

# CONCRETE COMPREHENSION

FOR PRIMARY LEARNERS



questioning



MISS DECARBO





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# CONCRETE COMPREHENSION

## THE WHY

Concrete Comprehension™ is an instructional resource series that uses concrete objects and hands-on experiences to help enhance comprehension skills for primary readers. When our students begin their learning with a concrete experience, it makes thinking visible and shows students the connections between text and the real world. The series is designed to engage students in literacy experiences that will promote higher order thinking and allow students to interact with the text in an authentic way. The lessons are set up using the gradual release of responsibility model. While they are scripted for convenience, they can certainly be used as a guide and in whichever way works best for the students. Our hope is that you and your students enjoy launching your comprehension lessons in unique ways that ultimately promote rich discussion and thinking within the classroom.

Tanny McGregor explains it best when she says, "When it comes to meaningful instruction, it is never really about the stuff; it's about *thinking* and *talking* and *learning*. These concrete ideas simply give us a way in to the hearts and minds of our students." (McGregor, 2007)





# WHAT'S INCLUDED?



5 detailed lesson plans



differentiation for every lesson plan



aligned to Common Core standards



explicit and guided hands-on activities



concrete, highly visual experiences



exit slips for formative assessment



differentiated graphic organizers



interactive anchor charts



real photographs with how-to help



tool kit questioning sticks



research explanation and references



suggested book list for questioning

# 5 DETAILED LESSON PLANS

## differentiated & aligned

### LESSON #1

MY VIO: VERY  
IMPORTANT OBJECT:  
PART I

RL.K.1 & RI.K.1  
RI.L.1 & RI.L.1  
RI.2.1 & RI.2.1

NOTE: This is a 2 Part Lesson. I recommend completing each part on a

### LESSON #2

digging DEEP  
into the TEXT

RL.K.1, RI.K.1, RL.K.10, RI.K.10  
RI.L.1 & RI.L.1  
RI.2.1 & RI.2.1

Teaching Point: I can ask questions about things I am curious about.

Materials: Two important personal items, 2 small boxes/baggies, anchor chart piece, Questioning Sheet/printable

Introduction: Invite the students to a "show and tell" time. In If you feel comfortable more to the students, (about your object. And your students' question with lots of questions with prompts such as,

### LESSON #3

QUESTIONING  
REVEALS  
MORE!

RL.K.1, RI.K.1, RL.K.10, RI.K.10  
RI.L.1 & RI.L.1  
RI.2.1 & RI.2.1

Teaching Point: I can ask questions before, during, and after I read.

Materials: puzzle pieces (store bought or cut and laminate the pieces included), one of the informational articles included in this pack (or your own piece of text), Before/During/After anchor chart (optional), recording sheets (optional) \*Optional: This lesson can be completed twice. Two articles have been provided.

Set-Up: Cover up the article, passage, or page you will be using for this lesson's text using the puzzle pieces. (see included example pictures) You can choose to have students record their questions on their individual

both. You could also complete the

Matchbox Diary, by Paul Fleischman. The book is about a his granddaughter. In each matchbox is a memento that diary. The book correlates perfectly to the previous Very

we ask questions about things in our lives, readers ask (anchor chart with the students.) Today, I am going to y, by Paul Fleischman. The first time I read this book, I as curious about. There were even things I didn't out the events in this book.

used about what we are reading, we ask questions to a question, we "dig deeper" into the text and "st few pages. When I am curious or confused, I will tion together, I will take my shovel and dig some sandeper and deeper into my pool, just like our brains dig

at least once on every page, to ask a question you

### LESSON #4

SIP AND SLURP!  
THIN VS. THICK  
QUESTIONS

RL.K.1, RI.K.1, RL.K.10, RI.K.10  
RI.L.1 & RI.L.1  
RI.2.1 & RI.2.1

Teaching Point: I can ask within and beyond the text questions. (Or, I can ask thin

Materials: Fiction read aloud of your choice, cocktail straws, regular or smoothie s filled with water ( Dixie cups work well), Thin and Thick Questioning Cards, anchor cha

\*IMPORTANT: See PREPPING LESSON 4 on the following page prior to c

### LESSON #5

MAGIC 8 BALL  
SHOWDOWN

RL.K.1, RI.K.1, RL.K.10, RI.K.10  
RI.L.1 & RI.L.1  
RI.2.1 & RI.2.1

Teaching Point: I can answer questions by going back into the text and citing evidence to prove my answer.

