



# Table of Contents

<b>Introduction</b> .....	3
<b>The Layers of Reading Comprehension</b> .....	4
<b>How to Use This Book</b> .....	6
<b>Unit 1: Basic Strategies</b>	
Predicting Problem and Solution .....	10
Questioning .....	13
Making Connections .....	16
<b>Unit 2: Inferring through Realistic Fiction</b>	
Identifying Character Actions and Appearance .....	19
Inferring Traits .....	22
Comparing and Contrasting Characters .....	25
Unit Project: Character Masks .....	31
<b>Unit 3: Visualization through Mystery</b>	
Identifying Setting Elements .....	32
Visualizing the Setting .....	35
Altering the Setting .....	38
Unit Project: Dioramas .....	44
<b>Unit 4: Summarizing Fantasy Stories</b>	
Retelling the Story .....	45
Determining Fantasy and Reality .....	48
Analyzing Important Events .....	51
Unit Project: Comic Strip Scrolls .....	57
<b>Unit 5: Deducing in Nonfiction</b>	
Collecting and Categorizing Facts .....	58
Determining Fact or Opinion .....	61
Deducing the Author's Message .....	64
Unit Project: Animal Report Mobiles .....	70
<b>Unit 6: Evaluating through Biographies</b>	
Using Six Questions .....	71
Sequencing with a Time Line .....	74
Evaluating Contributions .....	77
Unit Project: Cereal Box Honors .....	83
<b>Unit 7: Analyzing through Fairy Tales</b>	
Describing Themes of a Fairy Tale .....	84
Analyzing the Cause of an Event .....	87
Determining Perspective or Point of View .....	90
Unit Project: Fairy Tale Newspaper .....	96

# Introduction

Reading comprehension is the mind's ability to understand the ideas in a text and the message and purpose of the author. *Reading Comprehension 1-3* provides lessons that use specific genres to teach reading comprehension strategies. Teaching comprehension in a primary classroom is often seen as secondary to the instruction of decoding skills. If students are to become fluent readers who comprehend what they read, reading comprehension needs to be taught explicitly and consistently, starting in the early elementary grades.

Good readers are familiar with a variety of genres. Therefore, the comprehension skills in *Reading Comprehension 1-3* are genre-based. Good readers recognize how the indicators of specific genres, such as the captions and diagrams in nonfiction, or the problems and clues in a mystery, aid and assist them in deriving meaning from the text they read.

Good readers use a combination of six skills that lead to “real” comprehension:

**Skill 1:** Decoding—decode text fluently by integrating cueing systems: visual, meaning, and semantic.

**Skill 2:** Literal Comprehension—recall literal events, facts, or information that are explicitly stated in text.

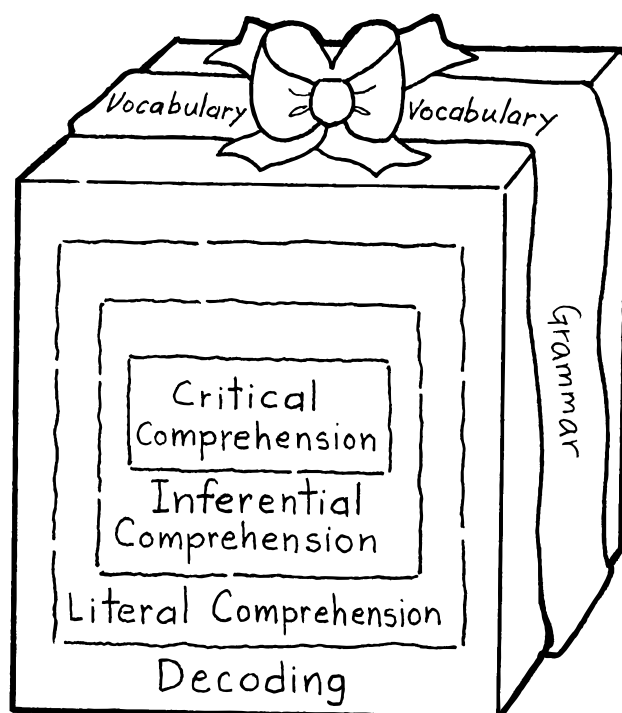
**Skill 3:** Inferential Comprehension—integrate knowledge of the reader's world and literal information of the text to gain a deeper understanding of its story elements.

