style say about his or her attitude toward the topic?*

### 9.3 Intended Audience

*Intended audience means the people the writer has in mind as the readers.*

Intended audience can be a *specific person*, a *particular group of people* and the *general public*. Writers consider how much their intended audience is likely to know about a topic. After you have read something, to determine the tone, ask yourself:

*Who did the author have in mind as readers?*

### \* Applying the Skill

Ok, here's the topic. *Reckless jet skiers who cause danger*

Ok, here is the intended audience, *Homeowners!*

Soon it will be summer, and once again our beautiful lake will be overrun with reckless jet skiers who pose a danger to themselves and rest of us. Jet skiers are an increasing hazard on our lakes. Irresponsible jet skiers are not only injuring themselves, they are injuring and killing innocent people who are simply out to enjoy a day at the lake. Enough is enough! It's time to take action. As homeowners who live on lakefront, we must insist on regulations to decrease the speed of jet skiers. In addition, no one under the age of 16 should be allowed to use a jet ski. Furthermore, all jet skiers should be required to take safety courses. Finally we must limit the number of jet skiers who can be on the water at any given time. Jet skiers who violate the rules would be made to pay heavy fines or be banned to use the lake. Call our City Council members today! Tell them it's time for a change!

The writer is trying to get readers to "take action" so the purpose must be to *persuade*

Well, the author feels very strongly about the matter. He uses exclamation marks, words such as should, must, insist to urge readers to take action. The tone could be *concerned, urgent*.

**A. In groups, try to identify the context clues to guess the meaning of the underlined words.**

1. The manic pace is evident in the streets, where swarms of motorbikes zip through intersections.
  - a. happy
  - b. excessively active, intense
  - c. violent, destructive
  - d. relaxed, leisurely
2. The cast of the television series is currently enjoying a three-month hiatus, but they start work again in the fall.
  - a. break
  - b. strike
  - c. call
  - d. probation
3. There has been a dramatic increase in the sales of cosmeceuticals (cosmetics plus pharmaceuticals that are more potent than cosmetics, but not so powerful).
  - a. cosmetics whose sales have increased dramatically
  - b. cosmetics that are powerful
  - c. cosmetics plus pharmaceuticals that are more potent than cosmetics, but not so powerful.
  - d. new brands of cosmetics
4. Both twins are extremely talented and intelligent. One has aspirations of obtaining a master's degree and becoming a social worker; the other has aspirations of attending graduate school, and then becoming a concert pianist.
  - a. ambitions
  - b. unrealistic expectations
  - c. false hopes
  - d. frustrations
5. But what is most remarkable about Tiger Woods is his relentless drive to what Japanese call kaizen, or continuous improvement.
  - a. relentless drive
  - b. remarkable ability
  - c. Japanese trait
  - d. continuous improvement
6. Certain college courses are compulsory for all students who wish to receive a degree; however, there are also elective courses, and students can choose whichever of those they prefer.
  - a. difficult
  - b. required

- c. unpleasant
- d. enjoyable

7. It is not lawful to practice medicine without first obtaining a valid medical license.

- a. received as an honor
- b. updated
- c. legal
- d. difficult to obtain

8. At the embassy reception, the diplomat's wife made an embarrassing faux pas when she addressed the prime minister's brother as the prime minister.

- a. international incident
- b. illegal action
- c. grammatical error
- d. social blunder

9. By age four, boys usually display better spatial skill than girls do. In daily play, girls are not encouraged as much as boys to engage in spatially oriented activities such as playing with blocks and puzzles.

- a. pertaining space
- b. pertaining gender difference in boys and girls
- c. pertaining to blocks and puzzles
- d. pertaining to biology

10. Introverts prefer solitary activities, whereas extroverts prefer activities involving other people.

- a. requiring other people
- b. pertaining to computers
- c. involving other people
- d. done alone

11. Examples of common allergens include pollen, dog and cat dander, and dust.

- a. pollen, dog and cat dander and dust
- b. substances commonly found around the house
- c. substances that cause allergic reaction
- d. allergic reactions

12. Mean-spirited people enjoy spreading malicious gossip. The rumors they spread damage the victim's reputation unfairly and cause undeserved pain and embarrassment.

- a. harmful
- b. interesting
- c. cheerful
- d. uplifting

**B. Using context clues, see if you can write a definition for the underlined words.**

1. Many communities hold referendums so that voters can decide local issues.

Definition:-----

2. It is hard to concentrate when there is any type of interference such as noise, a headache or even worries or daydreams.

Definition:-----

3. The fear of strangers, typically called stranger wariness, is a predictable feature of a baby's first year of life and is a major landmark of emotional development.

Definition:-----

4. There are several psychological explanations of the compulsive nonstop talker's need to monopolize every conversation.

Definition:-----

5. Many business schools are now revamping their existing curriculum by integrating international examples into their courses and emphasizing the use of technology.

Definition:-----

6. In Cuba and China, young adults are conscripted into military service and are then required to serve for a specified number of years.

Definition:-----

7. Social movements or political movements, refer to broad efforts to achieve change by citizens who feel that government is not properly responsive to their interest.

Definition:-----

8. In business a variable cost, an expense that varies directly with the quantity of the product produced and sold, is in direct contrast to a fixed cost.

Definition:-----

9. An adage in retailing is “Three things are crucial for the success of a business: location, location, location.”

Definition:-----

10. The difference between a good athlete and a great one is often simple tenacity. The great ones are champions because of their steadfast persistence in pursuing their goals.

Definition:-----

11. Most illnesses last for a relatively short, limited period time, yet nearly three-quarters of all deaths among those 18 and older are the results of chronic diseases.

Definition:-----

12. Some criminal acts of violence are premeditated; others are “crime of passion” committed on the impulse or on the emotion of the moment.

Definition:-----

**A. As you read the each paragraph below, ask yourself, *What is this paragraph about?* Then use the clues to determine the topic and circle the correct answer.**

**Suicide among Young People**

One of the major tragedies of our time is the high incidence of suicide. In the last year for which statistics are available, 31,100 people in the United States killed themselves, including 5,100 under twenty-five years of age. Among young people, suicides follow accidents as the second leading cause of death, although in certain segments of the young adult population deaths from homicide and HIV/AIDS now exceed those of accidents and suicide.

1. The topic of this paragraph is:
  - a. one of the major tragedies of our time.
  - b. the leading cause of death
  - c. suicide among young people
  - d. suicide

A common occurrence among adults is the sudden onset of low back pain. Each year, 10 million adults develop this problem, which can be so uncomfortable that they miss work, lose sleep, and generally feel incapable of engaging in daily activities. Eighty percent of those who have this condition will experience these effects two or three times per year.

