

Dear Parents/Carers

Further to our recent Year 2 Assessment Meeting, we have put together an explanation of the types of comprehension questions that our children will be working on to develop their skills.

Types of Comprehension Questions

1. LITERAL QUESTIONS

These are the easiest questions as the answers are clearly stated in the passage.

Example

The children sat along the corridors, chatting away as they waited for the school bus. They had been looking forward to this trip for ages.

Question: What were the children doing as they waited for their school bus?

Answer: They were chatting away.

2. CAUSE AND EFFECT QUESTIONS

Such questions generally begin with the word “**Why**”. Children have to read the passage clearly to find either the cause or the effect.

Example

Question: **Why** did the boy cry? (effect)

Answer: He could not find his parents. (cause)

Question: **Why** were the villagers running away? (effect)

Answer: The hurricane was approaching their village. (cause)

Cause and Effect questions can also appear in other forms. Sometimes, children need to find the effect of the cause.

Example

Question: What would happen when the giant was angry? (cause)

Answer: He would roar at the villagers whenever he was angry. (effect)

3. INFERENTIAL QUESTIONS

These are types of questions which are generally more challenging. The answers are not clearly stated in the passage, but are usually implied by the author. Children need to learn to draw conclusions from what they have read in the passage in order to answer these types of questions.

Example

This passage is taken from The Three Little Pigs story.

The first pig built a house of straw while the second pig built his house with sticks. They wanted to build their houses very quickly so that they could go out and have fun. They sang, danced and ate all day because they were lazy. The third little pig worked hard all day and built his house with bricks.

Question: Why do you think the third pig built his house with bricks?

If the answer is not clearly stated in the passage, children would then need to rely on clues found in the passage or to think of their own ideas to find the correct answer.

So, a correct answer would be: He used bricks because he knew that bricks are stronger than sticks or straw and his house would be safe.

Some children may answer by simply copying the entire sentence from the passage: The third little pig worked hard all day and built his house with bricks.

That answer would **not** be correct, because it does not show whether they have understood the question, which is an inferential one.

4. VOCABULARY QUESTIONS

This type of question requires the child to understand the meaning of a word or phrase, using clues from the text or the pictures. There are two ways of asking vocabulary questions:

1. The child is given the meaning of a word or phrase and has to find the exact word or phrase from the passage.

Example

The poor children studied in a dark, shabby classroom. They had no proper tables or chairs but they were very eager to learn how to read and write.

Question: Which word in the passage tells you that the classroom was scruffy?

Answer: The word is “shabby”.

2. The child is given a word or phrase and has to guess its meaning from the context of the passage.

Example

They sang, danced and ate all day because they were lazy. The third little pig worked hard all day and built his house with bricks.

Question: Which word shows that the first and second pigs were unwilling to work hard?

Answer: The word is “lazy.”

