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Using This Book

Reading comprehension in nonfiction involves numerous thinking skills. Students require these skills to make sense of a text and become successful readers. This book offers practice in key skills needed to meet the Common Core State Standards in Reading/Language Arts for grade one. (See page 6 for more.) Each student page includes a short passage focusing on three of these essential comprehension skills.

Comprehension Skills At-a-Glance

Use the information that follows to introduce the reading comprehension skills covered in this book.

Main Idea & Details

Understanding the main or key idea of a paragraph is crucial for a reader. The main idea is what the paragraph is about. The other parts of the paragraph help to explain more about this key idea. Sometimes, the main idea is in the first sentence of a paragraph.

The information that supports the main idea is usually referred to as the details. Details help a reader gain a fuller understanding of a paragraph.

Sequence

Readers need to understand that when several things happen in a paragraph or a story, they occur in sequence. Following the sequence of a selection helps readers recognize the time order of events or the order in which steps are taken. Students should become aware of common words or phrases which signal sequence, such as *first*, *then*, *next*, and *finally*.

Context Clues

Using context means determining an unfamiliar word's meaning by studying the phrases, sentences, and overall text with which the word appears. Context clues help readers comprehend and enjoy a text and also read more smoothly and efficiently.

Compare & Contrast

Recognizing how events, characters, places, and facts are alike and different helps a reader gain a richer understanding of a text. Sometimes a reader can learn more about something by finding out what it is *not* like than what it is like. A comparison shows similarities, while a contrast shows differences.


Passage 24

Name _____ Date _____

Read the paragraph. Then answer the questions.

Plants We Eat

We eat many foods that come from plants. Do you eat apples and bananas? They are fruits. Do you eat toast or cereal? They are made from grains like wheat, oats, and rice. How about carrots, celery, and potatoes? They are vegetables. Fruits, grains, and vegetables all come from plants.



1. The main idea of this paragraph is
O A. cereal is made from grains.
O B. carrots are vegetables.
O C. many foods we eat come from plants.
2. Apples are
O A. vegetables.
O B. fruits.
O C. grains.
3. If you eat a banana on cereal, you eat
O A. fruit and grains.
O B. two vegetables.
O C. plants and animals.

1. Main Idea 2. Details 3. Make Connections

In "Plants We Eat," the first sentence identifies the main idea. The main idea is supported by examples in the rest of the paragraph.


Passage 10

Name _____ Date _____

Read the paragraph. Then answer the questions.

Home in a Shell

The hermit crab lives in water along the **shore**. There are many empty seashells on the shore. The hermit crab crawls into an empty shell. A shell makes a good home for the crab. What happens if the crab grows too big for its shell? It crawls inside a bigger shell!



1. The main idea in this paragraph is
O A. hermit crabs live in water.
O B. hermit crabs use shells for homes.
O C. hermit crabs outgrow their homes.
2. Why might a hermit crab look for a bigger shell?
O A. because it grew bigger
O B. because it lives in water
O C. because there are many shells to choose from
3. In this paragraph, the word **shore** means
O A. inside of shells.
O B. kinds of boats.
O C. edge of the ocean.

1. Main Idea 2. Make Connections 3. Context Clues

In this paragraph, other words in the sentence provide a context for comprehending the word *shore*.

Predict

Good readers take time to think about a text. One way they do this is by thinking ahead to determine what may happen next or how an event will unfold. Often, information a reader has come across in the text provides clues to what will happen next. In many cases readers also use what they already know when they make predictions.

Inference

Although most primary students don't know what an inference is, many are most likely making inferences—both in their daily lives and when reading—without being aware of it. Students should understand that writers don't include every detail in their writing; it is up to readers to supply some information. A reader makes a guess or inference by putting together what is in a text with what he or she already knows. Inferring makes a significant difference in how much a reader gains from a text.

Make Connections

Good readers learn that there are connections between characters, events, ideas, or pieces of information in a text. Recognizing these relationships is an important way for readers to deepen their understanding of a text.

Fact & Opinion

Readers who can identify and differentiate between statements of fact and opinion are better able to analyze and assess a text. Students should learn to recognize phrases such as *I think* and *you should*, that signal opinions.

Tips

★ Tell students to first read the passage and then answer the questions. Show them how to fill in the circles for bubble-test questions.

★ The comprehension skills targeted in the questions accompanying each passage are labeled at the bottom of the page.