2. The topic of this paragraph is:
  - a. the sudden onset of pain.
  - b. ten million adults with this problem
  - c. low back pain.
  - d. missing work and losing sleep because of low back pain.

*Computer professional* are people who work directly with the development and operation of computer technology. Some computer professionals help users design computer-assisted solutions. Others operate and repair the computer equipment. Management of data, end user training, and all computer acquisitions in an organization are the responsibilities of computer professionals.

3. The topic of this paragraph is:
  - a. computer professionals.
  - b. people who work directly with the development and operation of computer technology.
  - c. people who help users design computer-assisted solutions.
  - d. interesting computer-oriented job opportunities.

Gender roles are the behaviors, interests, attitudes, skills, and personality traits a culture considers appropriate for males and females. All societies have gender roles. Historically, in most cultures, women have been expected to devote most of their time caring for the household and children, while men were providers and protectors. Women were expected to be compliant and nurturant; men were expected to be aggressive, active and competitive. Today, gender roles in western cultures have become more diverse and more flexible.

4. The topic of this paragraph is:
- a. men and women in all societies
  - b. gender roles
  - c. traits a culture considers appropriate
  - d. nurturant women and aggressive men.

Franklin Roosevelt was president from 1933 to 1945, longer than anyone else in American history; he was elected four times. When he won the election in 1932, he took office at one of the worst points in the Great Depression, but told American public, "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself." The early part of his presidency is remembered for a group of government programs designed to reverse the devastating effects of the Depression. This innovative leader used chats over radio to build support for his policies. In the later years of his presidency, he attempted to support the Allies in World War II without bringing the United States into war. After the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor, the United States entered the war. He began the Manhattan Project, which produced the atomic bomb, a weapon that brought a quick but highly controversial end to the war.

5. The topic of this paragraph is:
- a. Franklin Roosevelt
  - b. the election of 1932
  - c. government programs
  - d. Allies in World War II

What does the word drug mean? Each of us may have different ideas about what a drug is. Although a number of definitions are available, we will consider a drug to be "any substance, other than food, that by its chemical or physical nature changed structure or function in the living organism." Included in this broad definition is a variety of psychoactive drugs, medicines, and substances that many people do not usually consider to be drugs.

6. The topic of this paragraph is:
- a. different ideas about what a drug is.
  - b. psychoactive drugs.
  - c. the meaning of the word "drug".
  - d. substances that many people do not usually consider to be drugs.



**B. Use the clues to determine the topic.**

“When are you going to have a baby?” This question is heard less often these days, as societal attitudes have moved away from the belief that all married couples who can have children should have them. Some couples decide before marriage never to have children. Others keep postponing conception, waiting for the right time, until they decide that the right time will never come. Some of these couples want to concentrate on careers or social causes. Some feel more comfortable with adults or think that they would not make good parents. Some women worry that pregnancy will make them less attractive and that parenthood will change their relationship with their spouse.

1. Topic:-----

Of all ethical lapses a public speaker can commit, few are more serious than plagiarism. Global plagiarism is lifting a speech entirely from a single source and passing it off as your own. Patchwork plagiarism involves stitching a speech together by copying more or less verbatim from a few sources. Whenever you give a speech, you must be sure it represents your work, your thinking, your language. You must also take care to avoid incremental plagiarism, which occurs when a speaker fails to give credit for specific quotations and paraphrases that are borrowed from other people.

2. Topic: -----

For some people, binge eating constitutes their unique form of eating disorder. As the name applies, people who binge eat periodically consume large quantities of food in a short period of time. In doing so, they take in several thousand calories, which eventually the body will need to either expend or place in storage.

3. Topic:-----

When you give a speech, you will sometimes use a visual aid. Once it gets into the hands of your listeners, you are in trouble. At least three people will be paying more attention to it than to you-the person who has just had it, the person who has it now, and the person waiting to get the next. By the time it moves on, all three have lost track of what you are saying.

4. Topic:-----

### Active listening

You should begin to think of listening as an active process. So many aspects of modern life encourage us to listen passively. We “listen” to the radio while studying or listen to the television while moving about room to room. This type of passive listening is a habit—but so is active listening. We can learn to identify those situations in which active listening is important. If you work seriously at becoming a more efficient listener, you will reap rewards in your schoolwork, in your personal and family relation, and in your career.

5. Topic:-----

Economists define “saving” as that part of after-tax income which is not spent; therefore, households have just two choices of what to do with their incomes after taxes—use it to save it. Saving is the portion of income which is not paid in taxes or used to purchase consumer goods but which flows into bank accounts, insurance policies, stocks and other financial assets.

6. Topic:-----

Estimates are that between 20 percent and 60 percent of state correctional populations suffer from psychopathy. Psychopathy is characterized by an inability to learn from experience, a lack of warmth and no sense of guilt. Psychopaths lie and cheat without hesitation and engage in abuse. “Ted” Bundy is a classic example. Bundy, a former law student and former crime commission staff member, killed between 19-36 young women in Florida. The handsome physical fitness enthusiast often brutally sexually attacked his victims before murdering them.

7. Topic:-----

Health is a cultural concept that is defined differently in different cultures. The prevailing definition of health has evolved from the “absence of illness” to a broader term, wellness, with its definition as “a life-style that emphasizes such health-promoting behaviors as eating a healthful diet, avoiding harmful substances, enjoying regular exercise, and cultivating self-esteem.”

8. Topic:-----

**A. As you read each paragraph below, first determine the topic and then try to identify the main idea by asking yourself, "What is the author's most important point about the topic?"**

What determines who votes? The difference is striking: persons with a college education are about 40 percent more likely to vote than persons with a grade school education. Researchers have concluded that education generates a greater interest in politics, a higher level of political information, a greater confidence that one can make a difference politically, and peer pressure to participate. All of these are related to the tendency to vote. Education, in fact, is the single best predictor of voter turnout.

1. The stated main idea in this paragraph is
  - a. What determines who votes?
  - b. Persons with a college education are about 40 percent more likely to vote than persons with a grade school education
  - c. All of these are related to the tendency to vote.
  - d. Education, in fact, is the single best predictor of voter turnout.

People with learning disabilities are sometimes viewed as unintelligent. Nothing could be further from the truth. There is no relationship between learning disabilities and I.Q. For instance, dozens of well-known and highly accomplished individuals suffered from dyslexia. They include Albert Einstein, U.S. General Patton, poet William Butler Yeats and writer John Irving.

2. The stated main idea in this paragraph is
  - a. People with learning disabilities are sometimes viewed as unintelligent.
  - b. There is no relationship between learning disabilities and I.Q.
  - c. For instance, dozens of well-known and highly accomplished individuals suffered from dyslexia.
  - d. They include Albert Einstein, U.S. General Patton, poet William Butler Yeats and writer John Irving.

