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# Introduction

The importance of reading for meaning should never be underestimated. Whilst many young children might be able to decode quite complex texts, it is vital that they understand what they read. More importantly, it is fundamental that they enjoy what they are reading.

Over my 15 years of experience, I have used a number of comprehension books as part of my English teaching. Very few of them have engaged the children who are being asked to read and understand them. I decided that if we are asking children to read, understand and answer questions from a passage, that passage should at least engage their attention, and indeed their teacher's attention as well.

The passages in the **Brilliant Activities for Reading Comprehension Series** are designed to give children valuable reading practice through varied, enjoyable texts. The passages begin in the **Year 1** book with simple picture comprehension. They gradually increase in difficulty as you progress through the book, and through the series, encouraging pupils to use a range of strategies for decoding the text and to develop their ability to read for meaning. The passages are entirely fictional and it is hoped that both pupils and teachers will find them humorous.

Teachers should read the texts with the children and discuss them thoroughly before allowing them to proceed to the activities. If you are using the e-book version, you can display the pages on the interactive white board.

In the **Year 2** book there are first a series of Questions that require factual recall. Encourage children to respond in full sentences. The Word work sections will help to develop and stretch their vocabulary. The Extension work sections require more open-ended answers enabling the pupils to provide a more personal response. Although some space has been provided on the sheets, you may wish to ask them to write the answers in their workbooks. Answers are provided on pages 113–121. On pages 7–16 there are some suggestions for ways in which the passages can be linked to writing, speaking and other literacy activities, as well as to other areas of the curriculum. These activities are ideal for children who finish their work early.

The **Brilliant Activities for Reading Comprehension Series** provides the teacher with a basis for ensuring progression. The activities give pupils:

- ◆ the ability to select or retrieve information in order to answer the questions successfully using a full sentence
- ◆ the opportunity to deduce, infer or interpret information, events or ideas from the texts
- ◆ the opportunity to identify and comment on the structure and organisation of the text and comment on the writer's use of language at word and sentence level
- ◆ the chance to comment on cultural, social or historical traditions and the impact the text may have on the reader.

The **Brilliant Activities for Reading Comprehension Series** provides an invaluable resource for assessing pupil progress in reading. The chart on pages 5–6 shows how the activities link to the relevant Programmes of Study in the National Curriculum for England (September 2014).

# Links to the National Curriculum

<b>Pupils should be taught to</b>	
<b>develop pleasure in reading, motivation to read, vocabulary and understanding by:</b>	
listening to, discussing and expressing views about a wide range of contemporary and classic poetry, stories and non-fiction at a level beyond that at which they can read independently	<p>A wide range of different types of fiction and non-fiction writing are covered in the book: stories, postcards, newspaper articles, announcements, adverts, poetry, letters, recipes, wills, witness statements. The passages have been written to engage pupils' attention and these help to promote positive attitudes to reading.</p> <p>Narrate stories; read stories; make up stories in the style of contemporary and classic ones.</p>
discussing the sequence of events in books and how items of information are related	<p>Through reading and analysing the passages in this book, pupils will learn that text is structured in different ways, depending on the purpose of the writing. In addition to using the passages in this book, pupils should be given the opportunity to read a wide variety of books of different types.</p> <p>Put muddled up pictures of a story in the right order. Make storyboards of a story.</p>
becoming increasingly familiar with and retelling a wider range of stories, fairy stories and traditional tales	<p>Through reading the passages they will become aware of how stories and poems may be told. It will give them the chance to compare and contrast the stories and say which they preferred and why. It will help them to identify and empathise with assorted characters.</p> <p>Act out scenarios involving fairy tale characters. Ask the children to find a fairy story they have not heard before and report back to the class.</p>
being introduced to non-fiction books that are structured in different ways	
recognising simple recurring literary language in stories and poetry	Use highlighters to show places where language recurs.
discussing their favourite words and phrases	Make a class dictionary of new words they have discovered. Brainstorm favourite words on pieces of card and display.

continuing to build up a repertoire of poems learnt by heart, appreciating these and reciting some, with appropriate intonation to make the meaning clear	<p>The children will learn that poetry varies and that not all poetry rhymes. They will understand that poetry can entertain and identify key issues that might occur in life. Have a class competition to see if they can all learn a rhyme or verses of a longer one.</p> <p>Class assembly – retell a poem. Have a poetry competition.</p>
<b>understand both the books they can already read accurately and fluently and those they listen to by:</b>	
drawing on what they already know or on background information and vocabulary provided by the teacher	Teachers should read the texts with pupils and discuss them thoroughly before allowing them to proceed to the activities. Ask questions to check children's understanding and explain any words that are unclear. The 'Word work' activities encourage children to think about the meaning of words and to look at how they are used in context.
checking that the text makes sense to them as they read and correcting inaccurate reading	<p>The 'Questions' activities require factual recall and will check pupils' understanding.</p> <p>Give them a text which is muddled up to correct and re-structure. As a whole class, make up funny, muddled sentences and then re-structure correctly.</p>
making inferences on the basis of what is being said and done	Many of the 'Extension work' (EW) activities provide opportunities for drawing inferences from the text.
answering and asking questions	Interview a character and make up questions they would ask him/her.
predicting what might happen on the basis of what has been read so far	Pretend to be soothsayers; look into your crystal ball and say what will happen next.
participate in discussion about books, poems and other works that are read to them and those that they can read for themselves, taking turns and listening to what others say	Write book reviews and comment on the story. Share reviews aloud.
<b>explain and discuss their understanding of books, poems and other material, both those that they listen to and those that they read for themselves.</b>	Make up interviews of children discussing books and film them.

# Pirates



As the ship sailed close to the little island, the pirates could see palm trees and hot, yellow sand.

‘The treasure’s here!’ shouted Cut-throat Kacey, ‘I can see the cross marked out in the sand.’

The pirates threw their spades

into the jolly boat, then rowed like mad towards the island.

Suddenly, a giant octopus shot out of the water in front of them. It looked very angry. The creature’s tentacles picked the boat out of the water and held it up in mid-air. The pirates were terrified.

‘Steal my treasure, would you?’ hissed the octopus. Then it tossed the boat high into the sky. Up the boat went, up, up, up into space.

And that is where the pirates still float, in their not-very-jolly boat.

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## Questions

Answer the following questions with a full sentence:

1. Who was on the ship?
2. What did the pirates hope to find on the island?
3. How did they know where the treasure was buried on the island?
4. Did the pirates land on the island?
5. Who did the octopus think the treasure belonged to?
6. What did the octopus do to the pirates and why?

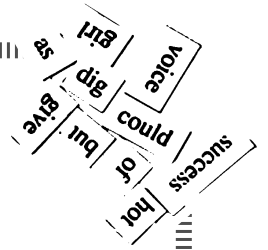
## Word work

Give the meaning of the following words:

*jolly boat*

*tentacles*

*hissed*



## Extension work

1. What would you do if a giant octopus picked you up?
2. Imagine you are one of the pirates circling the earth in your jolly boat. How would you spend your time?
3. If you were one of the pirates, what would you do to get back to Earth?
4. Imagine that the pirates get back to Earth and get hold of the treasure. Make a list of things they find inside the treasure chest.
5. Brainstorm lots of words to describe the octopus. Do the same for the pirates.
6. Imagine you are the octopus. Write a story about how you got the treasure and why you buried it!

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