



Literacy and Intervention

Reading Comprehension

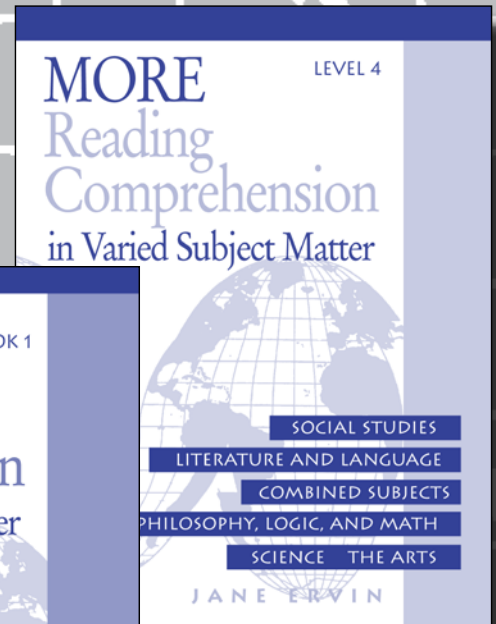
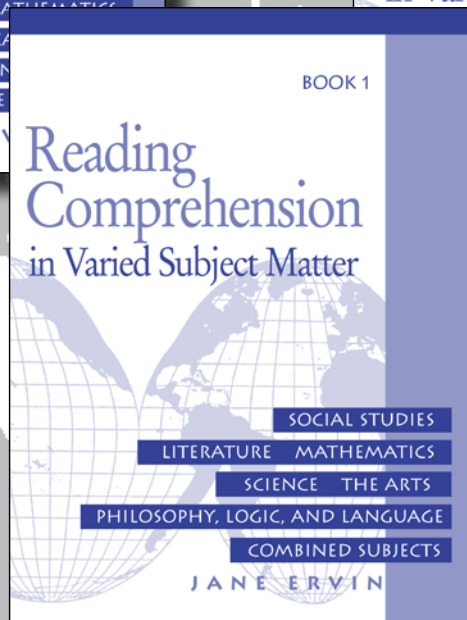
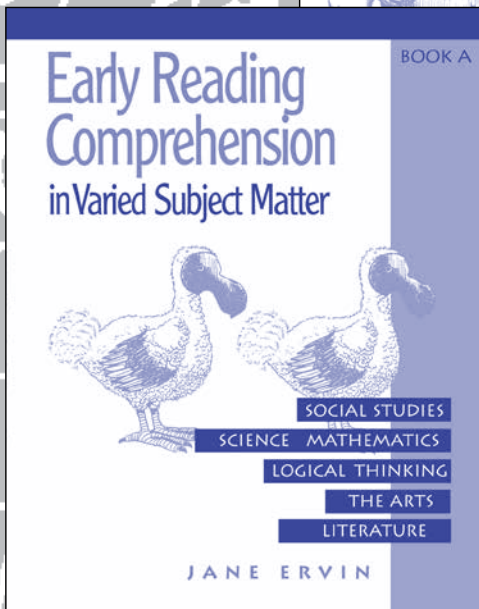
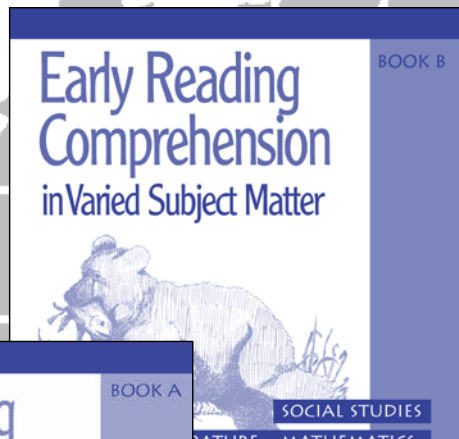
in Varied Subject Matter