Ineffective messages don't get results. A reader who has to guess what the writer means may be wrong. A reader who finds a letter or a memo unconvincing or insulting simply won't do what the message asks. In 1986, Frank Grazian said memos were written only because the first document didn't do the job.

3. The stated main idea in this paragraph is
  - a. Ineffective messages don't get results.
  - b. A reader who has to guess what the writer means may be wrong.
  - c. A reader who finds a letter or a memo unconvincing or insulting simply won't do what the message asks.
  - d. Frank Grazian said memos were written only because the first document didn't do the job.

Law enforcement officers are constantly faced with danger. Events go from routine to life-threatening in seconds. The risk of being shot--or having to shoot someone-- is high. Each year over 50,000 police officers are assaulted. Fifty-five were feloniously killed in 1996.

4. The stated main idea in this paragraph is
  - a. Law enforcement officers are constantly faced with danger.
  - b. Events go from routine to life-threatening in seconds.
  - c. The risk of being shot-or having to shoot someone- is high.
  - d. Each year over 50,000 police officers are assaulted. Fifty-five were feloniously killed in 1996.

Not all relationships last a lifetime. Sometimes they just wind down, as the two people involved slowly lose interest in maintaining their partnership. At other times, they break apart, as disagreements build and there is not a strong enough bond to hold two parties together. Or there may be an abrupt rupture if some event destroys one partner's feeling of trust.

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  - a. Not all relationships last a lifetime.
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  - d. There may be an abrupt rupture if some event destroys one partner's feeling of trust.

**Carbohydrates** are various combinations of sugar units that the body uses primarily for energy. Each gram of carbohydrate contains four calories. The average person requires approximately 2,000 calories per day. About 60 percent of our calories come form carbohydrates, and we obtain 1,200 calories per day from carbohydrates.

6. The stated main idea in this paragraph is
  - a. Carbohydrates are various combinations of sugar units that the body uses primarily for energy.
  - b. Each gram of carbohydrate contains four calories.
  - c. The average person requires approximately 2,000 calories per day.
  - d. About 60 percent of our calories come from carbohydrates, and we obtain 1,200 calories per day from carbohydrates.

**B. For each paragraph below, determine the topic first and then underline the stated main idea in groups.**

Scanning the newspaper for job openings and then filing an application with the company's personnel or human resources department is one way of looking for a job but often not the most effective. Many employees never advertise jobs, and one study reveals that between 75 and 85 percent of employers in typical U.S. cities did not hire any employees through ads during an entire year.

1. Topic:-----

The average American student attends school six or seven hours a day, five days a week, for 180 days, with three months off for summer. The average Japanese student attends school eight hours a day, five days a week plus a half day on Saturday, 240 days a year. For all their classes except physical education and laboratory work, students stay in their homerooms and their teachers come to them. It is clear that Japanese students work much harder than American students do.

2. Topic:-----

Men live 8 to 10 years less than women do. They have higher rates of stress-related disorders, alcoholism, car accidents, and suicide. In sum, the male role is hazardous to men's health.

3. Topic:-----

*Anorexia nervosa* (self-starvation) and *bulimia* (binge eating, alternating with self-induced vomiting and fasting) are serious illnesses involving life-threatening behaviors. An anorexic person considers herself fat and unattractive, regardless of her actual weight. Estimates of the number of women affected vary, but studies indicate that between 4 percent and 9 percent of female college students meet the clinical criteria for diagnosis. Most individuals suffering from anorexia are women (85-95%), and 12 percent of them die. African American women who are overweight seem to maintain a positive body image, but dieting using unhealthy methods and eating disorders are widespread and increasing among women of color.

4. Topic:-----

Take a look around the room you're in. How many things are powered by batteries or plugged into electrical outlets? Just as electricity drives all those appliances, light, etc., a versatile molecule called ATP provides cells with energy to move, build proteins, perform chemical reactions, and carry out any other necessary duties. ATP doesn't work solo in cell, however. Assistants known as enzymes help molecules interact with each other, speeding the cell's chemistry and making it more energy-efficient. Together, ATP and enzymes govern a cell's metabolism.

5. Topic:-----

There could hardly be a more challenging or interesting task for the environmental designer than planning a college campus. After all, it is much like designing a city from the ground up, and few people in history have had the chance to do that. The campus will, presumably endure for many hundreds of years. It will serve as a working environment and home away from home for a changing population of students and professors. It must be comfortable and efficient, but above all, it must express the special personality of the college. It must say through its design: This is who we are.

6. Topic:-----

Exercise is any muscular activity that maintains fitness. Exercise, especially running, tends to increase muscle mass and bone density. When you ask people who exercise regularly how they have benefited, they usually say that it makes them feel better. Whether exercise is moderate or vigorous, feeling better and having an improved sense of satisfaction provides more drive and zest for life.

7. Topic:-----

Stress management begins with adopting the philosophy that you, as an individual, are basically responsible for your own emotional and physical well-being. You can no longer allow other people to determine whether or not you are happy. You have little control over behavior of anyone by yourself. Your goal should be to develop such positive emotional wellness that nobody can ruin your day.

8. Topic:-----

**A. In groups read each paragraph and determines the topic. Then determine the main idea by asking yourself, “What is the author’s one most important point about the topic?” and circle the main idea.**

You may want to break the caffeine habit because it generates dependence. You may want to break it because you don’t like the headache you get when you can’t find a vending machine or when nobody at the office made coffee. Perhaps you want to set a good example for your children to avoid caffeine. Or you simply may want to live as drug-free as possible.

1. The implied main idea sentence for this paragraph is
  - a. You may want to break the caffeine habit because it generates dependence.
  - b. There are several reasons you may want to break the caffeine habit.
  - c. Caffeine is a dangerous drug.
  - d. Caffeine generates dependence and causes headaches.

Imagine trying to find a book in the library of Congress without the aid of a card catalog. It would be almost impossible. That’s the problem people faced in their efforts to find information on the World Wide Web. And that’s what created the demand for another software program” the search engine. In rapid succession, a number of programs with catchy names such as Yahoo!, emerged to act as search engines for the cyberspace traveler. The user could simply type in a name, a word, or a phrase and the search engine would scour the Net for relevant information and website addresses.

2. The implied main idea sentence for this paragraph is
  - a. A search engine is a necessity for anyone who wishes to uses the Library of congress.
  - b. It is a software that allows a user to type in a name a word, or a phrase and the search engine would scour the Net for relevant information and website addresses.
  - c. Yahoo! is a program that benefits the cyberspace traveler.
  - d. A search engine is a software program that allows a World Wide Web user to type in a name or a phrase and the search engine would scour the Net for relevant information and website addresses.