**Skill 4:** Critical Comprehension—extend and develop an understanding of text through discussion, comparison, classification, alteration, or imagination, thereby creating new views and knowledge.

**Skill 5:** Vocabulary—determine familiar and unfamiliar vocabulary.

**Skill 6:** Grammar—understand and use the grammatical, mechanical, and syntactical structures of the English language.

The goal of *Reading Comprehension 1-3* is to teach students to use all three levels of comprehension independently and appropriately. Students move through the three levels of comprehension while organizing and extending text information into a graphic organizer. These graphic organizers help students find meaning in text and help develop consistent frameworks for acquiring, integrating, and analyzing information from literature. The teacher models the skill the first time, but through the use of reciprocal teaching methods, the students can also act as the facilitator as they summarize, generate questions, clarify, and predict with their peers.





# The Layers of Reading Comprehension

In order to determine the most successful way to teach comprehension, it is important to understand what reading really is. Think of reading comprehension as a package wrapped in layers. The first large outside box is **decoding**. Explicit instruction on phonics and phonemic awareness is necessary in order to unwrap this first layer. Inside the decoding box is the next layer of reading: **literal comprehension**. At this level, a reader is able to answer simple recall questions, such as *Who? What? Where? and Which?* For example, read the following passage and answer the literal comprehension questions.

Trabe Flemmens

In the yatz, the trabe flemmens were gribbing glunky libbles into a planky dint. Zazle glained into the dint and was sopped with glunky libbles. The trabe flemmens vimmed and vimmed.

1. Where were the trabe flemmens?
2. What were the trabe flemmens gribbing?
3. Who glained into the dint?

The passage may seem like nonsense, but knowledge of decoding skills enables a reader to read the passage. The ease with which the literal comprehension questions can be answered is directly related to fluency and the ability to remember information from the text. Most students develop this type of story comprehension early on in their education. Teaching this type of comprehension tends to be just a matter of focusing on certain points in the text and giving strategies to aid in the recall of information. This passage demonstrates that it is possible for a reader to demonstrate literal comprehension without any true understanding of the message in the text.

True understanding is related to the next layer of reading: **inferential comprehension**. At this level, syntax, vocabulary, grammar, and language structure play an important role. Inferential comprehension also involves the reader's ability to integrate the literal information of the text with his or her own prior knowledge. For example, answering inferential types of questions about the Trabe Flemmens passage may prove more difficult.

4. How did the trabe flemmens feel about glaining in the libbles?
5. How would you describe Zazle?
6. Why would the trabe flemmens grib the libbles?



# The Layers of Reading Comprehension

Another good example of inferential comprehension is demonstrated with the following passage:

Every year, Tony takes his baby for a checkup. When he arrives, he checks in and usually has to wait to be seen. There are many others waiting and it can get very noisy. He hears screeching, banging, and the beeping of machines. When it is finally his turn to see the specialist, Tony expresses some of his concerns. Tony's baby has been sputtering and making other strange noises. The specialist examines Tony's pride and joy carefully. The specialist recommends that Tony monitor his baby's fluid levels.

Interpreting what is going on in the passage is really difficult. Many readers think that the character is taking his child to the doctor and others think that he is taking his car to a mechanic. A person's background, prior experience, vocabulary, and knowledge of syntactical structures directly impact the interpretation and message of the text. Most young students would miss the underlying themes and subtleties of the passage. This misinterpretation would impact accurate predicting and other conclusions made in further reading. This type of comprehension requires active engagement with the material, an ability to integrate and recall prior knowledge of a subject independently, as well as a strong grounding in English language structures.

To aid young readers in the inferential comprehension of text, students are taught to identify key elements in their literal understanding of the text. Then, they brainstorm concepts and ideas related to those elements, tapping into their prior knowledge of the world. Next, they are shown how to narrow down the brainstorming and apply it so that they can integrate what they have read and what they know. Finally, they are able to evaluate and analyze their conclusions and predictions based on what they know about language. This type of comprehension can be developed about midway through second grade or prior, if a reader's decoding and literal comprehension skills are strong.

