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Using the *CARS* and *STARS Plus Series*

CARS Plus Series

Diagnose needs of the class by administering 5 Pretests

Benchmark during instruction to monitor progress, using 5 longer tests

Assess mastery by administering 5 Post Tests



STARS Plus Series

Instruct the class in 1 to 6 strategies, based on students' needs (differentiate instruction using Books P–H)



What are the *CARS Plus* and *STARS Plus Series*?

The *CARS Plus* and *STARS Plus Series* are a comprehensive resource that allows you to identify and teach essential reading comprehension strategies. As the diagram above indicates, the *CARS Plus Series* is the assessment component and the *STARS Plus Series* is the instruction component.

CARS Plus Series

The *CARS Plus Series* is a diagnostic reading series that allows you to identify and assess a student's level of mastery for each of 12 reading strategies. It contains Pretests, Benchmarks and Post Tests. This ten-level series is designed for students in years P to 8. The *CARS Plus Series* helps teachers place students in the companion *STARS Plus Series* for reading instruction and remediation.

STARS Plus Series

The *STARS Plus Series* is a prescriptive reading series that provides essential instruction in the same 12 reading strategies as the diagnostic *CARS Plus Series*. This ten-level series is also designed for students in years P to 8. The *STARS Plus Series* provides precise instruction in and practice with the strategies students need to master in order to achieve reading success.

Book C in both the *CARS Plus* and *STARS Plus Series* features the following 12 reading strategies:

- Finding Main Idea
- Recalling Facts and Details
- Understanding Sequence
- Recognising Cause and Effect
- Comparing and Contrasting
- Making Predictions
- Finding Word Meaning in Context
- Drawing Conclusions and Making Inferences
- Distinguishing Between Fact and Opinion
- Identifying Author's Purpose
- Interpreting Figurative Language
- Distinguishing Between Real and Make-believe



How do I get started with the *CARS Plus* and *STARS Plus Series*?

As shown in the diagram on page 4, the *CARS Plus Series* is used to diagnose the needs of the class, monitor students' progress and assess students' mastery of the strategies. The *STARS Plus Series* is used to instruct the class in targeted reading strategies, based on the diagnosis from the *CARS Plus Series*.

To get started, use the following steps:

1. Diagnose

Administer the five pretests in the *CARS Plus Series* to diagnose the needs of the students in your class. (See the *CARS Plus* teacher guide for additional information.)

2. Instruct

Based on the results of the *CARS Plus* diagnosis, assign specific strategy lessons in the *STARS Plus Series* to remediate areas that need improvement and reinforcement. Or, you may have students complete an entire *STARS Plus* student book in order to build and reinforce students' basic knowledge of reading strategies. (See pages 7 and 10–11 for information about differentiating instruction.)

3. Benchmark

Use the five Benchmarks in the *CARS Plus Series* and the Review Lessons in the *STARS Plus Series* (see page 6) to monitor students' progress.

4. Assess

Use the five Post Tests in the *CARS Plus Series* and the Final Review in the *STARS Plus Series* (see page 6) to assess mastery of the strategies taught in the *STARS Plus Series*.



Why do the *CARS Plus* and *STARS Plus Series* concentrate on 12 reading strategies?

The reading strategies in these series were based on reviews of the following:

- Current research on reading comprehension
- Gaps in basal or core reading programs

The strategies in both series cover a range of areas that lead to success in reading comprehension:

- Literal comprehension
- Inferential comprehension
- Text structure and organisational patterns
- Vocabulary and concept development
- Metacognitive strategies

Practice in these reading strategies leads to success on tests as well as improves students' overall reading comprehension.



How do researchers define the relationship between skills and strategies?

According to Regie Routman (2000), strategies are the thinking, problem-solving processes that the learner deliberately initiates, incorporates and applies to construct meaning. At this point, the reading strategies become instinctively incorporated into one's reading.

According to Afflerbach et al. (2008), when a reading strategy becomes effortless and automatic, the strategy has become a skill. Reading skills operate without the reader's deliberate control or conscious awareness.



What is in the *STARS Plus* student book?

