

How to Use *Daily Reading Comprehension*

Daily Reading Comprehension provides a unique integration of instruction and practice in both comprehension strategies and comprehension skills.

Strategies—such as visualizing or asking questions—are general, meta-cognitive techniques that a reader uses to better understand and engage with the text. **Skills**—such as finding a main idea or identifying a sequence of events—focus on particular text elements that aid comprehension. See page 6 for a complete list of strategies and skills covered in *Daily Reading Comprehension*.

The first six weeks of *Daily Reading Comprehension* introduce students to comprehension strategies they will apply throughout the year. Weeks 7–30 focus on specific skill instruction and practice. All 30 weeks follow the same five-day format, making the teaching and learning process simpler. Follow these steps to conduct the weekly lessons and activities:

STEP 1 The weekly teacher page lists the strategy or skills that students will focus on during that week and provides a brief definition of the strategy or the skills. Read the definition(s) aloud to students each day before they complete the activities, or prompt students to define the skills themselves. You may also wish to reproduce the comprehension skill definitions on page 8 as a poster for your classroom. Then reproduce the strategy visual aids on pages 9–14 and distribute them to students.

STEP 2 The teacher page provides an instructional path for conducting each day’s lesson and activities. Use the tips and suggestions in each day’s lesson to present the skills and introduce the passage.

STEP 3 Each student page begins with directions for reading the passage. These directions also serve as a way to establish a purpose for reading. Help students see the connection between setting a purpose for reading and improving comprehension.

STEP 4 Because much of reading comprehension stems from a reader’s background knowledge about a subject, take a moment to discuss the topic with students before they read a passage. Introduce unfamiliar phrases or concepts, and encourage students to ask questions about the topic.

STEP 5 After students have read a passage, two comprehension activities give students an opportunity to practice the strategies and skills. In weeks 1–6, the first activity is an open-ended writing or partner activity that encourages students to reflect on the reading process, applying the weekly strategy. The second activity provides three constructed response items that practice the week’s skills in a test-taking format.

In weeks 7–30, students complete the constructed response activity before practicing the strategy activity. The teacher page for these weeks offers suggestions for teaching the skills and gives tips for reminding students of the strategy(ies). Throughout the week, encourage students to refer to the strategy visual aids. Use the Student Record Sheet on page 15 to track student progress and to note which skills or strategies a student may need additional practice with.

Weekly Teacher Page

Strategy Visual Aid

WEEK 3 Organization
When students use this strategy, they recognize the organizational pattern of what they are reading. This daily student activity shows the author will organize the information in the text. Common organizational patterns are main idea and details, compare and contrast, cause and effect, and sequence.

Reproduce the Organization visual and distribute it to students. Then introduce the Organization strategy to students. Say, "This week I'll practice figuring out how an author organizes a passage. This means we'll look for a pattern that the author uses to tell us the information. One way an author can organize a passage is by sequence. This means the author tells us the events in the order that they happened. Read about the instructions at the top of the page. Prompt students to list words that describe sequence, and find them on the hand (first, next). Then, finally, direct students to look for those words as they read. When students have finished reading, direct them to complete the strategy practice activity before returning to share the signal words they found in the passage. Then direct students to complete the skill practice activity."

DAY 1
Reinforce students of the strategy, and read the instructions at the top of the page aloud. Then read about the soil and the paragraph. Ask, "What do you think the next paragraph will be about? Use reasons why the author thinks earthworms are a farmer's best friend." Say, "The author organized this passage by giving us details and then telling more about the idea. As you read the rest of the passage, look for reasons why the author thinks earthworms are a farmer's best friend. Have students finish reading the rest of the passage. When students have finished, direct them to complete the strategy and skill practice activities. Review the answers together."

DAY 2
Reinforce students of the strategy. Say, "Sometimes authors tell us what happens and the reasons why it happens. What happens in this case, and what reasons why it happens in the case. Authors can organize the things they write by cause and effect. Read the instructions at the top of the page aloud. Then read the first and third paragraphs about the fish. Ask, "What do you think the author's message was an arrow to deep in the water—and why it happens—the wagon was too full. Because the passage is organized this way, it will help us see cause and effect as we read. Direct students to finish reading the passage and complete the strategy practice activity. Review the answers together before having students complete the skill practice activity."