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

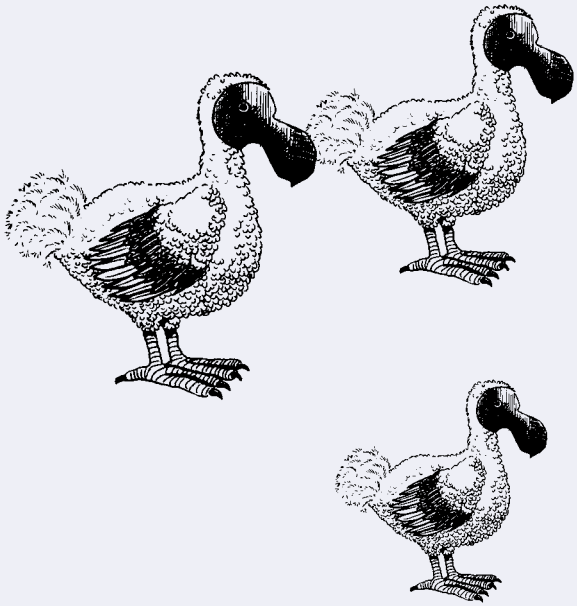
Grades 2–11

Including Passages from **National Geographic Society**

Build literal and inferential comprehension skills with reading selections across the content areas



What is *Reading Comprehension in Varied Subject Matter*?

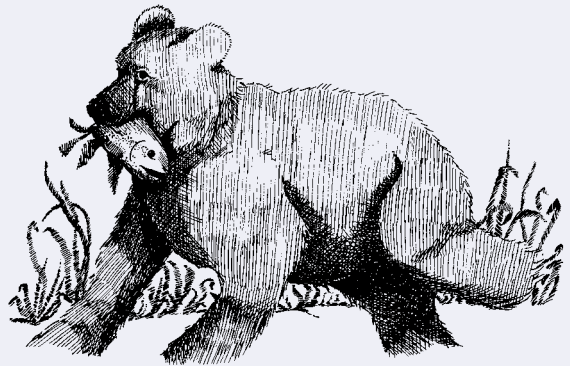


Reading Comprehension spans grades 2–11 and comprises fourteen student books. The series offers nonfiction reading passages with comprehension questions on a variety of subjects.

- Topics and questions prepare students for standardized tests and provide valuable practice in nonfiction reading comprehension.
- Short passages on a variety of topics are followed by varied comprehension exercises including story recall, inferential questions, and writing prompts.
- Reading passages promote thinking and learning across the content areas and include topics in science, social studies, literature, math, and more.

The *Early Reading Comprehension* workbooks (Books A–D) are for young readers, specifically grades 2 through 4. *Reading Comprehension* (Books 1–6) targets grades 3 through 8, and *MORE Reading Comprehension* (Levels 1–4) is designed for junior high and older students.

The entire *Reading Comprehension* series is particularly useful in a classroom that has students of varying reading abilities. The consistent format allows students in the same class to use different levels in the series. Students gain confidence and increase their reading, language, and comprehension skills as they progress through the series.



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Features for You

- Passages include a variety of content area topics, allowing for cross-curricular reading practice.
- Each passage for grades 2–11 is followed by a writing response prompt, similar to those encountered on many standardized tests.
- Vocabulary development exercises are incorporated into each lesson as students identify and define key words from the passages.
- The Reason for Reading prompt preceding each passage sets a purpose for reading.

Benefits for Your Students

- Students maintain interest and increase their knowledge as they read nonfiction passages across the content areas.
- Students learn to think critically and respond to texts in writing as they build language and comprehension skills.
- Students increase their comprehension and understanding and they build essential vocabulary skills in context.
- Students activate prior knowledge and bring what they know to the topic.

Skills Addressed

Early Reading Comprehension (Grades 2–4)

- Story elements
- Literal comprehension questions
- Recalling the main idea and details
- Sequencing
- Matching vocabulary words with meanings
- Responding to reading passages

Reading Comprehension (Grades 3–8)

- Story recall
- Sequencing
- Drawing conclusions
- Vocabulary development
- Main idea
- Extending thoughts in writing
- Inference

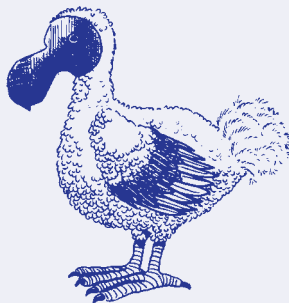
MORE Reading Comprehension (Grades 8–11)

