

# **Scaffolding Comprehension Instruction: From Teacher Support to Student Independence**

Marsha L. Roit

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## What is Scaffolding

- Scaffolding is a process in which students are given support until they can apply new skills and strategies independently (Rosenshine & Meister, 1992).
- When students are learning new or difficult tasks, they are given more assistance. As they begin to demonstrate task mastery, the assistance or support is decreased gradually in order to shift the responsibility for learning from the teacher to the students. Thus, as the students assume more responsibility for their learning, the teacher provides less support.

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Contractors use scaffolding to support a building until it can stand by itself.



Teachers provide instructional scaffolding to support new learning and then withdraw support as students demonstrate understanding.

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## Scaffolding Simply Put

- **The teacher does the instructional activity through direct explanation and modeling using thinking aloud.**
- **The class or student works with the teacher to perform the task.**
- **The class or student works with partners or in a small group.**
- **The individual students does it.**

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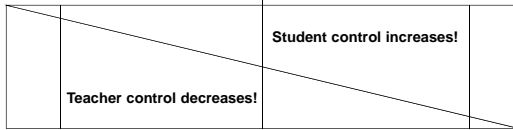
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## Goal of Scaffolding

From teacher control to student ownership!



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## Scaffolding Strategy Instruction

From maxim support to independence

- Initially, the teacher models the strategy.
- Students begin guided practice – perform parts of the modeling independently; teacher continuously assesses.
- As students gain experience with and understanding of strategies, the teacher gradually reduces support.
- Students perform the entire task with little or no support from their instructor.

Turnbull et. al., 1999, pp. 641-642

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## Strategies

- Strategies are conscious plans that people use in order to achieve a goal.
- Reading strategies are the procedures that all readers bring to bear when they encounter difficulties when reading.
  - When something doesn't make sense, readers stop and recognize there is a problem
  - Strategies are used to clarify confusions, inconsistencies, and complexities.
  - Strategies are used to delve deeper into text, to make connections, inferences, and draw conclusions.

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Assess first to determine the students' instructional level or understandings!

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Rubrics: Monitor Progress and Support Scaffolding

**Making Connections**

- The student makes connections between prior knowledge and information in the text.
- The student makes connections between or relates personal experiences to what is read in the text (text-to-self connections).
- The student makes connections across or relates information from different selections (text-to-text connections).
- The student makes connections or relates information between what is happening in the text to what is happening in the world today (text-to-world connections).

**Predicting**

- The student stops to make a prediction about the text.
- The student identifies the clues in the text used to make a prediction.
- The student uses clues in the text and prior knowledge to make a prediction.
- The student recognizes when a prediction is or is not confirmed by the text.

**Summarizing**

- The student retells information from the story.
- The student paraphrases or puts the main ideas and details in his or her own words.
- The student gives a summary that includes only the important or main ideas.
- The student recognizes when the same ideas are included more than once in a summary and deletes them.

**Visualizing**

- The student recognizes appropriate places in the text to stop and visualize.
- The student visualizes literal ideas or scenes described by the author.
- The student makes inferences while visualizing to show understanding of characters' feelings, mood, and setting. The visualizations go beyond the author's literal words.
- The student uses visualizing differently depending on the type of text (for example, characters, setting, and actions in narratives or a process description in nonfiction).

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REMEMBER, BUILD ON WHAT STUDENTS ALREADY CAN DO!

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## Use Instructional Routines to Support Scaffolding and Learning

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## Consistency Helps! Instructional Routines

- For the children, routines
  - Help students focus attention on new learning, not on how to learn something.
  - Let children know what is important.
  - Organize learning.
  - Set expectations.
  - Connect to real life.
- For the teacher, routines
  - Make it easier for the teacher.
  - Maximize instructional time.

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## Effective Routines

“Establishing routines is one way of letting students know what is expected from them in specific situations. However, the reason why effective teachers use routines goes beyond classroom management; more specifically and more importantly, effective teachers use routines to make the most of classroom time for teaching and learning.”

Stronge, Tucker and Hindeman (2004)

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## Building Instructional Scaffolds

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## Scaffolding: Making Predictions and Building Language

Introducing making predictions: Beginning

- Show pictures of typical breakfast foods: eggs, toast, cereal, juice, etc, naming each food as you show it.
- I see eggs, toast, cereal and juice. What are the clues? Why are these clues?