Strategy Lessons

Each student book contains 12 strategy lessons, one lesson for each reading strategy. Each ten-page lesson provides instruction and practice in the targeted reading strategy. Students read several passages and answer 16 strategy-based selected-response (multiple-choice) questions.

The strategy lessons are scaffolded, providing a gradual release of support. Each lesson moves from modelled instruction to guided instruction to modelled practice to guided practice to independent practice. (See Features of a *STARS Plus* Lesson on pages 12–23 for more information about the strategy lessons.)

Review Lessons

A four-page review lesson follows every three strategy lessons. Students read two longer passages and answer 12 selected-response questions that focus on the target reading strategies in the three previous lessons.

Final Review

A twelve-page final review gives practice in all 12 reading strategies. Students read four longer passages and answer 48 selected-response questions that focus on all the reading strategies in the book.



What is in the *STARS Plus* teacher guide?

Overview

Information about using the *CARS Plus* and *STARS Plus Series* and the Classroom Reading System, including:

- Suggested Pacing Chart
- Features of a *STARS Plus* Lesson
- Research Summary
- Reproducible Strategy Bookmarks

Lesson Plans

Six-page guides for each *STARS Plus* student-book lesson, including a facsimile of each student-book page with correct answers, teacher tips and these special features:

- ELL Support
- Genre Focus
- Teacher's Corner
- Reteaching
- Connecting with Literature

Reproducible Answer Form

A reproducible bubble sheet that students may use to record their answers to Parts Two–Five of each lesson

Completed Answer Form

A filled-in bubble sheet that may be used for correction purposes



How can I provide differentiated instruction using the *STARS Plus Series*?

There are two easy ways to provide differentiated instruction in the classroom using the *STARS Plus Series*.

By Reading Strategy

Use the results from the Pretests in the *CARS Plus Series* to diagnose the individual needs of the students in your classroom.

Then use *STARS Plus Book C* to provide targeted instruction in one specific strategy or in several strategies to remediate areas that need improvement and/or reinforcement.

Or, you may wish to provide instruction using the entire *STARS Plus Book C* to build students' basic knowledge of all the reading strategies.

By Reading Level

Students in the same classroom are likely to be reading at different skill levels (below year level, at year level or above year level). You can use the levelled books in the *STARS Plus Series* (Books P–H) to meet this need.

To enable this type of differentiated instruction, the sequence of the strategies and the page numbers across the books in the *STARS Plus Series* are the same from lesson to lesson (with some exceptions in Books P–C). So all students in the classroom receive the same reading-strategy instruction but work with appropriately levelled reading passages.

For example, some year-three students may work in the on-level Book C, which contains reading passages that don't extend beyond a year-three reading level. At the same time, other students in the class may be assigned an above-level book, while other students may be assigned a below-level book.



How can I assess students' progress in the *STARS Plus Series*?

After students have been placed into the *STARS Plus Series*, based on the diagnosis from the *CARS Plus Pretests*, several methods may be used to assess students' progress in the *STARS Plus Series*.

You may use classroom observation to monitor and informally assess students' mastery of the strategies taught in each *STARS Plus* lesson.

You may also use the following to formally assess students' mastery of the strategies:

STARS Plus Review Lessons

A review lesson follows every three strategy lessons. The reviews may be used to assess students' mastery of the reading strategies taught in those three lessons in the *STARS Plus* student book.

STARS Plus Final Review A final review follows all 12 strategy lessons. The final review may be used upon completion of the student book to assess students' mastery of all 12 reading strategies.

CARS Plus Benchmarks

These five tests may be used throughout instruction in the *STARS Plus* student book (after the *CARS Plus Pretests* and before the *CARS Plus Post Tests*) as individual progress-monitoring tools to monitor students' progress in applying all 12 reading strategies.

CARS Plus Post Tests

These five tests may be used upon completion of the *STARS Plus* student book to assess students' overall mastery of all 12 reading strategies. The results of the *CARS Plus Post Tests* may be compared with the results of the *CARS Plus Pretests* to assess students' mastery of the reading strategies.



What instructional features in the *STARS Plus Series* can be helpful for students, especially ELL students?