DAY 3
Reinforce students of the strategy, and prompt them to recall the ways a passage can be organized by sequence, by giving an idea and telling more about the idea, and by cause and effect. Say, "Sometimes an author might organize each paragraph a little differently. As we read, let's make sure we look for words that tell us how each paragraph is organized. These are called signal words. Direct students to read the first paragraphs and look for signal words that show cause and effect (because, so). Ask, "What are some words you would look for to show sequence? (first, next, then, last, and finally) Direct students to look for signal words as they finish reading the passage. Then direct students to complete the strategy and skill practice activities. Review the answers together."

DAY 4
Reinforce students of the strategy, and read the instructions at the top of the page aloud. Say, "The author has organized this passage by giving us an idea and then telling more about that idea. Use students read the passage. When students have finished, ask, 'Why do you think the author wanted to tell the end of the first paragraph to tell that there is a reason to organize the reader to keep the reader interested?' Say, 'Sometimes authors organize a passage to make it interesting to the reader. But if something is so boring when you read the first time, you should read it again to make sure you understand it. Direct students to complete the strategy and skill practice activities. Then review the answers together.'

DAY 5

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Weekly skills are explained at the top of each teacher page.

The daily instruction path provides suggestions for modeling the skill and guiding students through the passage and activities.

Visual Aid Reading Comprehension Strategy: **Ask Questions**

Readers ask questions when they read a text. Asking questions before, during, and after helps in understanding a text.

Then look for answers to the questions in the text.

Ask questions before reading to help set a purpose for reading.

- Whom does the story focus on?
- What is the story's genre?

Ask questions during reading to get more involved in the story.

- Where does the story take place?
- Why does the main character feel happy?

Ask questions after reading to check understanding.

- When did she realize that she had a problem?
- How did she solve the problem?

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A definition and graphic image for each strategy help students to understand the concept and provide a reference as they complete the activities.

Daily Student Pages

Name: _____

Organization WEEK 3 DAY 1

READ THE PASSAGE: Notice words that help you understand when things happen.

Ready, Aim, Split!
An archerfish can get its food in two ways. It can blow out of the water to spray a bug. Or it can stay in the water and shoot down its food by spitting a jet of water. The fish begins the attack by first swimming near a low branch. It stays underwater but close to the surface. Only the tip of its mouth sticks out of the water. Next, the fish waits for a bug to land on the branch. When the bug lands, the archerfish acts quickly. First, the fish presses its tongue against a groove on the roof of its mouth. This makes a narrow tube. Then, it snaps its gills shut. This action forces water into its mouth and out the tube. Zap! The jet of water hits the bug, which falls into the water. With a gloop, the archerfish finally gets its meal.

STARTER PRACTICE: Circle the signal words that helped you understand how the passage was organized.

SKILL PRACTICE: Read the item. Write your response.

1. When an archerfish is hungry, where does it go?

2. Why does the archerfish press its tongue against the roof of its mouth?

3. What happens if the archerfish misses the bug?

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Name: _____

Organization WEEK 3 DAY 2

READ THE PASSAGE: Notice how the author feels about earthworms.

Wiggly Workers
If people think earthworms are yucky, I think earthworms are a farmer's best friend. Healthy plants, a farmer needs healthy soil. Earthworms help make the soil rich. These wiggly critters live in the ground where it is moist and they move by digging tunnels. Each time earthworms wiggle, they mix and aerate the soil. This allows the dirt so that plants can spread their roots. The worms' actions also bring air into the soil, which plants need to live. Earthworms eat plants and dead bugs. The droppings that earthworms deposit are very rich in nutrients for growing fruits and vegetables. Farmers will agree with me. Earthworms are amazing creatures!

STARTER PRACTICE: Underline two sentences that tell why earthworms are good for farmers.

SKILL PRACTICE: Read the item. Write your response.

