



Understanding Reading Comprehension

Parent Engagement Session

20 April 2024



Outline

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What is Reading
Comprehension?

2

Why is Reading
Comprehension
important?

3

How can Reading
Comprehension
be improved?



What is Reading Comprehension?



Strategies for English Language Learning And Reading 2.0 (STELLAR 2.0)



READING & VIEWING

Develop reading and viewing skills, strategies, attitudes and behaviours to comprehend a variety of texts meaningfully.

Areas of Language Learning



Why is Reading Comprehension important?

Desired Outcomes of Education

Empathetic communicators

who possess the values, dispositions and skills to listen actively to different perspectives; communicate confidently, effectively and sensitively while collaborating with others to work towards shared goals; and balance an appreciation of the Singapore spirit with multi-ethnic and multicultural sensitivities.

Discerning readers

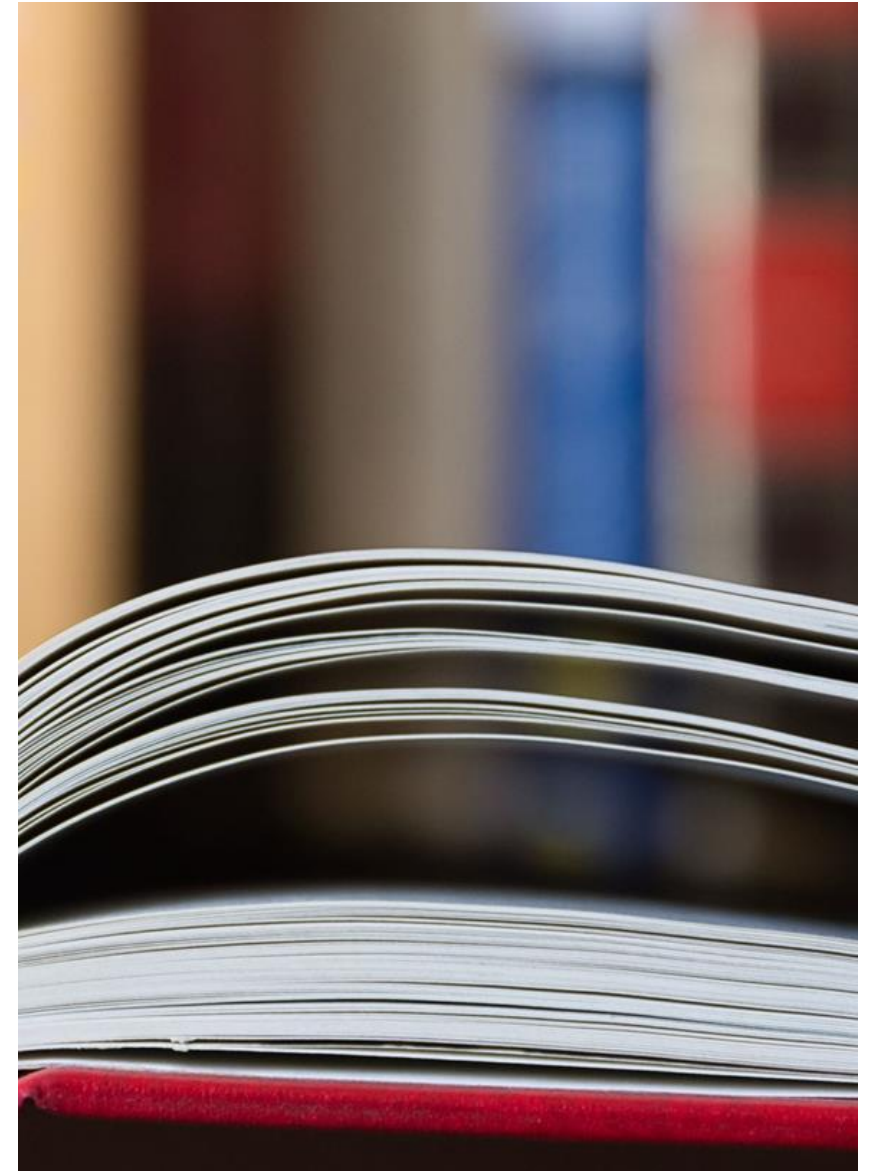
who possess broad worldviews by staying well informed and self-directed in the use of information, and are able to distinguish fact from falsehood by processing and evaluating information, critically and with discernment according to purpose, audience, context and culture.

Creative inquirers

who explore and evaluate real-world issues and multiple perspectives as well as gather and synthesise information from diverse print, non-print and digital networked sources, so as to co-create knowledge and solutions in familiar or new contexts.

