

Level 5

TIME
FOR KIDS

Nonfiction Comprehension Test Practice



Table of Contents

Standards Correlations

Introduction

Lesson 1: The Packs Are Back

Lesson 2: She's for the Birds

Lesson 3: Honor at Last for Flipper

Lesson 4: Green Thumbs

Lesson 5: Another Star in Our Flag

Lesson 6: It's Time to Pay the Price

Lesson 7: A Carousel of Dreams

Lesson 8: Into the Dark Unknown

Lesson 9: Accident Prone

Lesson 10: The Everglades Forever?

Lesson 11: On the Prowl Again

Lesson 12: Shipwrecked in Antarctica

Lesson 13: Dinosaurs with Feathers

Lesson 14: Game Over!

Lesson 15: How Vikings Lived

Lesson 16: Open Wide, Don't Bite

Lesson 17: A Special Delivery

Lesson 18: Troubled Tongues

Lesson 19: Thanks, Jackie!

Lesson 20: A Sweet Deal

Answer Key

Answer Sheet

(Note: Each six-part lesson revolves around an article from *Time For Kids*. The article titles are listed here for you to choose topics that will appeal to your students, but the individual articles do not begin on the first page of the lessons. The lessons in this book may be done in any order.)

Standards Correlations

Shell Educational Publishing is committed to producing educational materials that are research and standards-based. In this effort we have correlated all of our products to the academic standards of all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the Department of Defense Dependent Schools. You can print a correlation report customized for your state directly from our website at <http://www.shelleducation.com>

Purpose and Intent of Standards

The No Child Left Behind legislation mandates that all states adopt academic standards that identify the skills students will learn in kindergarten through grade twelve. While many states had already adopted academic standards prior to NCLB, the legislation set requirements to ensure the standards were detailed and comprehensive.

Standards are designed to focus instruction and guide adoption of curricula. Standards are statements that describe the criteria necessary for students to meet specific academic goals. They define the knowledge, skills, and content students should acquire at each level. Standards are also used to develop standardized tests to evaluate students' academic progress.

In many states today, teachers are required to demonstrate how their lessons meet state standards. State standards are used in development of all of our products, so educators can be assured they meet the academic requirements of each state. Complete standards correlation reports for each state can be printed directly from our website as well.

How to Find Standards Correlations

To print a correlation report for this product visit our website at <http://www.shelleducation.com> and follow the on-screen directions. If you require assistance in printing correlation reports, please contact Customer Service at 1-877-777-3450.

Introduction

Why Every Teacher Needs This Book

In a day of increased accountability and standards-based instruction, teachers are feeling greater pressure for their students to perform well on standardized tests. Every teacher knows that students who can read, and comprehend what they read, will have better test performance.

In many classrooms today, teachers experience challenges they are not trained to meet, including limited English speakers, students with disabilities, high student mobility rates, and student apathy. Many states with poor standardized test scores have students that come from print-poor environments. Teachers need help developing competent readers and students who can apply their knowledge in the standardized test setting.

The *Nonfiction Comprehension Test Practice* series is a tool that will help teachers to teach comprehension skills to their students and enable their students to perform better in a test setting. This series supplies motivating, readable, interesting, nonfiction text, and comprehension exercises to help students practice comprehension skills while truly becoming better readers. The activities can be quick or in depth, allowing students to practice skills daily. What is practiced daily will be acquired by students. Practice for standardized tests needs to be started at the beginning of the school year, not a few weeks before the tests. The articles in this series are current and develop knowledge about today's world as well as the past. Students will begin thinking, talking, and developing a framework of knowledge which is crucial for comprehension.

When a teacher sparks an interest in knowledge, students will become life-long learners. In the process of completing these test practice activities, not only will you improve your students' test scores, you will create better readers and life-long learners.

Readability

All of the articles used in this series have been edited for readability. The Fry Graph, The Dale-Chall Readability Formula, or the Spache Readability Formula was used depending on the level of the article. Of more than 100 predictive readability formulas, these are the most widely used. These formulas count and factor in three variables: the number of words, syllables, and sentences. The Dale-Chall and Spache formulas also use vocabulary lists. The Dale-Chall Formula is typically used for upper-elementary and secondary grade-level materials. It uses its own vocabulary list and takes into account the total number of words and sentences. The formula reliably gives the readability for the chosen text. The Spache Formula is vocabulary-based, paying close attention to the percentage of words not present in the formula's vocabulary list. This formula is best for evaluating primary and early elementary texts. Through the use of these formulas, the levels of the articles are appropriate and comprehensible for students at each grade level.

General Lesson Plan

At each grade level of this series, there are 20 articles that prove interesting and readable

to students. Each article is followed by questions on the following topics:

Sentence comprehension—Five true/false statements are related back to one sentence from the text.

Word study—One word from the text is explained (origin, part of speech, unique meaning, etc.). Activities can include completion items (cloze statements), making illustrations, or compare and contrast items.

Paragraph comprehension—This section contains one paragraph from the text and five multiple-choice questions directly related to that paragraph. The questions range from drawing information directly from the page to forming opinions and using outside knowledge.

Whole-Story comprehension—Eight multiple-choice questions relate back to the whole article or a major part of it. They can include comprehension that is factual, is based on opinion, involves inference, uses background knowledge, involves sequencing or classifying, relates to cause and effect, and involves understanding the author’s intent. All levels of reading comprehension are covered.

Enrichment for language mechanics and expression—This section develops language mechanics and expression through a variety of activities.

Graphic development—Graphic organizers that relate to the article are used to answer a variety of comprehension questions. In some lessons, students create their own maps, graphs, and diagrams that relate to the article.

