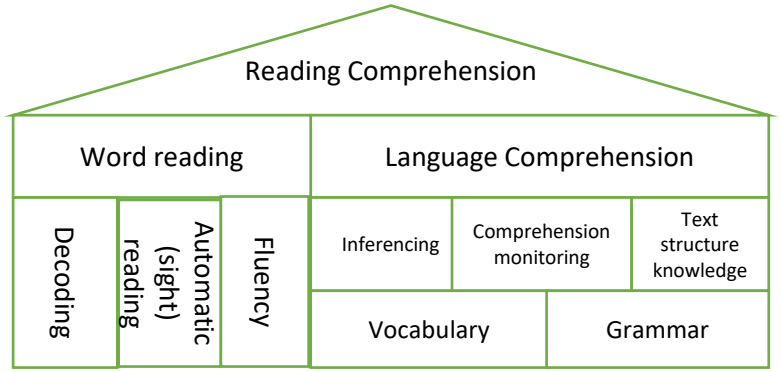
Alexandra Primary School
Aspire, Perform, Succeed

# Comprehension in Early Years

The primary processes of **reading comprehension** are:
- Decoding printed text.
- Understanding language accessed through the process of decoding.

**Language skills** play a substantial role in the achievement of reading comprehension.




**We develop <u>Language Skills</u> through:**

- Shared book readings
- Reading for pleasure
- Promoting the sharing of stories at home
- Teaching key vocabulary
- Quality interactions
- Neli
- WellComm Screening
- Contingent talk
- Quality first teaching
- Language rich environment
- 1:1 reading sessions
- Speech and Language Intervention
- Colourful Semantics
- Assessment and monitoring

**Comprehension** – The ability to understand something.

**Inference** – the process of arriving at a certain conclusion using reasoning or evidence.

In **Early Years** it is important to develop the skills needed prior to reading comprehension. These skills are focused around **listening comprehension.** This includes – following a set of instructions, understanding spoken narratives, animations and recalling accounts of everyday activities.

**Inferencing:** The initial skills that are developed are – listening skills, recalling of basic facts, and recalling of basic concepts presented in a text or picture. For example, by asking "where did the boy find his teddy bear?" or "what is the girl wearing?". Colourful Semantics also supports this process through sentence structure development and an understanding of where, what and when questions.

After this, the next step is to develop children's integrative processing of text. This takes place during quality inferential discussions as well as inferentially-oriented questioning. For example, discussions take place about how a character might be feeling or actions that are not explicitly stated in the text. E.g. "How do you think he felt when he could not find his teddy." or "Where do you think the boy should next?" These questions require children to use their background knowledge and inference skills to provide an accurate response. Discussions to promote inference skills take place through shared reading, 1:1 reading and through many other aspects of our Early Years provision.

We promote communication and language, listening and attention, recall and memory activities to support children's comprehension development.

**Text structure:** Through daily stories and the design of our curriculum, children build their knowledge of story structures and narrative. Through a set of core books children develop their ability to recall a sequence of events. Children use their knowledge of these predictable components to make their own predictions about what might happen next. Information texts are also used.

**Instructional techniques:** Visual representations are used to provide support. For example, story maps, flow charts, and sequencing pictures. Opportunities are maximized to provide children with as many engaging book experiences as possible.

**Reading comprehension:** Reading comprehension is modelled and drawn upon during **shared reading** sessions with the whole class using all of the above strategies.
**1:1 reading** sessions focus on decoding, comprehension and fluency. Each aspect is assessed and focused on at the appropriate point during each child's reading journey. Comprehension questions are only asked at the end of a sentence/page so that the focus remains on decoding and building fluency. More in-depth comprehension assessments are carried out regularly.