

# STRATEGIES FOR DEVELOPING READING COMPETENCE USING LITERARY TEXTS

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**Abstract.** In today's education systems, developing reading competence is a fundamental goal, as it lays the foundation for lifelong learning and critical thinking. Literary texts, with their rich language and cultural depth, offer valuable opportunities for enhancing students' reading skills. This article explores effective strategies for developing reading competence through the use of literary texts, focusing on comprehension, analysis, and engagement. It also highlights how teachers can integrate literature into lessons to improve linguistic and cognitive development among learners.

**Key words:** Reading competence, literary texts, vocabulary acquisition, cultural awareness, emotional engagement, critical thinking, interpretation, pre-reading activities.

## СТРАТЕГИИ РАЗВИТИЯ ЧТЕНИЯ С ИСПОЛЬЗОВАНИЕМ ХУДОЖЕСТВЕННЫХ ТЕКСТОВ

**Аннотация.** В современных системах образования развитие читательской компетентности является основополагающей целью, поскольку она закладывает основу для непрерывного обучения и критического мышления. Литературные тексты с их богатым языком и культурной глубиной предлагают ценные возможности для улучшения навыков чтения учащихся. В этой статье рассматриваются эффективные стратегии развития читательской компетентности с помощью литературных текстов, уделяя особое внимание пониманию, анализу и вовлеченности. В ней также подчеркивается, как

учителя могут интегрировать литературу в уроки для улучшения языкового и когнитивного развития учащихся.

**Ключевые слова:** читательская компетентность, литературные тексты, приобретение словарного запаса, культурная осведомленность, эмоциональная вовлеченность, критическое мышление, интерпретация, предчтение.

**Introduction.** Reading competence goes beyond the simple decoding of words—it includes the ability to comprehend, interpret, analyze, and critically evaluate texts. With the increasing emphasis on literacy in modern education, teachers are seeking more dynamic ways to nurture these skills in students. Literary texts—such as short stories, poems, novels, and plays—play a crucial role in this process. They expose learners to authentic and expressive language, diverse perspectives, and complex themes that stimulate intellectual and emotional engagement.

This article aims to identify and explain strategies that enhance reading competence using literary materials and to demonstrate how these texts contribute to the holistic development of learners' language and thinking skills.

### **The Role of Literary Texts in Reading Development**

Literary texts are uniquely positioned to support reading development due to several key features:

- **Rich and varied vocabulary:** Literary works often include descriptive and figurative language that enhances vocabulary acquisition. Literary works are a valuable resource for vocabulary development because they often contain rich, descriptive, and figurative language. Through exposure to metaphors, similes, idiomatic expressions, and precise word choices, readers naturally encounter new and diverse vocabulary in meaningful contexts. This type of language not only enhances students' word knowledge but also deepens their understanding of how words function in different stylistic and emotional situations. As a result, learners become more capable of using a wider range of vocabulary accurately and expressively in their own speech and writing.

**Cultural and emotional resonance:** Stories and poems can connect with students on a personal level, increasing motivation and empathy. Stories and poems have the unique ability to connect with students on a personal and emotional level. Through relatable characters, real-life situations, and culturally rich settings, literary texts invite learners to see the world from different perspectives. This emotional engagement not only makes reading more enjoyable and meaningful but also fosters a deeper understanding of diverse cultures, values, and human experiences. As students identify with characters or reflect on moral dilemmas, they develop greater empathy and become more motivated to read and explore literature further. Such emotional and cultural connections contribute significantly to the development of critical thinking and social awareness.

• **Critical thinking and interpretation:** Literature encourages learners to read beyond the surface, make inferences, and evaluate ideas.

As a result, literature becomes a powerful tool for improving both lower-level (decoding, fluency) and higher-level (analysis, synthesis) reading skills.

### **Strategies for Developing Reading Competence**

#### **1. Pre-reading Activities**

✓ **Prediction tasks:** Asking students to guess the content based on titles or pictures activates prior knowledge and sets a purpose for reading.

✓ **Vocabulary preview:** Introducing key words and phrases before reading helps with understanding and builds confidence.

✓ **Contextual background:** Providing historical, cultural, or biographical context can enhance comprehension of unfamiliar settings or references.

#### **2. Active Reading Strategies**

✓ **Annotation and note-taking:** Encouraging students to underline, highlight, and write marginal notes supports active engagement.

✓ **Guided questions:** Teachers can provide comprehension questions that prompt students to identify key details, themes, and character motivations.

✓ **Reading aloud and dramatization:** Performing dialogues or scenes increases fluency and makes interpretation more vivid.

### 3. **Post-reading Discussions and Analysis**

✓ **Literary circles:** Small group discussions foster collaborative interpretation and allow students to hear different viewpoints.

✓ **Thematic analysis:** Exploring themes, symbols, and motifs develops deeper understanding and critical thinking.

✓ **Creative response tasks:** Asking students to write alternative endings, character diaries, or personal reflections boosts comprehension and writing skills.

### 4. **Integration of Technology**

✓ **Digital storytelling tools:** Students can use multimedia to retell or respond to a story, encouraging multimodal literacy.

✓ **Online forums or blogs:** Virtual discussions can engage reluctant readers and extend learning beyond the classroom.

✓ **Interactive quizzes and games:** Technology-based assessments can reinforce vocabulary and comprehension in engaging ways.

**Conclusion.** Literary texts offer rich, multidimensional opportunities for developing students' reading competence. Through strategic planning and the implementation of diverse teaching methods—before, during, and after reading—educators can guide learners toward deeper comprehension and lasting appreciation of literature. As education evolves to meet the needs of the 21st century, integrating literature into language and literacy education remains both relevant and essential.

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