1. Do crops do if planted in a field with very few earthworms? Why?

2. How do farmers probably think about earthworms? Explain.

3. List ways in which earthworms affect the soil.

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Name: _____

Organization WEEK 3 DAY 3

READ THE PASSAGE: Think about reasons why travel to the West was uncomfortable.

Rugged Roads
In the 1800s, people moved to the West in covered wagons. Mules or oxen pulled the wagons. Families piled their furniture and belongings inside. Because the wagons were so full, there was no room in the wagon for sleeping. Traveling was an adventure. The wagons were not comfortable to ride in because the wagon wheels were covered in iron, not rubber. Roads made wagons more uncomfortable because they were bumpy and not paved. People who did not drive the wagon walked beside it. The roads were rugged, but they did help with one daily chore. Women or children milked their cows in the morning. Then they poured some fresh milk into a wooden butter churn. They hung the container on the wagon. The wagon bounced so much that by night, the churn held a lump of butter.

STARTER PRACTICE: Look back at the second paragraph. Write a C above each cause. Write an E above each effect.

SKILL PRACTICE: Read the item. Write your response.

1. What was the effect of the unpaved road?

2. Why did people walk beside the wagons rather than ride in them?

3. Why didn't families sleep in their covered wagons?

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Activity directions help students establish a purpose for reading.

Grade-appropriate text supports comprehension.

Each passage is followed by three constructed response items, practicing specific comprehension skills, as well as an open-ended strategy-based activity. In weeks 1–6, the strategy activity precedes the skill activity.

Student Record Sheet

Student Record Sheet

Student: _____

Week	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Weekend
Week 1						
Week 2						
Week 3						
Week 4						
Week 5						
Week 6						
Week 7						
Week 8						
Week 9						
Week 10						
Week 11						
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Week 26						
Week 27						
Week 28						
Week 29						
Week 30						

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The record sheet allows you to record students' progress and identify areas in which individuals need improvement.



Comprehension Strategies and Skills

In *Daily Reading Comprehension*, students learn and practice the following commonly tested comprehension strategies and skills, all proven to increase students' abilities to read and understand a wide range of text types. Reproduce and post the strategy visual aids on pages 9–14. You may also wish to post or distribute copies of page 8, which provides a student-friendly list of skills and helpful questions that students can ask themselves as they read.

Strategies

Make Connections

Students make connections to the text to aid their comprehension. Connections can be made to personal experiences or to things the students have seen or read.

Visualization

Students make mental images of what they are reading. They learn to look for vivid language, including concrete nouns, active verbs, and strong adjectives.

Organization

Students learn to find the organizational pattern of a text. This allows them to anticipate what they are reading and helps them focus on the author's central message or important ideas.

Determine Important Information

Students learn to categorize information based on whether or not it supports an author's central message or is important for a specific purpose.

Ask Questions

Students learn to ask questions before reading to set a purpose for reading, during reading to identify when their comprehension breaks down, or after reading as a way to check their understanding of a passage.

Monitor Comprehension

Students learn to pay attention to their own reading process and notice when they are losing focus or when comprehension is breaking down. They then can employ another strategy to help them overcome their difficulty.

Skills

Main Idea and Details

Students identify what a passage is mostly about and find important details that support the main idea.

Sequence

Students look for the order in which things happen or identify the steps in a process.

Cause and Effect

Students identify what happens (effect) and why it happens (cause).

Fact and Opinion

Students determine which statements can be proved true (fact) and which statements tell what someone thinks or believes (opinion).

Compare and Contrast

Students note how two or more people or things are alike and different.

Make Inferences

Students use their background knowledge and clues from the text to infer information.

Prediction

Students use their background knowledge and clues from the text to figure out what will happen next.

Character and Setting

Students identify who or what a story is about and where and when the story takes place.

Fantasy vs. Reality

Students determine whether something in a story could or could not happen in real life.

Author's Purpose

Students determine why an author wrote a passage and whether the purpose is: to entertain, to inform, to persuade, or to teach.

Nonfiction Text Features

Students study features that are not part of the main body of text, including subheadings, captions, entry words, and titles.

Visual Information

Students study pictures, charts, graphs, and other forms of visual information.