

Free Second Grade Reading Comprehension Activities

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Second Grade Reading Skills | Reading Comprehension

Comprehension is gaining meaning from what you read. This is a complex, higher-level thinking skill, but children from a very early age can begin thinking about what they have just read and tell you what a story is about. When children read, they must turn their “minds on” and actively think about the meaning of what they are reading.

The goal for 2nd graders is that they can understand the book they read and the books that are read to them. They can answer questions about the story and find evidence by flipping through the book’s pages to point out and prove their answer.

They show their understanding by retelling about the characters, setting and important events from the story. If the book is nonfiction, they can describe important facts from the book. They can even act out a story.

See It

HOME ACTIVITIES

Read At Home Everyday

Reading at home independently or aloud for enjoyment is the single best daily routine to help strengthen your child’s understanding of stories. Asking simple questions about the characters and talking about best parts of a book get your child thinking about the story and making connections to their own life.

Ask Open-ended Questions

It’s easy to fall into the trap of always asking simple, straight-forward questions that elicit one word answers about your child’s reading. Questions such as “*Who is the main character?*”

Try asking a question that stretches your child’s thinking and allows them to explain their feelings. “*Did you agree with what the character did? What would you have done?*”

This taps into higher-level critical thinking skills, deepening their comprehension while giving you a window into their thoughts.

K-W-L

A K-W-L chart is a popular method for teachers to hook their students and get them thinking right away about a story they're about to read.

This is best used for nonfiction reading, or books about facts. You don't have to write this all down, these questions can be used when talking with your child as they read. It's quick and easy, but will get your child diving into the topic they're learning.

Keep it Light

Conversations about books should be fun. Quizzing a child for correct answers after reading their favorite book can suck the joy out of the reading experience. Instead, try to ask questions from a place of curiosity and wanting to know what your child thinks. This makes them feel that their opinions and thoughts matter.

Use the Five Finger Strategy

After reading a story, use your hand to help you remember the most important elements of the story. This technique can be used for people ages 4 to 94.

1. Characters – Who was in the story?
2. Setting – Where did the story take place?
3. Events – What happened in the story?
4. End – How did the story end?
5. Your Take – What was your favorite part?

[CLICK HERE FOR THE FIVE FINGER RETELL PRINTABLE](#)

Try the 5 W's to Learn Summarizing

2nd Graders learn the skill of "summarizing," or retelling the main points of what they have read. This skill further helps students to remember what they have just read.

- Who – Who are the characters or people?
- What – What happened?
- Where – Where did it take place?
- When – When did it happen?
- Why – Why did the story end the way it did?

Process It

When reading with your child, a great technique is to pause after a few pages and check in to see if your child is truly grasping what they are reading. By asking open-ended questions, you allow your child to explain their thinking. If what they tell you does not match the story, you can help redirect them back on track:

You say, *"Helen Keller's teacher wrote the word "W-A-T-E-R" into the palm of her hand as water was flowing onto her when she was 7 years old . Why did she do this?"*

You say, “Helen could not see or hear. What do you think Helen was learning when her teacher did this?”

3 Seconds of Wait Time

Allow your child enough undisturbed “think time” to process what is happening. If you ask them a question about the story, let them look at the pages and take a few moments to think, at least 3 seconds. We typically only wait one second before jumping in with the answer. Providing answers too quickly takes away a child’s “thinking time”, robbing them of the opportunity to form conclusions on their own.

Show Me

As your young reader matures, they can demonstrate their understanding in more sophisticated ways. When asking them questions from the story, have them prove their answers by showing you the pages and words that describe the event.

Different Ways to Read

Books are the best way to expose children to new vocabulary, stories and higher-level thinking skills. But reading on their own is not the only way to access stories. Read alouds and audio books offer the same benefits and let children enjoy a great book. The NC Kids Digital Library offers hundreds of picture read alouds that let your child hear stories and build their reading skills.

PRINTABLES

The best way to build your comprehension skills is by using books or magazines and asking questions to get your child to think about what they just read. It doesn’t have to be complicated; a simple “What happened to that character?” or “What was that story about?” are great questions.

Worksheets can feel like meaningless “work” and may take away your child’s enthusiasm for reading. For this age, *worksheets do not need to be completed* to build excellent comprehension skills.

If you choose to use them during breaks from school or your child shows interest, try to make it a fun and light activity. Pretend like you’re on a game show and your child is earning points for a special prize at the end (“*You win 10 more minutes of free time after your bath!*”)

Comprehension – 3D: It’s Not Just For Movies

2nd Grade Comprehension Worksheets

GAMES

Reading books online, interactively, feels just like playing a fun computer game and helps your child build their reading comprehension skills.

NC Kids Digital Library (Free, requires library card number)

Libby, by Overdrive (Free app for iPhones and iPads, Google Play, or Windows Mobile)

This app can be used on your phone or tablet to quickly access the NC Kids Digital Library for free read along books.

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