

COMPREHENSION

Definition

Comprehension is the ability to understand and draw meaning from text. This includes:

- Paying attention to important information
- Interpreting specific meanings in text
- Identifying the main idea
- Verbal responses to questions
- Application of new information gained through reading

Comprehension

This website gives information about what comprehension is, what a child who struggles with comprehension feels like, and what can be done to help. There is access to numerous articles from research that has been conducted.

Ideas for Home

- Sequencing errands. Talk about errands that you will run today. Use sequencing words (sequence, first, next, last, finally, beginning, middle, end) when describing your trip. For example, you might say, "We are going to make three stops. First, we will go to the gas station. Next, we will go to the bank. Finally, we will go to the grocery store."
- Every day comprehension. Ask your child who, what, when, where, why, and how questions about an event in his/her day. For example, if your child attended a party, you could ask, "Who was there? What did you do? When did you have cake? Where did you go? Why did the invitation have dogs on it? How did the birthday child like the presents?" Once your child is comfortable answering these questions about his/her experiences, try asking these questions about a book you've read together.
- Think aloud. When you read aloud to your child, talk about what you are thinking. It is your opportunity to show your child that reading is a lot more than just figuring out the words. Describe how you feel about what's going on

in the book, what you think will happen next, or what you thought about a character's choice.

- Reading Fiction
 - Before reading. Point out the title and author. Look at the picture on the cover and ask, "What do you think is going to happen in this story? Why?" This will help your child set a purpose for reading.
 - During reading. Stop every now and then to ask your child to tell you what has happened so far or what he/she predicts will happen. You might also ask for your child's opinion. "Do you think the character did the right thing? How do you feel about that choice?" Explain any unfamiliar words. After you read a few pages, ask "What do you think will happen next?"
 - After reading. Ask your child to retell the story from the beginning, and ask for opinions, too. "What was your favorite part? Would you recommend this to a friend?"
- Reading Nonfiction
 - Before reading. Point out the title and author. Look at the picture on the cover and ask, "What do you think you'll learn about in this book? Why?" This helps your child consider what he already knows about the topic. Look at the table of contents. You and your child may choose to read the book cover to cover or go directly to a certain chapter.
 - During reading. Don't forget the captions, headings, sidebars, or any other information on a page. Young readers tend to overlook these, so it's a good idea to show that the author includes lots of information in these "extras."
 - After reading. Ask your child, "What was it mostly about? What do you still want to know? Where could you find out?"