- Raincoat, boots, umbrella - what type of weather do we think is
- Suitcase, airplane,
- Table, stove, sink, refrigerator – what room might we be in if we saw these things..

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## Scaffolding: Making Predictions and Building Language

Introducing making predictions: Intermediate

Explain that when we make predictions, we try to use what we know or clues from the author to think about what will happen next.

Give examples based on everyday experiences  
I can predict . . . because . . .

Frederick was eating his favorite meal. He had a bagel, a banana, some cereal, and a glass of milk.

I predict his favorite meal is breakfast because I know that many people eat these foods for breakfast.

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## Scaffolding: Making Predictions

Use short paragraphs with obvious clues

Sharon and her friends were planning a wonderful day at the park. They played games. Before spreading out their lunches, they looked around on the ground very carefully. They wanted to be sure there were no unwanted guests around to eat their food. I predict they were looking for:

*The clues in the story are . . . and I know . . . I predict the unwanted guest is . . .*



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## Scaffolding: Making Predictions

Use short paragraphs with obvious clues

Sue planted a garden in the spring. She placed the seeds in the ground and carefully covered them. She watered her garden regularly and the sun warmed the soil.

*What information in the passage can we use to make a prediction? What prediction can you make using that information?*

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## Scaffolding

To practice, use stories with obvious clues

- *The Garden* (Arnold Lobel)
- The Little Red Hen
- *The Three Billy Goats Gruff*
- *The Day They Parachuted Cats into Borneo*

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## Scaffold

### Develop Elaborated Responses

- I predict ...
- I predict ... because ...
- I can infer ... because ...
- The author has provided the following clues: ...
- My prediction was confirmed because ...
- My prediction was refuted because ...
- I know ... so I can predict ...
- The clues the author gave are ... so I can predict ...
- I need to make a prediction because ...
- I think ... is going to happen because ...

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## Asking Questions and Finding Answers

- Model questions of importance.
- Move students from asking yes or no questions or factual questions to questions that reflect higher order thinking
- Scaffold student questioning: Ask a how question or a what question after reading a section.
- Keep track of questions; discuss answers or discuss where and how to find the answer.

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## Consistency Helps!

What is this animal called?

What is this animal covered with?



How does this animal move?

What does this animal eat?

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## Consistency Helps!

What is this animal called?      What is this animal covered with?



How does this animal move?      What does this animal eat?

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## Consistency Helps!

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How does this animal move?      What does this animal eat?

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## Scaffold Understanding! Build on the known!

How would this animal feel if you touched it?

What noise does this animal make?

How does this animal protect itself?

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**What is this clothing called?**

**On what part of your body would you wear this?**



**What is this piece of clothing called?**

**Where would you go if you were wearing this?**

**In what kind of weather would you wear this?**

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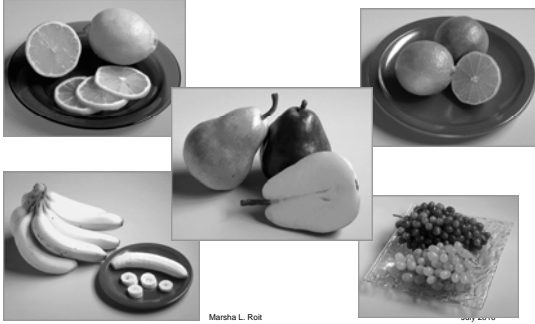
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**What questions would you ask?**



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**Where in the kitchen would you store this?**

**What is the shape of the food in this picture?**

**What is this food called?**

**How would these taste?**

**Where would you buy this?**

**When would you eat this food?**

**How would you prepare this food?**

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## Scaffolding: Asking Questions

Developing questions about information presented in a sentence.  
The students are provided with an appropriate question word.

- An octopus is a sea creature that hides in the rocks on the bottom of the ocean.  
What \_\_\_\_\_?
- Coral grows on the ocean floor where it is not too deep or cold.  
Where \_\_\_\_\_?

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- Many baby animals are born in the spring.  
When \_\_\_\_\_?
- Squirrels gather nuts and seeds.  
What \_\_\_\_\_?

Scaffold by giving students sentences but no question words.

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## Model

### Asking Questions

- Why is this the way it is? What else is there to know about this?
- What question can I ask to check if I've understood this?
- What questions did I ask while reading that I can answer now?
- What questions do I think the author will answer as I read this selection?
- Why weren't some of my questions not answered?