- Story recall
- Sequencing
- Drawing conclusions
- Vocabulary development
- Main idea
- Extending thoughts in writing
- Inference

Types of Exercises

Early Reading Comprehension

- *About the Passage* – introduces the selection to the readers and asks them to determine the main idea
- *Can You Remember?* – asks students to recall literal information from the passage
- *Put the Sentences in the Correct Order* – lists four sentences from the selection and asks students to sequence them in the correct order
- *Match the Words with Their Meanings* – asks students to match vocabulary from the passage with its meaning
- *Write about It* – provides several prompts for students to respond critically to the passage in writing



Reading Comprehension and MORE Reading Comprehension

- *About the Passage* – introduces the selection to the reader and activates prior knowledge
- *Reason for Reading* – explains the reading skill being emphasized in the passage
- *Thinking It Over* – asks two to three broad questions that students must answer with a complete sentence
- *Studying the Passage* – asks both literal and inferential questions in multiple-choice and true/false formats including main idea, interpretation, sequencing, and drawing conclusions
- *Using the Words* – encourages students to use vocabulary from the passage in a paragraph
- *Write about It* - provides several prompts for students to respond critically to the passage in writing including their own interpretations

How can I fit *Reading Comprehension* into my curriculum?

***Early Reading Comprehension, Reading Comprehension, and MORE Reading Comprehension* can be used in a variety of ways.**

The program can be used to supplement any existing reading program. Students can begin in second grade with *Early Reading Comprehension* Book A and move through the series to *MORE Reading Comprehension* for junior high and high school. The books in this series can also be used to differentiate instruction. Students can be assigned different selections at different levels according to their skills or interests. In addition, students can read passages on the same theme at different reading levels and discuss them as a group.

Early Reading Comprehension, Reading Comprehension, and MORE Reading Comprehension are perfect for small group and one-on-one instruction with struggling readers or English Language Learners.

17 An Odd Spider

What is odd about this spider?



Most spiders live on land, but this spider is different. It spends most of its time under water. How does it breathe? It breathes by making a tent full of air bubbles under water.

First it **spins** a **web** in the shape of a bell. Then it **fixes** it to plants under the water. Next it swims up to the top of the water and **traps** a tiny bubble of air with its hairy back legs. It **drags** the bubble to its web. It does this many times until its home is full of air. Then it sits nice and snug in its web and feeds on tiny fish and other water animals.

The passage is about a spider that

- (a) can't spin a web (b) lives under water (c) lives in plants

Can you remember?

1. Most spiders

- (a) fly (b) live on land (c) live under water

Comprehension exercises following every passage promote story recall including main idea.

Early Reading Comprehension, Book B, p. 33

The passage is about

- (a) birds nesting (b) how birds change their homes (c) keeping birds as pets

Can you remember?

1. Birds get ready for their trip south in the
(a) summer (b) fall (c) winter
2. What shape do snow geese fly in?
(a) Y (b) V (c) X
3. They don't
(a) go the same way (b) go to the same place (c) get lost
4. Which of these may be harmful to the birds?
(a) flowers (b) trees (c) TV antennas
5. The birds fly north in the
(a) spring (b) summer (c) fall

Put the sentences in the correct order.

- _____ In the spring the geese make the trip back again.
_____ It takes place every year.
_____ Not all the birds make it.
_____ Snow geese travel thousands of miles.

Consistent exercises ask students to synthesize the information they read and sequence events from the story.

Match the words with their meanings.

- _____ 1. bustle (a) a loud, sharp noise made by birds
_____ 2. rustle (b) lots of little sounds, like the moving of dry leaves
_____ 3. flocks (c) groups of animals living and traveling together
_____ 4. honking (d) moving around with lots of noise; in a rush

Passages not only vary in topic but also include a wide range of formats including charts and graphs.

6 Some of Our Great Presidents

What do you know about the four presidents in the chart below?

