

Teaching is an art. Rajeev Ranjan

Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension is the ability to understand what we read — where words have context and texts have meaning. Reading comprehension skills allow us to read proficiently, learn effectively, problem-solve, strategize, conceptualize, and succeed in life. Without reading comprehension skills, many students are left behind.

Objective: To understand the text and answer the factual and inferential question based on the text.

Types of Reading Comprehension:

Unseen Passage, Prose, Poem, Newspaper cutting, News, Scientific Report –according to age group

Subskills/ types of reading comprehension

1. Skimming
2. Scanning
3. Intensive reading
4. Extensive reading/ reading for pleasure

Basically two sub skills

- Factual Comprehension
- Inferential/Global comprehension

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It is quickly looking through text to get an idea of what the text concerns. Used when reading magazines, newspaper articles etc

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In the Beginning: By improving reading comprehension skills, a reader can better connect with the ideas on a page and apply it to what they already know

- Give students a purpose for reading
- Focus students' attention on what they are to learn
- Help students to think actively as they read
- Encourage students to monitor their comprehension
- Help students to review content and relate what they have learned to what they already know
- What kind of text is this?
- What new information did I learn, and what do I expect to learn?
- Is this text informative or entertaining, fact or fiction?
- What interests about text?

Techniques to improve reading skill

- Survey
- Question
- Read
- Recite
- Relate
- Review

When you begin to read, follow these strategies

We read paragraph for two purposes, first to develop comprehension about the text. It happens when we have command over the words which are used in the paragraph and second for drawing inferential meaning from the text. Inferential meaning demands reader to look beyond the written text.

Please follow the following strategies to develop comprehension.

1. Read the text thoroughly
2. Have a look on title of the passage (sometimes reflects the story)
3. Find out (underline) the fact mentioned in the text. i.e.
 - A. Simple name of character
 - B. Place of story
 - C. Day and date mentioned in the story
 - D. Simple questions i.e. who was the kind? When did happen? How many characters in the story etc(these are known as factual questions)
 - E. Reader should try to extract the meaning of underlined , italicized , bold printed words and phrases

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- F. Reader should re-read the difficult paragraph
4. Try to understand the meaning of text. Donot stuck or worry if you donot know the meaning of a word mentioned in the text. Simple solution of this problem is read the first previous line and next proceeding line. This will give you insight about the meaning of words.
 5. Try to find out the answer of inferential question which demands the reader to look beyond the text. (Why do you think so? How did incident take place? Given statement? Why or why not?) To answer these types of questions readers should look into the mentioned text as well as co-relate it into real life situations. Reader should give the answer even beyond the text.
 6. If reader is facing difficulty to find out the complex question answer then passage demands you to re-read once with little increasing comprehension level of the text.
 7. Slowly and gradually reader should increase vocabulary power to comprehend a written paragraph.
 8. Comprehension passage demand readers to have sound knowledge of basic grammar, word power and techniques to write answer properly and accurately
 9. Questions can also be related to grammar because written passage may focus single item of grammar in the passage i.e. if the passage consists of past indefinite then grammar question will be related to past indefinite tense.
 10. Generally questions' answer can be find easily from the passage but one or two questions demands re-reading of paragraph/sentences for more than one time
 11. Generally reader face the difficulty to find out the answer of vocabulary related questions i.e. synonyms, antonyms, homophones, inferential meanings. Problems will be solved if the reader practices reading comprehensive passage regularly have command on vocabulary etc.....
 12. The only remedies to reach at the level of perfection is more and more practices regularly
- Now take a paragraph and do practices, if you feel problemsplease contact me-----

A. Read the passage carefully and answer the following questions.

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1. To make our life a meaningful one, we need to mind our thought, for our thoughts are the foundations, The aspirations and the motivating power of our deeds. We create our entire world by the way we think. Thoughts are the causes and the conditions are the effects.

2. Our circumstances and conditions are not dictated by the world outside; it is the world inside us that creates the outside. Self-awareness comes from the mind, which means the souls. Mind is the sum total of the state of consciousness grouped under thought, will and feeling. Besides self-consciousness, we have the power to choose and think. Krishna says, "No man resteth a moment in active". Even when inactive on the bodily plane, we are all the time acting on the thought plane. Therefore, if we observe ourselves, we can easily mould our thoughts. If our thoughts are pure and noble, naturally actions follow the same. If our thoughts are filled with jealousy, hatred and greed, our action will be the same. Thought or intent is more responsible and dynamic than an act.