The following is a list of words from the lessons that may be difficult for some students. These words are listed here so that you may review them with your students as needed.

Word	Page
coyote	21
ecological	23
environmental	23
Giordano	27
Messina	27
poachers	27
ornithologist	28
chaffinches	29
dishonorable	34

fertilized	39
bouquets	41
Caribbean	46
meager	52
carousel	57
prances	58
aragonite	63
speleologist	65
ibis	77
ecosystem	77
simile	79
canine distemper	81
Serengeti	83
<i>Endurance</i>	89
acronym	103
abbreviated	103
uninhabited	105
fjords	105
Scandinavia	109
Kertesz	111
aardvarks	112
canine	116
premolar	116

Koorina	117
platypus	117
echidnas	121
extinct	124
Choctaw	125
nutritionist	136

What Do Students Need to Learn?

Successful reading requires comprehension. Comprehending means having the ability to connect words and thoughts to knowledge already possessed. If you have little or no knowledge of a subject, it is difficult to comprehend an article or text written on that subject. Comprehension requires motivation and interest. Once your students start acquiring knowledge, they will want to fill in the gaps and learn more.

In order to help students be the best readers they can be, a teacher needs to be familiar with what students need to know to comprehend well. A teacher needs to know Bloom's levels of comprehension, traditional comprehension skills and expected products, and the types of questions that are generally used on standardized comprehension tests, as well as methods that can be used to help students to build a framework for comprehension.

Bloom's Taxonomy

In 1956, Benjamin Bloom created a classification for questions that are commonly used to demonstrate comprehension. These levels are listed here along with the corresponding skills that will demonstrate understanding and are important to remember when teaching comprehension to assure that students have attained higher levels of comprehension. Use this classification to form your own questions whenever students read or listen to literature.

Knowledge—Students will recall information. They will show knowledge of dates, events, places, and main ideas. Questions will include words such as: *who, what, where, when, list, identify, and name.*

Comprehension—Students will understand information. They will compare and contrast, order, categorize, and predict consequences. Questions will include words such as: *compare, contrast, describe, summarize, predict, and estimate.*

Application—Students will use information in new situations. Questions will include words such as: *apply, demonstrate, solve, classify, and complete.*

Analysis—Students will see patterns. They will be able to organize parts and figure out meaning. Questions will include words such as: *order, explain, arrange, and analyze.*

Synthesis—Students will use old ideas to create new ones. They will generalize, predict, and draw conclusions. Questions will include words such as: *what if, rewrite, rearrange, combine, create, and substitute.*

Evaluation—Students will compare ideas and assess value. They will make choices and understand a subjective viewpoint. Questions will include words such as: *assess, decide, and support your opinion.*

Comprehension Skills

There are many skills that form the complex activity of comprehension. This wide range of understandings and abilities develops over time in competent readers. The following list includes many traditional skills found in scope and sequence charts and standards for reading comprehension.

- identifies details
- recognizes stated main idea
- follows directions
- determines sequence
- recalls details
- locates reference
- recalls gist of story
- labels parts
- summarizes
- recognizes anaphoric relationships
- identifies time sequence
- describes a character
- retells story in own words
- infers main idea
- infers details
- infers cause and effect
- infers author's purpose/intent
- classifies, places into categories
- compares and contrasts
- draws conclusions
- makes generalizations
- recognizes paragraph (text) organization
- predicts outcome

recognizes hyperbole and exaggeration
experiences empathy for a character
experiences an emotional reaction to the text
judges quality/appeal of text
judges author's qualifications
recognizes facts vs. opinions
applies understanding to a new situation
recognizes literary style
recognizes figurative language
identifies mood
identifies plot and story line

Observable Comprehension Products

There are many exercises that students can complete when they comprehend the material they read. Some of these products can be performed orally in small groups. Some lend themselves more to independent paper-and-pencil type activities. Although there are more, the following are common products of comprehension.

Recognizing—underlining, multiple choice items, matching, true/false statements

Recalling—writing a short answer, filling in the blanks, flashcard question and answer

Paraphrasing—retelling in own words, summarizing

Classifying—grouping components, naming clusters, completing comparison tables, ordering components on a scale

Following directions—completing steps in a task, using a recipe, constructing

Visualizing—graphing, drawing a map, illustrating, making a time line, creating a flow chart

Fluent reading—accurate pronunciation, phrasing, intonation, dramatic qualities

Reading Comprehension Questions

Teaching the kinds of questions that appear on standardized tests gives students the framework to anticipate and thus look for the answers to questions while reading. This framework will not only help students' scores, but it will actually help them learn how to comprehend what they are reading. Some of the types of questions students will find on standardized comprehension tests are as follows:

Vocabulary—These questions are based on word meaning, common words, proper nouns, technical words, geographical words, and unusual adjectives.

Facts—These questions ask exactly what was written, using *who*, *what*, *when*, *where*,

why, how, and how many.

Sequence—These questions are based on order—what happened first, last, and in between.

Conditionals—These questions use qualifying terms such as: *if, could, alleged, etc.*

Summarizing—These questions require students to restate, choose main ideas, conclude, and create a new title. Also important here is for students to understand and state the author’s purpose.

Outcomes—These questions often involve readers drawing upon their own experiences or bringing outside knowledge to the composition. Students must understand cause and effect, results of actions, and implications.

Opinion—These questions ask the author’s intent and mood and require use of background knowledge to answer.