How can Reading Comprehension be improved?

1. Strategies for different Comprehension questions
 2. Procedures for answering Reading Comprehension questions
 3. Supporting your child's development in Reading Comprehension skills
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Strategies for different comprehension questions

1. Factual Questions

Find relevant information that can be easily found in the given passage.

After lunch, Mummy brought me to a clothing store to get a pair of long pants for me. "You're older now," she said. "You cannot be wearing shorts all the time when you go out." Mummy wanted to get me a pair of black pants but I wanted the brown pair because it was less baggy. We lingered for a few minutes in front of a shelf stacked with pants. I caught sight of a tall male security guard watching us.

Why did the mother want to get the author a pair of pants?

He was older and could not be wearing shorts whenever he went out.

Strategies for different comprehension questions

2. Inference Questions

Look out for clues from phrases which suggest a “hidden” meaning.

Before we could reach the doors, the same guard whom I had noticed earlier blocked our path. He spoke to Mummy in a low voice and told us to follow him. **I felt Mummy jump behind me.** She was quiet as the guard led us to a room at the back of the store. There was a man seated behind a table. The man glanced at me and then spoke in a sharp voice to my mother, “Did you think you could get away with it? Mrs...”

Which **sentence** tells you that the mother **did not expect** the guard to stop them?

I felt Mummy jump behind me.

surprised

Strategies for different comprehension questions

3. Sequencing Questions

Indicate the chronological order of events.

The man instructed the security guard to empty out the contents of Mummy's bag. The guard picked up the bag and drew out a new pair of brown pants. I looked on, perplexed. Had Mummy bought the pants without telling me? Leaving both the pants and bag on the table, the guard went back to his standing position behind us. The bag had other things inside it that Mummy had bought earlier that morning, which the guard left alone inside the bag; only the pants was on the table.

Write **1**, **2** and **3** in the blanks below to indicate the order in which the events took place in the story.

- 2** The guard took out the pants from the bag.
- 3** The author was puzzled.
- 1** The author's mother bought some items.

Strategies for different comprehension questions

4. True or False Questions

Determine if the statement is true or false and provide evidence from the text to support the answer.

I enjoyed my years in Raffles Institution. I coped with the work comfortably and was active in the Scouts movement. I also played cricket and tennis, swam and took part in many debates. But I never became a prefect, let alone head prefect. This was not a possibility as I was often caught not paying attention in class, scribbling notes to fellow students or mimicking some teacher's strange mannerisms. I was even caught drawing the back of my Science teacher's head with its bald patch.

Statement	True/ False	Reason
The author was involved in many school activities in Raffles Institution.	True	

He was a Scout, played cricket and tennis, swam and participated in debates.

Strategies for different comprehension questions

5. Information Transfer Questions

Organise information from the passage into given categories.

- Cause and Effect
- Before and After
- Similarities and Differences
- Actions and Causes
- Feelings and Actions
- Problems and Solutions
- Advantages and Drawbacks

Cause	Effect
	The hostels were nearly empty.
	The author helped the injured and the dead.
The areas near the city had been bombed.	

How did the author's father react to the old lady **before** and **after** he had heard the old man's story? [2m]

before	
after	

Strategies for different comprehension questions

5. Information Transfer Questions – Cause & Effect

Explain the relationship between an event and the factors leading to it.

The students at Raffles College were alarmed. Those from Malaya immediately prepared to leave for home by train, believing that Singapore would be the main target of the attack. Within days, the hostels were nearly empty. Lessons were cancelled and the remaining students were asked to volunteer for the First Aid unit. I was one of the volunteers and worked at the First Aid station set up in the college grounds. The war did not go well and soon we had our first casualties. A bomb had fallen near the police station and there were several victims. It was a frightening sight and my first experience with the injured and the dead.

Cause	Effect
<u>Those from Malaya left for home by train.</u>	The hostels were nearly empty.
	The author helped the injured and the dead.


He was a volunteer and worked at the First Aid station in the college grounds.

Strategies for different comprehension questions

5. Information Transfer Questions – Before & After

Explain the difference in a character's reactions due to an event.

The old woman **looked hopefully** at Dad but **he quickly waved her away**. "Only one dollar," she pleaded, clutching a few packets of tissue in her wrinkled hand. **Again, Dad gesticulated, asking her to move away** and then, he turned back to me. I watched as she retreated in disappointment and trudged towards the next table.

spoon, I realised that Dad was not beside me. I looked around to see where he had gone. I was surprised to see **him standing next to the old lady** who was selling the tissues. Her head was bobbing up and down and she was grinning. Dad came back and **dumped a dozen packets of tissues on the table**. "I had the opportunity to make someone happy," he said, "so I did!"

