

Comprehension Continuum

Answers Literal Questions

Answering literal questions shows that learners can skim and scan for answers, pick one out that matches the question, and have short-term recall. Does not demonstrate understanding.



What is...?
Where did...?
Who was...?
How did...?
How many...?

Retells

Retelling shows that learners can organize thoughts sequentially and put them into their own words. Shows short-term recall of events in a narrative and bits of information in nonfiction. Does not, in and of itself, demonstrate understanding.



Tell me what happened...
Tell me what this was about...
Retell what you read...
What comes first, second, third?
When did...?

Merges Thinking with Content

Real understanding takes root when learners merge their thinking with the content by connecting, inferring, questioning, determining importance, synthesizing, and reacting to information. Understanding begins here.



What do you think?
What did you learn?
What does this remind you of?
What do you wonder?
What do you infer?
What is this mostly about?
What makes you say that?
How did you come up with that?
What makes you think that?

Acquires Knowledge

Once learners have merged their thinking with the content, they can begin to acquire knowledge and insight. They can learn, understand, and remember. Shows more robust understanding.



What did you learn that you think is important to remember?
Why does it matter?
What do you think the author most wants you to get out of this?
What evidence can you cite to make your claim?
What do you think are some big ideas here?
What difference does it make?
Say more about that...

Actively Uses Knowledge

With new insights and understandings, learners can actively use knowledge and apply what they have learned to the experiences, situations, and circumstances at hand to expand understanding and even take action.



What do you want to do about this?
Why do you want to take action?
Is there a way you can get involved?
How do you think you can help?
How can you convince others to get involved?
What is your plan?