

Parents Guide to Understanding Corrective Reading Comprehension

Parents:

The most important thing parents can do is to be aware of what your child is learning in school and where they should be in their grade as far as reading comprehension is concerned. Another thing you need to be aware of are the results of the standardized tests that are given on a regular basis. Knowing these results can also help you find out how our schools are fairing compared to other schools. Reading is a fundamental concept that needs to be taught and reinforced at all times.

Basic Concept:

Corrective Reading Comprehension is used for those students who *read without understanding*. Corrective Comprehension programs develop vocabulary, information, and comprehension strategies needed for academic success. Corrective Comprehension helps underachieving readers develop higher order thinking and reasoning tactics used by successful readers – applying prior knowledge, making inferences (conclusions or deductions), and analyzing evidence. These programs are designed to help a wide range of students from grades 3 through 12. How much the student has to learn depends on which level they are currently reading at, compared to the level they should be reading at.

Corrective Reading Comprehension Programs:

There are *four* types of comprehension programs: Comprehension A, Comprehension B1, Comprehension B2 and Comprehension C. The student will have to take a comprehension placement test to determine which program they belong in.

*Comprehension A	*Comprehension B1	*Comprehension B2	*Comprehension C
Comprised of 5 preprogram lessons, 60 regular lessons and 7 fact-game lessons	Comprised of 60 regular lessons and 12 fact-game/mastery-test lessons	Comprised of 65 regular lessons and 7 fact-game/mastery-test lessons	Comprised of 140 regular lessons and 9 fact-game/mastery-test lessons
This program emphasizes oral language skills – deductions, inductions, analogies, vocabulary building, inferences (conclusions), recitation behavior and common information	These 2 programs emphasize literal and inferential skills, reading for information, writing skills, following sequenced instructions, analyzing contradictions and learning information.		This program emphasizes critical thinking skills in analyzing arguments, organizing and utilizing (using) information, and communicating information.

* SRA Corrective Reading Series Guide

These programs are designed to change the behaviors of a poor comprehender. There are specific tendencies that the students have that suggest what a program must do to be effective in changing the student's behavior. This type of student is not able to follow directions precisely. They often lack the analytical or systematic skills needed to process arguments. They are oftentimes unable to articulate how they feel or what they believe in everyday situations.

People who have trouble understanding often need to learn the meaning of more words and also need to learn more facts. This prevents them from constructing the appropriate plan when reading about situations that assume basic information or vocabulary.

Since each student learns differently, reading comprehension provides a mechanism for promoting students as they learn new skills, and teachers are able to offer enrichment for those who master the corrective reading comprehension skills.

Solutions to Using the Comprehension Programs according to SRA:

1. These programs are designed to provide extensive practice in following directions. For example one lesson might tell a student to draw a circle around the nouns; another might say to put a star next to the verbs, things of that nature. As each lesson progresses, the instructions allow the students to learn the strategy of reading carefully and paying attention to the details of the given instructions.
2. These programs are also designed to provide daily practice in statement repetition in levels A, B1, and B2. In level A, this is done without reading. In levels B1 and B2, the activities are related to what the student is reading. Repetition exercises are useful in that they help the student learn to deal with what is said and what is heard in a statement
3. These programs present various analytical skills that can be applied to "higher order" thinking tasks. This means that students are being taught how analogies work, how logical reasoning is applied, how conclusions depend on evidence and things like that. The student has to work out the problem in a specific order to come to the correct conclusion.
4. In order to compensate to vocabulary and common information deficiencies, this program introduces fact-based games and vocabulary words. The fact-based games include but are not limited to: lessons on body systems, calendar information, and animal information. These methods are used to teach the student vocabulary skills, and the technique varies depending on which program they are in (A, B1, B2 or C). Each program tackles learning vocabulary and common information differently.
5. The programs also address the issue of the poor comprehender's (*a poor comprehender is someone who has trouble understanding what he/she reads*) self image. The program is based on realistic performance goals that assure that the student will receive positive reinforcement as they progress. It is important that we encourage the students to realize that they can become a successful reader.

Progression through the comprehension programs:

The programs are designed so that there is careful progression of skill development from level to level.

- ☑ Students who start at level A should complete levels A and B1 in a school year (consists of 125 total lessons)
- ☑ Students who start at level B1 should complete levels B1 and N2 in a school year (consists of 125 total lessons)
- ☑ Students who start at level C should complete level C and additional outside reading in a school year.
- ☑ As you can see, progression is slow and easy, to allow the student to better understand what they are reading.

Comprehension Placement Tests

This test consists of two parts: part one is an oral test that is individually administered and it provides an evaluation of the following skills:

- × Recitation behavior, which is repeating sentences that have been presented orally
- × Deductions, which consist of drawing one conclusion from a set of facts
- × Analogies
- × Basic information, which are common facts that students should know
- × Divergent reasoning skills, which state how things are the same and how they are different.