The *STARS Plus Series* uses several effective instructional procedures that support all students, including:

- Opportunities to activate prior knowledge before beginning strategy instruction
- Explicit instruction in key English language concepts
- A step-by-step scaffolded approach, beginning with explicit instruction, to build a clear understanding of the reading strategies
- Opportunities to build and reinforce self-esteem
- Use of graphic organisers to visually depict the reading strategies
- Frequent reviews and restatements of concepts
- Allowances for students to work at their own pace
- Ample practice through a variety of high-interest reading passages
- Presentation of selections depicting real-life situations
- Encouragement of paired-learning experiences
- Student discussion of strategies to demonstrate conceptual understanding

In addition to these supports, the teacher guide also provides minilessons on English language topics that may be challenging for ELL students (called ELL Support). See pages 12–13 of this teacher guide for an example.



Where do students record their answers?

Students may record their answers to Part One on a separate piece of paper or directly in their student book. The answers to Part One are discussed during partner or all-class discussions. Students may record their answers to Parts Two–Five on the reproducible Answer Form (on pages 106 and 107 of this teacher guide) or directly in the student book.



What is the correction procedure?

For best results, correct each part of the strategy lesson orally with students immediately following its completion. Explain concepts that students do not understand. Encourage students to participate in a discussion about the targeted strategy and how to apply it in everyday life experiences.



What are the Strategy Bookmarks?

The Strategy Bookmarks are a set of reproducible bookmarks for each of the strategies taught in the *STARS Plus Series*. You may wish to distribute the appropriate bookmark after students have completed each strategy lesson. The bookmarks serve as a helpful reminder, highlighting the essential points about the strategy that students have learned in the lesson.

Suggest that students use the bookmarks to support their application of the strategy to year-level text, especially when completing the Connecting with Literature activity (see pages 22–23 for an example of this feature).



How much time is required to complete the *STARS Plus Series*?

The *STARS Plus Series* is designed for flexibility in the classroom and can be used effectively in several ways to fulfil your classroom needs. How you choose to allocate time for the strategy lessons, review lessons and the final review is up to you, depending on the needs of your students.

You can adjust the times as needed in the Suggested Pacing Chart on page 9 to accommodate your daily schedule of instruction.



SUGGESTED PACING CHART

Day	Lesson(s)	Strategy	Minutes	Day	Lesson(s)	Strategy	Minutes
1	1	Finding Main Idea Introduction and Part One	30–45	38	8	Drawing Conclusions and Making Inferences Introduction and Part One	30–45
2		Part Two	30–45	39		Part Two	30–45
3		Part Three	30–45	40		Part Three	30–45
4		Part Four	30–45	41		Part Four	30–45
5		Part Five	30–45	42		Part Five	30–45
6	2	Recalling Facts and Details Introduction and Part One	30–45	43	9	Distinguishing Between Fact and Opinion Introduction and Part One	30–45
7		Part Two	30–45	44		Part Two	30–45
8		Part Three	30–45	45		Part Three	30–45
9		Part Four	30–45	46		Part Four	30–45
10		Part Five	30–45	47		Part Five	30–45
11	3	Understanding Sequence Introduction and Part One	30–45	48	7–9	REVIEW Parts One and Two	45–60
12		Part Two	30–45	49	10	Identifying Author’s Purpose Introduction and Part One	30–45
13		Part Three	30–45	50		Part Two	30–45
14		Part Four	30–45	51		Part Three	30–45
15		Part Five	30–45	52		Part Four	30–45
16	1–3	REVIEW Parts One and Two	45–60	53		Part Five	30–45
17	4	Recognising Cause and Effect Introduction and Part One	30–45	54	11	Interpreting Figurative Language Introduction and Part One	30–45
18		Part Two	30–45	55		Part Two	30–45
19		Part Three	30–45	56		Part Three	30–45
20		Part Four	30–45	57		Part Four	30–45
21		Part Five	30–45	58		Part Five	30–45
22	5	Comparing and Contrasting Introduction and Part One	30–45	59	12	Distinguishing Between Real and Make-believe Introduction and Part One	30–45
23		Part Two	30–45	60		Part Two	30–45
24		Part Three	30–45	61		Part Three	30–45
25		Part Four	30–45	62		Part Four	30–45
26		Part Five	30–45	63		Part Five	30–45
27	6	Making Predictions Introduction and Part One	30–45	64	10–12	REVIEW Parts One and Two	45–60
28		Part Two	30–45	65	1–12	FINAL REVIEW Parts One and Two	60
29		Part Three	30–45	66	1–12	FINAL REVIEW Parts Three and Four	60
30		Part Four	30–45	67	1–12	FINAL REVIEW Discussion of Parts One and Two	30–45
31		Part Five	30–45	68	1–12	FINAL REVIEW Discussion of Parts Three and Four	30–45
32	4–6	REVIEW Parts One and Two	45–60				
33	7	Finding Word Meaning in Context Introduction and Part One	30–45				
34		Part Two	30–45				
35		Part Three	30–45				
36		Part Four	30–45				
37		Part Five	30–45				