Charts are an easy and quick way to learn. Here are some facts about some of our greatest presidents. Study the chart and then see if you can answer the questions.

| President | When President | First Lady | General Information |
|-------------------|----------------|------------|--|
| George Washington | 1789–1797 | Martha | Our first president. Our capital is named after him. He never lived in the White House because it wasn't built when he was president. He led our army against the English in the Revolutionary War (1775–1781). |
| Thomas Jefferson | 1801–1809 | Martha | He drafted the Declaration of Independence and started the University of Virginia. |
| James Madison | 1809–1817 | Dolley | While he was president, we fought the English a second time in the War of 1812 (1812–1814). During this war, the English burned down the White House. |



Exercises promote vocabulary development and include vocabulary words taken from the reading selection.

Early Reading Comprehension, Book D, p. 24

The passage is about how you get

- (a) air (b) food (c) blood

Can you remember?

1. You breathe air in through your
(a) nose (b) skin (c) muscles
2. The tube that divides into two smaller pipes that go to the lungs is kept open by
(a) bones (b) rings (c) a flap
3. Your lungs are like
(a) pears (b) balloons (c) kites
4. When you breathe in, your chest
(a) gets wider (b) gets taller (c) doesn't move
5. When you breathe out your lungs become
(a) bigger (b) smaller (c) They stay the same.

Put in the correct order.

- _____ This gives the lungs room to pull in more air.
_____ When you breathe in, air goes through your nose.
_____ The diaphragm shortens and moves down.
_____ The lungs push the air out again.

Match the words with their meanings.

- _____ 1. describes (a) tells you about something
_____ 2. windpipe (b) goes into two or more parts or pieces
_____ 3. flap (c) a long tube that is used in breathing
_____ 4. divides (d) small covering that opens and closes
_____ 5. muscle (e) part of the body that makes you move

Selection 25—Subject: Literature
Theme: Myth, Folklore, and Fantasy

HOW HAWAII WAS CREATED

ABOUT THE PASSAGE

The Hawaiians have a myth explaining the **origin** of their islands. Where do you think they came from?

- (a) the tears of a whale (c) a hurricane
(b) out of the sea (d) none of these

REASON FOR READING

To see how a common, everyday experience can be used to tell a magical story.

READ THE PASSAGE

Maui sat on the beach looking out to sea. He was waiting for his brothers to return from fishing. He had wanted to go fishing with them, but they said, “Why should we take you? We do all the work paddling, and you pull in all the fish.” Maui had to admit this was true. He was just a little lazy.

To pass the time, Maui **fashioned** a fishhook from bone. He was a good carver, and soon it was ready for use. He held it up in the sunlight to admire it, and as he did so, he prayed to the gods to give it special powers.

At last Maui’s brothers returned. “How many fish did you catch?” Maui asked.

“None,” they answered. “There were no fish in the sea. There was nothing to catch but seaweed.”

“You should have taken me,” Maui told them.

“How do you think you can catch fish that aren’t there?” his brothers asked crossly.

“Take me tomorrow and I will show you,” said Maui with a **mischievous** grin.

The next day the brothers took Maui fishing with them. It was not because they believed he would catch any fish. Quite the opposite. They wanted to teach him a lesson for **boasting**.

When they were far out to sea, the brothers began to fish. But Maui lay back in the canoe, enjoying the sun.

“Why aren’t you fishing?” the brothers asked Maui. “You said you could catch some fish, so why don’t you start?”

“We’re not far enough out,” replied Maui, “paddle some more.”

The brothers paddled farther out to sea. But Maui told them to go still

Exercises mimic those commonly found on standardized assessments and provide test-taking practice.

well-known conductor, voiced the thoughts of many when he said, “A voice like yours is heard only once in a hundred years.”

Perhaps Marian Anderson was remembering her return to the United States and that day in December 1935 when she sang in the New York Town Hall with her leg in a cast. Despite pain from a broken foot, she had sung beautifully and received a standing **ovation**. She had thought then that she had finally been accepted by people, but again it was not so. She tried to give a concert in Washington, D.C., in the famous Constitution Hall. The hall was owned by the Daughters of the American Revolution, an organization of women whose families had fought for freedom against the British. They refused to let Marian Anderson sing there because she was Black.

This time her prejudiced treatment be-

came a national issue. Leaders of the government invited her to give an outdoor concert. On the morning of Easter Sunday, she stood on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial. Behind her was the statue of Lincoln, who had freed the slaves, and in front of her was an audience of 75,000 people—Black and White. Her act was a courageous one that became one more step toward defeating prejudice.

