Flow Chart of Comprehension-Monitoring Behaviors

1. Read a passage of text.

2. Pause, ask yourself: Does this make sense? (Do this periodically; pause at ends of natural text segments like paragraphs.)
   - Option, check yourself: Can I retell the important points of the last segment? Other options: Can I say it in my own words? Are my hypotheses holding up, or do I need to change my predictions?

3. If Yes, reading makes sense! Continue reading (back to #1). If No, continue to #4.

4. Ask: When did I lose track? When did it start to go wrong?

5. Isolate cause of difficulty (each difficulty is matched to an appropriate problem-solving strategy in #6). Did I:
   a. run into difficulty with a word or words? (vocabulary)
   b. stop concentrating?
   c. read it too fast?
   d. lose the thread of meaning? i.e., struggle to understand how it relates to what was written before?
   e. not know enough about the topic that’s been taken up?
   f. lose image or mental representation? i.e., Can’t “see” what it is I am reading about?
   g. not understand how text is organized and where it is headed, what I should expect?
   h. try a strategy that didn’t work? Not know which strategy to try?
**STUDENTS DO/TEACHER HELPS**

**THE STOP, FIX, ASK CHECKLIST**

When students are ready to take over the process of self-monitoring in small groups or individually, I might give them a Stop, Fix, and Ask Checklist (see next page). This checklist is an expansion and adaptation of the Stop-Think Strategy of Sue Mowery which I discovered on the Internet.

6. Use an appropriate strategy for your problem.
   - a. Skip the word and read to end of sentence or segment, trying to figure it out from the context.
   - a. Guess the meaning or substitute a word that seems to fit and see if it makes sense.
   - a. Ask someone the meaning of the word, look for definition in text, look up in dictionary.
   - b. Reread the segment.
   - b. Read aloud—it can really help to hear the text. Or ask someone else to read it aloud to you.
   - c. Slow down and reread, or read aloud.
   - d. Chunk the confusing segment with what came before or what comes afterward. Try to understand a whole chunk that is short and manageable.
   - e. Identify the topic and bring personal knowledge to bear. What do you know about this or a similar topic that might help you?
   - e. Find out more about the topic—read something else that is simpler or more introductory; use a reference book; ask someone else who knows more.
   - f. Try to create an image or mind picture of what is going on (could use picture mapping, tableaux, or mapping techniques from next chapter).
   - g. Ask: How is the text organized? How should what comes before help me with my problem? (Very helpful to know that in an argument a claim is followed by evidence and evidence is usually followed by a warrant; in cause and effect text structures, causes are followed by effects; in classification, one class or category is followed by a parallel category, etc. See Chapter 6.)
   - g. Recognize and use text features and cues to text structure like transitions, headings, illustrations, and captions, charts, etc.
   - g. Ask: Am I supposed to make an inference? Fill a gap in the story? Put several pieces of information together to see a pattern?
   - h. Read on and see if the confusion clears up.
   - h. If still confused, try another strategy or ask for help. Ask a peer, then the teacher or another expert reader.

7. Check understanding—if Yes, back to #1 to continue reading; if No, ask for help.