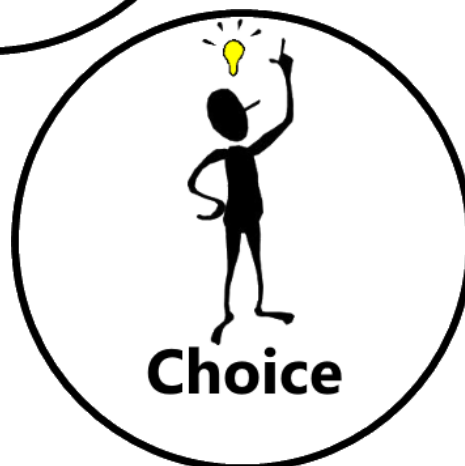
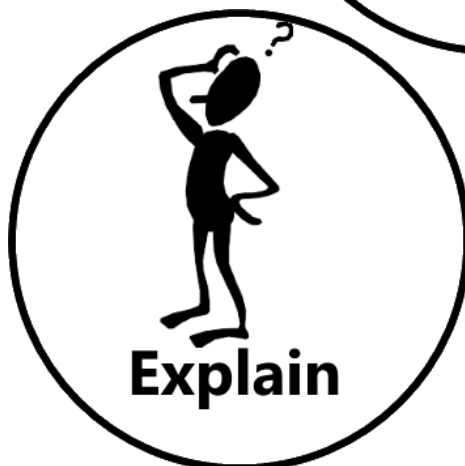
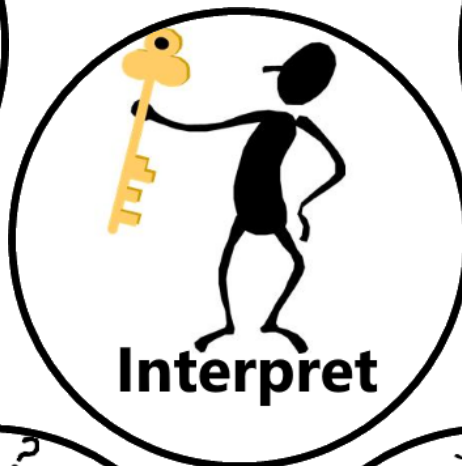
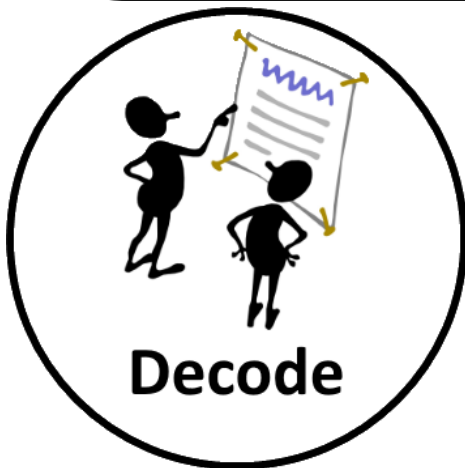
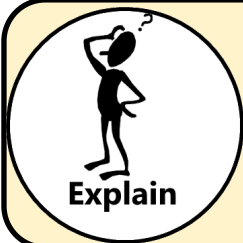


# Moving Beyond Comprehension Sheets

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## EXPLAIN ACTIVITIES

### *Reading Activities to develop children's understanding of vocabulary and understanding of whole texts*

#### 1. Vocabulary Ranking

In this activity, children are given a selection of related words. These words could link to characters/ scenes in books or genres they have been reading. The children have to decide on a suitable order for these words and justify their decisions.

##### Example:

When reading about Miss Trunchbull in Matilda, the children were given the following words which could relate to the character:

unkind

mean

malevolent

vindictive

nasty

Children then have to rank these words based on the strength of the emotion the word evokes. An order for these words might be as follows:

unkind

mean

nasty

malevolent

vindictive


#### 2. Word Diagrams

Using the diagram below, children have to investigate a word. They are asked to write a definition of the word; write synonyms and antonyms; write the word in a sentence and write a definition of the word. The words chosen could be unfamiliar words from the class text they are studying.