Experiencing failure is not easy. If we take a course and fail it, it hurts, though we may pretend for a moment that it doesn’t. But even if you feel tempted to shrug it off publicly, don’t make that mistake privately. It’s important to take responsibility for and accept failure.

3. The implied main idea sentence for this paragraph is
  - a. if we take a course and fail it, it’s important to take responsibility for and accept failure.
  - b. Experiencing failure is not easy, but it’s important to take responsibility for and accept failure.

- c. Everyone experiences failure, and it is important not to let failure get you down.
- d. If you experience failure, you should pretend it doesn't hurt and shrug it off publicly.

Though steroids make muscles stronger, tendons and ligaments do not increase in strength. Therefore, a strong muscle contraction can tear a tendon and/or a ligament. This is made more serious because the steroids make the injury heal more slowly. When steroids increase muscle size, the extra muscle can grow around the bones and joint, causing them to break more easily.

4. The implied main idea sentence for this paragraph is
- a. Steroids make muscles grow stronger, but they can cause injuries to happen more easily and to heal more slowly.
  - b. Though steroids make muscles stronger, they can cause tears in tendons and /or ligaments.
  - c. They cause slow-healing injuries.
  - d. It is foolish to take steroids.

**Virtual reality** is also known as **VR, artificial reality** or **virtual environments**. Virtual reality hardware includes headgear and gloves. The headgear has earphones and three-dimensional stereoscopic screens. The gloves have sensors that collect data about your hand movements. Coupled with software, this interactive sensory equipment lets you immerse yourself in a computer-generated world.

5. The implied main idea sentence for this paragraph is
- a. Virtual reality is also known as VR, artificial reality or virtual environments.
  - b. headgear and sensory gloves are necessary for virtual reality.
  - c. Coupled with software, interactive sensory equipment lets you immerse yourself in a computer-generated world.
  - d. Virtual reality headgear has earphones and three-dimensional stereoscopic screens.

Every student wants to succeed in school. The same qualities that get you hired and promoted can also help you succeed in this area. Your instructor will be just as impressed as your boss with good communication skills, through preparation, good manners, and adherence to commitments.

6. The implied main idea sentence for this paragraph is
- a. Every student wants to succeed in school.
  - b. The same qualities that get you hired and promoted can also help you succeed in school.
  - c. Students should try to impress their instructors with good communication skills and good manners.
  - d. Students who approach school like a job will be more successful when they start their careers.



**B. Use the formulas you learned in this chapter to help you formulate the implied main idea sentence.**

Exercise appears to lead to improved memory in older people. It can lead to improved reasoning. It can also result in improved reaction time. Researchers at Scripps College compared 42 men and women aged 55 to 89 who exercised vigorously for at least 75 minutes each week with similar group who exercised less than 10 minutes weekly. The high-exercise scored higher in all three-areas.

1. Implied main idea sentence:-----

By now you know that HIV/AIDS has to do with the most aspects of our life, namely sexual behavior. Although HIV is tied closely to the sexual aspects of your life, it is also related to drug use, blood transfusion, pregnancy, and birth. At present there are not effective vaccines against HIV/AIDS. Your best protection against this deadly disease is establishing caring, respectful relationships, and educating yourself so that you can avoid behaviors that expose you to infection.

2. Implied main idea sentence:-----

The best candidate does not necessarily get the job. In most situations, the person who knows the most about getting hired usually gets the desired position. "Chemistry is the paramount factor in hiring," states Wilhelmus, vice- president of William H. Clark Associates, a New York recruiting firm. Job-getting skills are not a guarantee of qualifications once the actual work begins. However, they are necessary to get hired in the first place.

3. Implied main idea sentence:-----

Interruptions and crises, minor and major, can't be eliminated. However, they can be prepared for. By making sure your schedule has some slack in it, for example, you'll have the opportunity to regain time lost to unexpected events.

4. Implied main idea sentence:-----

**Playing Hard to Get**

The traditional advice that has been given to girls is that boys will be more attracted to them if they play hard to get. Is there evidence that is true? In fact, two experiments provide no support for this kind of strategy.

5. Implied main idea sentence:-----

Everyone needs to rest, not only through sleep but through deep relaxation. Too little of either causes irritability, depression, inability to concentrate, and memory loss. Yoga is a great way to unwind, stretch and tone the muscles, and focus energy. Many people find that meditation is essential for relaxation. You don't have to practice a certain type of meditation; just create a time for yourself when your mind is free to rest and quiet itself. Other people find that massage relieves physical and mental tension. Visualization is another powerful technique for relaxing your body.

6. Implied main idea sentence:-----

Absorbent socks that fit properly should be worn during exercise. Socks that are too can cause ingrown toenails, and loose-fitting socks can cause blisters. Not wearing socks results in blisters, odor, and excess wear on shoes. It's important to wear the right size and the right type when you exercise.

7. Implied main idea sentence:-----

**Polygamy** is marriage involving more than one wife or husband at the same time. Most often this takes the form of **polygyny**, marriage of man to two or more women. Polygyny was practiced in ancient China, hardly a small primitive society. It is part of Judeo-Christian history: the ancient Hebrews were polygynists. Up until 1890, so were the Mormons of Utah. Islam, the second-largest religion in the world today, allows a man four wives (providing he treats each wife equally). Only four known societies have practiced **polyandry**-marriage of one woman to two or more men.

8. Implied main idea sentence:-----

Until the 1980s, Japan had one of the lowest rates of divorce in the developed world. Love, however, was not the main ingredient keeping couples together. In part, strong social pressure kept couples together. Becoming divorced was shameful, a sign of individual weakness or moral failing. Marriages were also held together by a strict division of work. Women were responsible for nearly all of the housework and child rearing. Japanese men did, and still do, much less of the housework and childcare than men in Western countries. National studies of time use in Japan from 1965 to 1990 show that husbands do only 10 percent of the housework and childcare.

9. Implied main idea sentence:-----

Although caffeine does not have pharmacological effects on the function of the cardiovascular, respiratory and nervous system, at low fixed pattern of consumption that most people enjoy, caffeine is merely a mild stimulant. But the withdrawal from even mild caffeine habit can cause headaches, tiredness and depression. In high doses, effects such as restlessness, agitation, irregular heartbeat, gastric disturbances and diarrhea have been reported. Problems such as heart and vascular disease, breast fibrocystic conditions, breast cancer and infertility have been largely dismissed by the scientific community as not being related to caffeine.

10. Implied main idea sentence:-----

In order to develop cultural competence, it's important to identify our prejudices and stereotypes and to fight them. Sometimes they are quite difficult to detect. For instance, a wealth of data taken from observation of elementary school classrooms show that teachers often are more responsive to boys than to girls. The teachers don't know they're doing it, but it's a very real bias.

