



Picture This!

Close your eyes and imagine your favorite breakfast. What did you see? Did you see the letters that make up the word “breakfast?” Did you see words such as “pancakes,” “sausage” or “omelet?”

You probably did not see words at all. Most likely your brain created pictures of the specific foods you enjoy eating. This ability to create visual imagery is an important part of how the brain processes information.

Visual imagery is vital when reading. The words in a book are just tools used by the brain to build the images that create meaning from the text. This is what leads to comprehension, understanding and learning.

Students who comprehend well are able to create imagery in their brains as they read words on the page, but those who struggle with comprehension find this difficult. They focus on the words instead of developing images and movies in their mind from those words. This is a barrier to learning.

Let’s look at an example where students are reading a textbook chapter about birds. The paragraph is about robins and the text says robins have reddish-orange breasts, hop on the ground, and eat worms.

Students who only think in words must somehow memorize the specific information about robins.

But students who can create images from those words can actually “see” the bird with his red breast hopping in the grass and tugging a long slimy worm out of the ground.

At this point, if a teacher asks questions about robins, students who image well can look at the movie they created in their mind to find the specific answer. Then, as those students talk or write about what they see, they transfer the images back into words.

This process of moving back and forth from words to imagery is called “dual-coding.” The term is associated with the research of cognitive psychologist Allan Paivio, who discovered that children and adults with good comprehension have this ability to “dual code.”

Students who struggle with comprehension have difficulty creating clear images from what they read. These students may create partial images and leave out important details, or they may focus on specific details and miss the big picture.

Since these students struggle with creating images, they often rely on memorization. They may re-read a passage until they’ve memorized enough concrete and factual information to get by on the test. However, even for excellent memorizers, this creates problems

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Drew's Story

All I can say is.....Thank You Langsford Learning Center.

Why, you ask?

I don't hate reading anymore.

My experience with school has been a good one, except for the classes that required a lot of reading. It took me hours to read what should have taken a few minutes. Then after completion, I still did not really know what I had just read. I hated to read.

I had been diagnosed with ADHD at an early age. I went to the school specific to learning differences for grade school and then entered high school in the "slow track." My mom blamed my not reading on laziness. Insisting that if I really tried I could get the work done. She had me take the ACT in my junior year, just to see how far behind I was going to be my senior year and where I could possibly go to college. The first time I took the ACT, I scored a 17. Mom then went to work having me assessed to find out what exactly were my learning problems. I was tested at a local tutoring service that said they could help me score higher on the test. It was not the place for me. I was then tested by a psychologist and she directed us to The Langsford Center.

The Langsford Center put me through a battery of tests that showed I was really lacking in the reading comprehension department. They came up with a plan to help me understand what I was reading. I was assigned a teacher and Stephen oversaw my progress. The work was really hard, but the people were so nice and made it fun for me to learn. I liked the fact that I was working one on one with the teacher. I felt good everyday when I left because I knew I was making progress. The words became pictures, the pictures became movies and I could understand what I was reading.

I would encourage anyone that has a learning difference to be tested at the Langsford Center. The program really works. They knew exactly what I needed in order to improve on my reading.

I took the ACT test for the 2nd time after being at the Langsford Center for only two weeks and increased my score to a composite 21. The reading and English sections were where I made the progress, they jumped 9 points!!!

I wish I would have realized what my problem was at an earlier age.

I really appreciate the time the Langsford Center devoted to me and the instruction I received.

Thank you,

Drew



Would you like to see your Langsford story in the next Langsford Letter? Just send your letter and a picture of your former Langsford student to our nearest office.



Don't be left out of the Langsford loop!

Keep up with events, programs and receive information about reading by joining our email list.

To sign up today, simply go to www.WeTeachReading.com

Read our blog for a peek inside Langsford: www.langsfordblog.com

Website Spotlight

A Visual Dictionary

<http://blachan.com/shahi>

This website contains a visual dictionary that combines Wiktionary content with visual images. It not only provides pictures of the word being defined, but also for key words within the definition. This eliminates the confusion that often comes along when one looks up a word only to find that the definition contains even more words that are unfamiliar.

It's as simple as this: the viewer enters a word in the search box and is provided both visual images of the word and a written definition. Clicking on one of the key words within the definition will provide images for that word as well. Another click on one of



the photos will enlarge it to provide more detail. Since accurately comprehending information relies on the interplay between verbal and visual information, this website would be a handy tool for anyone, regardless of age.

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especially when asked questions in a different way than they memorized the information.

In addition, comprehension difficulties may not show up until the middle school years, when students are asked to “read between the lines,” make predictions, inferences, and generally think more abstractly. This kind of higher order thinking and reasoning relies on active mental movies.

Parents and teachers are often puzzled because struggling students may be hard workers and great readers but their grades don't reflect this work. Yes, they can read well, but they are only working with words. Their brains are not processing those letters and words into images.

Some parents doubt whether visual imagery is a problem because their child can relay details from novels quite well. But it's important to realize that novel authors are very invested in helping the reader create detailed images necessary to enjoy the book. Unfortunately textbooks are not particularly written with that goal in mind so it's up to the student to create imagery that works based on their experience and background knowledge.

With guidance and help from an experienced instructor trained in developing visual imagery, soon the struggling student can be imaging information in his social studies textbook as easily as he imagines his favorite breakfast of pepperoni pizza, with lots of extra cheese!



We teach reading
& learning for life!

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Langsford Learning Acceleration Centers, with locations in Louisville, Kentucky, and Cincinnati, Ohio, has tutored children and adults since 1992. We have proven results teaching phonological (phonemic) awareness, phonics, reading, spelling, reading and listening comprehension, and handwriting using specialized, research-based approaches.

From enrichment to remediation, we have extensive experience training the foundations associated with independent learning, including helping individuals with learning disabilities, auditory processing disorder and dyslexia.

- **Multisensory, one-to-one learning sessions**
- **A customized plan of action**
- **Diagnostic assessment**
- **Highly-trained, year-round staff**

**We Make
Learning
Fun!**

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