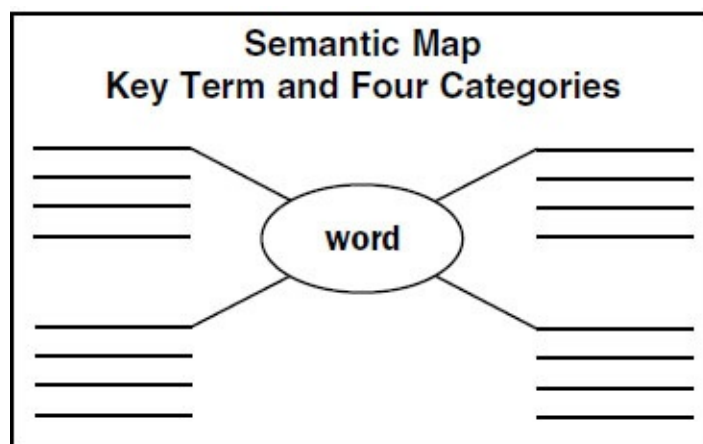
Graphic Organizers

Reading and comprehension can be easier for students with a few simple practices. For top comprehension, students need a wide vocabulary, ideas about the subject they are reading, and understanding of the structure of the text. Pre-reading activities will help students in all of these areas. Graphic organizers help students build vocabulary, brainstorm ideas, and understand the structure of the text.

Graphic organizers aid students with vocabulary and comprehension. Graphic organizers can help students comprehend more and, in turn, gain insight into how to comprehend in future readings. This process teaches a student a way to connect new information to prior knowledge that is stored in his or her brain. Different types of graphic organizers are listed below by category.

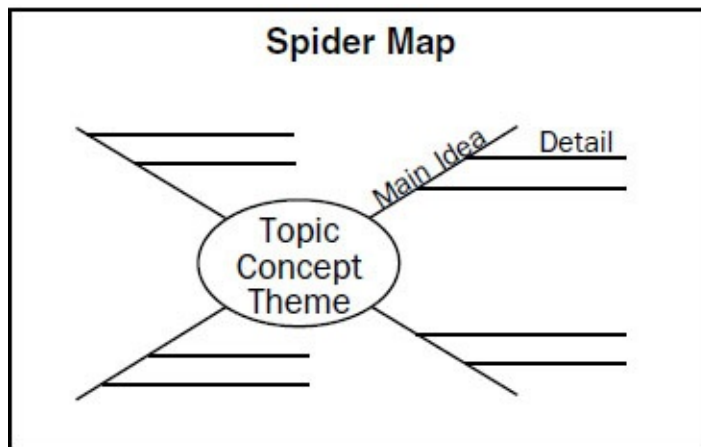
Concept organizers include: semantic maps, spider maps (word webs), Venn diagrams, and fishbone diagrams.

Semantic map—This organizer builds vocabulary. A word for study is placed in the center of the page, and four categories are made around it. The categories expand on the nature of the word and relate it back to personal knowledge and experience of the students.

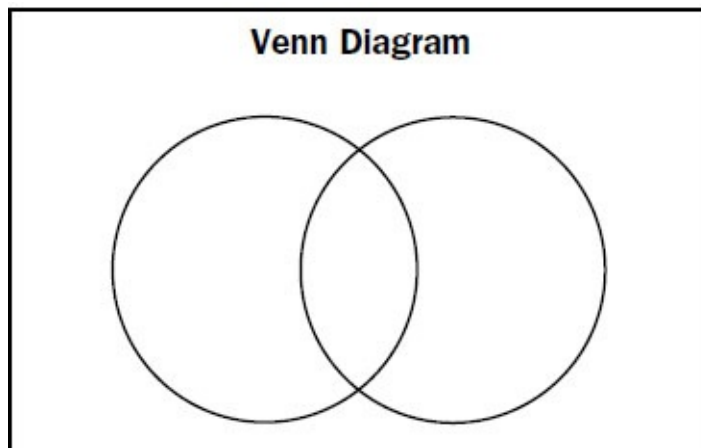


Spider map (word web)—The topic, concept, or theme is placed in the middle of the

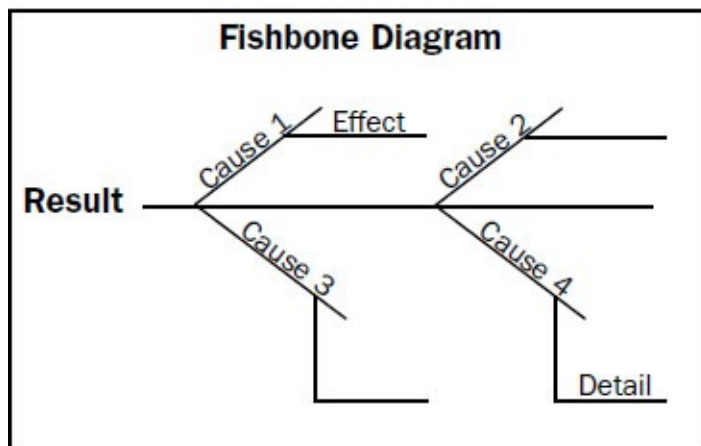
page. Like a spider's web, thoughts and ideas come out from the center, beginning with main ideas and flowing out to details.



Venn diagram—This organizer compares and contrasts two ideas. With two large circles intersecting, each circle represents a different topic. The area of each circle that does not intersect is for ideas and concepts that are only true about one topic. The intersection is for ideas and concepts that are true about both topics.