Definition of the word:	Synonyms and antonyms of the word:
The word is:	
The word in a sentence:	A picture of the word:

### 3. Preteaching Vocabulary

Having a quick session pre-teaching tricky vocabulary that is coming up in a chapter greatly aids children's understanding of the content. This can be done through a quick dictionary session or through a matching activity like the one below. It is also useful if these definitions are displayed in the classroom for use by the children.

L1

The tricky words appear in Chapter 2. Can you match each word to its definition?

revenge	pulled out with force	
wrenched		showing hate
pitted	an indent	
hank		getting your own back
scorn	a length of hair/rope/wool	

### 4. Analysing Vocabulary Choice

In this activity, the children focus on a section of the text. A character description or setting description work really well. The teacher then highlights key words in the section and challenges children to substitute these words with synonyms.

#### *Taken from Matilda by Roald Dahl*

She was above all a most **formidable** **female**. She had once been a famous athlete, and even now the muscles were still clearly in evidence. You could see them in the bull-neck, in the **big** shoulders, in the thick arms, in the sinewy wrists and in the **powerful** legs. Looking at her, you got the feeling that this was someone who could bend iron bars and **tear** telephone directories in half. Her face, I'm afraid, was neither a thing of beauty nor a joy for ever. She had an obstinate chin, a **cruel** mouth and small arrogant eyes. As for her clothes...they were, to say the least, extremely **odd**. She always had on a brown cotton smock which was pinched around the waist and a wide leather belt. The belt was fastened at the front with an enormous silver buckle. The **massive** thighs which **emerged** out of the smock were **encased** in a pair of extraordinary **breeches**, **bottle green** in colour and made of **coarse** twill.

## 5. Summarising the Text

Challenge children to summarise the main events of the chapter or book in five bullet points. Get the children to see if their ideas agree with what the rest of the group think and then discuss.

## 6. Explaining specific word choice

Getting children to explain what the specific choice of adverb, adverbial phrase or adjective tells us about a character helps them to develop their understanding of the vocabulary the author has chosen.

### Example:

An activity based on The Demon Headmaster by Gillian Cross

### Selecting adverbs

Look at these sentences taken from Chapter 14. For each of the sentences, copy out the adverb (or adverbial phrase) that describes the action, and then write an explanation of what it tells us about the character. Your explanation should not use the same root word as the adverb.

The example has been done for you.

- a. Then the headmaster said, very quietly, "Put the fuses back."

*Quietly – this adverb shows that the headteacher is feeling calm and in control of the situation, because he does not panic or raise his voice.*



## RETRIEVE ACTIVITIES

*Reading Activities to develop children's ability to retrieve information from the text*

### 1. Ordering Sections

Give the children key events from a whole story or chapter. Get them to use their retrieval skills to put them into the order they occur in the text.

#### Example

This example uses the beginning of Chapter One: The Dolls from The Daydreamer by Ian McEwan. Children cut up these key events and arrange them into the correct order once they have found the evidence in the text.

The Bad Doll started to climb up the bed.

He went into Kate's room.

Peter gave a gasp because the Bad Doll was hobbling across the room.

All the other dolls start to move across the carpet.

Peter thought he heard a rustling and thought he saw something move.

Peter felt sick and bored

The dolls on the shelf start muttering things like, "He's doing it."

The Bad Doll waves to the crowd.

### 2. Drawing Characters and Scenes

Give the children a character description or scene setting from the text and get them to use their retrieval skills to draw what it should look like. Challenge children to annotate their drawings with quotes from the text.

In the 2016 Reading Paper, children had to use their retrieval skills to select which was the correctly drawn statue. Teachers or children could create their own multiple choice questions based on text descriptions.

Which of these drawings best represents the monument?

Tick one.

☐

☐

☐

☐

Umbrella

Horns

curly hair

Pointed Beard

Brown paper parcels

Goat Shaped Legs

hidden fake tail

Thank you, Miss Wilson

I love you Mr Turnus!

