



# Tutor Connection

Fall 2014 Edition

Tri-County Literacy Council – Fall 2014

Tri-County Literacy Council is a community-based, non-profit organization that enriches both community and individuals by addressing literacy needs

*“Neither comprehension nor learning can take place in an atmosphere of anxiety.”*

*Rose Kennedy*

## Comprehension – A Common Problem



Carol Anne Maloney, Coordinator of Volunteers

**F**all is a time of newness.

Children are going back to school, vacations are over, and the cool weather makes studying more appealing. Many adult students seek out our agency in order to set new academic and personal goals. Comprehension problems are common issues with many of our students. They may be able to read a text fluently, but have trouble understanding it. If this is a problem your student encounters, the following strategies may be helpful:

- **Ask questions *before* reading the text.** What clues does the title give you? Is the writing a work of fiction or nonfiction? Why are you reading this document? What information do you already know about the topic? What predictions can you make about what will happen next?
- **Ask questions *when* reading the text.** What are you learning? Do you need to reread it? What are the main ideas? Can you summarize what you have read in your own words? Are there words that are new to you?
- **Ask questions *after* you read a text.** Take the time to discuss what you have read. Were your predictions right? What were the main ideas and themes in the writing? Do you agree with the author? Could you think of a better ending? Students should know that what they think is important. Their opinion counts!

*“Literacy is a bridge  
from misery to  
hope.”*

*Kofi Annan*

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#### We're on the Web!

See us at:

[www.tricountyliteracycouncil.ca](http://www.tricountyliteracycouncil.ca)

Visit our website  
regularly; to learn about  
the latest FREE courses  
being offered.

- Cloze exercises are another technique you may want to use to increase comprehension. **In cloze exercises words are deleted from a passage, and the student must think of appropriate words to apply.** In order to do the exercise the student must understand the context in order to complete the sentence. Cloze exercises are also a great way to build vocabulary. Some students may have comprehension difficulties due to low vocabulary skills.
- Encourage students to visualize what they have read. Their imagination is a wonderful tool. It will also help them to remember what they have read.



## International Literacy Day

Each year on September 8<sup>th</sup> International Literacy Day is celebrated to acknowledge the importance of basic literacy skills. We may think that literacy is a third-world issue but following are surprising statistics from the Canadian Literacy and Learning Network:

- 42% of Canadian adults between the ages of 16 and 65 have low literacy skills.
- 55% of working age adults in Canada are estimated to have less adequate health literacy skills. Shockingly, 88% of adults over the age of 65 appear to be in this situation.
- Adults living in poverty often do not have the literacy skills required to get into job training programs. They may need literacy upgrading before they can succeed in training programs, but only 5 to 10% of eligible adults enroll in these programs.
- Less than 20% of people with the lowest literacy skills are employed.
- Investment in literacy has a 241% return!

Source:

[www.literacy.ca/literacy/literacy-sub/](http://www.literacy.ca/literacy/literacy-sub/)



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