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## Scaffolding: Questioning

- I wonder . . .
- I am curious to find out . . .
- Who . . .
- What . . .
- Why . . .
- When . . .
- How . . .
- I wonder why the octopus needs two forms of camouflage.
- I am curious to learn what other animals use camouflage.
- Why don't all animals use camouflage?
- How do chameleons change color?

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## Summarizing

- Should be done during and after reading to check understanding when reading a text that is dense or problematic.
- Summing up is not a word-for-word retelling but rather a 'kernel' statement - quick and in one's own words - about what is most important to this point.
- In fiction, may summarize a piece that has many characters, describes many events, or covers a long period of time. Summarize after episodes or significant events.
- In nonfiction, the reader often summarizes at the end of a chapter or section. (Sections are often marked with subheads.)

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## Scaffolding: Summarizing

Introduce the concept of summarizing.

- What is the title of your favorite story?
- What is the story about?

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## Scaffolding: Summarizing

Move from retelling to introducing summarizing.

- Bananas, pears, and apples  
What is one word to describe this list?
- Red, yellow, blue and green  
Tell me one word that describes this list?
- Sweater, shirt, pants, and jacket  
What does this list describe?

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## Scaffolding: Summarizing

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## Scaffolding: Summarizing

### Creating gist statements for simple sentences

Josephine eats the same breakfast every day. She eats bacon and eggs, She eats two pieces of toast and drinks a glass of strawberry milk. If she is still hungry, she'll have a small bowl of cereal.

- Who is the person described in the story?
- What is the most important information that you learned?

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## Identifying Important and Unimportant Information

### Rule-based Summarizing

- o Delete trivial information
- o Delete redundant information
- o Substitute superordinate terms for lists
- o Select a topic sentence or create one

Brown, Campione, and Day (1981)

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## Model

### Summarizing

- Does this make sense? What is this selection about? What are the big ideas or key points the writer is trying to get at?
- What can I delete from my summary? What isn't important?
- Have I said the same thing more than once in my summary?
- What is the main idea of what I just read?
- Can I put what I just read into my own words?
- What is unclear? What is the meaning of the word or sentence? How can I figure this out?

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## Scaffolding: Summarizing

- o Read a segment
- o Have students give information for a summary
- o Write student points on board
- o Read student points
  - Delete any unimportant information
  - Delete any redundant information
  - Organize using superordinates and categories
  - Identify main idea statement or create one.

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### Linguistic Structures: Making Connections

- o The reminds me of . . .
- o . . . is like. . . because . . .
- o The person in the story is like . . . in the story . . . because . . .
- o I did . . . just like . . . in the story.
- o This connects to the unit theme because . . .

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### Linguistic Structures: Visualizing

- o I can picture in my mind . . .
- o I see . . .
- o I see . . . after reading this part.
- o From reading this, I can now see . . .

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### Clarifying

- o Stopping to make sense of text while reading.
- o Clarifying at the word, sentence, paragraph or concept level.

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### Connect Clarifying to Question Asking!

- What does this word mean?
- How can I figure out the meaning?
- What parts of this word do I know?

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### Scaffolding: Clarifying

- I don't understand . . .
- I need to figure out . . .
- What I need to figure out is . . .
- I don't get what the author means when . . .
- I'm having a problem with . . .
- I don't understand what the author means by
- I'm having a problem figuring out what 'predator' means.

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### Expand Clarifying beyond the Word Level

- What does this . . . mean?
- What clues can I use to figure out the meaning of . . . ?
- What does the author mean by . . .
- Why did the author write . . .
- How can I figure this out?

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## Clarifying Vocabulary while Reading

- Encourage problem solving and use of strategies. Make use of strategies intentional.
- Encourage thinking aloud
- Encourage self questioning
  - ✓ How can I figure that out?
  - ✓ What clues are in the text?
  - ✓ What clues are in the words?
  - ✓ Do I need to look it up?
  - ✓ Does the meaning I figured out or looked up make sense?
  - ✓ What parts of the word do I recognize?
  - ✓ What are the clues in the surrounding sentences?
  - ✓ Why should I remember this word?
  - ✓ How does this connect with words and ideas I already know?
  - ✓ Where else might I come across this word?
  - ✓ Where else can I use this word?