Great retrieval!

He was only a little taller than Lucy herself and he carried over his head an umbrella, white with snow. From the waist upwards he was like a man, but his legs were shaped like a goat's (the hair on them was glossy black) and instead of feet he had goat's hoofs. He also had a tail, but Lucy did not notice this at first because it was neatly caught up over the arm that held the umbrella so as to keep it from trailing in the snow. He had a red woollen muffler round his neck, and his skin was rather reddish too. He had a strange, but pleasant little face, with a short pointed beard and curly hair, and out of the hair there stuck two horns, one on each side of his forehead. One of his hands, as I have said, held the umbrella; in the other arm he carried several brown paper parcels. What with the parcels and the snow it looked as if he has been doing his Christmas shopping.

### 3. True or False or Multiple Choice answers

Phrasing retrieval questions as true or false or as multiple choice questions provides children with a speedy way of practising retrieval skills. Encourage the children to highlight where they got their evidence from to support their answer.

Mr Tumnus was wearing a purple scarf	
TRUE	FALSE
Mr Tumnus carried an umbrella under his arm	
TRUE	FALSE

What was Lucy given as a gift from Aslan?	
A.	A potion to heal the sick and wounded
B.	A shield
C.	A bow and arrow
D.	A sword


### 4. Hot-seating Characters

Children are given a chapter to read and prepare factual interview questions for one of the characters in the story, e.g. What time did you catch the bus? A child is then interviewed in the role of this character. They may only answer using their knowledge of the facts from the chapter.

NB: This could also be done as an interpret activity too, with children using supporting evidence from the text in their answers, e.g. *How did you feel when you first saw Doctor Kalmenius?*

### 5. Retrieval from Songs

Songs, especially songs which tell a story, are great vehicles for children practising their retrieval skills. The children have a copy of the lyrics in front of them and highlight the evidence to answer retrieval questions. Songs from musicals are great for this!

<u>Under the Sea from The Little Mermaid</u>		Lower KS2
	According to Sebastian, where is the seaweed greener?	
	Can you find the word in the song that rhymes with fate?	
	Why are the fish on the land not happy?	
	What instrument does the newt play?	

## 6. Developing Skimming and Scanning Techniques

Getting children to practise their skimming and scanning techniques by setting them mini challenges helps them to develop their retrieval skills.

In chapter one, please highlight:

1. The names of three different characters
2. Something someone said
3. Three words beginning with B

It is important to make it explicit to the children that to find a month of the year or a name involves looking for a capital letter at the beginning of a word. Looking for something that somebody has said means scanning for inverted commas.

## 7. Writing using Retrieval

Get children to produce a short piece of writing using their retrieval skills such as a diary entry from a character's point of view detailing the events of the last chapter. Before they begin to write, get them to read back through the chapter and highlight some key events that they wish to include.

### Example:

Writing instructions for how to catch a dragon based on the text from How to Train Your Dragon.  
*Lower ability pupils have to find the correct word from the text to fit the instructions.*

### Instructions for catching your Dragon

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_ quietly through the \_\_\_\_\_.
- 2) Next steal one \_\_\_\_\_ dragon.
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_ the dragon \_\_\_\_\_ from the rock.
- 4) After place the dragon in your \_\_\_\_\_.
- 5) Spend time \_\_\_\_\_ your dragon, it is \_\_\_\_\_ to get the correct size.
- 6) Choose the \_\_\_\_\_ creature that will fit into your \_\_\_\_\_.





## INTERPRET ACTIVITIES

*Reading Activities to develop children's ability to interpret information from the text*

### 1. Highlighting Evidence to Show a Character Trait

Give the children a list of colour-coded character traits pertaining to one of the main characters in the story. Get them to read through a chapter/extract from the text, highlighting evidence for that character trait in the relevant colour.