11. Implied main idea sentence:-----

Dr. Kishore Ranade, a neurologist who has background in studying adolescent sleep disorders, said teenagers were biologically programmed to fall asleep later and get up later than adults. "Their brain cycle is not mature. We think this is because adolescents need more hormones for growth, and growth hormones are secreted in the brain during sleep," he said. He also believes that adolescents need about nine hours of sleep a night. Since most teenagers go to bed at 11P.M or later, and get up at 6 A.M., they are going to school in the latter third of their sleep cycle. "No wonder they act like zombies".

12. Implied main idea sentence:-----

**A. Use the list of clue words and signals and identify the pattern.**

The pricing of Internet access provider services varies widely and the market is so competitive that pricing changes frequently. Often you can choose from a menu of pricing plans. Some charge a fixed amount for unlimited use. Others charge a lesser fixed monthly amount plus an hourly connect charge.

1. The writing pattern in this paragraph is
  - a. list
  - b. sequence
  - c. comparison-contrast
  - d. cause-effect

---

The consequences of America's high adolescent pregnancy rate are cause for great concern. Adolescent pregnancy creates health risks for both the offspring and the mother. Infants born to adolescent mothers are more likely to have low birth weight as well as neurological problems and childhood illness. Adolescent mothers often drop out of school. Although many adolescent mothers resume their education later in life, they generally do not catch up with women who postpone childbearing.

2. The writing pattern in this paragraph is
  - a. definition
  - b. sequence
  - c. list
  - d. cause-effect

---

Tuition costs vary greatly from one school to another, but they are substantial everywhere. It costs just over 1,500\$ per year in tuition at the average public community college; more than 3,000\$ per year at the average four-year public college; and almost 14,000\$ per year at the average private college. If you live on campus, count on another five to six thousand dollars for room and board.

3. The writing pattern in this paragraph is
  - a. comparison- contrast
  - b. sequence
  - c. cause-effect
  - d. definition

---

Why do women stay with men who abuse them? Some have low self-esteem and feel they deserve to be beaten. Constant ridicule, criticism, threats, punishment, and psychological manipulation may destroy their self-confidence. Some women feel they have nowhere to turn. Their abusive partners isolate them from family and friends, they are often financially dependant and lack outside social support. If they try to end the relationship or call the police, they get more abuse. Some women are afraid to leave- a realistic fear, since abusive husbands later track down and beat or even kill their wives.

4. What is the writing pattern in this paragraph?

---

Condominiums are individually owned housing units in a building with several such units. Individual ownership does not include the common areas, such as hallways, outside grounds, and recreational facilities. These areas are owned by the condominium association which is run by the people who own the housing units. The condominium association oversees the management and operation of the housing complex. Condominiums owners are charged a monthly fee to cover the maintenance, repairs, improvements, and insurance for the building and the common areas. A condominium is not a type of building or structure; it is a legal form of ownership.

5. What is the writing pattern in this paragraph?

---

With the exception of the police and military, the family is the most violent social group in American society. The home is more dangerous than a dark alley. A person is more likely to be assaulted or murdered in his or her home by a member of the family, than by anyone else, anywhere else, in society.

6. What is the writing pattern in this paragraph?

---

There are ways you can keep your motivation alive, so that you can work with your full energy behind you.

- Take responsibility for your failures – and success.
- Think positively
- Accept that you can't control everything.

7. What is the writing pattern in this paragraph?

---

If you have brothers or sisters, your relationships with them are likely to be the longest-lasting you'll ever have. You and your siblings may have fought continually as children, or you may have been each other's best friends. Either way, your siblings share your roots; they accepted or rejected the same parental values, and they probably deal with you more candidly than almost anyone else you know.

8. What is the writing pattern in this paragraph?

---

Architects use drawings throughout the process of designing of a building. First, they may make very rough sketches, which they gradually refine as the idea takes shape. They may then make detailed sketches of certain parts of the building. Finally, they make a finished drawing for presentation to the client, to sell the idea.

9. What is the writing pattern in this paragraph?

---

On the basis of observation and previous data, a scientist formulates a hypothesis. The hypothesis is tested by further observations or a controlled experiment, and new data either support or falsify the hypothesis. The scientist may then choose to retest the same hypothesis or to test a related hypothesis.

10. What is the writing pattern in this paragraph?

---

Experts continue to question the origins of obesity. As you might expect, the many theories focus on factors within the individual, as well as from the environment. When a definitive cause is identified- and some interesting progress has been made toward that goal-it will comprise an interplay of genetic, metabolic, psychological, and environmental factors. However, until a single all-inclusive discovery is made, if ever, it is safe to assume that obesity is a complex condition caused by a variety of factors. Obese people gain weight in a variety of ways and for a variety of reasons.

11. What is the writing pattern in this paragraph?

---

One of the major tragedies of our time is the high incidence of suicide. In the last year for which statistics are available, 31,100 people in the United States killed themselves, including 5,100 under twenty-five years of age. Among young people, suicides follow accidents as the second leading cause of death, although in certain segments of the young adult population deaths from homicide and HIV/AIDS now exceed those of accidents and suicide.

12. What is the writing pattern in this paragraph?

---

When you type a letter or number on the keyboard, the computer looks it up in a table to find the binary number that has been assigned to represent it. It then uses that binary number during processing. After processing, it reverses the process and looks up each binary number in a table to find the character or other symbol it represents and displays that character for use.

13. What is the writing pattern in this paragraph?

---

When document design is poor, both organizations and society suffer. The defects that caused nuclear accident at Three Mile Island appeared 17 months earlier in a power plant. At the plant, workers were able to control damage before a serious problem arose. However, it was clear that a problem existed that might occur again either at that plant or at other

locations. A supervisor recommended new guidelines- and put them on the second page of a two-page memo. None of the 12 people on the distribution list for that memo responded. Ineffective writing and poor document design caused the memo to be ignored. On March 28, 1979, the same defect led to America's worst nuclear accident to this date - an accident that might have been avoided if writers had been able to design documents that readers could understand and act on.

14. What is the writing pattern in this paragraph?

-----

**A. Read the following excerpts and identify the author's purpose, tone, point of view and intended audience.**

I meant to write this piece earlier, but I had to go to the supermarket and buy more fruit. By the time I got back, I still hadn't worked out. I didn't wake up early this morning to get a head start because it would have cut into my eight hours of dream time. Then, when I finally got to the computer today, bottle of water at my side, I got right up to go to the bathroom. Staying healthy is practically a full time job. The thing is, I already have a full time job.

As it happens, most of us have full-time jobs. And families. And households. And hobbies. Trying to shoehorn into our schedules all the health advice we're given is enough to make us give up and drown our frustrations in a pint of Ben and Jerry's Chubby Hubby.