The last box to unwrap is **critical comprehension**. A reader at this level can use the integrated information and the text to demonstrate a true understanding of the author's message through manipulation, evaluation, and extension of the story elements. For example, using the Trabe Flemmens passage once again, these are some examples of critical comprehension tasks or questions:

7. Imagine what Zazle may like to do in the winter. Explain and defend your ideas.
8. What might the trabe flemmens do if there were no libbles?

Keep in mind that each layer of comprehension does not need to be completely unwrapped before proceeding to the next layer. However, it is virtually impossible to skip a level of comprehension altogether.



# How to Use This Book

Reading Comprehension 1–3 provides the materials and resources you need to assist your students as they develop their reading comprehension skills.

## Unit Format

This resource contains seven units. Each unit features three lessons that progress through the three levels of comprehension: literal, inferential, and critical. A graphic organizer is provided to match each lesson skill. Each skill can be applied to a sample story found at the end of the unit, a literature book selected by the teacher, or through the use of a grade-level anthology that is part of the regular reading program. Each unit includes twelve literature suggestions that are appropriate for the focus skills. However, you may choose other texts within that genre.

Units 2–7 end with a project that connects the unit with its skills and strategies. The project may be done in conjunction with the entire unit or as a culminating event to an independent, shared, modeled, or guided reading. The unit project combines information students learned in the three lessons with a fun art and writing activity.

The first unit in this book is in a slightly different format. Rather than being genre-based, the skills in this unit can be used throughout the year and with any genre. It focuses on basic comprehension strategies that are prerequisites for many of the other genre-based units. Any grade-level appropriate literature book can be used with the first unit, but literature suggestions appear in the Book Box.

The lessons in each unit are intended to expose students to a genre, a reading skill, and a supporting graphic organizer. However, continue to provide students with the opportunity to use a blank graphic organizer as they read other literature selections at a listening center, in guided reading groups, in independent reading, or even to organize ideas in a writing center.

# How to Use This Book

## Lesson Format

Each of three lessons in a unit is structured to give students an opportunity to engage prior knowledge and introduce a new comprehension strategy through literature and a graphic organizer. Each lesson is divided into four parts: direct explanation, modeling, guided practice, and application. Before beginning each lesson, make a copy of the accompanying graphic organizer on a transparency. This transparency is used in either the modeling or guided practice portion of each lesson. Each lesson teaches students to apply the comprehension skill and graphic organizer to a story (either a sample story or a literature selection). A set of sample stories is provided at the end of Units 2–7. Choose and repeat sample stories or literature selections that best meet the needs of your students.

## Assessments

Comprehension is an evolving process, and assessing comprehension involves many layers of observation and reflection. Rubrics offer both the student and teacher an open, yet objective, evaluation tool for this process. Rubrics allow individual interpretation, as long as it is supported by text. As opposed to question sets and quizzes, which are commonly used to evaluate comprehension, rubrics encourage refinement and extension of knowledge. Two rubrics—one for teacher use and one for student use (pages 8–9)—are provided. Both rubrics can be used to assess learning throughout each unit. The rubrics focus on the content of the graphic organizers, written responses, and unit projects.

The image shows two overlapping rubric forms. The left form is titled "Teacher Rubric for Student Observation" and the right form is titled "Student Rubric for Self-Evaluation". Both forms include fields for "Student's Name" and "Date", and "Unit".

**Teacher Rubric for Student Observation**

	Independent (consistently completes task without teacher intervention)	Supported (can complete task with some teacher intervention)	Dependent (consistently requires teacher intervention to complete task)	Unable (unable to complete task even with consistent teacher intervention)
<b>Graphic Organizer</b> Completes a neat, legible organizer. Uses organizer to present information to others. Identifies accurate information from text within organizer.				
<b>Written Response</b> Written response to text is focused, organized, and accurate.				
<b>Unit Project</b> Creative response to text is accurate and attractive. Applies learning skills to create written response.				

**Student Rubric for Self-Evaluation**

	Always	Sometimes	Never
I can complete my graphic organizer.			
I can use my organizer to present information to others.			
I can record examples from the story on my organizer.			
I can use my organizer to write about the story.			
My writing is clear, correct, and organized.			
My project is creative and based on my story.			