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## When I don't know the meaning of a word, I can . . .

- Look at the parts of the word and see if that helps.
- Look at the words around the word to see if they explain the meaning.
- Quietly ask someone.
- Ask the teacher.
- Look in the glossary or dictionary.
- Write the meaning in my own words and write a sentence using the word.

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## Building Vocabulary

- Contextualize words
- Focus on deep processing
- Capitalize on cognates
- Build on structural elements

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○ ○ ○ **Begin by Classifying and Naming Objects by Category.**

wagons bicycles boats wheels motors 

- Beginning/Early Intermediate  
 \_\_\_\_\_ have \_\_\_\_\_.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ do not have \_\_\_\_\_.
- Intermediate  
 \_\_\_\_\_ have \_\_\_\_\_, but \_\_\_\_\_ do not have \_\_\_\_\_.
- Early Advanced  
 \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ have \_\_\_\_\_ but they do not have \_\_\_\_\_.

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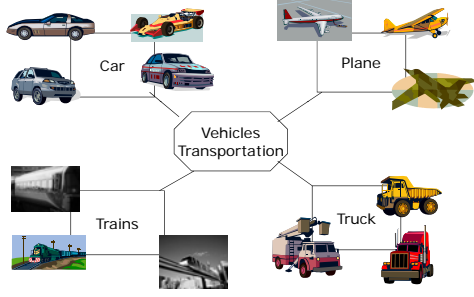
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○ ○ ○ **Multiple examples help!**



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- Begin with solid and consistent examples.
- Move to likenesses and differences
- Have students bring in different examples.
- Develop additional terms: vehicles to transportation.
- Broaden the concept: bicycles, boats, etc.
- Move from pictures to words to sentences to writing.

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**Beginning:**

- Find the . . . and students point to the picture
- Create a graphic organizer with pictures and talk about the general category: fruit, clothes, flowers, etc.
- Create a graphic organizer with words.

**Intermediate**

- Ask questions and students answer in sentences.

**Advanced**

- Ask questions and students answer in extended sentences.
- Students write responses to questions.

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## Use organizers!

### Four Square Vocabulary Map

Word and Picture	What is it like?
What are some examples?	What are some non-examples?

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**Vocabulary**

Word: \_\_\_\_\_

What does the word mean in the story? \_\_\_\_\_

My own sentence using this word: \_\_\_\_\_

**Challenge:**

- Another meaning of this word is \_\_\_\_\_.
- A synonym for this word is \_\_\_\_\_.
- An antonym for this word is \_\_\_\_\_.

**Optional:**

- A way to help me remember this word is \_\_\_\_\_.
- A picture that might help me remember is \_\_\_\_\_.

**Scaffold learning by having students begin with a picture and then move**

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### Scaffolding using Sentence Stems to Provide Support

1. protect: to protect someone means to keep them safe  
 My dog protected me by \_\_\_\_\_  
 My dog protected me because \_\_\_\_\_.

2. camouflage: the way some animals use color or shape to become like where they live. It helps keep other animals away.  
 The octopus used camouflage to \_\_\_\_\_.  
 The baby deer's camouflage is \_\_\_\_\_ and it helps \_\_\_\_\_.

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### Scaffolding using Example/Non Example

Urge  
 A mother tells her children that they should remember to take their vitamins every morning. Children tell their mother that they already took their vitamins.

Banter  
 A husband and wife argue about what to have for dinner. A husband and wife kid each other about who ate more at dinner.

Impatient  
 A boy counts the days until his birthday and wishes the time would go faster. A boy tells his friends about his birthday party and hopes they can come.

I. Beck, Vocabulary, Sacramento, 1992  
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### Vocabulary Worksheet Selection: (sample)

Tier 1: High Frequency; everyday basic words (ELL and low language student focus)

Tier 2: High frequency for mature language users; general utility words (Focus instruction on these words)

Tier 3: Low frequency; domain/selection/content specific  
 Pre Teach for Comprehension      Limited focus for instruction