★ Review the completed pages with students on a regular basis. Encourage them to explain their thinking for each correct answer.


Passage 16

Name _____ Date _____

Read the paragraph. Then answer the questions.

The Secret Plan

Petra and her father had a secret plan. They waited until Petra's mother went out. Then they took out a bowl, a cake mix, some eggs, and other things they needed. They mixed and stirred. They put the batter in the oven. Then they checked. Yes! They had just enough birthday candles.



- What do you think Petra and her father were doing?
 - ☐ A. making breakfast
 - ☐ B. cleaning up the kitchen
 - ☐ C. baking a birthday cake
- How do you know it was a surprise?
 - ☐ A. They waited until the cake was done.
 - ☐ B. They waited to see if they had candles.
 - ☐ C. They waited until Petra's mother went out.
- What did they do first?
 - ☐ A. They put the batter in the oven.
 - ☐ B. They took out the things they needed.
 - ☐ C. They mixed and stirred the batter.

1. Inference 2. Inference 3. Sequence

The writer never says what Petra and her father are doing, but information in the paragraph plus what readers already know helps make it clear.


Passage 5

Name _____ Date _____

Read the paragraph. Then answer the questions.

Mr. Tuttle's Dog

Mr. Tuttle is my neighbor. He has a little black poodle named Mack. Mack is the cutest dog in the world! Mack can do some tricks. He can shake hands and roll over. I think playing with Mack is really fun.



- What is a fact from the paragraph?
 - ☐ A. Mack is a little black poodle.
 - ☐ B. Mack is very cute.
 - ☐ C. I think playing with Mack is fun.
- What is an opinion from the paragraph?
 - ☐ A. Mr. Tuttle's dog is named Mack.
 - ☐ B. Mack is the cutest dog in the world.
 - ☐ C. Mack can do some tricks.
- What is not a detail from the paragraph?
 - ☐ A. Mack can sit up.
 - ☐ B. Mack can shake hands and roll over.
 - ☐ C. Mr. Tuttle has a little black poodle.

1. Fact & Opinion 2. Fact & Opinion 3. Details

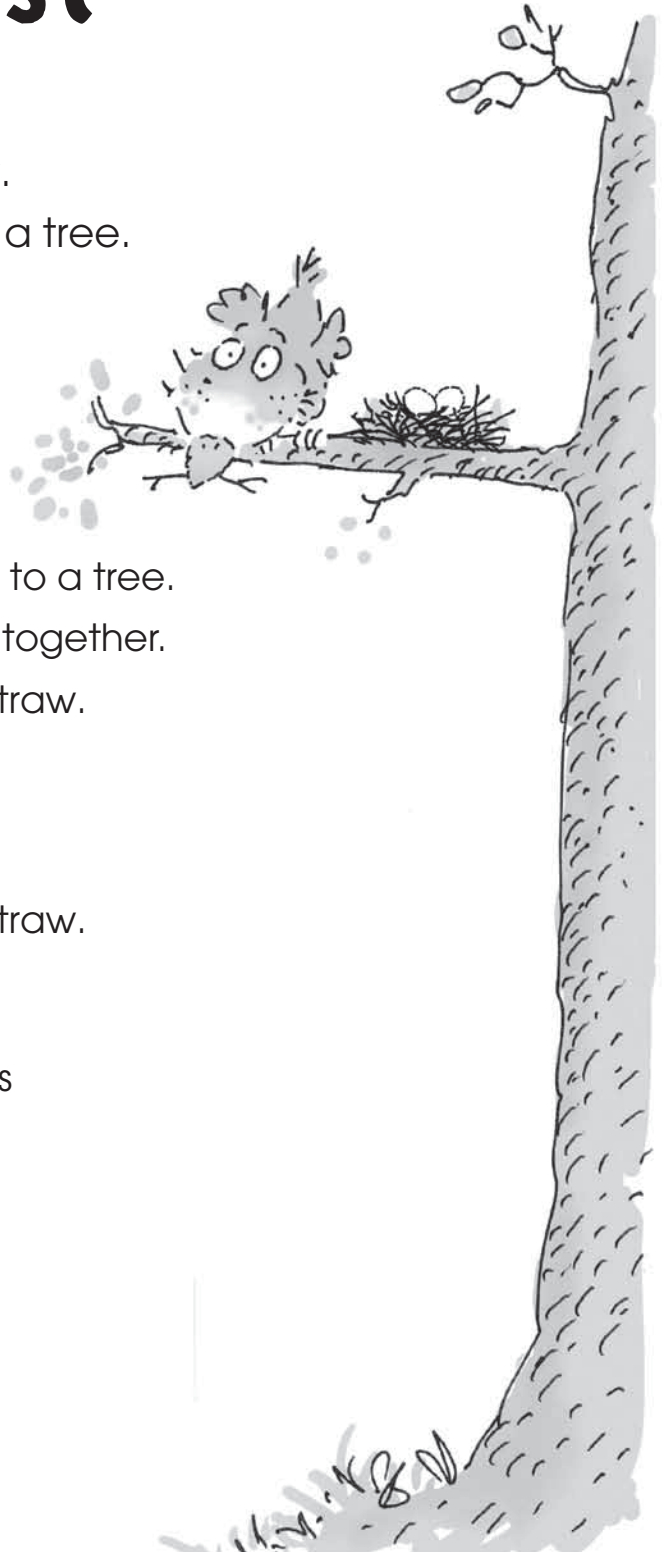
To appreciate this story, the reader should understand that the writer has shared several opinions as well as some facts about the neighbor's dog.