**Reflection**

1. What have I learned as a reader?
2. What do I still want to learn as a reader?

# Teacher Rubric for Student Observation

Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Unit \_\_\_\_\_

	<b>Independent</b> (consistently completes task without teacher intervention)	<b>Supported</b> (can complete task with some teacher intervention)	<b>Dependent</b> (consistently requires teacher intervention to complete task)	<b>Unable</b> (unable to complete task even with consistent teacher intervention)
<p><b>Graphic Organizer</b></p> <p>Completes a neat, legible organizer.</p> <p>Uses organizer to present information to others.</p> <p>Identifies accurate information from text within organizer.</p>				
<p><b>Written Response</b></p> <p>Written response to text is focused, organized, and accurate.</p>				
<p><b>Unit Project</b></p> <p>Creative response to text is accurate and attractive.</p> <p>Applies learning skills to create written response.</p>				

# Student Rubric for Self-Evaluation

Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Unit \_\_\_\_\_

	Always	Sometimes	Never
I can complete my graphic organizer.			
I can use my organizer to present information to others.			
I can record examples from the story on my organizer.			
I can use my organizer to write about the story.			
My writing is clear, correct, and organized.			
My project is creative and based on my story.			

## Reflection

1. What have I learned as a reader?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. What do I still want to learn as a reader?

## BookBox

*It Could Always Be Worse* by Margot Zemach (Farrar, Straus & Giroux)

*Julius, Baby of the World* by Kevin Henkes (William Morrow & Company)

*Momotaro: Peach Boy* by George Suyeoka (Island Heritage)

*Now One Foot, Now the Other* by Tomie de Paola (Putnam)

# Predicting Problem and Solution

## OBJECTIVES

Students will

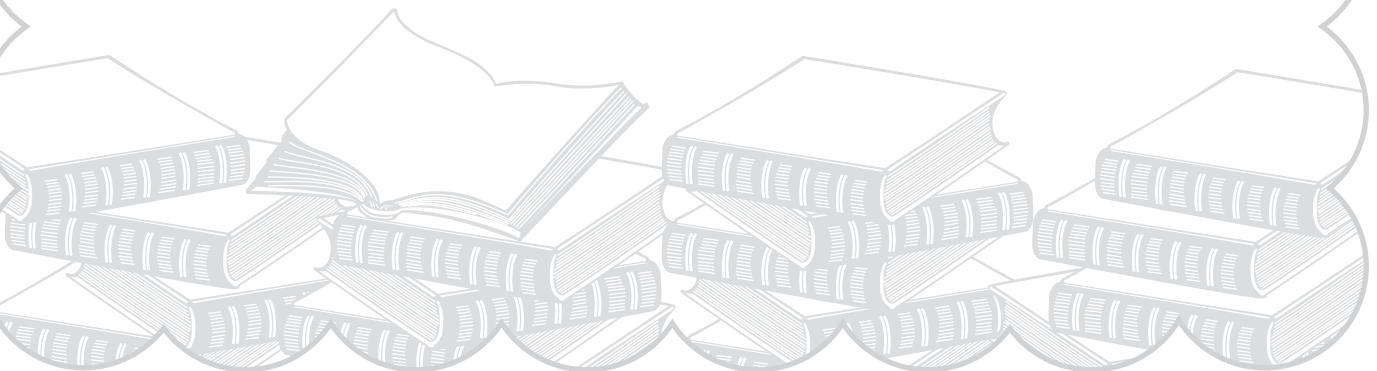
- make predictions about a story based on a picture walk.
- identify the actual problem and solution in a story.



- Predict Problem and Solution graphic organizer (page 12)
- 2 literature selections (see Book Box)
- chart paper
- blue and red markers
- overhead projector/transparency

## Direct Explanation

Explain to students that they set a purpose for reading when they make predictions about a story. Predicting is making a guess about what will happen in a story. Predicting helps them comprehend what they read because they look for details in the story that either prove or change their prediction. Explain that authors use both words and pictures to tell a story. Good readers can look at the pictures to predict a story's problem before they read. They can also make predictions about how the problem will be solved. Draw a web on chart paper, and label it *Problems and Solutions*. Brainstorm problems that characters might face in a story, and use a blue marker to write them on the web. Then, for each problem, ask students to predict how the problem might be solved. Point out that there can be more than one prediction. Use a red marker to write at least two predicted solutions next to each listed problem.