Materials: Fireflies passage (printable or copy onto an anchor chart), Magic 8 Ball OR use [www.8ball.net](http://www.8ball.net), recording sheet, "Goldfish" passage to project onto a screen (optional), "Goldfish" printable

Introduction: Today, we are going to learn about thin and thick questions. There are 50 many during, and after we read. Thin questions are questions we can find the answer t easier to understand, and can be answered with "yes," "no," or even just a few w question and the answer is not in the text. These are called thick questions. They one word. We have to use our schema, think about the clues the author gave us, some further reading to find the answer. They take more brain power than thin c questions are important to ask, but because thick questions require more thinking questions to help us deeply understand the text. Our discussions will be richer, or the story more when we answer thick questions. Let's take a look at some exam

Explicit Instruction: Review the characteristics of thin vs. thin questions on the anchor chart and/or story to your students. Using the short story sorting cards, read each question l the question first. When it is a thin question, point out that we can find the answe even want to underline it.) When it is a thick question, review how they had to thr answer it. Together, answer the 6 questions and sort them onto the anchor cha don't want to create an anchor chart for this, you can use the worksheet variat

Pass out the 2 paper cups filled with water to every student. (Be sure both cups up will have a thin cocktail straw. The second cup will have a thick smoothie sira will use your read aloud for this section.

Now, we are going to practice asking and answering thin and thick questions. I a thick questions help us think about the text more than thin questions using straw read a book called \_\_\_\_\_. As I read, I will stop to draw a card from Questioning Cards). We will answer the question together and decide if it was a t is a thin question, sip your water that has the thin straw while I quickly count to stop sipping the water. If it is a thick question, sip your water from the thick str when I stop counting, stop sipping the water. At the end of the book, we are g water using the "Thin Question Straw" or the "Thick Question Straw."

Read the book to your students, stopping periodically to choose a card from the about the story. Allow students to answer the question first, and then make a de question is thick or thin. Have students sip their water from their corresponding i sure to count to 3 at the same speed each time.) I suggest allowing the student story, too. This allows them to practice the skill on their own. Because students o of the thick straw, by the end of the book, students should see they drank more i Question Cup."

Closing: Let's take a look at your cups. Which straw let you drink the most water? Students should observe they were able to drink more water using the thicker str We drank more water using the thick straw. This same thing happens when we al questions. Thin questions are important, but they only tell us a tiny bit about the answer thick questions, our brains have to do MUCH MORE thinking. Thick questio facts about the text, they help us think and understand the text!

Differentiation Tips & Tricks: Writing down answers to the questions will help beginning c visually SEE that thin questions can be answered directly, and in very few words. To incre students generate the thin and thin questions entirely on their own for the Guided Practi

Intro: We have been working really hard at asking questions. Now, we are going to practice answering questions. Thoughtful readers do not make a guess when they are asked a question about the text. First, they read carefully. Then, they cite (give) evidence from the text to support and explain their answers. We need to reread the text and find the part or parts that show proof. This is called using "text based evidence."

First, we will play a game! The game is called The Magic 8 Ball Challenge. (Show the Magic 8 Ball to the class.) A Magic 8 Ball is a silly toy that gives you random answers to questions you ask it. A Magic 8 Ball provides answers to questions, but it does NOT use any evidence or proof! It just guesses when it answers a question. On dear! Today, we are going to practice answering questions AND using evidence from the text, so that we can make sure we read and do not guess the answer. In this game, you will be competing against the Magic 8 Ball! Whoever answers the most questions correctly will win! Do you think you can beat the Magic 8 Ball? We will be using a short passage about fireflies for this game. We will pretend that the Magic 8 Ball has already read the passage very quickly. Before I let YOU read the passage, we will ask the Magic 8 Ball five questions about the passage. For each question we ask, we'll shake the ball and record if the Magic 8 Ball said "yes" or "no" to the question.