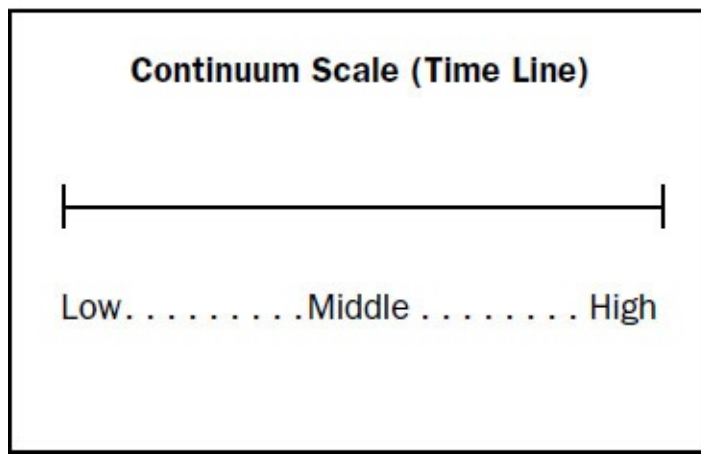


Fishbone diagram—This organizer deals with cause and effect. The result is listed first, branching out in a fishbone pattern with the causes that lead up to the result, along with other effects that happened along the way.

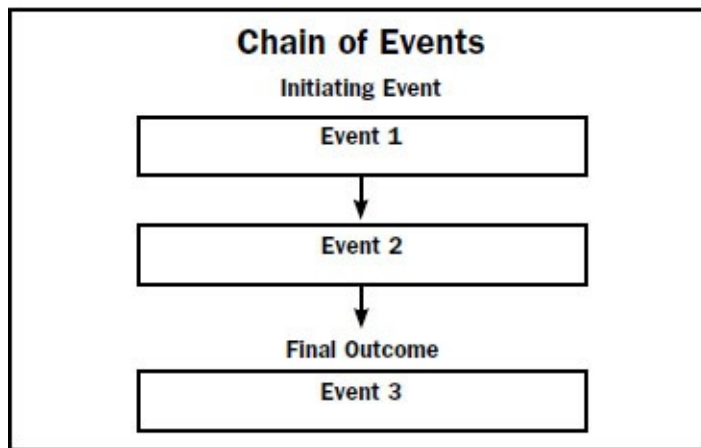


Continuum organizers can be linear or circular and contain a chain of events. These include time lines, chain of events, multiple linear maps, and circular or repeating maps.

Time lines—Whether graphing ancient history or the last hour, time lines help students to see how events have progressed and understand patterns in history.

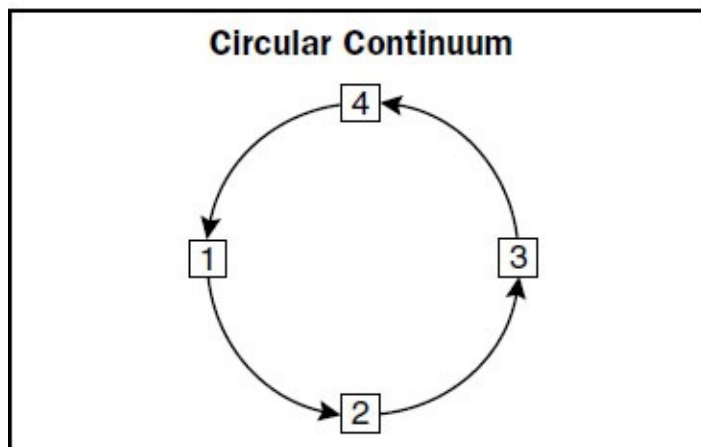


Chain of events—This organizer not only shows the progression of time but also emphasizes cause and effect. Beginning with the initiating event inside of a box, subsequent arrows and boxes follow showing the events in order.



Multiple linear maps—These organizers can help students visualize how different events can be happening at the same time, either in history or in a story, and how those events affect each other.

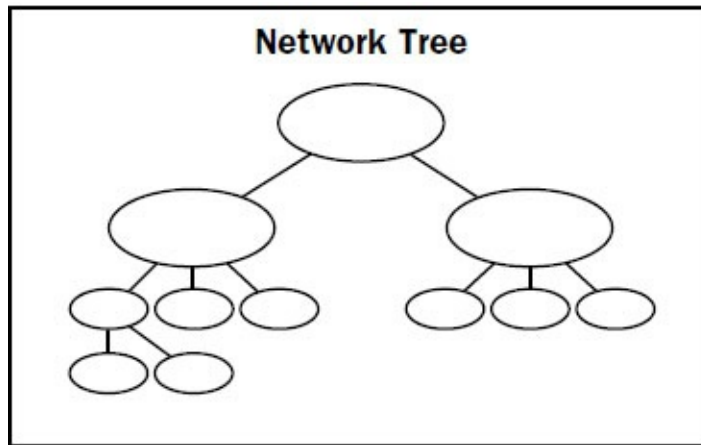
Circular or repeating maps—These organizers lend themselves to events that happen in a repeating pattern like events in science, such as the water cycle.



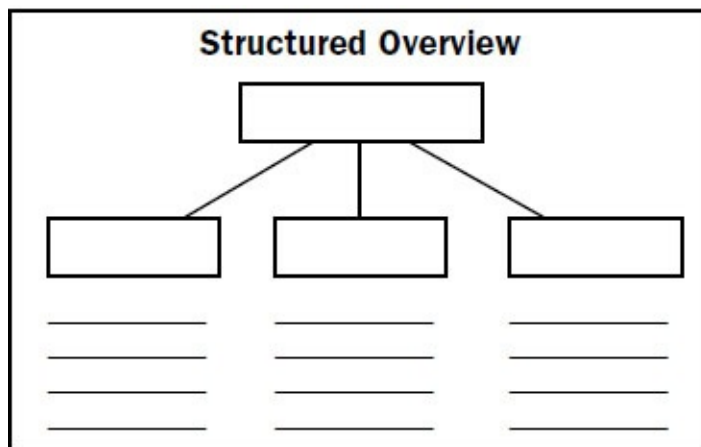
Hierarchical organizers show structure. These include: network trees, structured overviews, and class/example and properties maps. These organizers help students begin to visualize and comprehend hierarchy of knowledge, going from the big picture to the details.