WORD MEANINGS:-

- 1) Observe – watch carefully.
- 2) Dynamic – having a lot of energy and strong personality.

ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS BRIEFLY:-

- 1) How can we make our life meaningful?
- 2) What motivates our deeds?
- 3) What constitutes our state of consciousness?
- 4) Why did Krishna say, "no man resteth a moment inactive."?
- 5) Find in the passage a word which means 'full of activity.'?

ANSWERS:-

- 1) By minding our thoughts.
- 2) Our thoughts.
- 3) Our thought, will and feelings.
- 4) Because we are all the time acting on the bodily plane and the thought plane.
- 5) Dynamic

B. Read the passage carefully and answer the following questions.

Next to the church in the village of Sanford, there is an old manor-house 1 which is famous for its large number of ghosts.

The present owner of the manor 2 says that it is difficult to keep servants because the ghosts frighten them. Many people have seen the ghost of the previous owner. He was a farmer who committed suicide by hanging himself from the gate and he often appears in the garden wearing old working clothes.

Another ghost is of an 18th century priest who used to kill visitors while they were asleep in their beds. He still sometimes frightens guests in the middle of the night by standing over their beds holding a knife.

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The ghost of a servant sometimes walks along the dark corridors of the house. He murdered his master at Sanford manor, but nobody knows why.

But perhaps the most frightening story is of a young man who grew up in the house and then became a sailor. While he was at sea, he killed a boy, and then went mad. When he returned to Sanford manor, they locked him in a room at the back of the house. He never left the room again, and died there several years later. On some nights, when the moon is full, you can hear him screaming and banging on the door of the room.

WORD MEANING:-

- 1) Manor-house – large country house surrounded by a farm or garden;
- 2) Manor-vast – area of land owned by a big landlord.

COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING:-

- 1) The previous owner of the manor-house_____.
- 2) Many people have seen_____in the garden.
- 3) The sailor was locked in a room because_____.
- 4) It was_____who used to kill visitors when they were asleep.
- 5) Nobody knows the reason why the servant at the manor-house_____.

ANSWERS:-

- 1) Committed suicide.
- 2) The previous owner's ghost.
- 3) He had gone mad.
- 4) An 18thcentury priest.
- 5) Had murdered his master.

C. Read the passage carefully and answer the following questions.

The Seven Ancient Wonders of the World The ancient Greeks made a list of places they thought people should see. This list was named the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. The Greeks chose seven wonders, because in their culture this number symbolized perfection. The only one of the ancient wonders that still exists is in Giza, Egypt. This wonder is the Great Pyramid of Giza. It was one of three great pyramids built around 2500 B.C. It is the oldest wonder of the seven. People do not know how these pyramids were built but we know that they took over 20 years to complete. For a long time, the Great Pyramid was believed to be the tallest structure in the world. Pyramids were built as tombs for the leaders of Egypt called Pharaohs. Many travelers still visit the Great Pyramid today. The Hanging Gardens of Babylon are another ancient wonder. This wonder is special because people do not know for sure if it existed. Old books say the garden was built around 600 B.C. It was located on the bank of the Euphrates River. Today, this area is near Baghdad, Iraq. These gardens were built by a king for his wife. Living in the desert, she missed the plants at her old home. The king wanted to make his queen like their new home more. It may never be known if the Hanging Gardens of Babylon truly existed, but the descriptions of this

