Reading Activities to Develop Comprehension

- **Page 99**

Pick a novel that your child has not read. Before looking at the front cover or blurb, turn to page 99 and read it together. Have a discussion about what they can infer from this one page. What is the genre? What is the book about? Who are the main characters? Where is it set? How do you know?

- **Reading chains**

Attached are a set of reading chains. A simple story broken up into separate sentences. Read the first sentence and discuss with your child what they can infer from that one sentence. Then read the next sentence and discuss again, what new things can they infer now and does it add to or change what they thought about the first sentence. Carry on in this way.

Once you have completed the reading chains attached you can do a similar thing with any book you are reading with a child. Read the first five sentences of a new chapter, one at a time, discussing what you can infer from each sentence and how that increases what they know about the story so far.

Party

Joe went to a party.

He dressed up as a skeleton.

He baked some biscuits.

He took a torch.

He felt sick by bedtime.

Dance

Alice rubbed her aching feet.

She got changed into her jeans and a T-shirt.

She sat in the audience with her mum.

"Your dancing was very graceful," said Alice to Zoe.

"Your dancing was very graceful," said Alice to Zoe, grudgingly.

Animals

The warthog grabs a mouthful before running away.

The baby elephant stamps the ground impatiently.

The antelope is very hesitant.

A flock of birds suddenly flies into the air.

A lion crouches in the long grass looking at the water.

- **Tricky word window**

Pick a word that your child did not know and complete a tricky word window. There are a couple of attached ones in written form but if your child does not like the idea of writing it down the same associations of the word can be discussed orally.

Tricky Word	Examples
soothing	Music bathtime naps
Definition	**Opposites**
Comforting Offering relief	Tests Loud noises Being put on the spot

Tricky Word	Examples
murky	Dark, foggy wood Ponds Paint brush cleaning water
Definition	**Opposites**
Dark and gloomy, Difficult to see through	Clear sunny day Clean water

- **Dictionary use**
    1. Read the unknown word in context
    2. Predict what it might mean
    3. Look it up in dictionary
    4. Re-read the sentence and discuss.
- **Word Gradients**

Pick a word, find all the synonyms (words with same meaning) for that word with a thesaurus - use Google if you have no Thesaurus at home. Through discussion, order the synonyms from one extreme to another and put each into a sentence, verbally. There is not always an easy way to grade synonyms but the discussion about when and

where to use each synonym is very valuable as many children think they can use any synonym in any situation. This can be done with simple known words and trickier new words.

Word: happy   **Synonyms**: thrilled, ecstatic, glad, delighted, jubilant

Grading - glad, delighted, thrilled, jubilant, ecstatic

- ## Condense your answers

Ask your child some questions about what they have read, using the attached comprehension questions. Once your child has answered challenge them to answer the question in fewer words. You could maybe answer the question yourself and ask your child to 'beat you' by being more concise.

- ## Reading a page or two then asking comprehension questions

2a: Give/explain the meaning of words in context

- Which of these words…… is a synonym for (choose a word from the text)?
- Give the meaning of the word…… in this sentence
- Which word most closely matches the meaning of the word x?
- The writer uses …words/phrases…to describe … How does this make you feel?
- What does this phrase mean? (E.g. It's raining cats and dogs)

2b: Retrieve and record information/identify key details from fiction and non-fiction

- Who are the characters in the book?
- Through whose eyes is the story told?
- Where in the book would you find…?
- What is happening at this point in the text?
- Which part of the story best describes the setting?
- What part of the story do you like best? Find evidence to support your opinion.
- What was revealed at …. (beginning, middle, end, paragraph)

2c: Summarise main ideas from more than one paragraph

- What's the main point in this paragraph?
- Can you sum up what happens in these three/four/five… paragraphs?
- You've got 'x' words; sum up these paragraphs.
- Which is the most important point in these paragraphs? How many times is it mentioned?

2d: Make inferences from the text/explain and justify inferences with evidence from the text

- What makes you think that?
- Which words give you that impression?
- How can you tell that…?
- What does this… word/phrase/sentence… imply about… (character/setting/mood)?

2e: Predict what might happen from details stated and implied.

- Can you think of another story, which has a similar theme; e.g. good over evil; weak over strong; wise over foolish? Do you think this story will go the same way?
- Which other author handles time in this way; e.g. flashbacks; dreams?
- Which stories have openings like this? Do you think this story will develop in the same way?
- Why did the author choose this setting? Will that influence how the story develops?
- How is character X like someone you know? Do you think they will react in the same way?

2f: Identify/explain how information/narrative content is related and contributes to meaning as a whole

- What is the story (theme) underneath the story? Does this story have a moral or a message?

- Explain why a character did something.
- Explain a character's different/changing feelings throughout a story. How do you know?
- What are the clues that a character is liked/disliked/envied/feared/loved/hated etc…?
- What is similar/different about two characters?
- Why is 'x' (character/setting/event) important in the story?
- Where does it tell you that…(could be information contained in headings/glossaries/labels etc.)? Why has the writer written/organised the text in this way?

2g: Identify/explain how meaning is enhanced through choice of words and phrases

- Find two or three ways that the writer tells you 'x'.
- What do you think the writer meant by… 'x'?
- How has the writer made you and/or character feel …happy /sad/angry/ frustrated/lonely/bitter etc?
- Highlight a key phrase or line. By writing a line in this way what effect has the author created?
- In the story, 'x' is mentioned a lot. Why?
- What impression do these words… give you about… (use a synonym for the previous words)