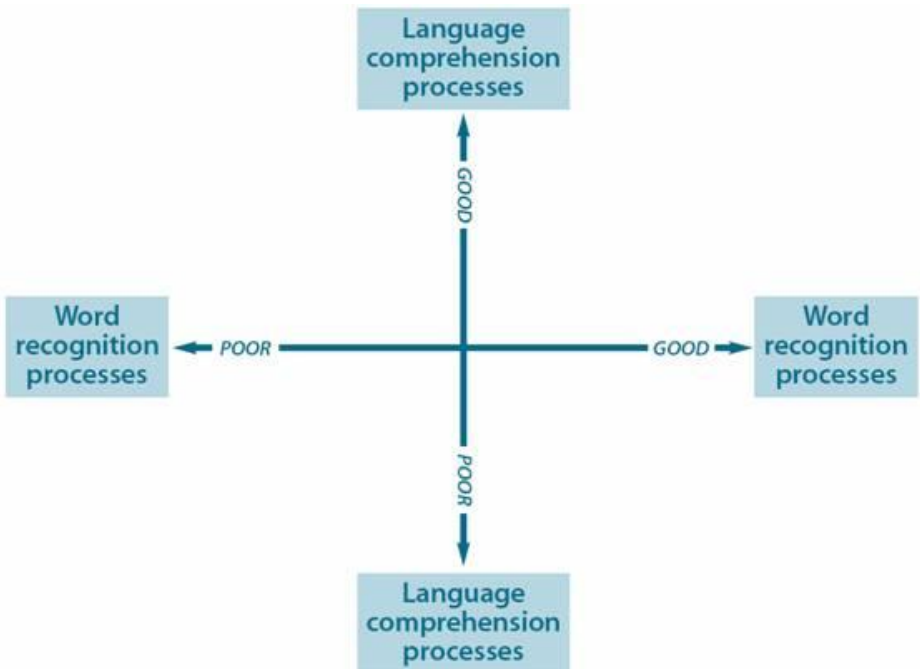


# Understanding Reading

Reading is a complex business. In the Rose Review of how reading should be taught (2005), a new model of reading was set out, the 'Simple View of Reading'. Essentially it boils down to two areas: word recognition (phonetically de-coding words and recognising tricky words) and language comprehension (understanding of the content (from individual words to overall themes) and layout).

To be a fluent and accurate reader, a reader must have both sets of skills. Both sets of processes are necessary for reading, but neither is sufficient on its own. Children who cannot adequately recognise the words on the page are by that fact alone prevented from fully understanding the text; however, recognising and understanding the words on the page is no guarantee that the text will be understood.



Children need to acquire and practise phonic knowledge in the early stages of reading in order to develop fluent automatic word

reading, whereas the abilities to understand and appreciate written texts continue to develop throughout life. Language comprehension skills also become increasingly complex as the reader becomes more competent, as there are many strands of language comprehension:

- finding and selecting information in text (describe, retell & locate)
- summarising
- deducing (drawing logical conclusions) and inferring information (go beyond information, use own experience, knowledge or opinion)
- synthesising (looking at the text as a whole)
- understanding of the structure and organisation of text
- understanding of the use of language
- recognising the writers viewpoint and purpose
- relating the text to themselves and the world around them

This seems a huge list, but remember these are skills which we continue to practise and develop even as adults.

## Helping Your Child Read

When children become more fluent at reading, they are often not as keen to read aloud. Don't worry, they are just becoming more independent readers and want to enjoy reading by themselves. However to help your child become a more competent reader, try and spend time discussing what they have read. The questions below might support you as you help your child progress.

### **Finding and selecting information**

*What happened at \_\_\_? What did \_\_\_ do? Which character \_\_\_? What does the text say about \_\_\_?*

### **Summarising**

*What is the book about? Tell me about the character \_\_\_\_.*

### **Deducing and inferring information**

*How did \_\_\_ do or feel? Which words tell us \_\_\_? Why did \_\_\_? How do you know that? What does the word \_\_\_ imply about \_\_\_? Why was that important? What are the important points the*

author is trying to get across to the reader? If that hadn't happened, how might the story have changed? What might happen next and why? Explain why \_\_\_\_\_. In this part, how does the character feel about \_\_\_\_\_, how do you know this? What do you think about \_\_\_\_\_, use the text to support you.

### **Synthesising**

Which do you think are the most important points? Which event in the story could not have been left out and why not? What is the moral of the story?

### **Structure and organisation of text**

How does the layout help the reader? Why are \_\_\_\_\_ used? Why has the information been presented in this way? Why are particular words/sections in bold? What would be a good heading for this section? Why does the author start a new paragraph here? Why has the author used these repetitive structures?

### **Use of language**

Why did the author use \_\_\_\_\_ word? Why does the author compare \_\_\_\_\_ to a \_\_\_\_\_? How do those words make you feel about \_\_\_\_\_? What does/do this/these words tell you about that character? Why is \_\_\_\_\_ a good title for this story/book/play? Find something that is not fact but the author's opinion. Is this writer an expert on \_\_\_\_\_, how do you know? Is this a persuasive text or a factual one?

### **Writer's viewpoint and purpose**

How do you feel when you read this? Which parts make you feel like this? Does the author like \_\_\_\_\_? What does the author think about \_\_\_\_\_? How do you know? What is the purpose of this text? Is this text effective? Why did the author include that? (eg picture/quotation). Why do you think the author says \_\_\_\_\_?

### **Relating the text**

Is this story like any others you have read? How is it similar/different? Does this character remind you of anyone else? When do you think this was written? In which country do you think it might be set? How do you know? What kind of ending do you think it might have? (eg for traditional tales). What kind of text is this? How do you know?



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# Understanding Reading and Helping Your Child Read