Network tree—This organizer begins with a main, general topic. From there it

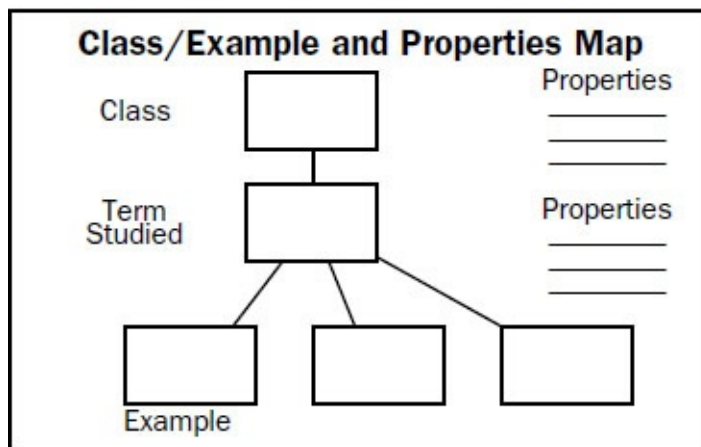
branches out to examples of that topic, further branching out with more and more detail.



Structured overview—This is similar to a network tree, but it varies in that it has a very structured look.



Class/example and properties map—Organized graphically, this map gives the information of class, example, and properties.



Spreadsheets are important organizers today. Much computer information is stored on spreadsheets. It is important for students to learn how to create, read, and comprehend these organizers. These include semantic feature analysis, compare and contrast matrices, and simple spreadsheet tables.

Semantic feature analysis—This organizer gives examples of a topic and lists features. A plus or a minus indicates if that example possesses those features.

Semantic Feature Analysis (Matrix)								
	Fill squares with + or – Features							
Term (class or example)								

Compare and contrast matrix—This organizer compares and contrasts two or more examples of different attributes.

Compare/Contrast Matrix (Spreadsheets)		
Attribute 1		
Attribute 2		
Attribute 3		

Simple spreadsheet table—Much information can be visualized through spreadsheets or tables. Choose examples and qualities and arrange them in spreadsheet style.

Maps are helpful in understanding spatial relationships. There are geographical maps, but there are also street maps and floor plans.

Geographical map—These organizers can range from globes to cities, and details are limited.

Street map—Information on this type of organizer becomes more detailed.

Floor plan—This organizer becomes more detailed, from a building to a room or a student’s desk.

Numerical graphs such as bar graphs, pie charts, and tables are important in comprehension, too.

Bar graph—With a vertical and a horizontal axis, this graph shows a comparison between subjects. It is important to be able to draw the correct information from the graph.

Pie chart—In the circular shape of a pie, amounts totaling 100% are shown as pieces of pie. Once again, drawing correct information is important.

Table—Information is organized into rows and columns to display relationships. A table can help to recognize patterns in a given problem.

Using graphic organizers while reading class material will help students know what to do in order to better comprehend material on standardized comprehension tests. Further, a varied use of all types of organizers will help students of different learning styles hit a method that works for them.

Pre-reading Strategies

It is widely understood that for comprehension and acquisition to take place, new information must be integrated with what the reader knows. Pre-reading strategies will help students to build knowledge and restructure the information they already possess in order to more fully comprehend what they are reading. After a teacher has spent time teaching pre-reading strategies, students will know what to do when reading on their own.

Building Vocabulary

There is a symbiotic relationship between knowledge of vocabulary and comprehension. Vocabulary development and comprehension span the curriculum. Students come across a large and diverse vocabulary in science, social science, mathematics, art, and even physical education. Skills and strategies for understanding vocabulary can be taught throughout the day. You can build your students' vocabulary directly and/or indirectly. Both ways have shown merit for different learners, so a combination will be sure to help all of the learners in your classroom.

Whether done directly or indirectly, teaching the kind of vocabulary that occurs in a text will greatly improve comprehension. Teaching vocabulary directly, a teacher would list the vocabulary in the text and have the students find the definitions in some manner. Indirectly, a teacher would introduce the content of the text and then elicit vocabulary that the students bring with them on the subject. The use of graphic organizers is helpful in doing this. (See [pages 10–14](#) for different types.) The teacher would lead the discussion to specific words if necessary.

Direct teaching—The more conventional way of teaching vocabulary has its merits. Give students a list of vocabulary words and have them find the definitions. This method teaches the use of reference materials and for some learners it is a good way to learn vocabulary. However, students truly learn vocabulary when they are involved in the construction of meaning rather than simply memorizing definitions.

Incidental or indirect teaching—This is really a combination of direct teaching and incidental learning for the well-equipped teacher. Teaching in this fashion, a teacher uses the students' knowledge and interests to begin a vocabulary development session that will end with what he/she wants the students to learn. Along the way, the teacher builds a grand vocabulary list and student interest. Also, students buy into the fact that they are part of the process and that learning vocabulary can be a personal experience that they can control. The students will learn how to become independent learners, studying things that interest them.

A general approach to building vocabulary could include the following:

Semantic association—Students brainstorm a list of words associated with a familiar word, sharing everyone's knowledge of vocabulary and discussing the less familiar words.

Semantic mapping—Once the brainstorming is done, students can group the words into categories, creating a visual organization to understand relationships.

