



Developing a Reading Road Map for Teaching COMPREHENSION

ON-DEMAND PROFESSIONAL LEARNING ROOTED IN BEST-PRACTICE STRATEGIES

Online Workshop Overview

Students at every level need explicit, ongoing instruction that builds their comprehension skills. This type of standards-driven teaching is intended to equip students with the ability to analyze and understand all types of texts. In this online workshop, you'll learn to layer skills to develop readers who can track and summarize key details, visualize and question author craft, and connect and synthesize bigger ideas.



Workshop Topics:

- Introduce the various scenarios readers will encounter— familiar v. unique formats, short v. long texts, easy v. hard reading, collaborative v. independent experiences, etc.
- Dissect the College and Career-Ready Reading Standards to identify the six core comprehension strategies readers must employ.
- Recognize a scaffold of mini-lesson subskills that must be explicitly taught.
- Study a yearlong calendar that begins with initial learning from simple texts and gives way to independent deep thinking of more complex texts.
- Select texts/passages best suited for comprehension instruction.
- Evaluate the strengths and limitations of traditional curriculum assessments.

When you complete the online workshop, you'll be able to:

- ▶ Effectively introduce the concepts of inferential thinking, text annotation, close reading, and on-screen reading in kid-friendly ways.
- ▶ Weave on-screen and paper-based reading experiences into the curriculum.
- ▶ Focus classroom time on strategy/skill instruction, rather than passage/novel understanding.
- ▶ Pair appropriate texts with whole-class comprehension instruction.
- ▶ Identify assessments that truly measure students' level of mastery of a particular comprehension skill/strategy.

"This is earth shaking info that is going to help us transform our elementary teaching!"
Nekita Johnson • Instructional Coach at Mercer County Intermediate School, Harrodsburg, KY

WORKSHOP OUTLINE

Yearlong Vision

- See the big picture
- Launch the first weeks
- Target comprehension the rest of the year

Anchor Standards

- Understand the expectations
- Recognize the embedded strategies
- Identify the comprehension subskills

The Spiral Approach

- Layer instruction intentionally
- Teach a skill across the year
- Increase independence & decrease support
- Plot a weekly focus

Text Selection

- Pair target skills with appropriate texts
- Identify texts for each level of the scaffold
- Assess comprehension with new texts

The First Weeks

- Establish procedures
- Define the range of reading
- Define readers as thinkers

Total time to complete:

5-6 hours; (allotted time to complete the online workshop: 30 days)

Instructor:

Kristina Smekens
President & Lead Consultant for
Smekens Education Solutions, Inc.

A RATIONALE TO ENROLL

Why Learn More About Comprehension Mini-Lessons?

When teaching reading, the focus should not be on the picture book, the textbook chapter, or the novel. The text is merely a tool. Simply reading a text and talking about its details isn't teaching reading. Rather, precious classroom time must be spent on explicit lessons that teach students six ways to think about texts.

1. Retell a text's relevant details and summarize its important highlights.
2. Determine an author's main idea and reason for writing.
3. Visualize an author's ideas to deepen understanding.
4. Ask questions of a text, make predictions about the ideas, and evaluate effectiveness of the author.
5. Use background knowledge to draw important comparisons and make bigger connections.
6. Synthesize learning, thinking far beyond what a text says and considering what it means and why it matters.

Deliberate instruction on each of the above is imperative. However, a single unit will not be enough. Rather, readers need to spiral through these strategies in several smaller units in order to construct a scaffold of understanding. This allows strategies to be introduced, studied, extended, and deepened throughout the year.

Top Questions Teachers Ask About Comprehension Mini-Lessons

- ▶ How do I honor my curriculum map or reading textbook series and still be responsive to student needs relative to comprehension?
- ▶ How do I prioritize my comprehension mini-lessons over the course of the year?
- ▶ How can I scaffold my comprehension mini-lessons so that the skills taught build on prior knowledge?
- ▶ What kinds of texts and materials can I use to enhance my comprehension mini-lessons?
- ▶ What principles should I use to guide my planning of comprehension mini-lessons?
- ▶ How can I make my comprehension mini-lessons more effective?
- ▶ What kinds of reading tasks should I have students do following the mini-lessons?

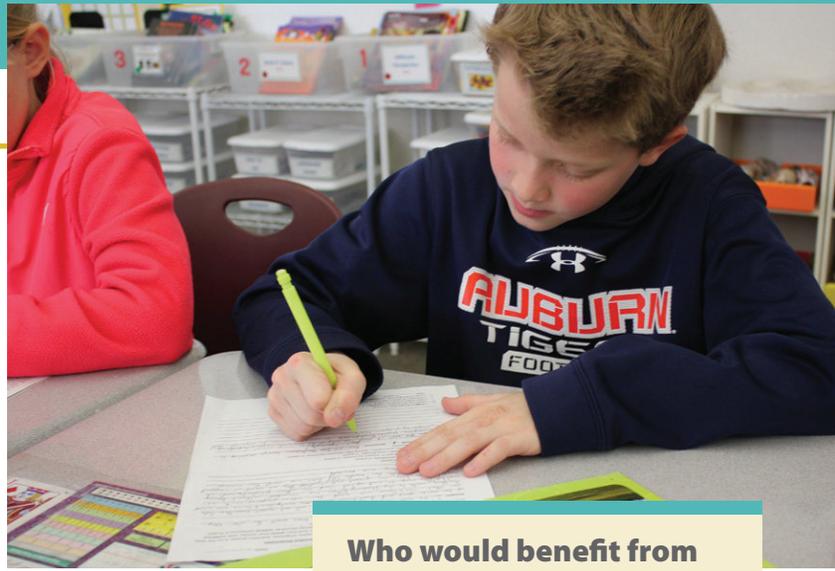
Kristina provides the answers to these questions and many more!

