

DEVELOPING READING COMPREHENSION OF NARRATIVE TEXTS IN ENGLISH BY USING EFFECTIVE READING STRATEGIES



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Abstract: *This article examines the features of narrative texts and the purpose of reading short stories, novels, biographies in comprehension and how to understand this type of reading material with a thorough analysis using effective reading comprehension strategies. Writing summaries after reading a selected passage and organizing oral discussions (pair discussions, mini-group discussions, or debates) based on the content reviewed are first described separately, and then the combination of using these selected strategies is also discussed.*

Keywords: *Narrative texts, reading strategies, comprehension of reading passages, summary writing, oral discussions.*

Learners usually read different kinds of coursebook texts, academic texts in the process of learning a foreign language. Additionally, they are supposed to read narrative text types as an extensive reading at schools, colleges and universities. Especially, students of foreign language departments, they have special classes called “Home reading” and “English Literature” which require them to read and analyze variety of narrative texts. Narrative text is a form of written or spoken communication that tells a story or recounts a series of events. A narrative is a text that tells a story and, in doing so, entertains the audience. (Mark Anderson and Kathy Anderson, Text Types in English 3, p.3.)

The primary purpose of narrative text is to entertain, engage, or emotionally connect with the audience by presenting a sequence of events in a structured and often creative way. Unlike expository text, which focuses on providing information, narrative text emphasizes storytelling and may include elements such as characters, plot, setting, and dialogue. Examples of narrative text include novels, short stories, memoirs, fairy tales, folktales, and fictional scripts for plays or films. Narrative writing is a powerful way to engage readers and immerse them in the experiences of characters as they navigate the challenges and events of the story.

Characteristics of narrative text include:

1. Plot: Narrative text typically has a plot, which consists of a sequence of events that unfold over time. This plot may include a beginning, middle, and end, with a central conflict or problem that characters must address.

2. Characters: Narratives often feature characters who play specific roles in the story. These characters can be developed with distinct personalities, motivations, and relationships.

3. Setting: The setting of a narrative text describes the time and place in which the events occur. It helps create a sense of atmosphere and context for the story.

4. Conflict: Most narratives involve some form of conflict or challenge that characters must confront and resolve. This conflict can be internal (within a character's mind) or external (a problem or obstacle in the external world).

5. Dialogue: Dialogue is often used in narrative text to convey conversations between characters. It adds realism and depth to the story, allowing readers to hear the characters' voices.

6. Emotion: Narratives often evoke emotions in the audience. Whether through humor, drama, suspense, or other means, the writer aims to connect with the reader on an emotional level.

7. Narrative Voice: The narrative text may be written in the first-person perspective (using "I" and presenting the narrator's personal experiences) or the third-person perspective (using "he," "she," or character names). The choice of narrative voice affects how the story is presented.

Chatman classified narrative text into four basic elements as follows:

A. Characters. In every story, there must be characters that play on it. There are two characters take place within a story. They are main characters and secondary characters. Character is the single most important element in the narrative text. It describes physical of the character such as age, weight, height, even personality traits including the strength and weaknesses. (Chatman, S., and B. Attebery, Reading Narrative Fiction, p.23)

b. Settings. Settings are what author writes to describe where and when the story takes place. The setting addressed the location (where) and period (when) of the story whether the story tells readers among realistic, historical fiction or fantasy.

c. Plot. The plot includes a series of episodes or events written by the author to hold the reader's attention and to build excitement as the story progresses. The plot contains an initiating event, starting the main character of the series of events toward problem solving.

d. Conclusion The writer ends up the story by summarizing and telling the solution of the problem in the story. This the last part is called by conclusion

Comprehending narrative text can be effectively achieved through a combination of writing summaries, engaging in oral discussions, and using comprehension questions. Here's how each method contributes to a better understanding of narrative text:

Writing Summary: Writing a summary of a narrative text can help you organize and recall the key elements of the story. It requires you to identify the main characters, the setting, the central conflict, and the resolution. Summarizing a narrative reinforces your memory of the plot and character development. It also encourages critical thinking by making you assess which elements are most essential to the story. However, summaries may not capture the emotional nuances and literary techniques used in the narrative.

Oral Discussions: Engaging in oral discussions about a narrative text with peers or a group can provide valuable insights and different perspectives. Discussing characters' motivations, the story's themes, and the author's writing style can deepen your understanding. It allows you to explore the story from various angles and encourages critical thinking and active engagement. Discussing the narrative with others can help you notice details or interpretations you might have missed on your own.

Comprehension Questions: Comprehension questions related to a narrative text can guide your reading and focus your attention on critical aspects of the story, such as plot developments, character motivations, and thematic elements. Answering these questions forces you to think deeply about the text and ensures you understand key points. Comprehension questions can also be tailored to target specific literary techniques or themes within the narrative.

In practice, a combination of these methods can be highly effective:

Start with Comprehension Questions: Begin by reading the narrative text while actively answering comprehension questions that prompt you to engage with the story's elements and themes.

Oral Discussions: Discuss the narrative with others, sharing your interpretations and hearing theirs. This can provide new insights and deepen your understanding of the story's nuances.

Write a Summary: After reading and discussing, write a summary of the narrative to consolidate your understanding and highlight the most critical elements of the story.

The most effective approach may vary depending on your learning style and the specific narrative text. Some individuals may find discussions more engaging, while others benefit from summarization or focused comprehension questions. Ultimately,

using a combination of these methods ensures a comprehensive and enriched comprehension of narrative texts.

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