Semantic feature analysis—Another way to group words is according to certain features. Use a chart to show similarities and differences between words.

Analogies—This practice will further help students to see the relationships of words. Also, analogies are often used on standardized tests. (e.g., Doctor is to patient as teacher is to *student*.)

Word roots and origins—The study of these, as well as affixes, will help students to deduce new words. Students can ask themselves, “Does it look like a word I know? Can I figure out the meaning in the given context?”

Synonyms and antonyms—The study of these related words provides a structure for meaning and is also good practice for learning and building vocabulary.

Brainstorming—The use of graphic organizers to list and categorize ideas will help greatly with comprehension. A great way to get started is with a KWL chart. By listing ideas that are known, what students want to know, and, when finished, what they learned, relationships will be established so that comprehension and acquisition of knowledge will take place. Word webs work well, too. Anticipating the types of words and ideas that will appear in the text will help with fluency of reading as well as with comprehension.

Understanding Structure

To be able to make predictions and find information in writing, a student must understand structure. From the structure of a sentence to a paragraph to an essay, this skill is important and sometimes overlooked in instruction. Some students have been so immersed in literature that they have a natural understanding of structure. For instance, they know that a fairy tale starts out “Once upon a time ...,” has a good guy and a bad guy, has a problem with a solution, and ends “... happily ever after.” But when a student does not have this prior knowledge, making heads or tails of a fairy tale is difficult. The same holds true with not understanding that the first sentence of a paragraph will probably contain the main idea, followed with examples of that idea. When looking back at a piece to find the answer to a question, understanding structure will allow students to quickly scan the text for the correct area in which to find the information. Furthermore, knowing where a text is going to go structurally will help with prediction as well as comprehension.

Building a large vocabulary is important for comprehension, but comprehension and acquisition also require a framework for relating new information to what is already in the brain. Students must be taught the structure of sentences and paragraphs. Knowing the structure of these, they will begin to anticipate and predict what will come next. Not having to decode every word reduces the time spent reading a sentence and thus helps students remember what they read at the beginning of the sentence. Assessing an author’s purpose and quickly recalling a graphic or framework of personal knowledge will help a reader predict and anticipate what vocabulary and ideas might come up in an article or story.

Several activities will help with understanding structure. The following list offers some

ideas to help students:

Write—A great way to understand structure is to use it. Teach students the proper structure when they write.

Color code—When reading a text, students can use colored pencils or crayons to color code certain elements such as main idea, supporting sentences, and details. Once the colors are in place, they can study and tell in their own words about paragraph structure.

Go back in the text—Discuss a comprehension question with students. Ask them, “What kinds of words are you going to look for in the text to find the answer? Where are you going to look for them?” (The students should pick main ideas in the question and look for those words in the topic sentences of the different paragraphs.)

Graphic organizers—Use the list of graphic organizers ([pages 10–14](#)) to find one that will suit your text. Have students create an organizer as a class, in a small group, or with a partner.

Study common order—Students can also look for common orders. Types of orders can include chronological, serial, logical, functional, spatial, and hierarchical.

Standardized Tests

Standardized tests have taken a great importance in education today. As an educator, you know that standardized tests do not necessarily provide an accurate picture of a student. There are many factors that do not reflect the students’ competence that sway the results of these tests.

- The diversity of our big country makes the tests difficult to normalize.
- Students that are talented in areas other than math and language cannot show this talent.
- Students who do not speak and read English fluently will not do well on standardized tests.
- Students who live in poverty do not necessarily have the experiences necessary to comprehend the questions.

The list could go on, but there does have to be some sort of assessment of progress that a community can use to decide how the schools are doing. Standardized tests and their results are receiving more and more attention these days. The purpose of this series, along with creating better readers, is to help students get better results on standardized tests.

Test Success

The ability to do well when taking traditional standardized tests on comprehension requires at least three things:

- a large vocabulary of sight words
- the mastery of certain specific test-taking skills
- the ability to recognize and control stress

Vocabulary has already been discussed in detail. Test-taking skills and recognizing and controlling stress can be taught and will be discussed in this section.

Test-Taking Skills

Every student in your class needs good test-taking skills, and almost all of them will need to be taught these skills. Even fluent readers and extremely logical students will fair better on standardized tests if they are taught a few simple skills for taking tests.

These test-taking skills are:

- The ability to follow complicated and sometimes confusing directions. Teach students to break down the directions and translate them into easy, understandable words. Use this series to teach them the types of questions that will appear.
- The ability to scale back what they know and concentrate on just what is asked and what is contained in the text—show them how to restrict their responses. Question students on their answers when doing practice exercises and have them show where they found the answer in the text.
- The ability to rule out confusing distracters in multiple choice answers. Teach students to look for key words and match up the information from the text.
- The ability to maintain concentration during boring and tedious repetition. Use practice time to practice this and reward students for maintaining concentration. Explain to students why they are practicing and why their concentration is important for the day of the test.

There are also environmental elements that you can practice with throughout the year in order for your students to become more accustomed to them for the testing period.

If your desks are pushed together, have students move them apart so they will be accustomed to the feel on test-taking day.

- Put a “Testing—Do Not Disturb” sign on the door.
- Require “test etiquette” when practicing: no talking, attentive listening, and following directions.
- Provide a strip of construction paper for each student to use as a marker.
- Establish a routine for replacing broken pencils. Give each student two sharpened pencils and have a back-up supply ready. Tell students they will need to raise their broken pencil in their hand, and you will give them a new one. One thing students should not worry about is the teacher’s reaction to a broken pencil.
- Read the instructions to the students as you would when giving a standardized test so they grow accustomed to your test-giving voice.