Part two is a written test that can be given to groups as well as to individual students. It provides and evaluation of the following skills:

- ✓ Statement-inference skills, which determine what word in a sentence is being defined and what word(s) define it.
- ✓ Rule application skills, which is using the rules they have learned and applying them to the assignment.
- ✓ Vocabulary skills

Summaries of each Comprehension Program

Comprehension A:

It is designed for poor comprehenders in grades 4 through 12 who understand English and whose scores on the Comprehension Placement Test show that they belong in this program. Students who place in Comprehension A do not understand the concepts in classrooms. They do not have well-developed recitations skills. They cannot repeat sentences they hear, so they have trouble retaining and answering questions about information that has been presented to them.

What is Taught:

The skills taught fall into 3 major categories: Thinking Operations, which concentrate on those general operations useful to students in solving a wide range of problems; Worksheets, which provide students with practice in applying the skills taught in thinking operations; Information Exercises, which are designed to teach information that should be useful to students and to give students practice in organizing groups of related facts.

Examples of Thinking Operations, Worksheets and Information Exercises:

- * Thinking – deductions, opposites, same, true-false, definitions
- * Worksheets – description, classification, analogies
- * Information – calendar (months, seasons and holidays), poems, animals

The following are examples of what is learned by the end of Comprehension A:

Exercise 7 Analogies and Synonyms –

Here is an analogy about words.

Ask is to inquire as weep is to...

Pause 2 seconds. **Get ready.** Signal. **Cry**

Everybody, say that analogy. Signal.

Ask is to inquire as weep is to cry.

Exercise 10 Definitions –

Listen. The buffalo ambled to the pond.

Say that. Signal.

The buffalo ambled to the pond.

Repeat until firm.

Now say that sentence with different words for ambled.

Pause. **Get ready.** Signal

The buffalo walked slowly to the pond.

Repeat until firm.

Exercise 13 Basic evidence: Using facts –

You're going to use two facts to explain things that happened.

Hold up one finger. **First fact.**

Louis owned an expensive diamond. Say it

Signal. Louis owned an expensive diamond.

Repeat until firm.

Hold up two fingers. **Second fact.**

The diamond was very well hidden. Say it.

Signal. The diamond was very well hidden.

Repeat until firm.

Everybody, say those facts again.

Hold up one finger. **First fact**

Louis owed an expensive diamond.

Hold up two fingers. **Second fact.**

The diamond was very well hidden.

Repeat until the students say the facts in order.

Circle **objects**, or **actions** or **tell what kind** for each group of words.

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|---------|---------|----------------|
| 1. Lizard, bat trunk | objects | actions | tell what kind |
| 2. Sprinkle, swim, shoot | objects | actions | tell what kind |
| 3. Healthy, sick, dry | objects | actions | tell what kind |
| 4. Exhibit, bush, tiger | objects | actions | tell what kind |
| 5. Deduce, decrease, dig | objects | actions | tell what kind |

Comprehension B1 and B2:

These two are designed for poor comprehenders in grades 4 through 12 who understand English and whose scores on the Comprehension Placement Test indicate that they belong in either program. Comprehension B2 is appropriate for students who have completed Comprehension B1. These programs are appropriate for students who may have been identified as learning disabled, educationally handicapped or perceptually handicapped. The programs are in no way appropriate for those students who cannot speak English or who can't grasp the English language.

Students in either group exhibit many of the same difficulties seen in students who are in Comprehension A. They seem to lack common basic information. Examples: how many months are in a year. They have deficiencies in vocabulary and information, which make it hard for them to perform many reading comprehension tasks/activities.

What is Taught:

This program requires the use of a number of skills. For example, if the student is asked to write the answers to questions about a written passage, they may have to use the following skills:

- ◆ Reasoning Skills
- ◆ Information Skills
- ◆ Vocabulary Skills
- ◆ Sentence Skills
- ◆ Comprehension Skills
- ◆ Writing Skills

Examples of the above skills:

- ⊙ Reasoning: the following teach reasoning skills – deductions, basic evidence, contradictions and similes.
- ⊙ Information: the following teach information skills – classification and body systems. Classification teaches the students how to put things in specific categories. The body systems track teaches the names and parts of the major body systems.
- ⊙ Vocabulary: all vocabulary skills are taught using the definitions track. This track teaches many new words and general procedures that help students understand and comprehend new words.
- ⊙ Sentence: parts of speech, subject/predicate, sentence combinations and sentence analysis are being taught with this skill.
- ⊙ Comprehension: two basic comprehension skills are taught – sentence inference, which teaches the student to answer questions based on simple sentences at first and later on expanding passages. The following directions track teaches the students to draw a picture by following a set of directions. The directions emphasize the function of prepositions and also make extensive use of vocabulary, rules and information.
- ⊙ Writing: this track teaches writing direction, writing paragraphs, editing and writing stories.

Examples of various skills:

Fill in the blank with the word that has the same meaning as the word or words in parenthesis beside the blank.