Highlight a phrase that makes Miss Trunchbull seem:

RUDE  
A BULLY  
SCARY  
STRONG  
MAD  
HUGE

### 2. Show not Tell reading

During this activities, the children/teacher chooses a character from the book to analyse. Firstly, the children find "show quotes" in the text which describe the character's physical appearance and their behaviour. They also find incidences of the character's speech and author's narration of the character. They then explain what this "tells" them about the character.

	Quotation (Evidence)	Explanation
Physical description		
Action / behaviour		
Speech / dialogue		
Narration		

## Chapter Five

We can find information about key characters from several elements of the text. We will use these headings to draw up a character profile for some of the main characters in the text.



Your task is to work as a group to find an example of each of these, and explain it, for X-ray, Armpit or Mr. Pendanski.



### 3. Thinking Deeper Questions

For these questions the children have to think a little deeper about their reading and there is often no right or wrong answer. The children have to use their inference skills to form their own judgement.

#### Example 1: The Highwayman by Alfred Noyes

##### **Who is responsible for the Highwayman's death?**

Here the children will have to rank the main characters in the poem from most responsible to least responsible, justifying their decisions using evidence from the text. However, there is lots of evidence to consider:

- The Highwayman was shot by the King George's men
- The Highwayman was committing crimes which were punishable by death
- We think Tim the Ostler may have informed King George's men of the Highwayman's whereabouts
- The Highwayman wouldn't have been travelling back to the inn if it wasn't for Bess.

#### Example 2

##### **Peter, Edmund, Susan and Lucy should have returned to their world via the wardrobe as soon as they found out about Mr Tumnus being taken by the White Witch**

Here children are asked to explain why they agree, disagree or why they are unsure making references to events in the text.

### 4. Predicting Events in the Story

Getting children to predict what they think will happen next in the story, justifying their views using evidence from the text is an excellent way to develop inference skills.

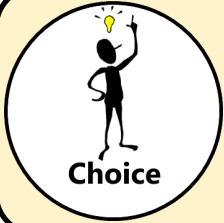
### 5. Charting the change of characters across a chapter or a book

During this activity, the children are asked to explain how the reader's views changes towards a character over the course of a chapter or story, and to explain this change in viewpoint using evidence to support this.

#### Example: Charlotte's Web, Chapter 5.

Children read Chapter 5 and discussed with their teacher how their feelings towards Charlotte changed over the course of the chapter. They then came up with three main headings for the beginning, middle and end of the chapter which were: Like Charlotte, changing to fear of Charlotte, changing to understanding Charlotte. They then highlighted words and phrases to support these headings and created sentences:

*At the end of Chapter 4, I really liked Charlotte because she said things like, "I'll be a friend to you Wilbur." In the middle of Chapter 5, I changed my mind because it becomes clear that Charlotte is quite a bloody-thirsty character. She describes how she eats flies and says things like "I drink their blood. I love blood." At the end of Chapter 5, I began to understand that this is just Charlotte's nature as a spider as she says things like, "I am not entirely happy about my diet of flies and bugs but it is the way I am made."*



## **CHOICE ACTIVITIES**

### ***Reading Activities to develop children's ability to discuss author choice***

#### **1. Investigating author word choice**

Give the children an extract of text and give them a mood word, e.g. tension, fear, suspense, excitement. Get them to highlight words and phrases in the text which help to create this mood.



**What words does Chris Van Allsburg create fear in his writing?**

"Peter," she whispered, "turn around very, very slowly."

The boy turned in his chair. He couldn't believe his eyes. Lying on the piano was a lion, staring at Peter and licking his lips.

The lion roared so loud it knocked Peter right off his chair. The big cat jumped to the floor. Peter was up on his feet running through the house with a lion a whisker's length behind. He ran upstairs and dived under a bed. The lion tried to squeeze under, but got his head stuck. Peter scrambled out, ran from the bedroom, and slammed the door behind him. He stood in the hall with Judy gasping for breath.

"I don't think," said Peter in between gasps of air, "that I want...to play...this game...anymore."

"But we have to," said Judy as she helped Peter back downstairs. "I'm sure that's what the instructions mean. That lion won't go away until one of us wins the game."