As a teacher, you probably realize that what is practiced daily is what is best learned. All of these practices work well to help students improve their scores.

Reduce Stress and Build Confidence

As well as the physical and mental aspects of test-taking, there is also the psychological. It

is important to reduce students' stress and increase students' confidence during the year.

- In order to reduce stress, it first needs to be recognized. Discuss feelings and apprehensions about testing. Give students some tools for handling stress.
- Begin talking about good habits at the beginning of the year. Talk about getting enough sleep, eating a good breakfast, and exercising before and after school. Consider sending home a letter encouraging parents to start these good routines with their children at home.
- Explain the power of positive thought to your students. Tell them to use their imaginations to visualize themselves doing well. Let them know that they have practiced all year and are ready for what is to come.
- Remember to let students stretch and walk around between tests. Try using “Simon Says” with younger students throughout the year to get them to breathe deeply, stretch, and relax so it won't be a novel idea during test time.
- Build confidence during the year when using the practice tests. Emphasize that these tests are for learning. If they could get all of the answers right the first time, they wouldn't need any practice. Encourage students to state at least one thing they learned from doing the practice test.
- Give credit for reasonable answers. Explain to students that the test makers write answers that seem almost true to really test the students' understanding. Encourage students to explain why they chose the answers they gave, and then reason with the whole class on how not to be duped the next time.
- Promote a relaxed, positive outlook on test-taking. Let your students know on the real day that they are fully prepared to do their best.

Suggestions for the Teacher

When practicing skills for comprehension, it is important to vocalize and discuss the process in finding an answer. After building vocabulary, tapping background knowledge, and discussing the structure that might be used in the article, have the students read the article. If they are not able to read the article independently, have them read with partners or in a small teacher-led group. After completing these steps, work through the comprehension questions. The following are suggestions for working through these activities.

- Have students read the text silently and answer the questions.
- Have students correct their own papers.
- Discuss each answer and how the students came to their answers.
- Refer to the exact wording in the text.
- Discuss whether students had to tap their own knowledge or not.

Answer Sheet

The teacher can choose to use the blank answer sheet located at the back of the book for practice filling in bubble forms for standardized tests. The rows have not been numbered

so that the teacher can use the form for any test, filling in the numbers and copying for the class as necessary. The teacher can also have the students write the answers directly on the pages of the test practice sheets instead of using the bubble sheet.

CD-ROM

A CD-ROM with all the lessons, answer sheet, and answer key has been provided at the back of this book.

Summary

Teachers need to find a way to blend test preparation with the process of learning and discovery. It is important for students to learn test-taking skills and strategies because they will be important throughout life. It is more important for students to build vocabulary and knowledge, to create frameworks for comprehension, and to become fluent readers.

The *Nonfiction Comprehension Test Practice* series is an outstanding program to start your students in the direction of becoming better readers and test-takers. These are skills they will need throughout life. Provide an atmosphere conducive to the joy of learning and create a climate for curiosity within your classroom. With daily practice of comprehension skills and test-taking procedures, teaching comprehension may seem just a little bit easier.

Name _____

Date _____

Sentence Comprehension

Directions: Read the following sentence carefully and answer the questions below “True” (T) or “False” (F).

“I will fight with everything I have to keep the wolves in Yellowstone,” said Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt, who was in charge of the national parks.

- Bruce Babbitt was in charge of the national parks in the United States.

- Bruce Babbitt’s title was Defense Secretary. _____
- Bruce Babbitt wants to keep the wolves in Yellowstone National Park.

- The wolves want to leave Yellowstone National Park. _____
- Bruce Babbitt was in charge of parks around the world. _____

Word Study



Directions: Make the singular words plural.

Wolf

A wolf is a powerful, meat-eating, wild dog. However, a wolf is part of a pack and, therefore, a wolf rarely travels or hunts alone. To make wolf plural, the “f” is dropped, and “ves” is added to spell “wolves.” Wolf is singular, and wolves is plural.

- coyote _____
- fox _____
- badger _____
- eagle _____
- bear _____
- person _____

7. moose _____

8. rodent _____

9. mouse _____

10. puppy _____

Paragraph Comprehension

Directions: Read the paragraph below and answer the following questions.

Grizzly bears are no longer forced to strip the trees of nuts and leaves for food, because now they can eat the wolves' leftovers. There are fewer coyotes because wolves have killed some of them. That means there is more of the coyotes' favorite food—little rodents—for foxes, badgers, and eagles to eat. Even trees and plants are healthier now that bears and elk don't snack on them as much. The amazing positive changes in Yellowstone show clearly that the return of the wolves is a positive step.

1. Grizzly bears do not have to eat nuts and leaves because they can eat
 - a. tree bark.
 - b. fish and raspberries.
 - c. wolves.
 - d. wolves' leftovers.
2. The coyote population is
 - a. increasing.
 - b. dwindling.
 - c. over 8,000.
 - d. attacking wolves.
3. Predators of the coyotes are
 - a. bears.
 - b. wolves.
 - c. foxes.
 - d. badgers.
4. The return of the wolves to Yellowstone
 - a. has positively impacted the ecosystem.
 - b. has meant a significant decrease in tourism.
 - c. has done nothing to reduce tree and plant damage.
 - d. has made the elk migrate south.
5. The animals that have benefited from the wolves' return are
 - a. foxes.
 - b. eagles.
 - c. badgers.

d. all of the above

Whole-Story Comprehension

Directions: Read the story below and answer the questions on the following page.

The Packs Are Back

For centuries, gray wolves prowled the forests of the American West. They had few enemies until settlers arrived in the early 1800s. People feared the wild, sharp-toothed creatures. Wolves sometimes killed farmers' animals. People worried that they might attack humans, too.