Honors and praise continued to fill Marian Anderson’s life. She sang in New York at Carnegie Hall and with the Metropolitan Opera Company. She sang abroad, this time sent by the United States State Department. She was appointed a **delegate** to the United Nations and received the Medal of Freedom, our nation’s highest civilian peacetime award. Still, I have a feeling that it was the day at the Lincoln Memorial that Marian Anderson was remembering nearly forty years later.

THINKING IT OVER

- (1) What was Marian Anderson’s profession? _____
- (2) What was her courageous act? _____

STUDYING THE PASSAGE

- (1) Find the Main Idea: Choose one.
 - (a) How Marian Anderson learned to sing. _____
 - (b) How Marian Anderson helped the cause of Black people. _____
 - (c) Marian Anderson’s singing career. _____
 - (d) Marian Anderson’s travels as a singer. _____
- (2) Find the Facts: Mark each one *true* or *false*.
 - (a) Marian Anderson received a medal from the president. _____
 - (b) She had an unhappy childhood. _____
 - (c) She had always loved to sing. _____
 - (d) Her church raised money so she could have singing lessons _____
 - (e) She won a competition in which 300 other young people competed. _____
 - (f) She went to Europe to sing because her fellow Americans were still biased against Black people. _____
 - (g) She faced the same problems of bias in Europe. _____
 - (h) She was told, “A voice like yours is heard only once in a hundred years.” _____

Reading Comprehension, Book 4, p. 48

- (f) Some of the water seeps into the earth. (f) ____
 (g) There is not a great deal of water stored underground. (g) ____
 (h) Water eventually finds its way back to the sea. (h) ____
- (3) Find the Order: Number the following in the order in which they appear in the passage.
- (a) The vapor rises with warm air until the air begins to expand. ____
 (b) If the clouds are carried over continents by the winds, it may fall on land. ____
 (c) Where does the water in a spring come from? ____
 (d) It is taken up by the roots of living plants. ____
 (e) The great reservoir for most of the water on earth is the ocean. ____
 (f) But most of the underground water continues to seep down through the soil where it is stored temporarily. ____
 (g) Trace a brook to its source. ____
 (h) Even the vast reservoir is not lost permanently to the water cycle. ____
- (4) Go beyond the Facts: Which one is true?
- (a) The water cycle takes a year to complete.
 (b) The more it rains the more water there will be.
 (c) There is never a time when water is not in our presence.
 (d) If there is a drought, it means there is less water in the world. ____
- (5) Determine the Writer's Style: Which one is *not* correct?
- (a) She uses a visual aid with an explanation.
 (b) She gives facts and details.
 (c) She begins with a descriptive passage.
 (d) She begins with an anecdote—a short story. ____

USING THE WORDS

- (1) Words and Their Meanings: Write the letter of the correct definition beside the word.
- | | |
|------------------|--|
| ____ thicket | (a) to make or become thicker, denser or more closely packed together |
| ____ reservoir | (b) a place where shrubs, underbrush, or small trees grow close together |
| ____ evaporation | (c) a place where something, especially water, is collected and stored for use |
| ____ expenditure | (d) come out again; reappear |
| ____ vapor | (e) to change into vapor |
| ____ condenses | (f) a mass of tiny drops of water floating in the air as steam or fog |
| ____ seep | (g) the act of using up or spending money, time, energy, etc. |
| ____ reemerge | (h) to leak through small openings, ooze |
- (2) Write a paragraph using at least 2 of the words from the list above. Use a separate piece of paper.

WRITING ABOUT IT

Use a separate piece of paper.

- (1) Reread the passage and underline the important facts. Then summarize the passage in one short, clear paragraph giving the facts as clearly and logically as possible.
- (2) This passage begins with a description of a spring. Notice how the writer gives the names of specific trees and birds, uses metaphors like, "a thread of water," and introduces interesting words like, "its **whisper** became a **full-fledged song**." Describe a scene involving water using the same techniques as the writer to make your description as vivid and imaginative as possible.

Students are encouraged to respond to passages in writing and give their personal reactions and interpretations.

USING THE WORDS

(1) Words and Their Meanings: In the passage find the boldface words for these definitions.