1. We stayed until the conclusion (end) of the concert
2. Dentists examine (look at) many teeth every day.
3. Some things are very easy to criticize. (find fault with)
4. People cannot produce (make) storms.
5. To save gas, this car must be modified. (changed)

Write a word that comes from **acquire** or **participate** in each blank. Then write **verb**, **noun**, or **adjective** after each item.

1. Soccer is a participatory sport. Adjective
2. Mary was elected to participate in the school play. Verb
3. Some people choose to limit their participation in sports. Verb
4. Jim can't afford to acquire any more shoes. Verb
5. A car is an expensive acquisition. Noun

Comprehension C:

This program is designed for students who have completed the B2 program and whose scores on the Comprehension Placement Test indicate that they belong in this program. These students are probably in grades 6 through 12. These students however, have several common skill difficulties:

- ✓ Although they may be proficient in logical reasoning, they have not mastered the reasoning skills to the point where applying them to a problem is automatic.
- ✓ They may trouble learning a new concept or differentiating from written instructions (although the same concept or differentiation would not be hard to learn if the teacher presented it orally).
- ✓ The student is also deficient in advanced vocabulary.
- ✓ They are weak in the mechanics of writing and editing.
- ✓ They also lack the ability to get information from sources, for example, a written passage or a graph.
- ✓ They do not have the ability to work independently.

What is Taught:

Comprehension C is used to teach independent application of learned skills. The specific skills taught are: organizing information, operating on information, using sources of information, communicating information, and using information for direction. The last three are classified as *basic tools*, while the former two are classified as *higher order skills*. Below is a summary of what is included in each skill.

- ** **Organizing Information** – includes main idea, outlining, specific-general, morals and visual-spatial organization.
- ** **Operation on Information** – includes deductions, basic evidence, argument rules, ought statements and contradictions.
- ** **Using Sources of Information** – includes basic comprehension passages, words or deductions, maps, pictures and graphs and supporting evidence.
- ** **Communicating Information** – includes definitions, combining sentences, editing and meaning from text.
- ** **Using Information for Directions** – includes writing directions, filling out forms and identifying contradictory directions.

As you can see, each comprehension program (A, B1, B2, and C) is very different in how and what is being taught, it is very important for the student to be able to grasp this information and thus needs to be reinforced at home.






Comprehension Lesson Components

Comprehension A

Regular Lessons:

- ✖ Thinking Operations – oral exercises
- ✖ Award points for thinking operations
- ✖ Workbook activities
- ✖ Work check
- ✖ Awarding points for workbook
- ✖ Information exercises – oral
- ✖ Totaling points for the lessons

Fact-Game Lessons:







-  Fact-Game
-  Awarding points for fact-game
-  Workbook activities
-  Awarding points for workbook
-  Totaling points for the lesson

Comprehension B1 and B2

Regular Lessons:

- ✖ Oral Exercises
- ✖ Teacher-directed workbook activities
- ✖ Awarding points for oral exercises and teacher-directed workbook activities
- ✖ Independent workbook exercises
- ✖ Work check
- ✖ Awarding points for workbook exercises
- ✖ Totaling points for the lesson

Fact-Game/Mastery-Test Lessons:

-  Fact-Game
-  Awarding points for fact-game
-  Mastery Test
-  Work check
-  Awarding points for mastery test
-  Totaling points

Comprehension C

Regular Lessons:

- ✖ Oral Exercises
- ✖ Teacher-directed workbook and textbook exercises
- ✖ Independent workbook and textbook exercises

- ※ Work check
- ※ Awarding points for independent workbook exercises

Fact-Game/Mastery-Test Lessons

- ◆ Fact-Game
- ◆ Awarding points for fact-game
- ◆ Mastery Test
- ◆ Work check
- ◆ Awarding points for mastery test
- ◆ Totaling points for the lesson

Techniques that teachers may use – Firm-Up Procedures from SRA

The following summarize what the teacher can do about some unacceptable performance patterns. This allows the teacher to reteach some skill(s) that may still be unclear to the student. It allows the teacher the option of not continuing with the lesson until all students can grasp the concept of what is being taught. Scenarios and solutions are given below:

- ☐ Students continue to have trouble on a particular skill that has been taught. The skill may not have been taught adequately. This skill needs to be taught again.
- ☐ Students consistently miss items of a given type in the workbook. The item should be retaught by reviewing previous exercises in the track. The teacher should not continue to permit students to make the same kinds of mistakes day after day.
- ☐ A student (or a few students) in the group is responsible for most of the errors. Either additional instruction should be provided, or the student(s) should be moved to another group or program.
- ☐ Mistakes seem to result from carelessness rather than from poor understanding. The teacher can award bonus points (one or two) as incentives for students not to make mistakes on the type of item that is chronically missed.
- ☐ The group consistently fails to meet criteria for earning points. The lessons should be repeated from the point at which students began to fail to meet criteria.

Teachers know the importance of repetition and reinforcement; it is imperative that parents understand this concept as well. The techniques and guidelines outlined in this packet will help parents as well as students understand what is expected of them and what they have to do to accomplish the goal of reading comprehension.