1. The author's point of view is:
  - a. It's important to eat fresh fruit everyday.
  - b. Staying healthy is practically a full-time job and most of us don't have the time it requires.
  - c. Most of us already have full-time jobs.
  - d. It is easy to make poor food choice when we feel frustrated.
2. The author's tone is:
  - a. humorous
  - b. sarcastic
  - c. angry
  - d. intolerant.

**PREVENTION! EDUCATION! PROTECTION!** Avoid unsafe sex practices; avoid intravenous drug use. This advice has become the formula for surviving in the world of AIDS. *Controlling your behavior can help prevent human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infection.* It has been almost 16 years since Luc Montagnier of the Pasteur Institute published the first report on the virus (HIV) that is now known to cause AIDS. Despite the high-powered arsenal of contemporary biology and media hype, there is nothing on the horizon resembling a cure for AIDS. Nor is science anywhere near a workable vaccine against HIV.

3. The author's tone is
  - a. urgent
  - b. optimistic
  - c. indifferent
  - d. sentimental
4. The author's purpose is to
  - a. persuade readers to take precautions to prevent HIV infection, which ultimately becomes AIDS.
  - b. Inform readers why AIDS treatments have been largely unsuccessful.
  - c. Persuade scientists to redouble their efforts to develop a vaccine against AIDS.



- d. Inform readers about the background and history of HIV and AIDS.
5. The indented audience is
- a. medical personnel who deal with AIDS patients.
  - b. High school and college students.
  - c. Health and sex education teachers.
  - d. Anyone who is sexually active, who uses intravenous drugs, or who may be considering becoming sexually active or using intravenous drugs.
- 

### **Are You a Reader, a Listener, or a Doer?**

One way to explore how you learn best is to ask yourself if you are a reader, a listener, or a doer. Do you get more information from reading and seeing, talking and listening, or doing? Of course, you do all these things, but your learning strength or style may be in one of these areas. A person who learns better by reading possesses a visual learning style. Someone who learns better by listening is considered an auditory learner, and a kinesthetic learns by touch.

6. The author's tone is
- a. remorseful
  - b. emotional
  - c. matter-of-fact
  - d. disbelieving
7. The author's intended audience is
- a. teachers; educators
  - b. students; learners.
  - c. Administrators
  - d. College students who plan to become teachers.
- 

Unfortunately, there are even fewer vocational opportunities for women in prisons than for men. Those that do exist are often stereotypic female occupation (e.g., hairdressing, food service, clerical, housekeeping) that do not reflect the wide array of jobs available to women in today's world of work.

8. The author's tone is:
- a. arrogant
  - b. disapproving
  - c. mocking
  - d. nostalgic
-

The writer posted the following message as a remembrance at [www.thevirtual-wall.org](http://www.thevirtual-wall.org), an extraordinary website dedicated to those Americans in the military who gave their lives during the Vietnam Memorial in Washington, D.C. In his remembrance, the writer refers to *Saving Private Ryan*, a movie in which Capt. Miller is sent to find and bring home young Private Ryan. All of Ryan's brothers have been killed in the war, and he is the only remaining son. Capt. Miller dies saving Private Ryan.

To all those who paid the ultimate sacrifice for their country, their beloved ones, their friends, their enemies, and those they never knew and will never know for generations to come, I thank you.

I am not a "vet". I have never served in any branch of the military or any government entity. I can never know the pain, anger, frustration, or fear you experienced. Indeed, I cannot possibly imagine it. I only know that I am able to write this remembrance today because you *did* suffer through those inhumanities. Words alone can never express the sadness I feel knowing you had to make those sacrifices. Words alone can never express the anger I feel knowing you had to make those sacrifices. Words alone can never express the pride I feel knowing you that you *did* make those sacrifices for people you never knew. Even though I do not stand in front of that granite monolith and caress each and every name inscribed thereon, know that, in spirit, I already have. In one of the final scenes of *Saving Private Ryan*, Capt. Miller tells Ryan to "earn this", meaning the sacrifice they made for him. I hope I can "earn this" for you. You will not be forgotten.

9. The author's primary purpose is to
  - a. inform others of his guilt about not having served in the military
  - b. persuade others that they should feel anger about Americans having to give their lives to defend their country
  - c. persuade others of the importance of the movie *Saving Private Ryan*
  - d. inform those in the military who sacrifices their lives for our country of his gratitude to them and his intention to honor their sacrifice by becoming worthy of it.
10. The author's intended audience is primarily those who have
  - a. visited the "granite monolith"
  - b. seen the movie *Saving Private Ryan*
  - c. died in the military service to our country
  - d. served in the military or who are considering enlisting in the military

As many speakers have discovered, it is easy to overestimate the audience's stock of information. In most informative speeches, your listeners will be only vaguely knowledgeable about the details of your topic. Therefore, you must lead your listeners step by step, without any shortcuts. You cannot assume they will know that they cannot help but understand. As you work on your speech, always consider whether it will be clear to someone who is hearing about the topic for the first time.

1. The intended audience is: -----
2. The author's point of view is: -----

3. The author's purpose is to -----

The three leading causes of death in adolescence are accidents, suicide, and homicide (Takanishi, 1993). More than half of all deaths in adolescents aged 10 to 19 are due to accidents and most of those involve motor vehicles, especially for older adolescents. Risky driving habits, such as speeding, tailgating, and driving under the influence of alcohol or other drugs, might be more important causes of these accidents than lack of driving experience. In about 50 percent of the motor vehicle fatalities involving an adolescent, the driver had a blood alcohol level of 0.10 percent, twice the level needed to be "under the influence" in some states. A high rate of intoxication is often present in adolescents who die as pedestrians or while using recreational vehicles

4. The author's purpose is to -----.

5. The author's point of view is that:-----

Sometimes, inconsistent nonverbal signals result from the sender's internal confusions or uncertainty. For example, a group member may both like and dislike different elements of someone's proposal; this genuine confusion may appear as mixed signals in the form of a positive head nod with a frowning face. To avoid sending mixed messages, be honest and clear. If you as a speaker are confused, help other members interpret your remarks by honestly revealing your confusion. If you are confused or puzzled by the mixed messages of another, say so, and help the other person clarify his or her intent.

6. The author's purpose is to -----

7. The author's indented audience is-----

Our language has changed to reflect and give meaning to the influence of computer technology on our world. A bit of computer humor recently passed along on the Internet pokes fun at this change. Remember when a "window" was something you hated to clean and a "ram" was the cousin of a goat? "Meg" was the name of your girlfriend and "gig" was a job for the night. "Memory" was something that you lost with age, a "CD" was a bank account, "log on" was adding fuel to the fire, "hard drive" was a long trip, "mouse pad" was where a mouse lived, and "backup" happened in your commode. Now they all mean different things and that really "mega bytes"!