- | | |
|-------|---|
| _____ | (a) a change; alteration |
| _____ | (b) started; formed |
| _____ | (c) great effect |
| _____ | (d) careful plans; tactics |
| _____ | (e) a person who wants to do away with something |
| _____ | (f) mocked; laughed at; ridiculed |
| _____ | (g) exemptions or freedom from charges, taxes, or disease |
| _____ | (h) put a request into formal writing |
| _____ | (i) extreme; marked by departure from the usual |
| _____ | (j) women who work to get women the right to vote |

(2) Write a paragraph using 3 of the words from the list above. Use a separate piece of paper.

WRITING ABOUT IT Use a separate piece of paper.

- (1) Find out about one of the people mentioned in the passage. Then write a short biography of the person, describing the part she played in the women's rights movement.
- (2) Write an editorial for a newspaper during Susan Anthony's time expressing your views for, or against, the right of women to vote.

About the Passage introduces the selection to the readers, asks them to recall what they know, and offers new information.

Selection 14—Subject: Philosophy, Logic, and Math
Theme: What Do You Think?

THE FIRST WOMAN TO SAIL THE ATLANTIC ALONE*

ABOUT THE PASSAGE

You have probably heard about Amelia Earhart, the first woman to fly solo over the Atlantic. But have you heard of the first woman to sail it alone? Heading for the United States, Ann Davison set out from her native England in 1952. This selection describes part of her historic voyage.

REASON FOR READING

Before you begin reading, try to imagine the kinds of problems this woman faced and how she might have dealt with them. Then compare your ideas with the facts presented in the passage.

READ THE PASSAGE

She opened a Christmas package given her by friends before she sailed. The greetings, cards, and small gifts not only failed to cheer her, but also made her feel more lonely. The boat was making only a half a knot, so she ran the engine for a while, and this improved her spirits. She decided to run it a little every day while the calm lasted. It kept the engine from **corroding**, and the sound was good for her **morale**. She was discovering what a good many other long-distance sailors had learned: the single-hander's main enemies are lack of confidence, discouragement, and loneliness.

The next day she got the wind she had asked for—too much of it. A **squall** struck before daylight, heeling *Felicity Ann* dangerously. Ann Davison groped her way on deck and struggled to reef the mainsail. The wind was from the west—dead ahead. Little progress was made during this difficult day of squalls. Finally she gave up trying to sail and **consoled** herself by reading poetry in the cabin. In the afternoon the wind blew briefly out of the east, and a few miles were made toward the goal. The rain squalls and the spray had soaked everything in the cabin by this time. She had run out of places to store wet clothes, and there was no way to dry them.

More calms, **interspersed** with squalls. Fuel for the engine was almost gone, and she knew she would not be able to run it a little every day as she had hoped. She passed her time reading and inventing memory games. By January 8, struggling in this

way to gain a few miles every day, she calculated that she was only about seven hundred miles from Barbados, the nearest of the West Indies. The twin staysails were working again now, and she was creeping along on her course, but the **fatigue** was beginning to tell. She suspected she was suffering from a vitamin **deficiency**, although she had faithfully taken her vitamin tablets. And her mental **depression** was as much concern to her as her physical health. Although she had originally planned to sail a little farther to Antigua, she decided to head for Barbados, the nearest West Indies island.

Sailing through squalls that required her to **reef** and change sails constantly, usually in the middle of the night, she fought on to the northwest. She passed the sixty-day mark, the maximum time she had calculated for the voyage. Now she must ration both food and water rigidly. To make *Felicity Ann* steer better, she tried streaming heavy ropes astern, but in the changeable squalls the ropes got tangled up, and she had to pull them into the cockpit and untangle them. This exhausted her even more. And her eyes were getting so swollen that seeing was difficult. Finally, on January 18, weak and dispirited, she made out a faint shape on the horizon, the mountainous outline of Barbados. As she came up on the island, hungry for the sight of houses and green grass, night fell, and she was forced to stand offshore until morning.

*From *They Sailed Alone*, by MacDonald Harris. Copyright © 1972 by MacDonald Harris. Reprinted by permission of Houghton Mifflin Company.