How did the author's father react to the old lady **before** and **after** he had heard the old man's story? [2m]

before	<u>He waved her away and did not buy the tissues from her.</u>
after	<u>He approached her to buy a dozen packets of tissues.</u>

Strategies for different comprehension questions

6. Contextualised Vocabulary Questions

Determine the meaning of words in a given context.

The sound of chairs scraping shifted my attention to the table next to us. The patrons had finished their meal and stood up to leave. As they walked away, I noticed an old man walk up to their table. He had a red plastic bag in his hand. I thought that he was going to clear and wipe the table so I did not take much notice of him. However, instead of cleaning the table, he scooped the leftover food into the bag and tied a knot on top. I was **stunned!**

Sensing that I was staring at him, the old man turned to me and said, "Boy, when you grow up, make sure you look after your parents. Don't **abandon** them as our son did. We worked tirelessly to collect cans, newspapers and cardboard so that he could have a good education and go to a reputable university. But now he's married to a rich woman and he's too embarrassed to even acknowledge us! He is such a **disappointment!**"

For each of the words below, choose a **word** from **lines 9 to 19** that has a similar meaning. [3m]

taken aback	<u>stunned</u>
walk away from	<u>abandon</u>
let down	<u>disappointment</u>

Strategies for different comprehension questions

7. Applied Vocabulary Questions

Analyse the passage and use own words to describe the situation or characters.

the First Aid unit. I was one of the volunteers and worked at the First Aid station set up in the college grounds. The war did not go well and soon we had our first casualties. A bomb had fallen near the police station and there were several victims. It was a frightening sight and my first experience with the injured and the dead.

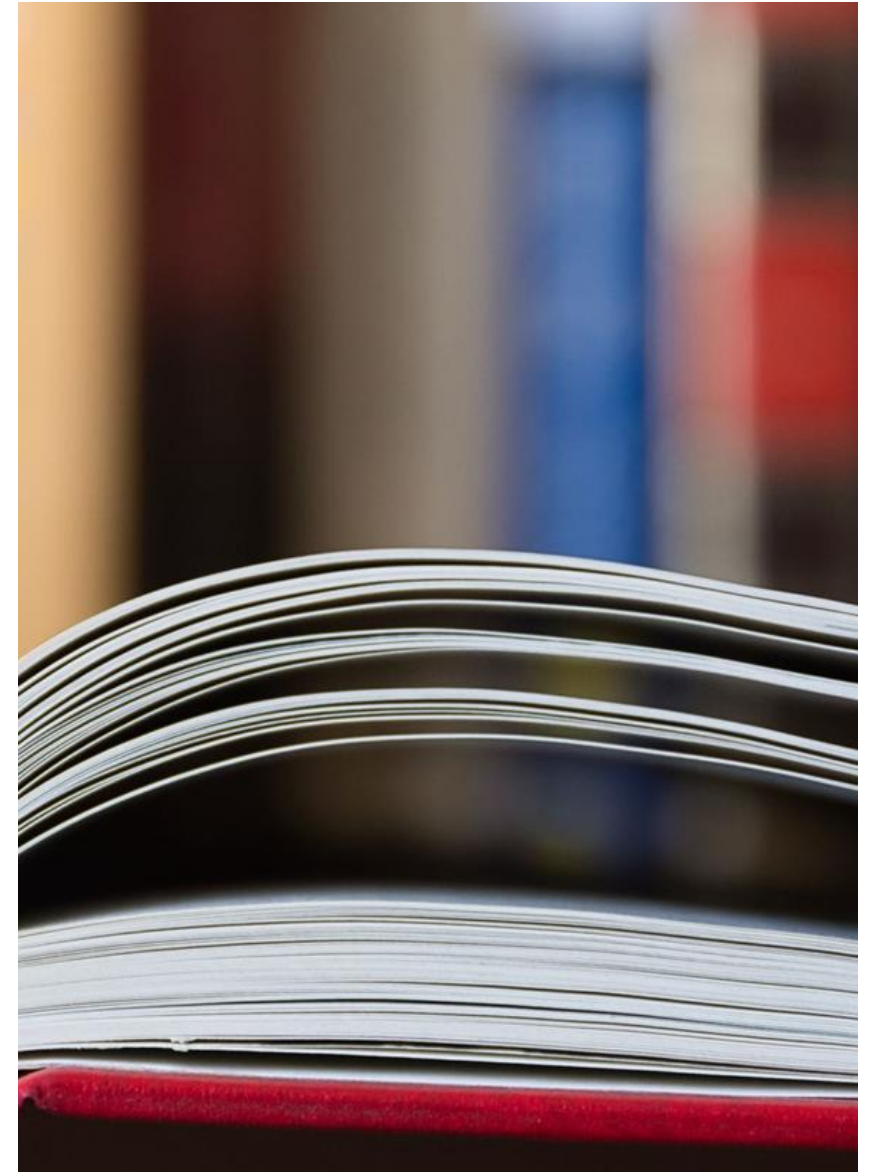
By the middle of January, all schools were closed. As the bombings got nearer to the city, my mother wanted the whole family to move to her father's house, which was farther north of the city and therefore less likely to be hit. I supported the move but told her I would stay behind and continue to report for duty at the college First Aid station.