8. The author's tone is-----

9. The author's purpose is to-----

Dirty Harry, the 1971 film that spawned several sequels, best illustrate the popular media image of the crime fighter. In that film Clint Eastwood plays Harry, a maverick police officer who is not constrained by standard police procedure. Harry is a man of action who has no patience for the Bill of Rights, the constitutionally protected liberties he holds responsible for letting scores of dangerous criminals go free. In Dirty Harry the qualities that have made Eastwood a Hollywood icon-“the quiet one painfully bottled-up capacity for violence”- break loose. Harry is in pursuit of a vicious killer, Scorpio, who has hijacked a school bus. When forcefully apprehended by Harry, Scorpio shouts, “I have a right to a lawyer!” but Harry kills Scorpio in cold blood, and in the final scene he removes his police badge and throws it into a gravel pit.

10. The author’s purpose is to -----

**A. Read each paragraph below. Decide whether each answer choice represents a logical inference based on the information presented in the paragraph.**

Increasing your reading comprehension is an essential job skill. The amount of your on-the-job reading increases throughout your career. Besides a mountain of memos, professional journals, letters, forms, manuals, annual reports, legal documents, government requirements, and codes, you will be reading community items, newspapers, and magazines. The employee who reads quickly, has the ability to concentrate, and comprehends accurately has an advantage over an employee who dislikes reading or has difficulty concentrating or comprehending.

**1. Identify any logical inferences or conclusions:**

- a. Employees who continue to improve their reading comprehension skills are more likely to get ahead than employees who don't develop their reading skills.
- b. A successful career is not possible without strong reading skills.
- c. Speed reading is the most important reading skill as employee can possess.
- d. A college reading improvement course could be very helpful to students who plan to have a career.

"Shopaholics" and young adults are most vulnerable credit. College students are a prime target for credit card issuers, and issuers make it very easy for students to get credit cards. Wendy Leright, a 25-year-old teacher in Detroit knows all too well. As a college freshman, she applied for and got seven credit cards, all bearing at least 18.9 percent interest rate and a 20\$ annual fee. Although unemployed, she used the cards freely, buying expensive clothes for herself, extravagant Christmas presents for friends and family, and even a one-week vacation to Bahamas, "I got to point where I didn't even look at the price tag", she said. By her senior year, Wendy had amassed 9,000\$ in credit card debt and couldn't make the monthly payments of nearly 200\$. She eventually turned to her parents to bail her out. "Until my mother sat me down and showed me how much interest I had to pay, I hadn't even given it a thought. I was shocked," Wendy said. "I would have had to pay it off for years."

**2. Identify any logical inferences or conclusions:**

- a. College student s should not use credit cards.
- b. College students should educate themselves about using credit cards wisely.
- c. Having multiple credit cards make it easier for college students to overspend.
- d. Credit card companies are unethical.

How important is an interview in getting the right job? The Bureau of National Affairs, a private research firm that serves both government and industry, conducted a survey to answer this question. It polled 196 personnel executives, seeking the factors that were

most important in hiring applicants. The results showed that the employment interview is the single most important factor in landing a job. Further research revealed that the most important factor during these critically decisive interviews was communication skills. Employers identified the ability to communicate effectively as more important in shaping a hiring decision than grade-point average, work experience, extracurricular activities, appearance and preference for job location.

**3. Identify any logical inferences or conclusions:**

- a. It's important to get the right job.
- b. The employment interview is the single most important factor in landing a job.
- c. Job applicants are more likely to be more successful if they have taken steps to strengthen their communication skills.
- d. Communication skills are overrated.

A series of well-conducted laboratory studies by psychologist Michael Bock examined the relationship between emotional arousal and memory. When individuals were shown a list of words and asked to recall them later, they were better able to recall words with positive emotional impact (such as *kiss* and *prize*) than words with negative emotional impact (such as *disease* and *loss*). However, words with neutral impact were recalled least well in Bock's studies. This suggests that, although Freud was correct in saying that negative events are recalled less well than positive events, experiences with any type of emotional impact appear to be easier to recall than neutral experiences.

**4. Identify any logical inferences or conclusions:**

- a. Psychologist Michael Bock conducted a series of well-controlled laboratory studies.
- b. A person recalling a car wreck he witnessed would probably remember it less clearly than a ceremony at which the person was presented with an award.
- c. More research is needed on memory and how it functions.
- d. Deliberately attaching a positive emotion to something you want to remember could help you recall it more easily.

### **Media Availability and Economics**

Every country has communications media, but they are not always available for commercial use (especially radio and television) and coverage may be limited. Lower literacy rates and education levels in some countries restrict coverage of print media. When income levels are low, TV ownership is also low. These factors tend to segment markets by media coverage.

**5. Identify any logical inferences or conclusions:**

- a. International companies have to adjust their marketing efforts to the conditions in

- various countries in which they wish to sell their products or services.
- b. print media are of limited usefulness in countries where literacy and education levels are substandard.
- c. TV would be a more effective advertising medium in the United States than in Cuba, India or Nepal.
- d. Companies that want to have more effective marketing campaigns should sponsor literacy training in countries with low literacy levels.

Emergencies are never expected, but when they do arise, they often demand performances that require good fitness. For example, flood victims may need to fill sandbags for hours without rest, and accident victims may be required to walk or run long distances for help. Also, good fitness is required for such simple tasks as safely changing a spare tire or loading a moving van without injury.

**6. Identify any logical inferences or conclusions:**

- a. The most important reason for working is to be able to handle emergencies when they arise.
- b. All emergencies require physical fitness in the person who is trying to deal with them.
- c. If you suffer an injury while changing a spare tire or loading a van, it is because you are not in good enough physical condition.
- d. In case of an emergency, being physically fit could save your life or help save someone else's life.

Once when we were living on Loomis, a nun from my school passed by and saw me playing out front. The Laundromat downstairs had been boarded up because it had been robbed two days before and the owner had painted on the wood *Yes We're Open* so as not to lose business.

Where do you live? She asked.

There, I said, pointing up to the third floor.

You live *there*?

*There.* I had to look to where she pointed –the third floor, the paint peeling, wooden bars Papa had nailed on the windows so we wouldn't fall out. You live *there*? The way she said it made me feel like nothing. *There.* I lived *there*. I nodded.

I knew then I had to have a house. A real house. One I could point to. But this isn't it. The house on Mango Street isn't it. For the time being, Mama says. Temporary, says Papa. But I know how those things go.

**7. Identify any logical inferences or conclusions:**

- a. The experience with the nun changed how the narrator felt about having a house.

- b. All children should live in a house they can be proud of.
- c. The narrator as a child expects to live on Mango Street for a long time.
- d. The narrator bought a nice home of her own when she became an adult.