Some wolves were shot. At one time, the government paid hunters a reward for each wolf they killed. By the early 1930s, no wolves were left in Yellowstone National Park. The disappearance of wolves left a big hole in Yellowstone's ecosystem. Coyotes, normally hunted by wolves, became too numerous. Foxes and badgers, which eat the same rodents that coyotes do, were going hungry. The ecosystem was badly out of balance.

To restore Yellowstone's natural balance, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service decided to bring back wolves. In 1995, 31 gray wolves from Canada were brought to the park. Since then, something incredible has happened: Yellowstone has come howling back to life.

Grizzly bears are no longer forced to strip the trees of nuts and leaves for food, because now they can eat the wolves' leftovers. There are fewer coyotes because wolves have killed some of them. That means there is more of the coyotes' favorite food—little rodents—for foxes, badgers, and eagles to eat. Even trees and plants are healthier now that bears and elk don't snack on them as much. The amazing positive changes in Yellowstone show clearly that the return of the wolves is a positive step.

"Ecological change seldom happens before your eyes," says John Varley, a director at Yellowstone National Park. "I never imagined we'd see it."

However, some people have ignored the improvement of the balance of nature in the park. Ranchers near the park still want to get rid of their old enemy. Since 1995, roaming wolves have killed more than 84 sheep and seven cattle. An environmental group has paid the ranchers to replace the animals. But, complains rancher Vern Keller, "There's the stress of not knowing if wolves are in the area or when they'll strike."

Keller and others went to court. They argued that the way in which Yellowstone's new wolves were brought into the park was illegal. In December, 1997, a judge

agreed and ordered the wolves to be removed. Environmental groups are fighting the decision. “It was an order to take 10 steps backward,” says Thomas France of the National Wildlife Federation.

The original 31 animals have multiplied to between 150 and 200. They cannot be shipped back to Canada, because their old territory has been taken over by other wolves. Zoos aren’t likely to take them. Says Yellowstone scientist Douglas Smith: “The options could come down to one thing—killing them.”

The judge’s decision is still being appealed. In fact, the case may go all the way to the Supreme Court. “I will fight with everything I have to keep the wolves in Yellowstone,” said Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt, who was in charge of the national parks. The wolves are used to being the focus of a fight. It’s been that way for more than 100 years. However, humans must not let the great success of the wolves be reversed.

Directions: After you have read the story on the previous page, answer the questions below.

1. Wolves cannot return to Canada because
 - a. their old territory has been taken over.
 - b. they have been Americanized.
 - c. they would be shot.
 - d. the wolves are an essential part in maintaining Yellowstone’s balance.
 - e. both a and d
2. Enemies of the gray wolf
 - a. were the settlers of 1800.
 - b. are ranchers.
 - c. are the National Wildlife Federation.
 - d. all of the above
 - e. both a and b
3. Wolves were once shot because
 - a. they attacked a group of tourists at Yellowstone.
 - b. the government paid for each wolf killed.
 - c. they had rabies.
 - d. they disrupted Yellowstone’s ecosystem.
4. Foxes and badgers suffered because
 - a. ranchers and farmers installed fences around their farms.
 - b. the wolves were their predator.

- c. the coyotes were eating all of their food.
 - d. Yellowstone National Park did not provide adequate food for them.
5. In the sentence, “Yellowstone has come howling back to life,” the word *howling*
- a. is a word often used to describe wolves’ sounds.
 - b. is a descriptive word.
 - c. gets the readers’ attention.
 - d. all of the above
6. Ranchers complain about wolves
- a. because roaming wolves have killed more than 84 sheep and 7 cattle.
 - b. they are unsure about where wolves are and when they might strike.
 - c. because they feel the wolves were brought into the park illegally.
 - d. all of the above
7. The author’s opinion is that
- a. wolves should remain in Yellowstone.
 - b. wolves should be removed from Yellowstone.
 - c. wolves are destroying Yellowstone.
 - d. wolves in Canada are mean.
8. The wolves’ greatest ally
- a. is Vern Keller.
 - b. is Thomas France.
 - c. is John Varley.
 - d. both b and c
 - e. all of the above

Enrichment

Directions: All nouns that name specific people, places, or things must be capitalized. Capitalize all letters or words that need to be capitalized in the group of sentences below. Rewrite the paragraph with the correct capitalization.

Proper nouns are nouns that name a specific person, place, thing, or idea. Proper nouns are almost always capitalized.

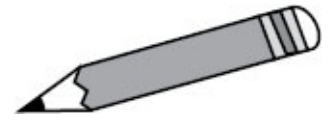
A rancher is fighting the decision to allow wolves to remain in the park.

The nouns in this sentence are: *rancher*, *decision*, *wolves*, and *park*. None of these nouns name a specific person, place, or thing. Therefore, all letters are lowercase. Now consider this sentence.

Vern Keller is fighting the decision to allow wolves to remain in Yellowstone National Park.

At yellowstone national park, wolves are now endangered. The supreme court of the united states may hold the wolves' existence in their hands. A group of ranchers want the american gray wolf to return to canada, but the national wildlife federation believes the wolves maintain yellowstone's ecosystem and symbolize the american west. Should the wolves be allowed to remain? The courts will decide.

Graphic Development



Directions: Based on the story, “The Packs Are Back,” create a poster of the animals and vegetation in Yellowstone National Park that have benefited since the wolves have been reintroduced to the park.

A large, empty rectangular area with rounded corners, outlined in black. This area is intended for the student to draw their poster about animals and vegetation in Yellowstone National Park that have benefited from the reintroduction of wolves.

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