

Reading Comprehension

It's easier than you think!

Book One

With
LEARNING SERIES

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Book One

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Do you want to have great reading comprehension?
Do you wish you could do all of the following?

- state the main idea
- make inferences
- predict outcomes
- draw conclusions

Language Structures: Book One starts off with a quick review of how a sentence is structured, reminding students that every sentence needs a subject and a verb.

You can.

But **ONLY** if you master finding the subject and verb in every sentence.
For example: You can't predict an outcome if you don't completely understand what happened.

Set this goal: **Become so skilled at recognizing the subject and verb that your brain does it automatically as you read.**

Let's review: Every sentence needs a subject and a verb.

The **subject** can be

- a noun
- a pronoun
- an unstated person

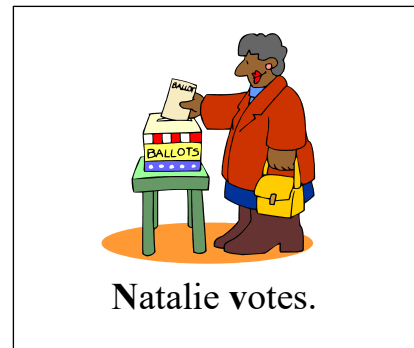
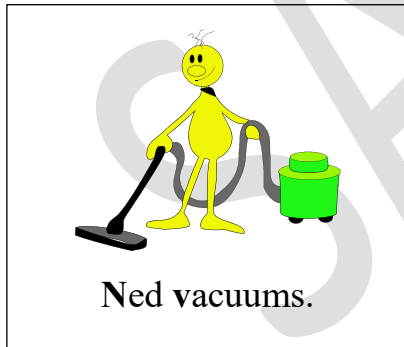
The **verb** can express

- an action
- a state of being

Do you know how to find nouns and verbs?

Most people can rattle off "*person, place, thing, or idea*" and "*action words.*" But if you're one of those people who can't remember which phrase describes a noun and which phrase describes a verb, use this full-proof way to NEVER mix them up again.

Pick one of these sentences. Memorize it.



In each sentence, the subject starts with the letter **n** (so does **noun**). The verb starts with a **v** (like **verb**).

- ✪ Together with your teacher, **label** the subject and verb in sentences 1-3.
- ✪ **Discuss** how the sentence you memorized helps you find the subject and verb – even when the subject is a *place* or *thing* and even when the verb is a *state of being verb*.

1. Her courage was impressive.
2. The cafeteria closed at 7:00 p.m.
3. The Lincoln Memorial is located on the end of the National Mall.

To have good comprehension, you need to figure out what authors mean when they use pronouns.

These **pronouns** replace nouns that are **subjects**:

I you we
he it they
she

These **pronouns** replace nouns in the ***what*** or ***whom***:

me you us
him it them
her

- ☛ Read the sentences in each box. ☛ Write a noun in each blank to tell what the pronoun refers to.

1. Jon bought a used snow blower.
He got **it** at a garage sale.

He refers to _____. **It** refers to _____.

Verbal Reasoning: Students practice looking back in the text to make sure they understand what word a pronoun refers to.

2. Jayla watched her brother until her mom got home from work.
She made **him** an after-school snack.

She refers to _____. **Him** refers to _____.

3. Isabella drank a sip of milk. **She** spit **it** out because **it** was sour.

She refers to _____. **It** refers to _____.

4. My grandpa grows radishes in his garden. **He** loves to eat **them**.

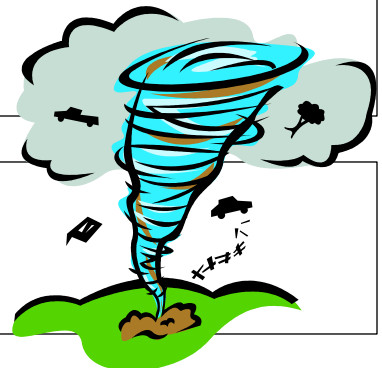
He refers to _____. **Them** refers to _____.

5. My brother and I read while **we** were riding in the car.

We refers to _____.

6. The tornado lasted for two hours. **It** killed 43 people.

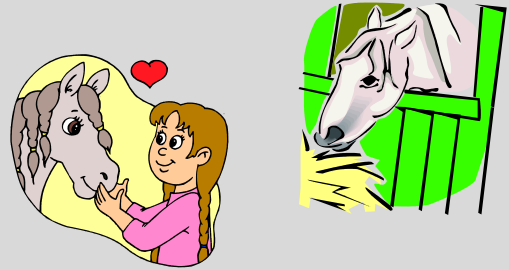
It refers to _____.



Are you reading **words** or are you reading **ideas**? Sounding out all the words on a page doesn't guarantee that you will understand anything you read. Even if you correctly locate the subject and verb in every sentence, you still might not understand what you read.

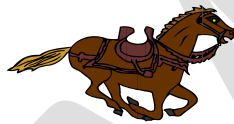
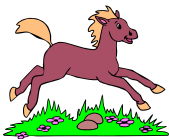
Reading comprehension requires that you give meaning to words. As you read words, you should be creating visual images of ideas.

For example, when you read *the hungry horse*, an image should pop into your head. That image should create a feeling based on your past experiences.



