



Developing a Reading Road Map for Teaching COMPREHENSION

ON-DEMAND PROFESSIONAL LEARNING ROOTED IN BEST-PRACTICE STRATEGIES

Course 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 powerful course, 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.



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 course, 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.

"What a refreshing way to spend my day! I always leave a Smekens (training) revived and excited for the next school day."

Brianne Hannah • teacher at Richard Allen Academy III, Hamilton, OH

COURSE 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 course:

5-6 hours; (allotted time to complete course: 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?

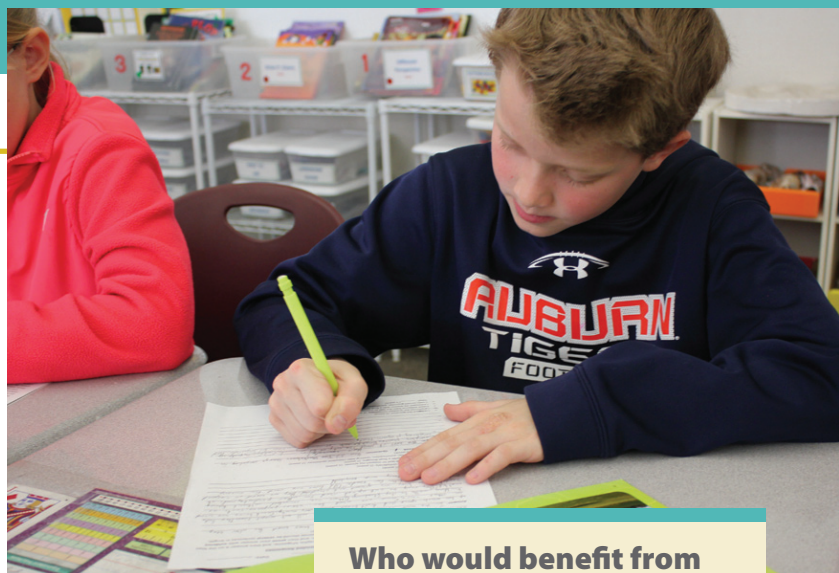
Kristina provides the answers to these questions and many more!

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 course. At the conclusion of the course, registrants may download a Certificate of Completion which can be used to verify participation.

Graduate Credit

Thanks to a partnership with the Midwest Teachers Institute, registrants may elect to pursue three university-level graduate credits after completing this course and the Delivering Explicit & Engaging Comprehension Mini-Lessons course. 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 web course.



Who would benefit from this course?

- 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 course 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 training 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

“I love how you made it abundantly clear the why and how to hone in with intentionality on the issues my kids are having rather than giving skimpy instruction on a plethora of topics just to say ‘we covered that.’ Now, I feel like I can create a road map that will make sense because it will be specifically tailored to their needs.”

Priscilla Peterson •
Teacher, Westfield Middle
School Westfield, 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

Developing a Reading Road Map for Teaching Comprehension

TWO WAYS TO ENROLL:

1. Online - with a credit card *(Perfect for individuals!)*

Visit: www.webAcademy.SmekensEducation.com

2. FAX THIS FORM - with a school purchase order to 888-376-0489

Contact Person: _____

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School name: _____

School address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

School phone: _____

COURSE FEE: Course sharing not allowed.

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PAYMENT:

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Name _____ Email _____

Name _____ Email _____

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TERMS OF USE

We encourage enrolled participants to take advantage of all the features webAcademy has to offer. In doing so, participants agree to the following terms of use:

- 1 Login information and video access may NOT be shared with any individual who is not enrolled in the course.
- 2 Unauthorized sharing of login access will result in a non-refundable cancellation of any and all active courses.
- 3 Subscribers are not permitted to reprint, republish, repost or otherwise distribute any content or images from a course.

MUST AGREE & SIGN

☐ _____
By checking & signing, you agree with the **Terms of Use**.

Group Registration Process

To register a group of teachers, complete the form on this page and fax it with a purchase order to webAcademy at 888-376-0489. After a purchase order is received, a professional development specialist will email each registrant with instructions for accessing the course.

webAcademy
BY SMEKENS EDUCATION

Each webAcademy course features engaging online professional development led by Smekens Education President and Lead Consultant, Kristina Smekens. Designed for individual or group use, every self-paced course consists of video footage from one of Kristina's full-day workshops.

In addition to delivering 5+ hours of professional development, webAcademy courses also include opportunities for educators to reflect and comment on what they are learning. Registrants are granted 30 days to complete the course but receive lifetime access to a password-protected web page that contains a treasure trove of lessons, videos, and other resources for implementation.