Understanding and Teaching Reading Comprehension: A handbook

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The ultimate aim of reading is not the process but to understand what we read and comprehension can take place at many different levels. There has been an increasing emphasis on the importance of reading comprehension in recent years but despite this there is very little written on this vital topic accessible to trainee and practicing teachers.

The *Handbook of Reading Comprehension* presents an overview of recent findings on reading comprehension and comprehension problems in children. It provides a detailed examination of the characteristics of children who have reading comprehension difficulties, and examines ways in which comprehension can be supported and improved. It is accessibly written for students and professionals with no previous background in the psychology of reading or reading problems.

This indispensable handbook asks the question 'what is comprehension?' The authors consider comprehension of different units of language: understanding single words, sentences, and connected prose and outline what readers (and listeners) have to do to successfully understand an extended text. This book also considers comprehension for different purposes, in particular reading for pleasure and reading to learn and explores how reader characteristics such as interest and motivation can influence the comprehension process.

Different skills contribute to successful reading comprehension. These include word reading ability, vocabulary knowledge, syntactic skills, memory, and discourse level skills such as the ability to make inferences, knowledge about text structure, and metacognitive skills. The authors discuss how each one contributes to the development of reading comprehension skill and how the development of these skills (or their precursors) in pre-readers, provides the foundation for reading comprehension development.

Areas covered include:-

- Word reading and comprehension
- Development of comprehension skills
- Comprehension difficulties
- Assessment
- Teaching for improvement

Throughout the text successful experimental and classroom based interventions will be highlighted, practical tips for teachers and summary boxes detailing key points and explaining technical terms will be included in each chapter

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