(You can fill out the recording sheet as a whole class, or provide each child with their own copy.) Read each question, shake the ball, and have the students record Yes or No in the Magic 8 Ball's column.

Now it's time for YOU to read the passage about fireflies. Let's read carefully.

Pass out a copy of the passage to each child, and a recording sheet. You can also choose to do this as a whole class to make it easier. After reading the passage with the students, answer the five questions with them. Our goal is to show students that unlike the Magic 8 Ball, they are carefully using the text to answer the questions correctly. I suggest modeling the first question for the students by going back and underlining the evidence, and then recording your answer. (See the example in the following pages.) At the end of the activity, have the students total up the points for the Magic 8 Ball and for the class. The students will circle the winner. (The students should be the winners because they used evidence to make sure all of their answers were correct. This differs from the Magic 8 Ball, which had a 50/50 chance because it guesses.)

Way to go! You won this game because unlike the Magic 8 Ball, you were thoughtful readers who went back into the text and FOUND your answers. You were able to prove your answers with evidence from the text.

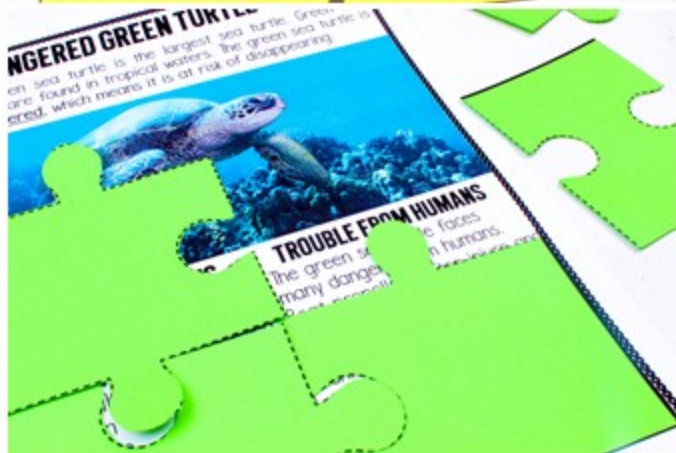
Choose a goldfish passage to read to the class. You can project it onto a screen, copy it onto a chart, or have students follow along on their printable. Students should read the passage independently, with a partner, or as a whole class. Read all three questions carefully. For each question, the students will go back into the text to reread and find evidence that proves their answer. They will underline or highlight the evidence in the text with a crayon/marker so they can SEE the proof and evidence. This is a very simple practice activity for getting students into the habit of going back into the text to reread, find evidence, and use the underlined evidence to write their answer.

When we read, we do not want to be like the Magic 8 Ball, who throws out random answers without any evidence. We want to be thoughtful readers who go back into the text to find evidence that will prove and support our answers. Being able to reread and share evidence from the text with others shows that we are careful readers who understood what we read.

Differentiation Tips & Tricks: For younger and/or struggling readers, having the students underline their evidence in the passage and recording YES or NO on the recording sheet will be enough. For older students or for a challenge, have students write in the correct answer for any "NO" answers on the recording sheet. (See the attached example pages.)



# CONCRETE EXPERIENCES: MAKE COMPREHENSION VISIBLE!





# HANDS-ON LEARNING



# STUDENT FRIENDLY EXIT SLIPS

**EXIT SLIP**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**THIN AND THICK QUESTIONS**

What is the difference between thin and thick questions?

Underline the thin questions. Circle the thick questions.

What is the character's \_\_\_\_\_

Does this story remind anything in your own \_\_\_\_\_

What did the author want you to \_\_\_\_\_ from this book?

**EXIT SLIP**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**WHILE I READ**

Write a question you have about seals:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

live in or near the sea.

**EXIT SLIP**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**I CAN ASK QUESTIONS ABOUT THE TEXT**

What happens when we ask questions about the text?

**EXIT SLIP**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**I CAN USE THE TEXT TO ANSWER A QUESTION**

Read the short story. Then, answer the text evidence question below.

Rowan went to the zoo with his sister, Polly. First, they saw the lions. Then, they ate a snack by the monkeys. Last, they waved to the elephants and went back home.