Name _____ Date _____

Read the paragraph. Then answer the questions.

The Robin's Nest

The robin wanted to build a nest.
 First, she found some grass and straw.
 Then she took the grass and straw to a tree.
 Next, she put the grass and straw
 together to make a nest.
Finally, she laid her eggs in the nest.



1. What did the robin do first?
 - ☐ A. She took the grass and straw to a tree.
 - ☐ B. She put the grass and straw together.
 - ☐ C. She found some grass and straw.
2. What did the robin do last?
 - ☐ A. She laid her eggs.
 - ☐ B. She found some grass and straw.
 - ☐ C. She looked for food.
3. In the story, the word **finally** means
 - ☐ A. first.
 - ☐ B. last.
 - ☐ C. next.

Name _____ Date _____

Read the paragraph. Then answer the questions.

You've Got Mail!

Suki got an e-mail from her friend, Annie.
The e-mail made Suki happy.
She went to talk to her mom.
Then she looked at the calendar.
Suki wrote back to Annie.
The answer was "Yes!"



1. Which sentence is most likely true?
 - ☐ A. Annie sent an e-mail to Suki's mom.
 - ☐ B. Annie asked about homework.
 - ☐ C. Suki made a date to see her friend.

2. What happened last?
 - ☐ A. Suki talked to her mom.
 - ☐ B. Suki got an e-mail.
 - ☐ C. Suki wrote back to her friend.

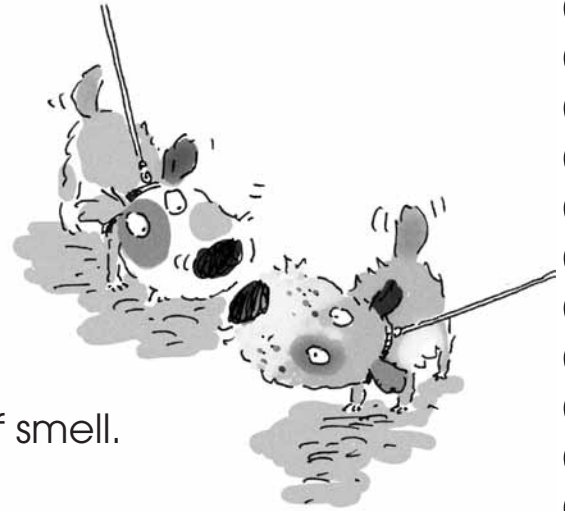
3. Why do you think Suki talked to her mom?
 - ☐ A. to find out what was for dinner
 - ☐ B. to ask if she could make a date with Annie
 - ☐ C. to ask for a snack

Name _____ Date _____

Read the paragraph. Then answer the questions.

The Nose Knows

When dogs meet, they sniff each other. Dogs use their sense of smell to learn about each other. Dogs can smell many things that people cannot smell. They **explore** the world with their noses. They can learn a lot through their sense of smell.



