

Reading Centre

making a difference

Supporting your child's reading comprehension
in Kindergarten to Year 2



Why read at home?

Research has proven that children who are immersed in quality reading experiences in the early years do better throughout their schooling.

There are opportunities to use books and eBooks in exciting ways, to capture children's interest and expand their thinking and language skills.

Children can practise learnt language and new words through:

- conversations about stories and information texts
- repeated readings of a text
- shared reading of their favourite text.



Read texts you love, discover together and re-read favourites!

Texts include written, spoken, printed, digital and multimodal.

All images: Pixabay

Kindergarten

Kindergarten children develop language through:

- engaging with different texts
- understanding the purpose of texts
- connecting stories with their own personal experiences
- understanding the connection between the words and images in a text
- exploring reading behaviours. For example, a child chooses a story and shares it with others or asks an adult to read a story with them. They might ask, ‘What does this writing say?’



Preparatory

Prep children use comprehension strategies to understand and discuss texts. They learn to:

- talk about what's happening in texts
- find answers to literal questions such as *who, what, where, when*
- recall one or two key facts from an informative text
- make links between events in a story and their own experiences
- make an inference about a character's feelings
- discuss the events in a story and retell the events in order.



Year One

Year One children use comprehension strategies to:

- make connections between a text and their own experiences and between the words and images in a story
- find key information in a text
- make inferences about characters' feelings and motives
- build knowledge about the topic of the text and learn new vocabulary before and during reading
- make predictions from looking at the cover and illustrations and at points in the text before reading on
- retell events or key information orally.



Year Two

Year Two children use comprehension strategies to:

- make connections between the text and their own experiences with other texts, comparing author's differing point of view on a topic.
- make connections between words and images
- use prior knowledge and vocabulary
- make inferences using information in a text and their prior knowledge
- predict, ask and answer questions as they read, summarise and review the meaning.

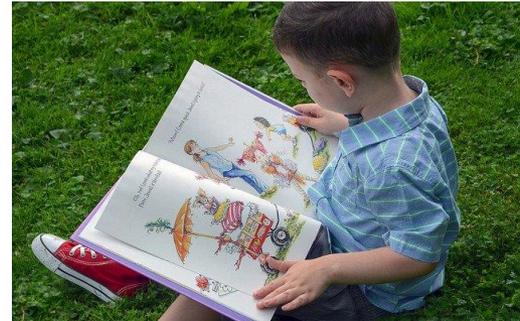


Early years

In the early years of schooling, children are taught a range of comprehension strategies to make meaning from texts.

Deep understanding happens when these three levels of comprehension are considered:

- ***literal***
- ***inferential***
- ***evaluative***



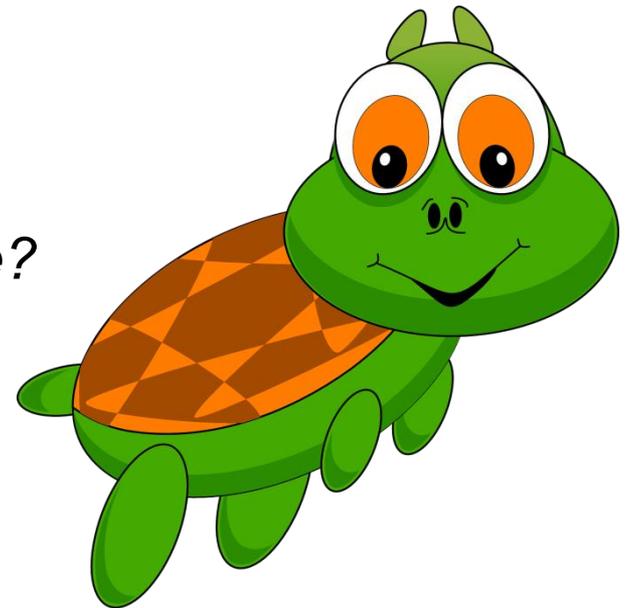
Help children make meaning of texts through discussions and by asking questions related to each level.

Developing literal understanding

Literal meaning refers to what is directly stated in the text.

Provide scaffolds to help children find the literal meaning in a text. Use prompts such as:

- *Where is the story set?*
- *Who is in the story?*
- *What is the main character's name?*
- *When is the story set?*
- *What is happening in the story?*



Developing inferential understanding

To make an **inference**, a reader draws on their prior knowledge and identifies the word, sound and image clues in a text.

Provide scaffolds to help children infer meaning from a text.

