

Year 5/6 Reading Comprehension – Parent Prompts for discussions with their children

In year 5 and 6, the children need to be reading independently as they make the transition from learning to read to reading to learn. The children need to be able to explore texts and answer questions in line with the prompts below. However, reading for pleasure is also a really important part of your child's ongoing learning, so where possible talk about the books your child is reading and share recommendations but also allow time for children to curl up and get absorbed in a book just for the enjoyment of reading.

Pupils are taught to:

Maintain positive attitudes to reading and understanding of what they read by:

...continuing to read and discuss a wide range of fiction, poetry, plays, non-fiction and reference books or textbooks

Would you have chosen to read this book/play/poem yourself? If not, why not? Now you have read it, have you changed your mind?

What genre of books does this belong to?

How does the front cover show that this book is one in a series?

What type of book is this? Is it like any others you have read?

...reading books that are structured in different ways and reading for a range of purposes

What does this section of text tell you about?

When might someone choose to use this book?

How is the story/information organised? Why do you think this order/these headings were chosen?

Why are we reading this text? Does it inform/excite/engage you?

..increasing their familiarity with a wide range of books including myths, legends and traditional stories, modern fiction, fiction from our literary heritage, and books from other cultures and traditions

Have you been in a similar situation to the character in this book?

Why do you think this book is regarded as a 'classic'?

Where/when is this story/poem set? Does this make a difference to how we read it?

Which do you prefer; texts set in historical times or in modern times? Why?

...recommending books that they have read to their peers, giving reasons for their choices

Who is this book aimed at? Do you think it is successful for this audience?

What made you choose this book?

Who would you recommend this book to? Why?

...identifying and discussing themes and conventions in and across a wide range of writing

What is the theme of this book? How does the author create a sense of loss/heroism etc...?

Why does the author consistently use the first person in this diary/autobiography?

How does the author use metaphor/simile/analogy?

Can you make a list of features in this text type? Does the author use these features in the way you would expect?

...making comparisons within and across books

How do these books deal with the same theme? Do the approaches of the authors differ?

What can you say about the viewpoint of the authors?

Have you read any other stories which handle time in this way e.g. flashbacks, dreams?

Are any characters similar to other characters you know?

Is the setting similar to any other settings from different books?

...learning a wider range of poetry by heart

Looking at the way the poem is organised, how does the form of the poem suit the content?

Can you find examples of simile/metaphor/alliteration/personification in this poem?

Which words or phrases particularly stick in your mind?

...preparing poems and plays to read aloud and to perform, showing understanding through intonation, tone and volume so that the meaning is clear to an audience

Some parts of the poem are speech, some are narrative, how can you show the difference between these two features in the way you read aloud/perform?

Can you describe the characters in the play using one word?

Could you use this to help you perform their lines effectively?

Understanding what they read by:

...checking that the book makes sense to them, discussing their understanding and exploring the meaning of word in context

Find an unfamiliar word. Consider how it is used in this sentence. What do you think it means?

Does the structure of the book help you to understand the subject?

Now that you have read (a section), do you understand why (a character) acted in the way they did?

...asking questions to improve their understanding

If you could ask the author a question about the text, what would you ask?

Can you create a quiz about the text for the class?

Is there a section of the text you don't understand?

...drawing inferences such as inferring characters' feelings, thoughts and motives from their actions, and justifying inferences with evidence

What do you think is going to happen to the main character and how will they feel about this?

What makes you think this?

Who would you like to meet in the story? Can you give reasons for your choice?

Why did (a character) behave in this way? Knowing what you know now, what do you think they were hoping to achieve?

...predicting what might happen from details stated and implied

Using the front cover, can you make a list of details about what you see? Who is on the cover? Where are they? What is in the background? How might these details give us clues about the content of the book?

Based on what you know about (a character/event), how do you think the author will develop the story?

Can you make a list of details to support your idea, using evidence from the text to say whether they are stated or implied?

...identifying how language, structure and presentation contribute to meaning

Can you list words and phrases which show you how the speaker is feeling?

Can you find a descriptive phrase and consider the effect it has on the reader? Which words create this effect?

What does... mean? Could you use a more emotive word? What about a less emotive word?

What effect would this have on the story?

Do the events happen in time order? If not, why not?

How is the information organised and presented? Why do you think this order/these headings were chosen?

...summarising the main ideas drawn from more than one paragraph, identifying key details that support the main ideas

Can you identify the main idea in each paragraph?

What is the most important?

Can you describe what happened in 3 sentences?

Discuss and evaluate how authors use language, including figurative language, considering the impact on the reader

How does the title engage the reader?

Give examples of words chosen by the author to describe (a character)? Are they effective?

What impression does the author want the reader to have of this character? How do you know?

Does the author have a viewpoint on...? How does s/he show this?

Distinguish between statements of fact and opinion

Is it true/false that...?

How does the author feel about this subject/the theme of this story?

Is the aim of the text to persuade or to inform? How do you know?

Which words does the author use to signal that this is opinion, rather than fact?

Retrieve, record and present information from non-fiction

What specific information do you need to retrieve from this text?

Where would you look for information on...?

How could you use the contents/index/glossary to help?

Using the information you have, can you plan a day at the museum/zoo/gallery suitable for (a consumer e.g. wheelchair user)?

Which is the best location to sit in to watch this play? How do you know?

Participate in discussions about books that are read to them and those that they can read for themselves, building on their own and others' ideas and challenging view courteously

Can you choose a section of the text that you particularly liked?

Discuss this with someone at home; what do they think? Did they choose a different part? Why?

Explain and discuss their understanding of what they have read, including through formal presentations and debates, maintaining a focus on the topic and using notes where necessary

Can you research this topic/theme independently? How might you structure your research?

How could you present your findings to the group?

What sort of presentation techniques would keep your audience engaged?

Provide reasoned justifications for their views

Can you research this topic/theme independently? How might you structure your research?

How could you present your findings to the group?

Does your personal experience impact on your view about (a subject)?

Why might someone else's view differ from your own?

