

Year 3/4 Reading Comprehension – Parent Prompts for discussions with their children

In year 3 and 4, the children are still learning to read more complex texts organised in different structures, so it is important for the children to read for understanding themselves to develop their comprehension skills but also give them opportunities to be read to. The following prompts can be used in both scenarios and it is really important for children to enjoy reading experiences to ensure reading doesn't become a chore.

Pupils are taught to:

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

...listening to and discussing a wide range of fiction, poetry, plays, non-fiction and reference books or textbooks

What happened in the story?

Where does the story take place?

Who is telling the story?

Can you find some words or phrases that tell you about this character?

How are you going to use this book to find out about...?

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

Why is the text arranged in this way?

Does the layout and colour of the text have an impact on the reader?

How are the beginning and end similar? Is the order of events important?

What features make this book similar to (another text)?

...using dictionaries to check the meaning of words they have read

Can you use alphabetical order to find this word in the dictionary?

Which of the meanings given is the correct one for this context?

...increasing their familiarity with a wide range of books, including fairy stories, myths and legends and re-telling some of these orally

Where and when is this story/text set? How does the writer show this?

What effect does the setting have on the story?

How did this character respond to (an event)? Can you use a particular action, or tone to show this?

...identifying themes and conventions in a wide range of books

What is the genre of this story? How do you know?

Have you read any other books in this series/by the same author/about this topic?

Do these texts share any common features e.g. language or theme?

...preparing poems and play scripts to read aloud and to perform, showing understanding through intonation, tone, volume and action

Whose 'voice' is the poem written in? How could you show this in the way you read aloud?

What does this poem make you feel? Can you use intonation to demonstrate this?

...discussing words and phrases that capture the reader's interest and imagination

What did you enjoy about this story?

What was the most exciting or interesting part? Can you explain why?
Which part of the story best describes the setting?
Can you identify words in the text which help the author create mood/effect?
...recognising some different forms of poetry (e.g. free verse, narrative poetry)
Did you hear any repeating patterns or patterns in structure in this poem?
Does this poem tell a story?
How does the author use the shape of the poem to reflect its meaning?
Does the poem follow the pattern of natural speech?

Understand what they read, in books they can read independently by:

...checking that the text makes sense, discussing their understanding and explaining the meaning of words in context

Drawing on what you know about this character already, does his response to (an event) make sense?

Can the context of (an unfamiliar word) help you to understand what it means?

Why is there a bullet point/exclamation mark/question mark here? What effect does it have?

...asking questions to improve their understanding of a text

If you could ask the characters in the story a question, who would you choose, and what would you ask?

Using the information in this section, can you create questions for your partner? Can you note where the answers are?

Is there a section of the text you don't understand? How could you find out what it means?

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

Can you choose a character and say what they felt/thought/did in response to events? How do you know?

What does... tell you about how the character is feeling?

How did this character's actions affect the outcome of the story?

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

Knowing what you do about (a character/an event), what might happen next? Why do you think this?

If the story develops in the way you have predicted, how will (a character) respond? Can you find evidence in the text to explain why you think this is?

How does the author indicate that (a character) feels excited/worried/scared? Does the author show this directly?

...identifying main ideas drawn from more than one paragraph and summarising these

Using your understanding of what happened, can you create a timeline of events?

What are the main events in this chapter?

Can you create a character profile using the key information in each paragraph? Does this

help you see how the author has created imagery/tension?

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

How are the beginning and end similar? Is the order of events important?

Why do you think authors use short sentences?

How do the illustrations/choice of font/bold type/italics contribute to the meaning?

Retrieve and record information from non-fiction

What is the text about?

What type of text is it?

Which subheading could you use instead of this one?

What title could you give this text?

When did (an event) first take place? Who were the key people involved?

Participate in discussion about both books that are read to them and those they can read for themselves, taking turns and listening to what others say

What opening statement would you make in beginning a discussion about this text?

What are the arguments for/against the subject of this text/story?

Who would you recommend this book to?