## Modeled Instruction

Model for students how to make a prediction based on a picture. Display the front cover of a selected book. First, name details you see in the picture. Then, model making a prediction. For example, say *I think this is a story about a boy who gets a new baby brother. I think the boy will think the new baby is the best baby in the world.* Write your prediction on the board. Take a picture walk with students. Use the pictures to model making a prediction. For example, write *I think the boy wants his new brother to go live with another family.* Next, predict a solution to solve the problem, and write it to the right of the predicted problem. As you read the next few pages, make changes to your predictions, if needed, or verify that it appears that your predictions are right so far.

## Guided Practice

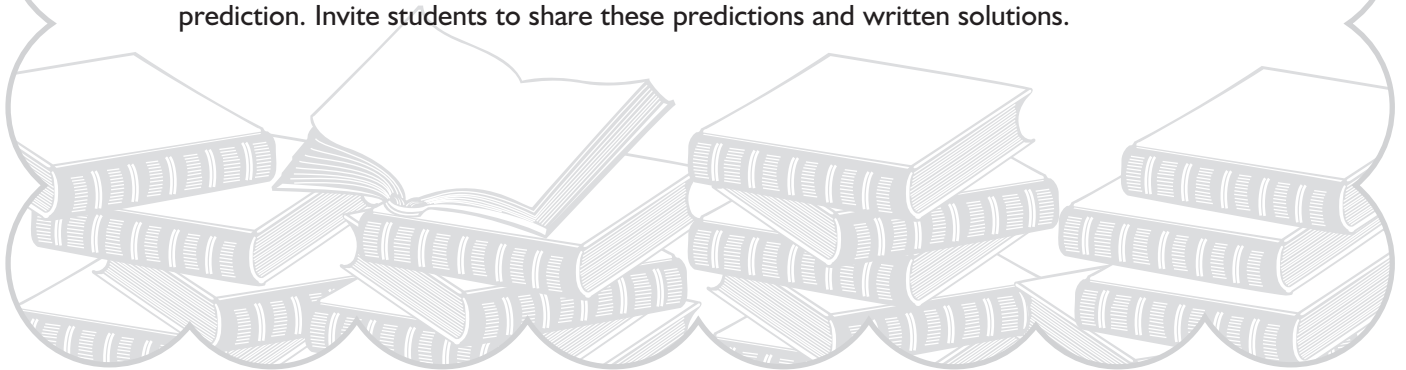
Display a transparency of the Predict Problem and Solution graphic organizer. Invite a volunteer to make another prediction about a problem that will arise in the book. Demonstrate where to write the prediction on the graphic organizer. Then, ask students to predict two different ways the problem might be solved. Write each predicted solution in one of the boxes to the right of the predicted problem. Read aloud the selected book. Stop periodically and ask students if the original predicted problem or solutions need to be changed based on what they have learned. After reading the book, ask students to name the actual problem and solution in the story as you write it on the graphic organizer. Ask students to review their original predictions and compare them to the actual events of the story.

## Application

Choose a new literature selection for students to read on their own. Give each student a Predict Problem and Solution graphic organizer. Remind students to take a picture walk through the story and complete the “My Predictions” part of the graphic organizer. Then, after reading, have them complete the “What Really Happened?” part.

For those students who need extra practice, form a prediction for them. Then, as you read aloud, ask students to point out evidence that either proves or disproves your prediction.

To extend the lesson, have students make predictions about what is happening in magazine pictures or photographs. Then, have students write a story that solves a problem based on their prediction. Invite students to share these predictions and written solutions.

