



Simple Strategies to Boost Your Second Grader's Reading Comprehension

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Second grade is a critical year for young readers; by the end of first grade, reading acquisition is well underway, and students must make the transition from learning to read to reading to learn. In other words, children must be fluent enough to move beyond merely decoding words so they may read and learn information across all subject areas.



Unfortunately, this is where many learners begin to struggle, as they may still face challenges with the basics, such as vocabulary or phonics. If kids are expected to read to learn in other subjects, but they are still struggling with decoding words to even figure out what they mean, frustration is sure to follow.

So, what can parents and teachers do to boost their second graders' comprehension skills? Focus on the following specific strategies to build and foster strong reading comprehension throughout grade two.

Strategies to Improve Reading Comprehension

1. Read to children daily. Eventually, ask them to read to you.

According to a [recent survey](#) out of the UK, fewer parents are reading to their kids. However, it is widely known and accepted that reading aloud has many benefits, such as improving vocabulary, modeling fluency, and widening their understanding of the world around them.

One of the most important and easiest steps adults can take is to read aloud daily. All it takes is 15 to 20 minutes a day, whether it is in the classroom or at home. The texts do not have to be entire books, either! For example, this [worksheet](#) offers a short text, and it even includes a comprehension question to assess a child's understanding.



Homework Blues

Read the story about Sal and Cal. Check the box that shows how each character feels about homework.

Sal and Cal are twins. They are both in third grade. On the bus ride home, they are chatting about homework...

"I cannot wait to get home and ride our new bikes," Sal said.

"I know, me either, but we will have to get our homework done first, you know the rules," Cal reminded him. Sal and Cal's mom had a rule at their house, finish all homework before playing. The boys had gotten new bikes for their birthday and it was finally nice enough outside for them to ride them around the neighborhood.

"Why do we always have so much homework? I really wish that we didn't have it at all!" Sal complained.

"I know, but we have to practice our spelling words if we want to do well on the test on Friday. It is better to just get it done," Cal explained.

1. How does Sal feel about homework?

He loves it. ☐ He does not like it. ☐

2. How does Cal feel about homework?

He does not like it. ☐ He feels like it is important. ☐

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Beyond reading to kids, it's also important that they have a chance to demonstrate and practice their own skills. Mix up your daily read alouds by taking turns reading, tasking learners with reading to you!

2. Build vocabulary before, during, and after reading.

It only stands to reason that what a child reads won't make sense to them if they do not understand the words on the page. Another crucial step to building reading comprehension is by supporting ample vocabulary acquisition.

To do this, talk about new words at each step of the reading process, which includes previewing new words before reading, stopping to talk about them in context while reading, and then reviewing them afterwards. Reread favorite stories or books to help new words “stick”. In addition, discuss how some new words may be similar or different to words they already know.

Finally, use a [lesson like this one](#) to help readers understand that words have different shades of meaning. For each of the activities, discuss how words can have similar meanings, but some are more specific or better suited for what the author means to say. Then, ask learners to complete the worksheet and quiz to demonstrate their understanding.

Estimated classroom
time: 7 min

Chapter: Word
Relationships and
Nuances

Unit: Vocabulary

Click on any activity below to start learning.

1st

🕒 3:00 min



Free Printable Synonym
Worksheet

Worksheet

2nd

🕒 4:00 min



Shades of Meaning

Quiz

3. Strengthen knowledge and understanding of story structure.

Most stories have a predictable structure; when students understand the most common patterns in literature, they are more easily able to keep track of the details and start working towards critical thinking. When it comes to story structure, they must understand the basics of plot, which usually involves a beginning, middle, and end.

But before they learn to complete plot maps, second graders focus on the sequence of events in a story, which helps them to keep track of the details. This [lesson](#) provides a text for kids to read, while offering story sequencing practice.

Estimated classroom time: 6 min

Chapter: Review Across Genres

Unit: Reading Literature

Click on any activity below to start learning.