How would you describe the author's behaviour during the war? Support your answer with information from the passage.

He was brave and dedicated. It was frightening to help the injured and the dead but he stayed behind to continue volunteering even when his family moved away.

How can Reading Comprehension be improved?










1. Strategies for different Comprehension questions
2. Procedures for answering Reading Comprehension questions
3. Supporting your child's development in Reading Comprehension skills



Procedures for Reading Comprehension

1. Read and annotate the text.

Making short notes will help students to understand and remember the text better.

1	Circle the characters (who).	
2	Box the setting and the time (where and when).	
3	Underline and put within round brackets the problem (what).	
4	Underline and put within square brackets the resolution [what].	
5	Draw a squiggly line below words that we do not understand.	
6	Use double-headed arrows to link the pronouns/other noun phrases with their referents.	
7	Use a question mark for questions.	
8	Signal this way when the text reminds me of something.	
9	Add an exclamation mark for information I find surprising.	

John sprinted out of the classroom the minute the recess bell rang. He bought his food and was just about to take his first mouthful of nasi lemak when he heard a (dreaded voice yell,) "Coolie boy!" It was too late. John was quickly surrounded by (Bully Chan and his gang.)

key characters

key event

John was scared.

John was surrounded.

Procedures for Reading Comprehension

2. Read the questions.

Determine question type and how best to answer them.

The sound of chairs scraping shifted my attention to the table next to us. The patrons had finished their meal and stood up to leave. As they walked away, I noticed an old man walk up to their table. He had a red plastic bag in his hand. I thought that he was going to clear and wipe the table so I did not take much notice of him. However, instead of cleaning the table, he scooped the leftover food into the bag and tied a knot on top. I was stunned!

Why was the old man carrying a red plastic bag? **[Factual]** [2m]

Procedures for Reading Comprehension

3. Refer to the text for the answers.

Read the relevant sections of the text and highlight the key information.
Students should not rely on their memory to answer.

The sound of chairs scraping shifted my attention to the table next to us. The patrons had finished their meal and stood up to leave. As they walked away, I noticed an old man walk up to their table. He had a red plastic bag in his hand. I thought that he was going to clear and wipe the table so I did not take much notice of him. However, instead of cleaning the table, he scooped the leftover food into the bag and tied a knot on top. I was stunned!

Why was the old man carrying a red plastic bag? [2m]

Procedures for Reading Comprehension

4. Give specific answers.

Give sufficient points according to the marks allocated.

The sound of chairs scraping shifted my attention to the table next to us. The patrons had finished their meal and stood up to leave. As they walked away, I noticed an old man walk up to their table. He had a red plastic bag in his hand. I thought that he was going to clear and wipe the table so I did not take much notice of him. However, instead of cleaning the table, he scooped the leftover food into the bag and tied a knot on top. I was stunned!

Why was the old man carrying a red plastic bag? [2m]

He used it to carry the leftover food [1m] which he scooped into the bag from a table [1m].

Procedures for Reading Comprehension

5. Paraphrase the answer.

Students should not lift the answers word for word from the text but should write in their own words. (e.g. change the pronouns.)

The old man's eyes glistened with unshed tears. He told us that he was jobless and that his wife was sick at home. He had no choice but to come to the hawker centre to collect uneaten scraps to feed himself and his wife.

Explain why the old man's eyes "glistened with unshed tears"?

He was sad that he did not have a job and that his wife was sick.