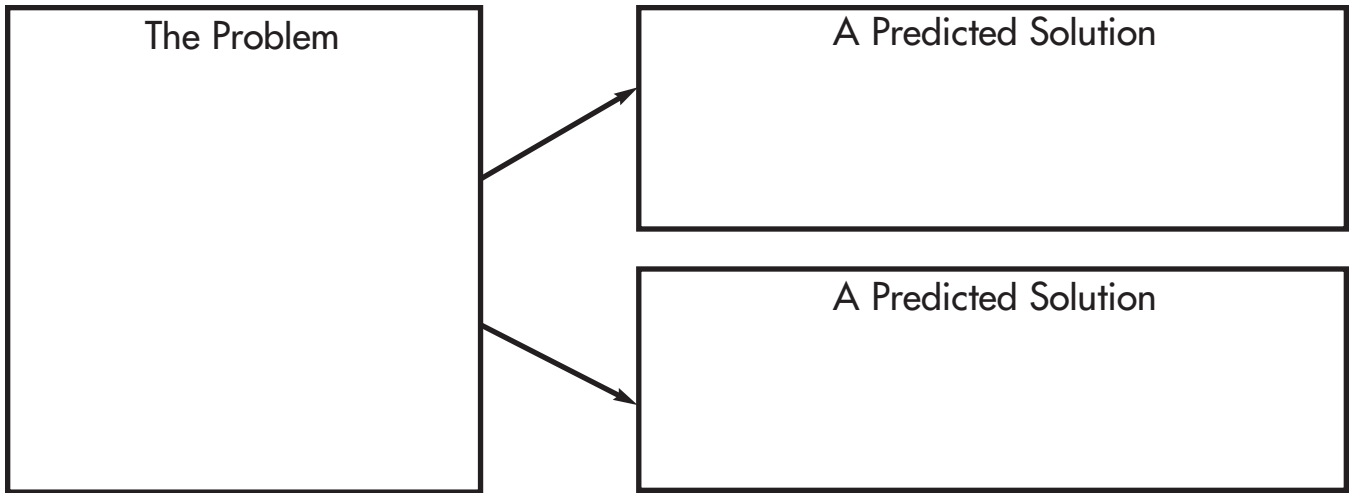


# Predict Problem and Solution

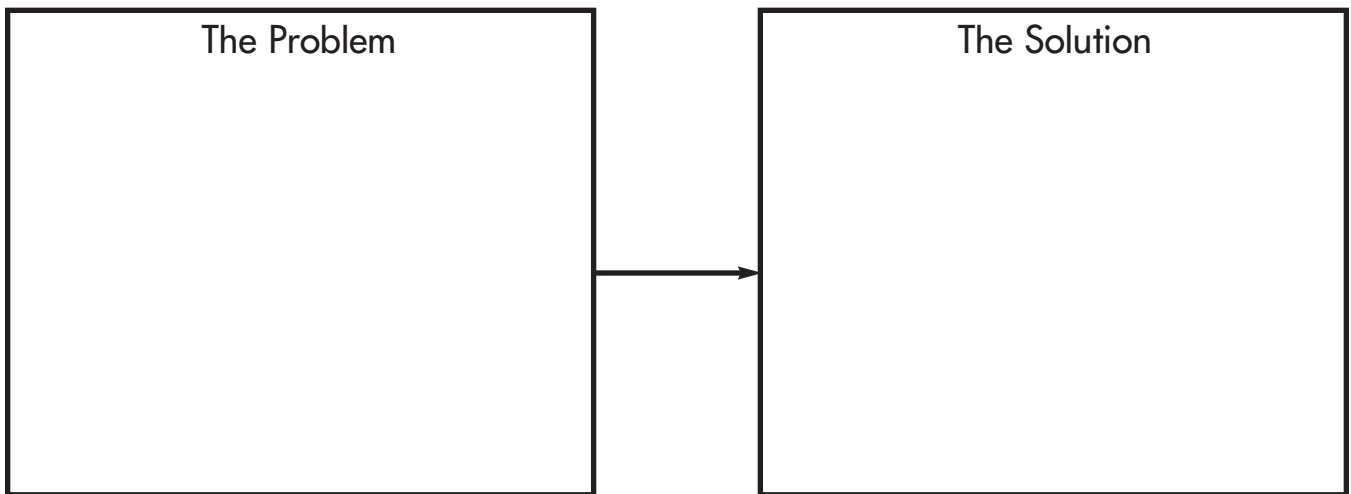
Title of Story \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** Write your prediction about the problem and two possible solutions. After you read, write the actual problem and solution.

## My Predictions



## What Really Happened?



How does my prediction compare to what really happened? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_