Continuing Education Credit

With prior approval from the registrant's school district, participants may receive credit for 5 hours of professional development for this webAcademy online workshop. Attendees who choose the "Verified View" viewing option may download a completion certificate after finishing the online workshop.

Graduate Credit

Thanks to a partnership with the Midwest Teachers Institute, registrants may elect to pursue three university-level graduate credits after completing this workshop and the Delivering Explicit & Engaging Comprehension Mini-Lessons online workshop. These are non-degree credits designed for professional certification renewals and salary step increases. (Check with your district or employers to determine their policies for pay increases.) The cost of graduate credit is \$375 and is separate from the cost of each online workshop.



Who would benefit from this online workshop?

- K-6 Classroom Teachers
- 6-12 Language Arts Teachers
- Literacy Coaches
- Literacy Coordinators
- Title I Teachers / Directors
- ELL Teachers
- High-Ability Teachers
- Principals & Assistant Principals
- Curriculum Directors

Direct Ties to Standards

The strategies shared during this webAcademy online workshop mirror the grade-level expectations outlined within the reading and writing portions of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and the Indiana Academic Standards.



Secret site Digital Resources

Registrants receive lifetime access to a password-protected web page that contains a treasure trove of lessons, videos, and other resources for implementation.



ABOUT THE PRESENTER

Kristina Smekens

Kristina Smekens is a full-time literacy consultant who has built a reputation for using enthusiasm, humor, and common sense to equip K-12 educators with practical, demystifying strategies for teaching reading and writing.

As president and lead consultant for Smekens Education, Kristina is constantly developing new strategies for helping teachers to meet the demands of today's College and Career-Ready Standards. She and her two full-time associates share those strategies with teachers across the United States and beyond through on-site school trainings, regional seminars, and an always-growing pool of print, digital, and video resources.

A PRESENTER

Kristina has a gift for making the complex seem simple—for showing teachers how to meet the needs of readers and writers by bridging the gap between education research and practical, classroom-tested strategies that work. When she presents at state and national conferences, teachers flock to her sessions because they know Kristina will share strategies they can use in their own classrooms the very next day.

But beyond providing teachers with practical classroom techniques, Kristina is also a master at giving educators an injection of motivation and encouragement to help them return to their classrooms with the confidence and excitement they need to execute change. In fact, more than 17,000 educators rely on a monthly “shot in the arm” from Kristina as subscribers to her monthly email newsletter, “Big Ideas.”

AN AUTHOR

Well known for offering innovative ideas, Kristina has created more than 50 “Smekens Originals,” a compilation of books, guides, and classroom tools designed to help teachers implement best-practice literacy strategies. Among the most popular of these resources are her best-selling books, *Launching the Writer's Workshop: Grades K-2* and *Grades 3-12*. Other popular publications include *The Trait Mate: 6-Traits Starter Lessons*, *Connecting Comprehension & Composition*, *Sing & Comprehend*, *Close Reading Questions for Literature*, *Close Reading Questions for Informational Text*, *Trait Trackers*, and *Serving Up Synthesis*. Additionally, Kristina is the author of *Trait-Based Writing: Lessons and Activities* (Scholastic, 2009).



A CRAFTER

Beyond books and physical teacher tools, Kristina has also created a library of more than 50 on-demand professional learning videos that are utilized by teachers around the world. With topics ranging from “Building Kid-Friendly Writing Rubrics” to “Achieving a Close Reading,” each of Kristina’s “webPD” videos uses a seminar-style format to capture her energy and enthusiasm while conveying her teacher-friendly ideas.

BACKGROUND

Kristina earned her BA in English and education at Michigan State University. Prior to her full-time consulting career, she was an accomplished high school English and journalism teacher in Michigan and Indiana. A leader in state and national scholastic journalism endeavors, Kristina authored a journalism textbook and teachers’ guide for Walsworth Publishing in 2002.

Over the past 12 years, she has been blessed to work and learn with hundreds of schools and thousands of teachers throughout the Midwest. She was awarded the Excellence in Reading Award by the Indiana State Reading Association in 2013 for her contributions to literacy in Indiana.

Kristina lives in Warren, Indiana with her husband and business partner Brady, their three teenage children, and a rambunctious family dog named Buddy.

“Kristina just takes the guess work out of everything to make it ALL make sense!”

Nicki King • Teacher,
Union Furnace
Elementary, Logan, OH

“Kristina was fantastic! She was very intentional in her approach to teaching the 6 Traits and making it interesting for all learners! I learned new and exciting strategies to improve student writing.”

Jenae McKnight •
Instructional Coach, Lake
Ridge New Tech Schools,
Gary, IN

“I love the way Kristina presents the information with so much enthusiasm. I love how she builds on what she’s taught before.”

Kristen Smith • Teacher,
Gilmer County High
School, Glenville, WV

“After 33 years of teaching, I still am drawn back into Kristina’s workshops because they are research-based, standards-focused, and very interactive.”

Katie Cadle • Teacher,
Paoli Community
Schools, Paoli, IN