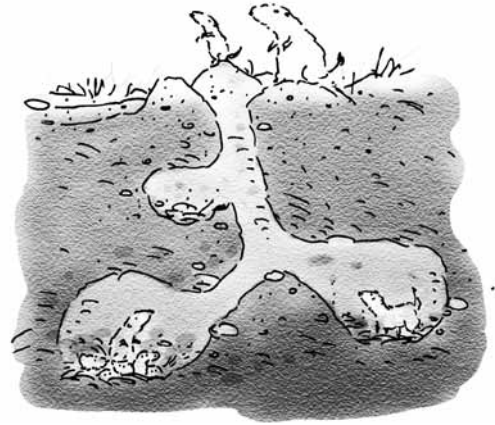
1. The main idea of this paragraph is
 - ☐ A. dogs do not have a good sense of smell.
 - ☐ B. dogs use their sense of smell in different ways.
 - ☐ C. dogs sniff each other.
2. A detail in this paragraph is
 - ☐ A. people can smell things that dogs can't smell.
 - ☐ B. dogs sniff each other when they meet.
 - ☐ C. dogs cannot smell well.
3. In this paragraph, the word **explore** means
 - ☐ A. run away.
 - ☐ B. go on a trip.
 - ☐ C. find out things.

Name _____ Date _____

Read the paragraph. Then answer the questions.

Underground Town

Have you ever seen a prairie dog town?
That is where prairie dogs live.
But this town has no buildings or houses.
Prairie dogs live underground.
They dig deep into the earth
to make tunnels. Along the tunnels
are rooms for sleeping or storing food.
One room is lined with grass for the babies!



1. The main idea of this paragraph is
 - ☐ A. towns without buildings.
 - ☐ B. raising young prairie dogs.
 - ☐ C. tunnel homes for prairie dogs.
2. A detail in the paragraph is
 - ☐ A. underground town.
 - ☐ B. where prairie dogs live.
 - ☐ C. rooms for storing food.
3. You can guess that prairie dogs live
 - ☐ A. alone.
 - ☐ B. in pairs.
 - ☐ C. in groups.

Name _____ Date _____

Read the paragraph. Then answer the questions.

Mr. Tuttle's Dog

Mr. Tuttle is my neighbor.
He has a little black poodle named Mack.
Mack is the cutest dog in the world!
Mack can do some tricks.
He can shake hands and roll over.
I think playing with Mack is really fun.



1. What is a fact from the paragraph?
 - ☐ A. Mack is a little black poodle.
 - ☐ B. Mack is very cute.
 - ☐ C. I think playing with Mack is fun.
2. What is an opinion from the paragraph?
 - ☐ A. Mr. Tuttle's dog is named Mack.
 - ☐ B. Mack is the cutest dog in the world.
 - ☐ C. Mack can do some tricks.
3. What is not a detail from the paragraph?
 - ☐ A. Mack can sit up.
 - ☐ B. Mack can shake hands and roll over.
 - ☐ C. Mr. Tuttle has a little black poodle.

Name _____ Date _____

Read the paragraph. Then answer the questions.

Snakes Are Everywhere!

Some snakes live in forests.

Some live in hot, dry deserts.

Others live in lakes or streams.

Some snakes even live in the sea!

Snakes live almost everywhere.

But they never live where

it is always freezing cold.



1. What is the main idea of this paragraph?

- ☐ A. Snakes can live in trees.
- ☐ B. Snakes live almost everywhere.
- ☐ C. Snakes do not like freezing weather.

2. Which is a detail from the paragraph?

- ☐ A. The author does not like snakes.
- ☐ B. Some snakes live in the sea.
- ☐ C. Snakes never go underground.

3. Snakes cannot live

- ☐ A. where it is always very cold.
- ☐ B. in forests.
- ☐ C. in lakes or streams.

Name _____ Date _____

Read the paragraph. Then answer the questions.

Sally's Snack

Sally **dashed** from the elevator.
 She gave her grandma a quick hug
 at the door. She dropped her
 book bag on the table.
 Then Sally headed for the kitchen.
 Out came the bread.
 Out came the jam.
 In no time, Sally made a snack.



1. Which sentence is most likely true?

- ☐ A. Sally does not have any homework.
- ☐ B. Sally likes peanut butter on bread.
- ☐ C. Sally is hungry after school.

2. What did Sally have for a snack?

- ☐ A. peanut butter on bread
- ☐ B. cookies
- ☐ C. jam on bread

3. The word **dashed** in this story means

- ☐ A. ran in a hurry.
- ☐ B. stopped.
- ☐ C. a little bit.