

PARENT UNIVERSITY PRESENTS

What families need to know about ...



GENERAL READING COMPREHENSION

Comprehension is the ability to understand, interpret, analyze, and evaluate text. It is the reason for reading. Good readers have a purpose for reading, and they think actively as they read. Good readers gain meaning from text and know how to make sense of the information. Children who are good at monitoring their comprehension are aware of what they *do* understand, they can identify what they *do not* understand, and they know and use appropriate strategies to resolve comprehension problems.

To master comprehension, students must be able to do the following:

- Demonstrate an understanding of concepts of print to determine how print is organized and read. Concepts of print include awareness that text has meaning and that words are made up of letters and read from left to right.
- Use strategies to prepare for reading (before reading). This includes previewing the text, reading the title and chapter headings, and making predictions.
- Use strategies to make meaning from text (during reading). This includes asking questions, making connections, and visualizing (forming mental pictures) as they read.
- Demonstrate understanding of text (after reading). This includes summarizing and clarifying confusing material.
- Develop comprehension skills by listening to and reading a variety of informational and literary texts, both self-selected and assigned.
- Recognize, identify, and use text features to assist in the understanding of informational and literary texts. Text features include the title, illustrations, photographs, and charts.
- Develop knowledge of the organizational structure of informational text to aid in understanding what is read.
- Determine important ideas and messages in informational and literary texts.
- Identify and explain the author's use of language.
- Read critically to evaluate informational text.
- Use elements of narrative texts, poetry, and drama to assist in understanding.

How You Can Help Your Child at Home

- Read and enjoy books with your child every day.
- Explore a wide range of fiction and nonfiction reading materials.
- Discuss the book title, author's name, and cover before reading. Ask your child to predict what the book will be about; share the author's name.
- Encourage your child to visualize (form mental pictures) while reading.
- Encourage your child to make connections between personal experiences and the text. Discuss the connections.
- Ask your child to retell or summarize in a few sentences what he or she is reading. Is the book fact or fiction? Who are the characters in the story? What main events have happened?
- Encourage your child to ask questions while reading and to look back in the book to locate answers.
- Discuss any new or unfamiliar words with your child. Use context clues to help decipher the meaning.
- Encourage your child to read books about other cultures.
- Read different versions of the same fairy tale, and discuss their variations.
- Read tall tales with your child, and discuss the exaggerations.
- Read news articles in different magazines about the same issue.
- Read a newspaper article, and discuss the main ideas.
- Encourage the use of a diary or journal to write down personal experiences.
- Have your child use pictures, illustrations, or photographs to create captions or add speech bubbles with words that characters are speaking.