6. Check spelling, punctuation & grammar

Common errors: missing full stops, punctuation for dialogue

Procedures for Reading Comprehension

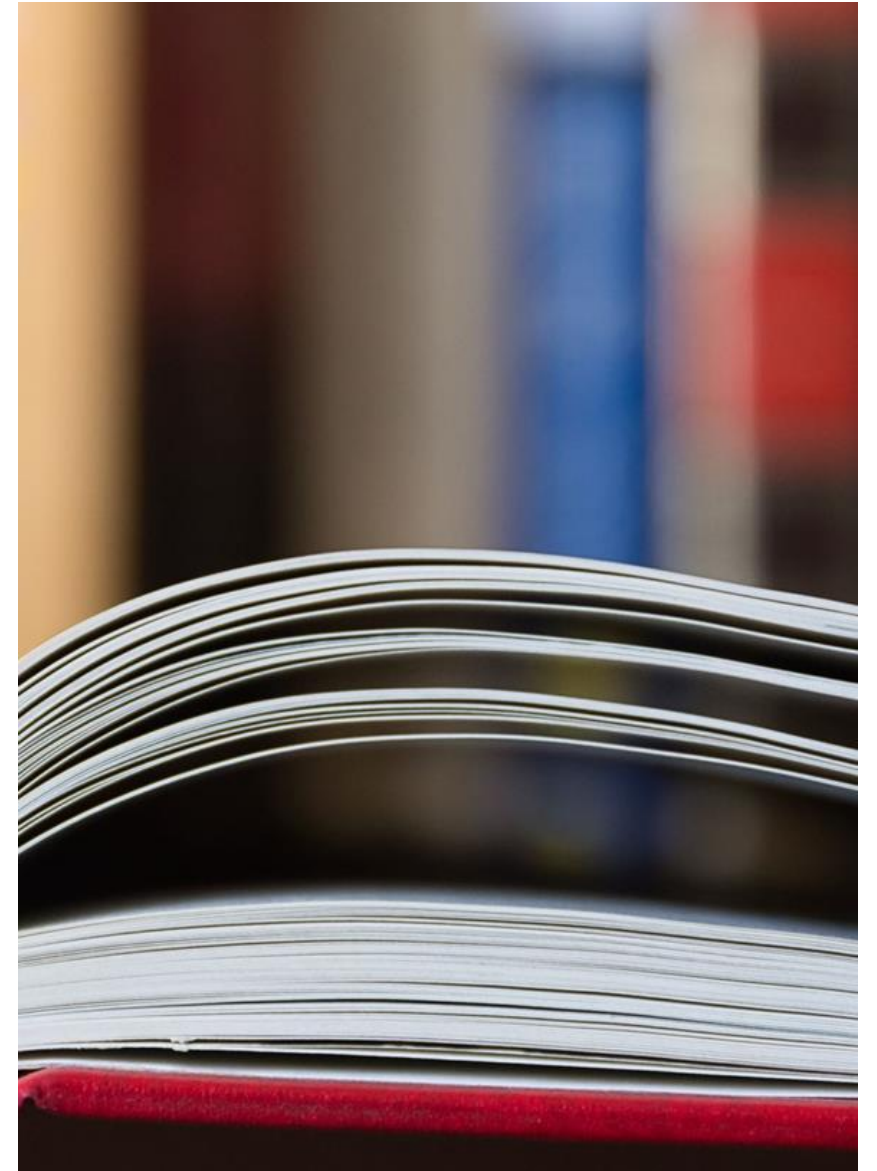
6. Check spelling, punctuation & grammar

Common errors:

- transference errors
- missing full stops
- wrong tenses
- wrong pronoun (use of “I”)

How can Reading Comprehension be improved?

1. Strategies for different Comprehension questions
2. Procedures for answering Reading Comprehension questions
3. Supporting your child's development in Reading Comprehension skills



Supporting your child's Reading Comprehension skills

1. Creating a reader-friendly environment at home

- Reading corner
- Conducive space
- Distraction free



Supporting your child's Reading Comprehension skills

2. Providing Access to Diverse Reading Materials

- Have reading materials readily available in your home
- Magazines, newspapers, books, graphic novels
- Consider your child's interests



Supporting your child's Reading Comprehension skills

3. Encouraging Positive Reading Habits

- Setting a regular reading time
- Read together as a family
- Read-alouds at bedtime
- Visit the library as a routine



Supporting your child's Reading Comprehension skills

4. Engaging in Conversations about reading

- Chat with your child on what they have been reading
 - Retell
 - Book Talk
- Share on interesting news articles





The **more** that
you read, the
more things
you will know.
The **more** that
you learn, the
more places
you'll go.

Dr. Seuss



Understanding Reading Comprehension

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hear from you.

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Thank you.