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beautiful place have made their place in history. The Greeks also added a couple of their own structures on the list of ancient wonders. The Statue of Zeus was built in Olympia, Greece in 457 B.C. This statue was built to honor the Greek god Zeus. The statue was as tall as a four-story building! It was made of wood and decorated with gold and ivory. Unfortunately, the statue was destroyed by a fire and no longer exists for us to see. In addition to Zeus, the Greeks also built a very big statue to honor the Greek sun god, Helios. This wonder is known as the Colossus of Rhodes. The Colossus of Rhodes took twelve years to build. It was finished in 226 B.C. It was 110 feet high. That is about the same size as the Statue of Liberty. Also like the Statue of Liberty, the Colossus of Rhodes was placed at the entrance to a harbor. Built around 550 B.C., the Temple of Artemis at Ephesus was considered the most beautiful structure on earth. It was built to honor the goddess of hunting, nature, and fertility. Ephesus was an ancient city that was located in what is now Turkey. The temple was made of marble and had many bronze statues. People used to come from all over the world to worship Artemis. The temple was later burned down and now there is only a marshy field where this wonder once stood. Another wonder was also located in what is now Turkey. It was the Mausoleum at Halicarnassus. This tomb was built for King Mausolus of Caria. Some of the best artists and craftsmen of the time period helped build and decorate this beautiful tomb. The mausoleum was finished around 350 B.C. Later, several earthquakes damaged the mausoleum. A group called the Knights of St. John later used the ruins to build a castle. King Mausolus's name and his connection with such a special tomb led people to use the word mausoleum. The only wonder built for a practical use was the Pharos of Alexandria. This was a lighthouse off the coast of Egypt. It was once the tallest building in the world. There was a very large mirror inside this lighthouse. It was used to reflect sunlight to help warn ships that they were getting close to the shoreline. At night, a fire was lit inside the Pharos of Alexandria to help sailors. The design and building of this lighthouse started in 290 B.C. It was later ruined by earthquakes. However, it remained longer than any of the wonders, other than the Great Pyramid. The Seven Wonders of the Ancient World are unknown to many people because most of these structures were destroyed so long ago. While it is sad people cannot see most of these wonders in person, the detailed stories about them help people know how special they were.

1. Which of the following countries did not have one of the Seven Ancient Wonders of the World?

A. Greece B. United States C. Egypt D. Turkey

2. What is a mausoleum?

A. A large tomb B. Coffin C. A kind of fabric D. A country

3. Why were the places and structures described in the passage considered wonders?

A. They were extraordinary. B. People would visit them to think. C. They were holy. D. They were old.

4. Based upon the passage you know that ALL of the Seven Wonders were:

A. Built by the Greeks B. Built by humans C. Destroyed by natural disasters D. Made of wood

5. Why can't people visit most of the Seven Ancient Wonders of the Ancient World?

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A. They no longer exist. B. They are imaginary. C. It is dangerous to go to those places. D. They are well guarded.

6. On a scale between 1 and 10 with 1 being low and 10 being how well did you like this passage?

Didn't Like It At All: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I Really Liked It : 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

7. Connections: Name three structures to include in a Modern Wonders list?

D. Read the passage carefully and answer the following questions.**Star**

Star in the heavens, what is your fate,
and when were you born to the sky?
How will you spend all of your light,
and how will you finally die?
Will you become a fiery red giant,
leaving a hot ball of flame,
Spreading your gas and dust into space,
to aid in the birth of the same?
Or is your mass so great you'll explode,
filling the sky with your light?
Will you become a pulsating beam,
that keeps perfect time in the night?
Far stranger still, if you are more massive,
than neighbors in your border space,
Will you collapse to become a black hole;
a tunnel to some other place?
Star in the heavens, are you aware,
that time passes on far below?
You stand aloof while generations of us,
quickly come and then go
But at the time you finally die,
we do not gaze passively
For it is only because of you,
that all life is able to be!

By Lauren Pierce

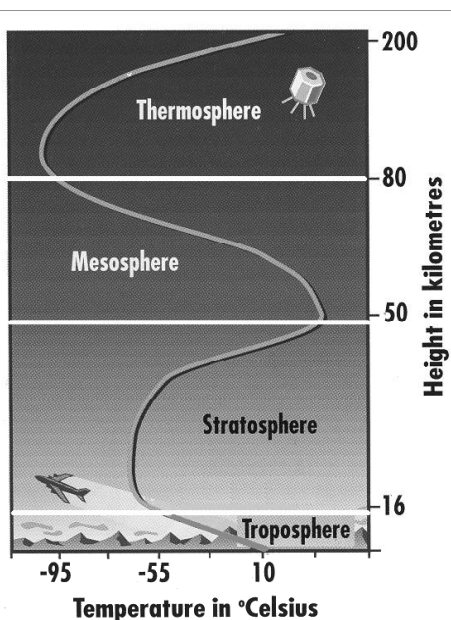
1. What might the star become when it dies?
 - A. A pulsating beam or a nebula.
 - B. A red giant or a black hole.
 - C. A pulsating beam or a border space.