What did Rowan and his sister do after they saw the lions?

Underline the sentence in the text that proves your answer.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**I CAN ASK**

Why do we ask questions?



# ANCHOR CHARTS, GRAPHIC ORGANIZERS & MORE!

## EXAMPLE PICTURE OF AN ANCHOR CHART FOR LESSON #3

Below is the anchor chart I have created and used through the lesson. I use sticky notes to post this chart. This allows me to re-use the chart over read aloud books and texts. The graphic that I chart has been included in this packet for you.



## EXAMPLE PHOTOGRAPH OF ANCHOR CHART FOR LESSON #3

Laminate the sentence strips and attach them to the chart. Then, use a dry erase marker to create an interactive chart that can be reused again and again!



## EXAMPLE PHOTOGRAPH OF ANCHOR CHART FOR LESSON #4



### Name \_\_\_\_\_ V.I.O. Questioning Sheet

Directions: Write a question you have about the Very Important Object. Remember to ask a question that will help you learn more, understand more, or show an audience.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Directions: Read the passage. Then, answer the three questions below. For each question, go back into the text and reread. Use a crayon to underline your evidence, or "proof," for each of your answers.

1. What are goldfish?

2. Where are goldfish found?

3. What do goldfish like to eat?

**Goldfish**

A goldfish is a fish. Goldfish live in fish tanks and ponds. They came from China. People keep goldfish as pets. They like to eat plants and insects. A goldfish can live for about 30 years.



Read the short story. Cut the questions out at the bottom of this page. Decide if they are thick questions or thin questions. Then, sort and glue them onto the chart.

### Nina's New Friend

Nina sat in the cafeteria by herself. For the third day in a row, she was eating lunch alone. Nina looked around at the other students sitting. Nina didn't know their names. She saw a girl with red hair sit down beside Nina. "Can I sit at lunch with you?" she asked. "Yes," Nina said. "I would like to have a new friend."



### Thick Questions

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Directions: Write a question you have about the Very Important Object. Remember to ask a question that will help you learn more, understand more, or show an audience.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Directions: Draw a picture of your Very Important Object. You can label your picture, and write what your object is. Do not write down why your object is important or give any details about your object.

### V.I.O. Recording Sheet

Directions: Draw a picture of your Very Important Object. You can label your picture, and write what your object is. Do not write down why your object is important or give any details about your object.



### Digging Deeper Recording Sheet

Directions: As you read, write and record questions you have about the text.

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### Thick Questions Sheet

Directions: Write down the thick questions you have about the text.

Why do you think Nina was eating lunch by herself?

Where did the story take place?



# IDEAS FOR USING THIS RESOURCE

**Concrete Comprehension** for Primary Readers can be used in so many different ways! Some teachers may prefer to complete each lesson in one day, while others will split each lesson up into two or three days. I suggest splitting each lesson up for younger learners. The lessons can be used as mini lessons, whole class reading lessons, or conducted in a small group setting.

Every **Concrete Comprehension** for Primary Readers resource will include exit slips that can be used as formative assessments for educators. These exit slips are optional and can be used at the end of the lesson, within a small group, or simply done as a whole class for additional application of the strategy. For kindergarten students, teachers will need to read the direction and text aloud, and have the children complete each part in a step-by-step process.

Graphic organizers are included in every edition of **Concrete Comprehension** for Primary Readers. Scripted activities that use specific organizers will be included with each lesson. The general graphic organizers at the end of the resource can be used for additional lessons, small groups, independent reading, or during whole group read aloud lessons.

Check out the **Differentiation Ideas** section in each lesson plan to learn how to simplify the lesson, and/or how to increase the expectations for more advanced readers and writers.

Due to the nature of **Concrete Comprehension**, some lesson plans require concrete objects. While we certainly recommend bringing these objects into the classroom, we understand that it is sometimes not always possible. In these cases, using the pictures within this pack will help students understand your teaching points. Most objects can be found in your general dollar store!

Last but not least, comprehension is FUN to teach and exciting to learn about! We hope you love all of the lesson plans, ideas, printables, and activities in this resource! If you have any questions, contact me at [missdecarbo@gmail.com](mailto:missdecarbo@gmail.com).