

Partners in Learning



What Is Reading Comprehension?

Reading comprehension is the ability to understand and interpret written material. Children must be able to read accurately, make connections between what they read and what they already know, and think deeply about the text.

A student may have difficulty with reading comprehension if:

- She struggles to tell about what she has read.
- He can tell you what happened in a story, but can't explain why events went the way they did.
- She can't explain what a character's thoughts or feelings might have been.
- He doesn't link events in a book to similar events from another book or from real life.



What Parents Can Do To Help At Home

- Listen to your child read out loud, and ensure he or she reads for meaning. Reading must make sense! Inaccurate reading can interfere with comprehension, but parents can encourage children to self-monitor by asking, "Did that make sense?"
- Have conversations with your child about his reading, and help him make connections to his own life. For example, say "I wonder why that girl did that?" or "How do you think he felt? Why?" and "So, what lesson can we learn here?" Use open-ended questions that encourage thinking beyond simply recalling events or facts.
- Think out loud about the book. Share your ideas, the connections you make, and what you're wondering about. This strategy models the kind of thinking strong readers use.
- Help your child monitor his or her understanding. Teach her to continually ask herself whether she understands what she's reading.
- Discuss the meanings of unknown words.
- Read material in short sections, and talk about the events or information.
- Help your child find books that are interesting, but not too difficult. Before reading, look at the cover and make predictions about the book. You may wish to provide some background information to set your child up for successful reading.
- Most importantly, read and talk about books with your child every day. This habit will lead to greater comprehension, improvement in all areas of learning, and a lifelong love of reading!

Sources: <http://www.readingrockets.org/helping/target/comprehension>
<http://www.k5learning.com/blog/tips-helping-kids-reading-comprehension>