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- D. A red giant or a sun.
- In this poem, the word pulsating means what?
 - Static.
 - Light.
 - Massive.
 - Vibrating.
 - What would be another good title for this poem?
 - Red Giants and Black Holes.
 - Stars and Constellations.
 - The Life and Death of Stars.
 - The Sun: Earth's Star.
 - How long does a star live?
 - Longer than many generations of people.
 - As long as the nearest star.
 - As long as one generation of people.
 - Until another star is born.
 - What type of feelings does the narrator have about stars?
 - Dread and fear.
 - Indifference and apathy.
 - Wonder and respect.
 - Sympathy and understanding.
 - Imaging: In this poem the narrator describes what happens to stars when they die. Reread the poem and draw a picture of each of the four transformations that can happen when stars die. Label each of your diagrams.

E. Read the passage carefully and answer the following questions.**The Atmosphere: The Ocean of Air above Us**

The Earth is surrounded by an ocean of gases we call the atmosphere. The atmosphere is important because it contains the air most living things breathe. It also absorbs heat energy from the sun. It even recycles water by returning it back to the Earth as rain. Without the atmosphere, life as we know it could not exist on Earth. The atmosphere extends about 600 kilometers (about 373 miles) above the surface of the Earth. Scientists discovered that the atmosphere is divided into layers, just like a layer cake. The names and number of layers are pictured in the diagram. As you can see, each layer varies in thickness and in temperature. These layers also differ in composition – the types of gases that make up each layer.



The layer of the atmosphere we live in is called the Troposphere. Tropo is a Greek word meaning turning or change. This first layer begins at sea level and ends about 15 (about 9 miles) kilometers up. The Troposphere contains about 50% of all the air in the entire atmosphere. Because it is at the bottom, air pressure, or the weight of the air, is greatest in this layer. All the clouds we see and the changes in weather we experience occur in the Troposphere. Air temperature and air pressure are not the same all the way up through the Troposphere. As altitude increases, air temperature and air pressure decreases. Mountain climbers must dress in warmer clothes as they climb higher. To keep air pressure constant as they gain altitude, airplanes are sealed to prevent air from escaping.

There are three other layers above the Troposphere. They are the Stratosphere, Mesosphere and Thermosphere.

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Together they make up the remaining half of all the air that surrounds the Earth. This means the air in these layers is thinner and has less pressure than the air in the Troposphere. The Stratosphere contains a special gas called ozone, which is found in a layer called the ozone layer. This layer blocks out most of the dangerous rays from our sun. These dangerous rays cause sunburn, which can lead to skin cancer. There has been a lot of discussion about this layer over the past twenty years. Scientists have discovered that the ozone layer has gotten thinner due to pollution. Now, more harmful rays reach the Earth. To protect our skin from these rays, we must wear sun block while outside, especially in the summer when we wear less clothing. It is also wise to wear sunglasses on bright days to guard against damage to our eyes.

1. In which layer is air pressure the greatest?
 - a. Stratosphere.
 - b. Troposphere.
 - c. Mesosphere.
 - d. Thermosphere.
2. What does the word composition mean in this passage?
 - a. Process material so that it is used again.
 - b. The way the parts of something are arranged.
 - c. To keep the air pressure constant.
 - d. Music notes written on a page
3. An alternate title for this reading passage might be:
 - a. The Thinning Ozone Layer.
 - b. Air Pressure and the Atmosphere.
 - c. Weather Events and the Atmosphere.
 - d. The Many Layers of the Atmosphere.
4. Why did the word Troposphere come from the Greek word tropo?
 - a. Greeks first discovered the atmosphere.
 - b. Tropo is the Greek god of weather.
 - c. The weather is always changing within the Troposphere.
 - d. The Earth is shaped like a sphere
5. How are health problems in humans caused by the thinning ozone layer?
 - a. More harmful rays from the sun reach Earth.
 - b. It allows pollution to reach the Earth.
 - c. There is less ozone for humans to breathe.
 - d. The thinning ozone layer is increasing the air pressure on humans.
6. **Inference:** Which layer of the atmosphere is the most important to humans? Why?

Resource:

http://www.ncsu.edu/project/lancet/fifth_grade/HelenKeller.5.doc

<http://www.slideshare.net/rajeevelt/reading-skill-7167314>