RECALLING FACTS AND DETAILS

★ ★ ★ ★ LESSON OBJECTIVES

Students will learn to:

- Recall facts and details by identifying information that tells more about the main idea in a reading passage
- Identify when test questions are asking them to recall facts and details

★ ★ ★ ★ GETTING STARTED

Introduce the Strategy

Tell students that today they will learn how to recall facts and details when they read.

SAY: Good readers recall facts and details in a reading passage by thinking about the main idea. They know that facts and details tell more about the main idea. You already know how to recall facts and details because you do it every day.

Model the Strategy

Introduce the strategy by describing a situation and asking students to think about what is happening.

SAY: Suppose you come home from school one day and someone says to you, “Tell me all about your day at school.” When you answer, you tell all about the things that happened during your day.

Point out to students that when they describe their day to someone, they are telling facts and details. Since the person asked them to tell all about their day, students can assume that they should tell more than just the main idea; they should include facts and details that give more information about the main idea. Explain that this is an example of recalling facts and details.

ELL Support**Multiple-Meaning Words**

Explain to students that words that have more than one meaning are called multiple-meaning words. Tell students that they can use other words or phrases in a sentence to help them know which meaning of a multiple-meaning word is being used.

Write the word *trip* on the board. Work with students to come up with different meanings for the word (“an outing”, “to fall by mistake”). Then write this sentence on the board: *The cords on the floor caused him to trip.* Work together to figure out which meaning of *trip* is correct (“to fall by mistake”). Guide students to see which words in the sentence helped them choose this meaning (*cords on the floor*).

Point out the multiple-meaning word *trip* on student book page 18.

Genre Focus**Journal Entry**

Tell students that on page 21, they will read a journal entry. Define this genre for students. Explain that a writer’s journal is a record of events and personal thoughts about the events in that person’s life. A journal entry is a piece of writing that focuses on a moment in time during the writer’s life. Sometimes the writer describes his or her feelings, makes an observation or tells a private thought about the events that happened on a certain day. The date the entry is written is included somewhere on the entry, usually at the top. Have students share journal entries they may have read.

MAKING PREDICTIONS

★ ★ ★ ★ LESSON OBJECTIVES

Students will learn to:

- Make predictions related to a reading passage by using detail clues along with their own background knowledge
- Identify when test questions are asking them to make predictions

★ ★ ★ ★ GETTING STARTED

Introduce the Strategy

Tell students that today they will learn how to make predictions when they read.

SAY: Good readers make predictions by using details in the passage, along with their own background knowledge, to make a guess about what will happen next. You already know about making predictions because you make many guesses about what is going to happen next every day.

Model the Strategy

Introduce the strategy by describing a situation and asking students to think about what is happening.

SAY: Imagine that you are playing outside. It's a sunny day, with a few clouds in the sky. Then suddenly, you notice it's no longer sunny. You look up in the sky and see a passing cloud blocking the sun. What do you predict will happen next?

Point out to students that they can predict that the cloud will pass by the sun, and it will become sunny again. Explain that they took what they already knew (passing clouds eventually move out of the way of the sun) with details from the situation (it's a mostly sunny day) to predict that the sky will become sunny again. Explain that this is an example of making predictions.