The following sentences are broken up into chunks of information. Each chunk of words conveys an idea. Go beyond sounding out words. Create a visual image for each idea. The images you create are never wrong, but **notice how the images keep shifting to fit new information as it is added.**

1. The spirited horse raced around the track.



Background Knowledge: Students are taught how to use their past experiences (background knowledge) to create visual images as they read.

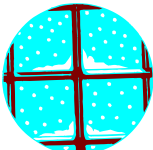
2. The spirited horse raced to deliver the mail.



3. Because it snowed, I spent an hour scraping ice from the car windows.



4. Because it snowed, I spent an hour waiting for a bus.



★ Look at each picture. Add words to each sentence to tell *where* the action happened.



1. Sofia hangs



2. Caleb is sleeping



3. Chloe looks



4. Raya swings

Language Structures: After identifying the essential parts of a sentence (subject and verb), students learn how and why sentences are expanded.

- ★ Underline the subject.
- ★ Put this symbol under the action verb.
- ★ Circle the words or phrases that tell *where* and *when*.
- ★ Circle the symbol to show if the words tell *where* or *when*.

	<i>Where</i>	<i>When</i>
5. My <u>cat</u> napped <u>under the porch.</u>		
6. The <u>dog</u> hid <u>between the bed and the dresser.</u>		
7. Our team won last Saturday.		
8. My grandma visits every summer.		
9. Anthony drove home.		
10. Flowers bloomed in the field.		
11. Bears hibernate during the winter months.		

To understand the meaning of a phrase,

- pay attention to the first word in the phrase.**

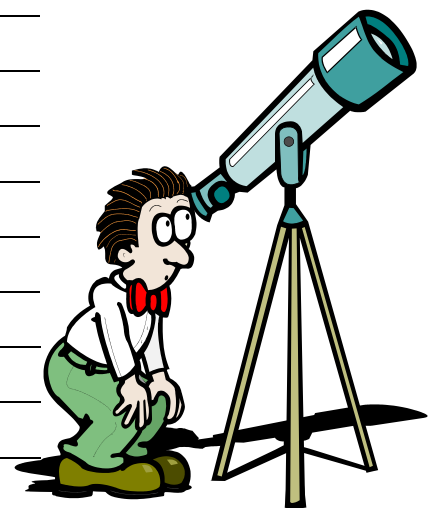
Carly ran after school.	<i>After school</i> tells <i>when</i> .
Jamar ran around the track.	<i>Around the track</i> tells <i>where</i> .
Zahara ran to the park.	<i>To the park</i> tells <i>where</i> she ran.
Avery ran to catch the ball.	<i>To catch the ball</i> tells <i>why</i> she ran.
- think.**
 A lot of people forget to think. They read and then say, "I don't get it."

★ Read each group of words. Think.

Do the words tell *where*, *when*, *why*, *how*, or *under what condition*?

1. **because** mirrors are easier to make than lenses why
2. **to** make sure I didn't spill _____
3. **to** its nest _____
4. **if** the diameter is made three times larger _____
5. **over** four light years away _____
6. **like** an expert _____
7. **in** the Milky Way Galaxy _____
8. **about** 4.6 billion years ago _____
9. **so** none of the gas will escape _____
10. **with** help from my teacher _____
11. **if** the temperature rises more than ten degrees _____
12. **while** the solution is boiling _____
13. **in** the next ten minutes _____
14. **in** case you forgot _____
15. **in** a hurry _____
16. **to** the furniture store _____
17. **to** get out of the path of on-coming cars _____
18. **unless** the package arrives today _____
19. **by** 4:30 p.m. _____
20. **by** looking through a telescope _____

Language Structures: Students are taught how to give meaning (semantics) to entire phrases. For example: "because mirrors are easier to make than lenses" is a group of words that tells *why*.



number correct _____ / number possible _____ = _____ %

An important piece of understanding what you read is understanding the meaning of individual words. When textbooks present a new concept, there are often new vocabulary words that you need to learn. If you don't understand the new vocabulary, then it will be hard to understand the new concepts.

If you find it hard to learn new vocabulary words, let's practice breaking definitions up into chunks that are easier to understand. We'll practice with words that you already know.

The definition of a noun is often written in two parts.

- The first part tells what group the noun belongs to.
- The second part tells how one thing in a group is different from something else in that same group.

Discuss these examples:

A toaster is a small electric kitchen appliance that cooks a slice of bread.

A blender is a small electric kitchen appliance that is used to mix, liquefy, chop, or puree food.

(Note: In the original image, blue wavy lines under 'toaster' and 'blender' indicate the group, and arrows labeled 'details' point to the 'that' clauses.)

1. How are a toaster and a blender alike? They are both things. They are both kitchen appliances.
2. How are a toaster and blender different? (Look at the detail part of the definitions.) _____

✪ Write definitions for each noun. Tell the group the noun belongs to. Then add details that tell how it is different from other members of that same group.

3. A mosquito is (group) an insect
(details) that flies and bites people



4. A nurse is (group) _____
(details) _____

5. A fork is (group) _____
(details) _____

6. A school is (group) _____
(details) _____

7. An inventor is (group) _____
(details) _____

Vocabulary: Too many students try to learn vocabulary by copying a definition and then trying to memorize it. But they often skip the most important step: understanding what the words mean. We make sure that doesn't happen. We explicitly teach students how to break apart definitions so they are easier to understand.