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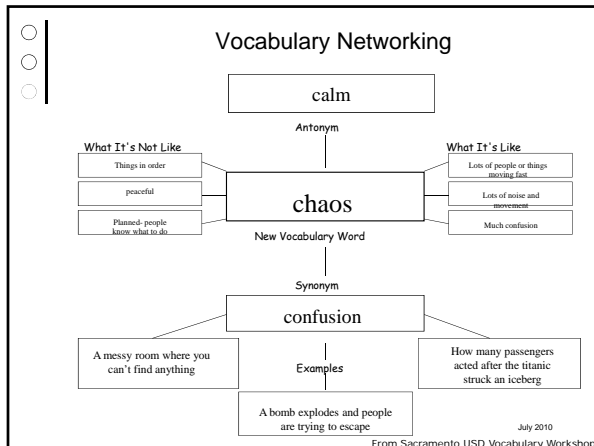
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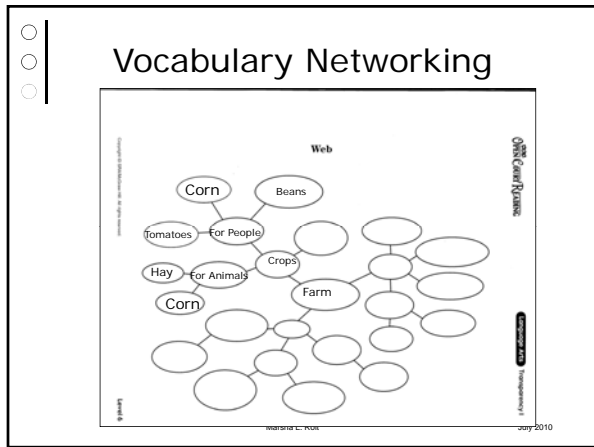
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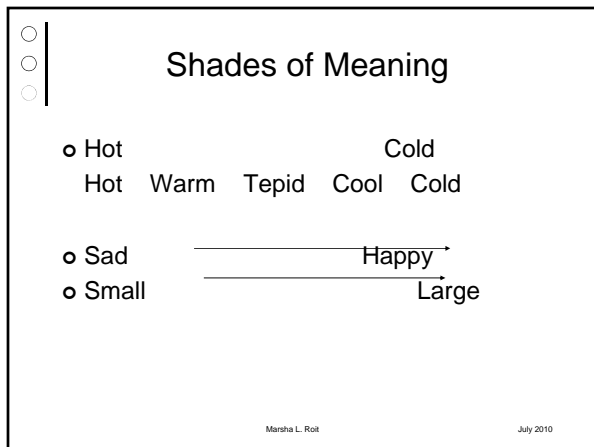
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## Capitalize on Cognates

English	Spanish
○ verb	○ verbo
○ reference	○ referencio
○ correct	○ correcto
○ mark	○ marcar
○ reflect	○ reflejar
○ theme	○ tema
○ capital	○ capital
○ candidate	○ candidato
○ debate	○ debate
○ history	○ historia
○ imagine	○ imaginar
○ importance	○ importancia
○ justice	○ justicia
○ liberty	○ libertad
○ problem	○ problema
○ comprehend	○ comprender
○ biography	○ biographia
○ fantasy	○ fantasia

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## Teach Concrete and Abstract Words

<u>Comparison</u>	<u>Contrast</u>
○ as	○ but
○ similarly	○ on the contrary
○ like	○ instead
○ both	○ rather
	○ however
	○ in contrast
	○ unlike

Marsha L. Roit July 2010

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## Strategies for Teaching Comprehension

- Scaffold, scaffold, scaffold
- Provide explicit instruction: directly explain concepts and strategies; model using think alouds.
- Make intentional connections by linking new concepts and skills to previously learned ones.
- Make learning comprehensible: use clear descriptions, realia, pictures, graphic organizers, and the like.
- Use Pre-teaching to prepare students for greater participation in the core curriculum.
- Provide for interaction between teacher and students as well as among students
- Raise the bar: move students as their abilities grow.

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## Scaffold, scaffold, scaffold

Remember . . .

- Scaffolding is temporary.
- Not all students need the same amount of scaffolding support.

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### ○ Disclaimer:

- The information that is included in the conference materials or provided by conference presenters is intended to serve as a resource for participants. It should not be construed in any way as an endorsement by the U.S. Department of Education (Department) of particular materials, products, services, or approaches or as an attempt by the Department to mandate, direct, or control the curriculum, program of instruction, or assessments of a State, local educational agency, or school. Consistent with the appropriate Federal requirements, States and localities have the flexibility to determine how best to use Federal funds to help ensure that every student can read at grade level or above by the end of the third grade.

Marsha L. Roit

July 2010

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