Selection 14—Subject: Philosophy, Logic, and Math
Theme: What Do You Think?

SYMBOLIC LOGIC

ABOUT THE PASSAGE

The following problem is given again at the end of this passage. Compare the answer you give now to the answer you give after reading the selection.

Hypothesis: Premise 1 — All sardines are fish.
Premise 2 — All fish can swim.

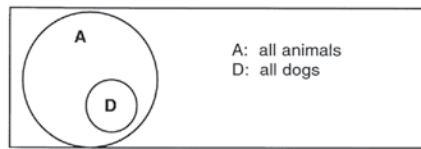
Conclusion: All _____

REASON FOR READING

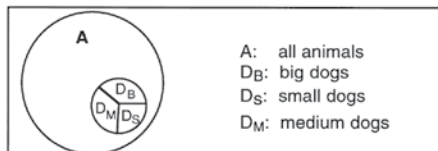
To see if you can follow the explanation in order to solve a particular type of problem.

READ THE PASSAGE

Suppose we want to express the idea that all dogs are animals. If we let D represent the set of all dogs and A represent the set that contains all animals, then set A contains set D; that is, set D is a proper subset of A. We can illustrate this concept by using a Venn diagram. In the Venn diagram below, we have drawn a smaller circle to represent D, the set of dogs, inside the larger circle A, the set of all animals. The diagram shows that every dog is an animal.

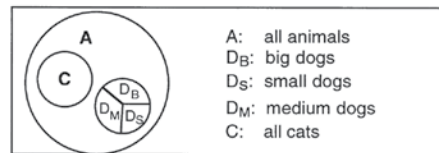


We could also divide the set D into three subsets: the set of big dogs, the set of medium dogs, and the set of small dogs. We would then **modify** our diagram to include this information (See Diagram 2).



The way the smaller circle is subdivided to include the whole area of D indicates not only that

all dogs are animals, but that there is no dog that is not a big dog, a medium dog, or a small dog.



To our previous example we have added set C, the set of all cats (See Diagram 3). The nonoverlapping circles C and D illustrate the fact that although all cats are animals and all dogs are animals, no cat is a dog and vice versa.

Sets C and D are examples of **disjoint** sets because they have no elements in common. In Venn diagrams, such sets are represented by two nonoverlapping circles or closed areas. Such illustrations represent the idea of “no” or “none” in symbolic logic.

Venn diagrams can also be used to represent the concept of “some.” Diagram 3 shows that the set of animals includes animals that are cats and animals that are not cats (for instance, dogs). Therefore, the diagram illustrates the premise that some animals are cats and some aren’t. It is important to note that in mathematical logic, the term *some* means one or more, and hence, could conceivably mean *all*. So we could conclude that *some* cats are animals, although it’s more precise to state that *all* cats are animals.

MORE Reading Comprehension, Level 4, p. 8

Selection 3—Subject: Combined Subjects
Theme: Transportation

THE POWERFUL RIVER*

ABOUT THE PASSAGE

One of the most efficient transportation systems in the world is very close to home—inside of us. It is our cardiovascular system.

How long does it take for a drop of blood to circulate throughout your body?

- (a) About a second
- (b) About 30 seconds
- (c) About a minute
- (d) About 5 minutes

REASON FOR READING

To practice reading for details and following a logical sequence of events.

READ THE PASSAGE

Within the human body flows a river unlike any other earthly river—a crimson stream that courses through every organ, twists past every cell on a journey that stretches sixty thousand miles, enough to circle the planet two and a half times. Earthly rivers refresh the land with water; the body's stream nourishes and cleanses, delivering food and oxygen to every cell, removing waste, regulating the human environment. Earth's rivers flow through inorganic rock and sand; the body's river travels through living tissue. The powerful heart that propels this stream and the vessels that guide it are all alive. The human river can regulate its own **velocity**, its banks widening or narrowing to control the shifting tides. And it can change its own course, instantly channeling its swift currents to meet new demands: swimming or sleeping, contemplating, celebrating, running a race or rocking an infant—each alters the flow of this powerful river.