The first thing to establish is whether you need a computer at all. Some colleges offer computer facilities at the library or in some dormitories. Or perhaps you can burrow a roommate's. The problem, however, is that when you are up against a term-paper deadline, many others may be also. Then the machine you want may not be available. To determine the availability of campus computers and network support, call the computer centre or the dean of students' office.

- 8. Identify any logical inferences or conclusions:**
- a. Not every college student needs to buy a computer.
  - b. College students who do not own a computer are at a great disadvantage.
  - c. Buying a computer is a complicated decision.
  - d. A college student who owns a computer will have a problem with other students wanting to use the computer.

**B. Write any logical inference that is based on the information in the selection.**

Everyone makes slips occasionally. During an interview with the director of admissions at Lafayette, a candidate was asked why he thought that particular college would be suitable for him. His response was, "Well, I don't want to go to a real big college or a small college. I just want a mediocre college like Lafayette."

- 1. Write an inference you could make about the candidate who was applying for admission to Lafayette College.**

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When women talk about what seems obviously interesting to them, their conversations often include reports of conversations. Tone of voice, timing, intonation, and wording are all re-created in the telling in order to explain-dramatize, really- the experience that is being reported. If men tell about an incident and give a brief summary instead of recreating what was said and how, the women often feel that the essence of the experience is being omitted. If the woman asks, "What exactly did he say?" and "How did he say it?", the man probably can't remember. If she continues to press him, he may feel as if he's being grilled.



**2.** Write an inference about men, women, and how they report conversation.

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If the father is absent, the lack of a same-sex role model for male children can become a worry. The presence of a grandfather or uncle in the house eases this concern somewhat, but the involvement of playmates' or classmates' fathers in their children's lives may cause some sadness or at least wistfulness. When a father is occasionally present, he may turn into a "Disneyland dad", only taking the role of friend and entertainer, leaving mom with all the day-to-day responsibility.

**3.** Write an inference about having a father in the home.

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**A.** Not concentrating is a poor cause of listening. The brain is incredibly efficient. Although we talk a rate of 120 to 150 words a minute, the brain can process 400 to 800 words a minute. This would seem to make listening very easy, but actually it has the opposite effect. Because we can take in a speaker's words and still have plenty of spare "brain time", we are tempted to interrupt our listening by thinking about other things. And thinking about other things is just what we do.

1. The topic of this paragraph is
  - a. the brain
  - b. how fast we think and talk
  - c. not concentrating
  - d. not concentrating and poor listening.
2. The main idea of this paragraph is:
  - a. Not concentrating is a poor cause of listening.
  - b. The brain is incredibly efficient. Although we talk a rate of 120 to 150 words a minute, the brain can process 400 to 800 words a minute.
  - c. This would seem to make listening very easy, but actually it has the opposite effect.
  - d. Because we can take in a speaker's words and still have plenty of spare "brain time", we are tempted to interrupt our listening by thinking about other things.
3. How many supporting details are given?
  - a. two
  - b. three
  - c. four
  - d. five
4. The writing pattern used in this paragraph is:
  - a. list
  - b. definition
  - c. comparison-contrast
  - d. cause and effect

**B.** Skilled performances look easy and effortless. In reality, as every dancer, musician, and athlete knows, they're the products of hard work, hours of patience, attention to detail, and intense concentration. Like skilled performances in other arts, writing rests on a base of work.

5. The topic of this paragraph is
  - a. hard work and attention to detail.
  - b. easy, effortless performances,
  - c. skilled performances and writing.
  - d. dancers, musicians, and athletes.

6. The main idea of the paragraph:

- a. Skilled performances look easy and effortless.
- b. Why some things are harder than they look.
- c. In reality, as every dancer, musician, and athlete knows, they're the products of hard work, hours of patience, attention to detail, and intense concentration.
- d. Skilled performances look easy and effortless but like skilled performances in other arts, writing rests on a base of work.

**C.** Readers who have already made up their minds are highly resistant to change. Therefore, when you must write to readers who oppose what you have to say, you need to

- Start your message with any areas of agreement or common ground that you share with your reader.
- Make a special effort to be clear and unambiguous. Points that might be clear to a neutral reader can be misread by someone who isn't.
- Make a special effort to avoid statements that will anger the reader.
- Limit your statement or request to the smallest possible area. If parts of your message could be delivered later, postpone them.
- Show that your solution is the best solution currently available, even though it isn't perfect.

7. The topic of this paragraph is

- a. showing your solution is the best available.
- b. readers who have already made up their minds.
- c. how to write readers who oppose what you have to say.
- d. making an effort to write in a clear, unambiguous way.

8. The main idea of this paragraph is:

- a. It is difficult to write to readers who have already made up their minds.
- b. Readers who have already made up their minds are highly resistant to change. Therefore, when you must write to readers who oppose what you have to say.
- c. Show that your solution is the best solution currently available, even though it isn't perfect.
- d. Make a special effort to avoid statements that will anger the reader.

9. What is the meaning of *neutral* as it is used in this paragraph?

- a. not favoring either side of an issue
- b. angry
- c. not having any interest in
- d. unsophisticated

**D.** Night terrors are a less common, but perhaps even more upsetting nocturnal experience than nightmare. The individual awakens in a state of panic, sometimes screaming. A sense of calm usually returns within a few minutes, but these are terrifying experiences. Unlike nightmares, they do not occur during REM sleep but occur during the deepest phases of sleep. Night terrors are most common in preschool-age children, but sometimes adults experience them.

10. The topic of this paragraph is
- night terrors
  - nightmares
  - panic attacks
  - REM sleep
11. The main idea of this paragraph is
- Night terrors are a less common, but perhaps even more upsetting nocturnal experience than nightmares.
  - The individual awakens in a state of panic, sometimes screaming.
  - A sense of calm usually returns within a few minutes, but these are terrifying experiences.
  - Night terrors are most common in preschool-age children, but sometimes adults experience them.
12. What is the meaning of *nocturnal* as it is used in this paragraph?
- frightening
  - related to childhood
  - happening frequently
  - occurring at night

E. Language is what lets us communicate with one another far more precisely than any other animals can. It lets us lay joint plans, teach another, and learn from what others experienced elsewhere or in the past. With it, we can mentally store far more efficiently than can any animals.

13. The topic of the paragraph is
- functions of language
  - humans and other animals
  - learning from the past
  - mentally storing representations of the world
14. The main idea of this paragraph is:
- Language is what lets us communicate with one another far more precisely than any other animals can.
  - Without language we could not learn from the past.
  - Language serves a variety of important functions and learn from the past.
  - Language allows us to store precise representations and learn from the past.
15. What is the meaning of *joint* as it is used in this paragraph?
- shared
  - evenly distributed
  - parted
  - point of connection between two bones

## Appendix C

