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Introduction

Comprehension is the goal of every reading task. The *Read and Succeed: Comprehension* series can help lay the foundation of comprehension skills that are essential for a lifetime of learning. The series was written specifically to provide the purposeful practice students need in order to succeed in reading comprehension. The more students practice, the more confident and capable they can become.

Why You Need This Book

- **It is standards based.** The skill practice pages are aligned to the Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL) standards. (See page 7.)
- **It has focused lessons.** Each practice page covers a key comprehension skill. Skills are addressed multiple times to provide several opportunities for mastery.
- **It employs advanced organization.** Having students encounter the question page first gives them a “heads up” when they approach the text, thereby enhancing comprehension and promoting critical-thinking abilities.
- **It has appropriate reading levels.** All passages have a grade level calculated based on the Shell Education leveling system, which was developed under the guidance of Dr. Timothy Rasinski, along with the staff at Shell Education.
- **It has an interactive whiteboard-compatible Teacher Resource CD.** This can be used to enhance instruction and support literacy skills.

How to Use This Book

First, determine what sequence will best benefit your students. Work through the book in order (as the skills become progressively more difficult) to cover all key skills. For reinforcement of specific skills, select skills as needed.

Then determine what instructional setting you will use. See below for suggestions for a variety of instructional settings:

Whole-Class or Small-Group Instruction	Independent Practice or Centers	Homework
Read and discuss the Skill Focus. Write the name of the skill on the board.	Create a folder for each student. Include a copy of the selected skill practice page and passage.	Give each student a copy of the selected skill practice page and passage.
Read and discuss responses to each question. Read the text when directed (as a group, in pairs, or individually).	Have students complete the skill practice page. Remind them to begin by reading the Skill Focus and to read the passage when directed.	Have students complete the skill practice page. Remind them to begin by reading the Skill Focus and to read the passage when directed.
Read and discuss the Critical Thinking question. Allow time for discussion before having students write their responses.	Collect the skill practice pages and check students' answers. Or, provide each student with a copy of the answer key (pages 138–149).	Collect the skill practice pages and check students' answers. Or, provide each student with a copy of the answer key (pages 138–149).

Details

Skill Focus



As you read, ask yourself, “What is this text about?” That is the main idea. Then you can find the details that support the main idea.

1. Read the story. What is the main idea? Write it in the top bar below.

Main Idea
Detail
Detail
Detail
Detail
Detail

2. Details tell more about the main idea. Write five important details in the chart above.

Critical Thinking



Do you think it is easier to find the main idea and details in a fictional story or a nonfiction text? Explain.

The Light at the End of the Tunnel

“Which way should we turn now?” asked Mario. His soft voice sounded like a shout in the still silence of the cave. It startled Leah. She stopped and looked down at her map. “We need to keep going west,” she replied. “It shouldn’t be much further now.”

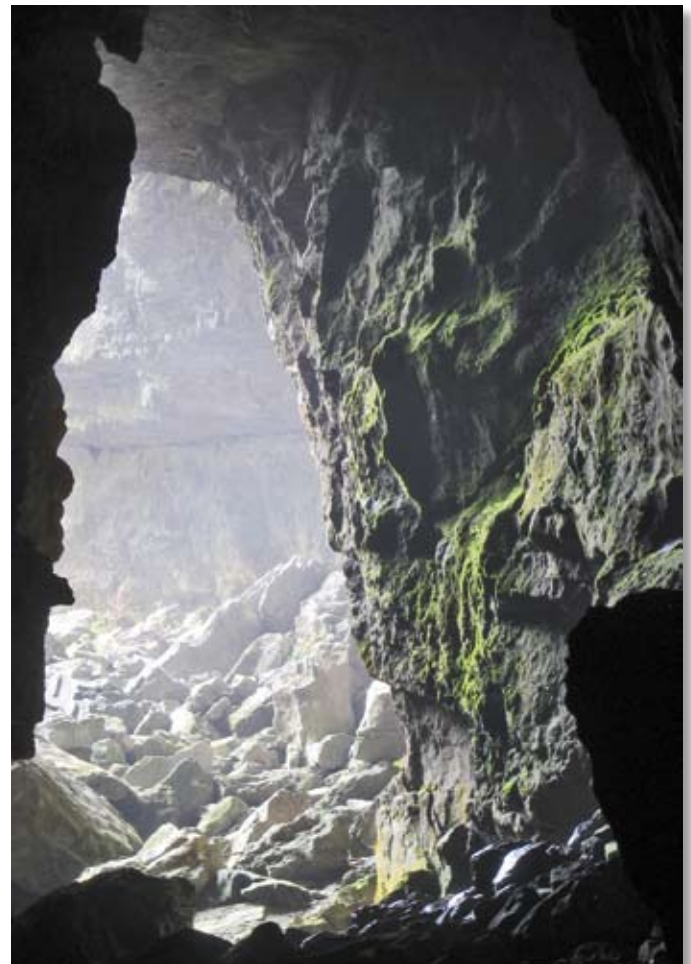
The ceiling had gotten lower, and the two tired spelunkers were now forced to crawl along the cold, clammy floor.

“I don’t know how you talked me into this adventure,” Mario moaned. He was dirty, hungry, and cranky. With some effort, he struggled to squeeze his large frame through the most narrow part of the tunnel’s opening. Then he looked up and gasped. Leah was standing in front of him and had switched off her lantern. Mario did the same.

The entire chamber was bathed in a soft, silver glow. In the very center of the cavern was a chimney-like opening that allowed light from the full moon and star-clustered sky to filter in. That was not the only source of illumination. Embedded in the walls were small, luminous crystals. It looked as if someone had attached diamonds to a set of outdoor lights and strung them throughout the cave. Columns of colorful rock reached from the floor to the ceiling. It no longer seemed like a cave. It looked like a magical fairyland.

Mario suddenly remembered to close his gaping mouth. Leah’s smile beamed up at him. “So, do you think it was worth it?” she whispered.

“I can’t think of anything in my life that has ever been more worth the trouble!” Mario cried in amazement. The two friends sat quietly in the beautiful cave for a long time. Then, without a word, the pair turned and started the long, hard journey back home.



Proposition and Support

Skill Focus



A proposition is a writer's opinion. The writer wants the reader to agree. So the writer gives support (reasons and information) to get the reader to share the same opinion.

1. Read the title. What do you think the writer's proposition will be?

2. Read the text. Why was the traditional school year calendar developed?

3. Write at least three details that support the writer's proposition.

Critical Thinking



State an argument against year-round school.

Let's Have Year-Round School

Summer vacation from school is too long. Students have to review everything in the fall when they come back to school. They have to re-adjust to the school schedule.

The traditional school year calendar was created when many people lived on farms. Students had the summer off so they could help with the harvesting. Today, most people do not live on farms. They do not need the whole summer off.

I propose that there should be more year-round schools. In this model, school vacations happen throughout the year. Students are still in school for the same amount of time. The vacation schedule is just spread out throughout the year. Instead of two months off in the summer, there may only be one month off. Students could still go to summer camp and have a summer vacation. Students and teachers would feel less burned out during the school year because their vacations would be spread out.



The research is mixed about whether year-round schools improve student achievement. Some studies show improvement whereas others do not. Despite this, I still think the year-round school is a better model. I think it can help with the problem of the long summer vacation.