Fourth Grade
Comparing and Contrasting
Making Predictions

One of the keys to reading comprehension is that the student must be actively involved. Reading comprehension is an active process that needs to engage the reader. As a reader, you grasp meaning by thinking during the act of reading. The reader also brings prior knowledge about the concepts and ideas to the reading activity. The fourth grade students have been working with two major strategies…**Comparing and Contrasting and Making Predictions.**

Finding how two or more things are alike and how they are different is called **comparing and contrasting.** Comparing is finding how people, places and objects are like. Contrasting is finding how these things are different. The students are learning to look for "clue words" to signal how things are alike. Some of these clue words are; *both, same, like, alike and similar.* Clue words that signal differences include; *but, unlike, different, however and whereas.* If there are no clue words in the reading passage that signal a comparison or contrast, the students are learning to self-question…by asking themselves, "How are these things alike? How are they different?"

Making Predictions is another comprehension strategy that requires the reader to engage and really *think* about the passage he/she is reading. Making a prediction is a way of using clues from a reading passage, as well as things you already know (activating prior knowledge), to make a good guess about what might happen next. The children are learning to look for clues in different places. Clues may be found in the title of a passage. Clues are often found in the facts and details of the reading passage. Details about the things characters do and say often help you make a prediction about what they may do or say later in the story. Finally, clues are often found in the pictures included with a story. The students are learning that a prediction is something you think will happen in the future. By identifying clues within the text, the students are learning how to make a good guess about what might happen next.