Once upon a time, long ago and far away, there lived a gentle queen. It was the deepest and darkest winters, and every day the gentle queen would spend her afternoons sitting with her needlework at the only window in the castle. The castle window itself was framed in blackest ebony, and anyone passing below could gaze upon the beautiful queen, as a picture, as she quietly worked at her. One day, as she sat sewing, she pricked her finger on her needle, and three rich, red drops of blood upon the glistening snow below. At the sight of the red blood upon the snow, the gentle queen whispered: "Oh, how I wish I had a baby daughter with hair as black as ebony, as red as blood and skin as white as snow." And so it came that the queen gave birth to such a child, whom she called Snow White.
Examine the strategies that help readers comprehend the passage.

Once upon a time, long ago and far away, there lived a gentle queen. It was the deepest and darkest of winters, and every day the gentle queen would spend her afternoons sitting with her needlework at the only window in the sunlight. The castle window itself was framed in blackest ebony, and anyone passing below could gaze upon the beautiful queen, pretty as a picture, as she quietly worked at her embroidery. One day, as she sat sewing, she pricked her finger with her needle, and three rich, red drops of blood fell upon the glistening snow below. At the sight of the red blood upon the white snow, the gentle queen whispered: "Oh, how I wish for a baby daughter with hair as black as ebony, lips as red as blood and skin as white as snow." And so it came to pass that the queen gave birth to such a child, whom she called Snow White.

**Formulaic Expressions**

English language proficiency leads to more experience with formulaic expressions in the language. These may be unfamiliar and thus difficult to predict for the English Language Learner.

"Once upon a time" A powerful factor in reading comprehension is the reader's prior knowledge of the topic of the passage or text. In this case the formulaic opening "Once upon a time" suggests that this is a fairy tale that follows a particular narrative structure. This background knowledge facilitates comprehension by helping you predict where the story is leading.
Examine the strategies that help readers comprehend the passage.

Once upon a time, long ago and far away, there lived a gentle queen. It was the deepest and darkest winters, and every day the gentle queen would spend afternoons sitting with her needlework at the only window in the sunlight. The castle window itself was framed in blackest ebony, and anyone passing below could gaze upon the beautiful queen, pretty as a picture, as she quietly worked at her embroidery. One day, as she sat sewing, she pricked her finger with her needle, and three rich, red drops of blood fell upon the glistening snow below. At the sight of the red blood upon the white snow, the gentle queen whispered: "Oh, how I wish for a baby daughter with hair as black as ebony, lips as red as blood and skin as white as snow." And so it came to pass that the queen gave birth to such a child, whom she called Snow White.

Syntactic Cues

Syntactic cues refer to the grammar and syntax of the language—how words work together.

As you read you need to predict words that fit grammatically. Using your implicit linguistic knowledge of English syntax, you were able to predict and confirm specific words to put in the blanks.
Once upon a time, long ago and far away, there lived a gentle queen. It was the deepest and darkest of winters, and every day the gentle queen would spend her afternoons sitting with her needlework at the only window in the sunlight. The castle window itself was framed in blackest ebony, and anyone passing below could gaze upon the beautiful queen, pretty as a picture, as she quietly worked at her embroidery. One day, as she sat sewing, she pricked her finger with her needle, and three rich, red drops of blood fell upon the glistening snow below. At the sight of the red blood upon the white snow, the gentle queen whispered: "Oh, how I wish for a baby daughter with hair as black as ebony, lips as red as blood and skin as white as snow." And so it came to pass that the queen gave birth to such a child, whom she called Snow White.

Graphophonic Cues

Graphophonic cues refer to the sound/symbol correspondences in words. The "h" at the beginning of the word acts as a clue for the reader.
Once upon a time, long ago and far away, there lived a gentle queen. It was the deepest and darkest of winters, and every day the gentle queen would spend her afternoons sitting with her needlework at the only window in the sunlight. The castle window itself was framed in blackest ebony, and anyone passing below could gaze upon the beautiful queen, pretty as a picture, as she quietly worked at her embroidery. One day, as she sat sewing, she pricked her finger with her needle, and three rich, red drops of blood fell upon the glistening snow below. At the sight of the red blood upon the white snow, the gentle queen whispered: "Oh, how I wish for a baby daughter with hair as black as ebony, lips as red as blood and skin as white as snow." And so it came to pass that the queen gave birth to such a child, whom she called Snow White.
Examine the strategies that help readers comprehend the passage.

Once upon a time, long ago and far away, there lived a gentle queen. It was the deepest and darkest of winters, and every day the gentle queen would spend her afternoons sitting with her needlework at the only window in the sunlight. The castle window itself was framed in blackest ebony, and anyone passing below could gaze upon the beautiful queen, pretty as a picture, as she quietly worked at her embroidery. One day, as she sat sewing, she pricked her finger with her needle, and three rich, red drops of blood fell upon the glistening snow below. At the sight of the red blood upon the white snow, the gentle queen whispered: "Oh, how I wish for a baby daughter with hair as black as ebony, lips as red as blood and skin as white as snow." And so it came to pass that the queen gave birth to such a child, whom she called Snow White.

Semantic Cues

Semantic cues relate to word meanings.

As you read you need to predict words that make sense within the sentences. Your internalized knowledge of semantics of English enables you to predict and confirm specific words to put in the blanks.

- sunlight = the words "darkest of winters" followed by the word "afternoon" hint that the missing word refers to light.
- white = the color of snow; "blood" was also described using a color, "red".
- lips = references to other parts of the body, "hair" and "skin" and their corresponding colors.

Source
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