Use prompts such as:

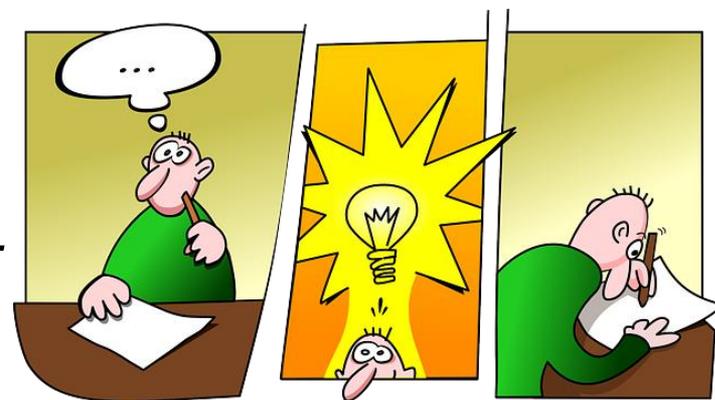
I think this happened because ...

I think a character did this because ...

What do you think?

What makes you think that?

What clues are in the story that support your thinking?

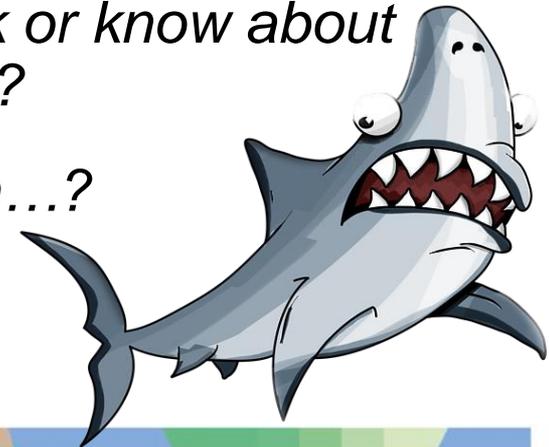


Developing evaluative understanding

Evaluative meaning is a deeper level of understanding. It includes the opinions and judgments a reader makes about the text, the author or the topic.

Some evaluative questions you might ask your child about what they have read include:

- *What does the author want you to feel, think or know about the story?*
- *What does the author want you to feel, think or know about the characters' actions, thoughts or feelings?*
- *Do you agree with the author's viewpoint on...?*
- *Why did the author ...?*



Supporting children to read

Shared reading

Parents and caregivers play a vital role in supporting children to respond to ideas, words and images in texts and to extend their child's ability to read for meaning.

During a shared reading, parents or care givers:

- ask questions about a text
- discuss illustrations and the words used in a text
- respond to their child's thinking about a text
- think out loud so their child can hear how to make meaning of a text
- encourage discussion about a text using words from the text
- support their child to share their thinking, predictions, connections, inferences and opinions about a text.



Sharing a text with your child

Before reading

- Discuss the cover, title, author and illustrations. For example: *Who is on the cover? Where are they? What are they doing?*
- Predict what will happen in the story from the cover or by looking through the book.
- Invite children to make predictions and personal connections to the story through conversation.
- Model or ask your child to pose questions about the setting, character and events.



Sharing a text with your child

During reading

- Choosing who reads a text will depend on the story's complexity and your child's confidence and development. Read to your child or with your child. You may choose to read a part each which should help your child feel supported as they learn to make meaning of a text.
- Read with fluency and expression to make meanings clear.
- Predict what will come next and confirm predictions.
- Read through the book stopping to discuss the meaning of the text. Use prompts such as:
 - *'I'm wondering if ...'* and *'I'm wondering why'...* questions about the setting, characters and events.
 - *'I'm thinking _____ because _____.'*

Sharing a text with your child

After reading

- Share connections about the text.

‘The story reminded me of ...’

‘What did the story remind you of?’

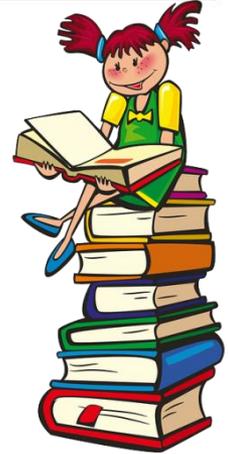
- Discuss why the characters acted the way they did. Use the story’s setting, characters, events and themes to support children to make inferences.

‘What do you think the character is thinking about?’

‘What clues in the story help us to understand the characters?’

- Share opinions about the book and the character’s feelings, motives, relationships and points of view.

‘Why do you think the author?’



Tips for a quality shared reading experience at home

Talk is important before, during and after a shared reading. It is vital your child sees your connection and enjoyment when reading.

Thinking out loud will help children's understanding of the story as they hear what you are thinking about as you read.

Engaging conversations about texts also provide children with a supported opportunity to use new language and unfamiliar words.

Try:

- wondering about the setting, characters or events in the story
- reacting personally to the illustrations or to what happens to the characters
- seeing humour in the situation – be playful!
- figuring out what a character is like and what they might do next.

Most importantly enjoy reading together!