1st ⌚ 3:00 min

2nd ⌚ 3:00 min

Jack and the Beanstalk

Read the story.

Once upon a time, there was a boy named Jack. Jack's mom asked him to sell their cow. The boy met a man on the road and traded the cow for a handful of magic beans. Jack's mom was mad. She needed money not beans. She threw them out the window and went to bed. In the morning, they



Jack and Beanstalk Worksheet



Worksheet

Sequence: Jack and the Beanstalk

Check the picture if it matches the sentence.

1 Jack traded the horse for a handful of magic beans.

2 Mom threw the beans out the window.



Sequence: Jack and The Beanstalk Worksheet

Worksheet

4. Ask who, what, when, where, why, and how while reading.

It's important to encourage kids to monitor their own reading by asking questions to remember key details. Foster active reading by starting with the 5 W's: who, what, when, where, and why. For longer texts, take frequent breaks by asking questions to assess comprehension. Add in the "how" for an extra challenge or for older learners.

The 5 W's work for shorter texts, too! [This lesson](#) offers brief passages that your second grader can read aloud, with questions at the end that monitor your child's ability to understand key moments in the story.

Estimated classroom time: 6 min


Chapter: Literature

Unit: Comprehension

Click on any activity below to start learning.

1st ⌚ 3:00 min ▶


2nd ⌚ 3:00 min



Soccer Star
Read the story. Then read the questions and check the correct answers.

Martha loved to play soccer. She practiced every chance she could. She took her soccer ball everywhere. She took it on the bus, she took it to school, she

Soccer Star Worksheet
Worksheet



Special DAY
Read the story. Then read the questions and check the correct answers.

Spencer could not wait for his birthday party. On the day of his party he got up extra early.

Special Day Worksheet
Worksheet

5. Have kids retell the story to you in their own words, including the details.

One of the most effective strategies to aid in learning is by asking students to recall stories, events, or information on their own and in their own words. This helps them to internalize learned material while revealing what they have learned or understood.

Use [this worksheet](#) to begin the transition to reading to learn. Children will read the passage aloud and when finished, ask them to tell you what it was about, recalling details from the excerpt. After doing so, the questions on the page should be much easier to answer!



THE MONTGOMERY BUS BOYCOTT: CAUSE AND EFFECT

A **CAUSE-EFFECT RELATIONSHIP** is when one event causes another event to happen.

Read the Montgomery Bus Boycott facts below.

The Montgomery Bus Boycott began when a woman named Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat on a bus in Montgomery, Alabama in 1955.

The bus driver ordered her to give up her seat to a white passenger. When she disobeyed, she was arrested and sent to jail.

Her friends heard about Rosa's arrest and organized a boycott of city buses. People who supported Rosa decided to walk to work and school instead of taking the bus.

The Montgomery Bus Boycott sparked by Rosa Parks helped end segregation on buses.



WHAT WAS THE EFFECT FOR THE MONTGOMERY BUS BOYCOTT?

Check the correct box.

☐

People had to buy cars to get to work.

☐

Bus tickets were free.

☐

Segregation on buses ended.



6. Connect reading to real life.

Lastly, it's important to connect what kids are reading to things they can relate to in real life. This helps to set a purpose for reading, proving why reading is essential to their everyday lives.

While [this worksheet](#) only features a few words, it helps to cement the idea of reading to learn across different subject areas. The visuals also show how understanding subject-specific vocabulary applies to their own lives as people perform these actions daily.

FORCES Push, pull, and gravity are all types of force. 

Read the words and circle the correct picture.

push



pull



gravity



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Second grade is a critical year for students; not only do they gain fluency, but they make a shift from actively learning to read to reading to learn across the curriculum. To be successful beyond grade two, they must make this transition. Try the strategies above to boost your child's reading comprehension. Find the worksheets and lessons inside our free [Interactive Classroom interface](#) for guiding children's learning in class and at home!