#### **2. Annotate the text from a success criteria**

Children investigate a piece of writing and discuss how the author has adapted it to suit the purpose, e.g. How has the author persuaded people to give money to charity in this piece?

The teacher and students create a success criteria for this purpose of writing and colour code it. The children are then given a copy, highlighting in the appropriate colour when they find an example of the success criteria.

Highlight an example of:

**A rhetorical question**

**Alliteration**

**Positive adjectives**

**Facts and statistics**

**The views of others**

### 3. Using Film to Support Choice Work

Film is great for introducing children to the fact that authors and directors make conscious decisions to impact on the reader/viewer. This is something that often takes children by surprise. Looking at short films and discussing choice of music and colour to reflect mood opens children's eyes to authorial intent and better prepares them for finding it in the text.

#### Example

**How does the director use colour to reflect the mood in the film?**

*Using the Gatoraid advert, The Boy who Learned to Fly*

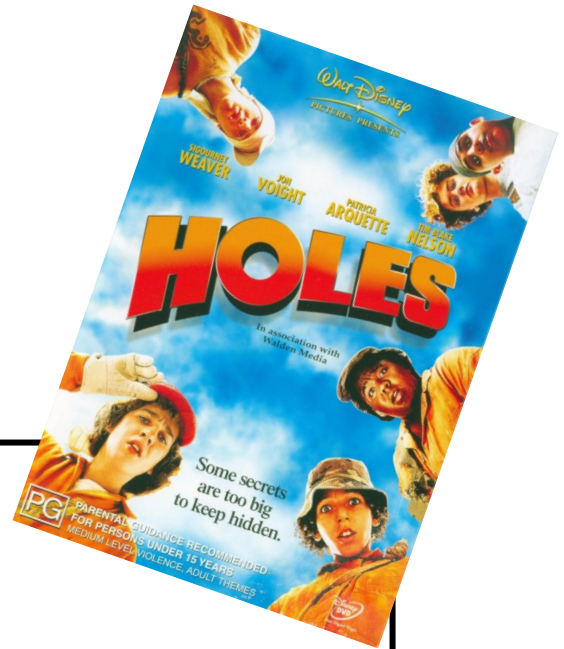


### 3. Using Film to Support Choice Work

Film can also be used to encourage children to investigate how an author uses conscious vocabulary and sentence structure choice. By looking at a scene from a film and comparing it to the extract from the text, the children can identify words and phrases the author uses to successfully create this image in our heads.

#### Example:

Chapter 1 of Holes by Louis Sachar



## 1

There is no lake at Camp Green Lake. There once was a very large lake here, the largest lake in Texas. That was over a hundred years ago. Now it is just a dry, flat wasteland.

There used to be a town of Green Lake as well. The town shriveled and dried up along with the lake, and the people who lived there.

During the summer the daytime temperature hovers around ninety-five degrees in the shade—if you can find any shade. There's not much shade in a big dry lake.

The only trees are two old oaks on the eastern edge of the "lake." A hammock is stretched between the two trees, and a log cabin stands behind that.

The campers are forbidden to lie in the hammock. It belongs to the Warden. The Warden owns the shade.

Out on the lake, rattlesnakes and scorpions find shade under rocks and in the holes dug by the campers.

Here's a good rule to remember about rattlesnakes and scorpions: If you don't bother them, they won't bother you.

Usually.

Being bitten by a scorpion or even a rattlesnake is not the worst thing that can happen to you. You won't die.

Usually.

Sometimes a camper will try to be bitten by a scorpion, or even a small rattlesnake. Then he will get to spend a day or two recovering in his tent, instead of having to dig a hole out on the lake.

But you don't want to be bitten by a yellow-spotted lizard. That's the worst thing that can happen to you. You will die a slow and painful death.

Always.

If you get bitten by a yellow-spotted lizard, you might as well go into the shade of the oak trees and lie in the hammock.

There is nothing anyone can do to you anymore.