

Purpose:

The National Curriculum for English focuses on reading comprehension as this is vital in enabling students to understand various forms of written texts. It encourages thinking by analysing, interpreting and evaluating information within texts. It also fosters an understanding of different perspectives presented in texts, promoting empathy and a broader worldview.

Effective reading comprehension helps students communicate more effectively. It enhances their vocabulary, language structure, and writing skills, enabling them to convey their thoughts and ideas clearly and coherently.

Strong reading comprehension skills are essential for success in higher education and the workplace. They're vital for understanding complex instructions and interpreting information.

Developing reading comprehension skills offers students a lifetime of learning, enjoyment and independence.

Assessment:

Teachers will assess reading comprehension through classroom discussions, questioning and observations during reading activities. Different question types (literal, inferential, evaluative) can assess different levels of comprehension.

Teachers can utilise a range of tasks to assess reading comprehension: short quizzes and comprehension questions, summarising tasks, identifying literary devices, making predictions, analysing character motivations.

Students can engage in projects or tasks that demonstrate comprehension skills, like book reports, presentations, or creative responses to texts.

Students can also maintain logs or journals where they record their thoughts, reflections, summaries or reactions to texts they've read. Teachers can review these to assess comprehension.

Cross curriculum:

Science: In science, reading comprehension is crucial for understanding complex scientific texts, research papers, and experimental procedures. Students need strong comprehension skills to grasp scientific concepts, theories, and explanations presented in textbooks and academic articles.

History: Students need to analyse historical documents, understanding different perspectives, and interpreting primary and secondary sources. Proficient reading comprehension enables students to engage critically with historical texts and develop a deeper understanding of events, cultures, and societal structures.

Maths: Reading comprehension plays a role in math as students need to comprehend word problems and written explanations of mathematical concepts. Clear comprehension aids in understanding the context of mathematical questions and applying appropriate problem-solving strategies.

Technology: In the digital age, reading comprehension is essential for navigating and understanding technical manuals, instructions, and online resources related to technology and digital literacy.

Art and Design: Comprehending texts related to art history, artist statements, or design theories enhances the understanding and appreciation of artistic works, their contexts, and their cultural significance.

Key Stage or stage breakdown:

Stage 1-2: Students will be introduced to foundational literacy skills: letter recognition, phonics and early reading activities. This will develop to word recognition and decoding skills to improve fluency. Students will be exposed to simple stories, nursery rhymes, and picture books to build vocabulary and understanding of basic narrative structures. Students will develop oral language skills through discussions, storytelling and retelling of familiar stories. Students will be introduced to comprehension strategies such as predicting, summarising, and sequencing events in stories.

Stages 3-6: Students will deepen comprehension strategies by exploring different genres and text types, including fiction, non-fiction, poetry and plays. There will be an emphasis on understanding and analysing the main ideas, themes, and characters in texts. Students will be introduced to more complex vocabulary and sophisticated comprehension strategies like inference, deduction and drawing conclusions.

Stages 7-9: Students will encounter more challenging and diverse texts. Key skills that will develop throughout these stages: critical analysis, evaluation and interpretation; vocabulary expansion and contextual understanding; independent reading and analysis; writing connections – connecting reading comprehension with writing skills by analysing how authors use language, structure, and literary devices their writing and using those techniques in their own compositions);