The Life-Giving Loop

Every 60 seconds, 1,440 times a day, our blood cycles through the body; traveling the double loop—from heart through lungs and from heart through body—known as the cardiovascular system. Fresh, oxygenated blood begins its voyage to the body's tissues by bursting from the left side of the heart into the arching aorta, the body's largest artery. Even the average resting heartbeat hurls about two ounces of blood against the aorta walls

with great force. These tidal waves of blood smash against the aorta 70 times a minute, delivering their blows 2–5 billion times during the average life span.

Rigid metal pipes could not withstand this battering for long, but the living tissues of our blood vessels have evolved with just this function. Artery walls have three layers: a smooth inner lining, a thick middle layer of elastic membranes and muscle, and an outer layer of fibrous connective tissue. The aorta's elastic membranes stretch with the impact of each surge of blood; its strong muscle fibers then recoil, channeling the **intermittent** waves into one continuous stream. The resilient muscles also act as a subsidiary pump, propelling blood through our larger arteries at a rate of one foot a second.

As arteries divide and subdivide, the elastic membranes in their walls **diminish**, and the proportion of muscle grows. A single muscle cell may wrap two or three times around each of the smallest arteries, the last short branches of the arterial tree. Rhythmically squeezing and relaxing, these muscled rings force blood into the ten billion capillaries that fan throughout the body.

Most tissues—brain, intestine, heart, blood vessel—are laced with so dense a network of capillaries that no cell lies more than a millionth of an inch from a blood supply. Capillaries, with **gossamer** walls only one cell thick, are so fine that even red cells must bend and twist to squeeze, one at a time,

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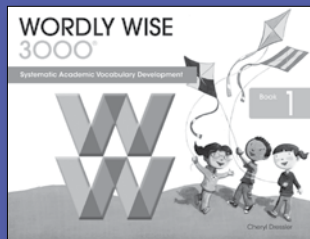
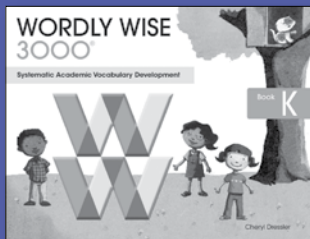
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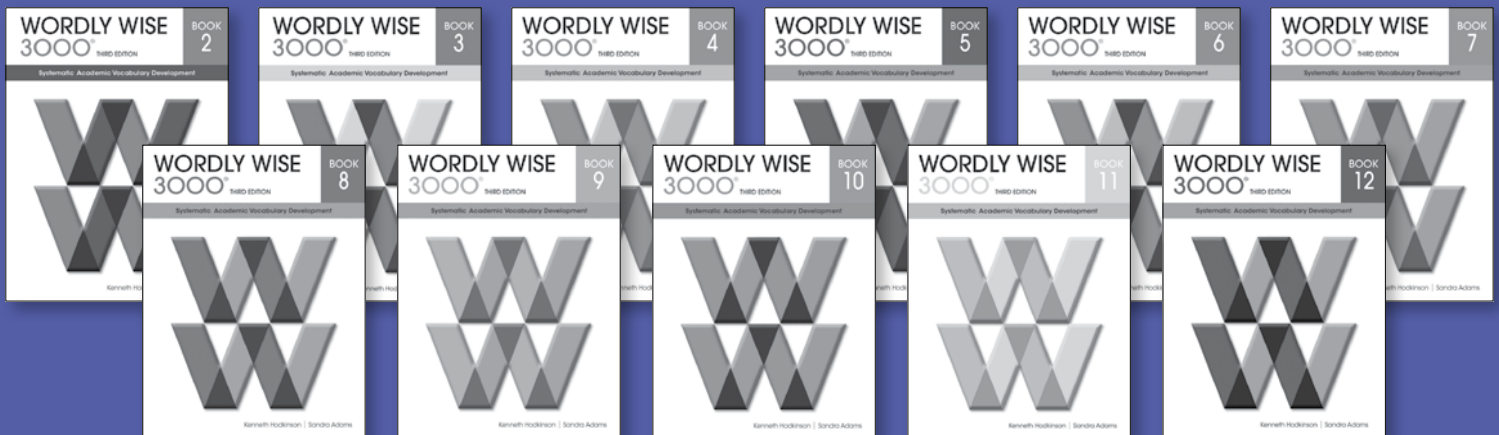
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