ELL Support**Past Tense of Irregular Verbs**

Explain to students that verbs are action words. The past tense of a verb tells that the action has already happened. The past tense of a regular verb ends in *ed*. The past tense of an irregular verb does not end in *ed*. Irregular verbs have special forms in the past tense.

Work with students to identify the past tense of irregular verbs. On the board, write this sentence: *I saw her today*. Work together to identify the irregular past tense verb in the sentence (*saw*). Explain to students that the present tense verb *see* was changed to the past tense verb *saw*. Tell them that since irregular verbs have special forms in the past tense, their past tense forms need to be remembered.

Point out the irregular past tense verb *saw* on student book page 64.

Genre Focus**Informational Article**

Tell students that on page 62, they will read an informational article. Define this genre for students. Explain that an informational article is a piece of writing that provides information about a topic. The purpose of an informational article is to inform or to explain. The opening of the article usually engages the reader's attention, and the body of the article gives facts, examples, reasons, descriptions and so on. The article answers the questions *who*, *what*, *when*, *where*, *why* and *how*. Informational articles often include photographs and captions to help readers understand the information. The ending usually sums up the main idea of the article. Have students share informational articles they may have read.

Modelled Instruction

Lesson MAKING PREDICTIONS

PART ONE: Think About the Strategy

What Is a Prediction?

A prediction is a good guess about something that will happen at a later time. A prediction is often based on information you already know or have read about.

- 1 Write one thing you guessed would happen yesterday or the day before.

Sample response: I guessed that our teacher would give us a surprise spelling quiz.

- 2 Write the clues that made you guess this would happen.

Sample response: Our teacher had told us to make sure we studied our words. Whenever she says this, she gives us a quiz the next day.

- 3 Was your guess correct? Why do you think this was so?

Sample response: Yes. Because the clues in what she had said and what I already knew helped me make my prediction.

Work with a Partner

- Tell each other something you thought would happen that actually did happen. For example, you might tell about a movie you enjoyed seeing that you had guessed you would like.
- Take turns explaining why you thought your predictions would happen.

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How Do You Make a Prediction?

You can make a prediction about a reading passage before you begin reading. Sometimes the title gives you a clue about what you will be reading.

Read the title of this passage. Make one or two guesses about what you will find out as you read. Then read the passage.

The Birthday Puppy

Nick has always wanted a puppy. His mother told him that he had to wait until he was twelve years old. Then he could get a puppy of his own. Nick is eleven. His birthday is in two days.

1. Let's think about what the title tells you about the passage.
2. Look at the magnifying glass below. It shows the title of the passage.



Predictions:

1. A puppy might have a birthday.
2. Someone gets a puppy as a present.

3. Now look at the box next to the magnifying glass. The box shows two good guesses, or predictions, about what the passage is about.
4. Think again about the title and the information in the passage.
5. Write the prediction from the box that is correct.

Someone gets a puppy as a present.

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AT A GLANCE

Students activate their background knowledge about making predictions and then learn how to apply this strategy to a short reading passage.

STEP BY STEP

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- Tell students that today they will practise making predictions.
- Read the information at the top of the page.
- Direct students to respond to items 1, 2 and 3.
- Discuss student responses as a class.

Work with a Partner

- Organise students to work in pairs to complete the Work with a Partner activity.
- Encourage volunteers to share their predictions and their reasons for making them with the class.

Tip: If students have difficulty pinpointing reasons for their predictions, have them recall what they already knew. For the movie example, perhaps they had liked the book version; that's why they thought they'd like the movie.

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- Read the information that precedes the reading passage.
- Direct students to read the passage in the box.
- Tell students that after they read the passage, they will use a graphic organiser to make a prediction.
- Guide students through steps 1–5 for making their prediction by having them follow along as you read the steps aloud.
- Direct students to write their prediction on the lines provided.
- Discuss student responses.
- Be sure students have a clear understanding of how the title, the information in the passage and what they already knew helped them make their prediction.

Tip: If students have trouble making a prediction, have them think about what the passage tells them and what they already know. Point out that the passage explains that Nick can get a puppy when he's twelve. Since Nick is eleven, students know this means he will turn twelve on his upcoming birthday. Ask, "Does it make more sense to predict that a puppy might have a birthday or that someone gets a puppy as a present?"