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RESEARCH SUMMARY

The following is a summary of the research upon which *Comprehensive Assessment of Reading Strategies II* is based.

INTRODUCTION TO THE SERIES

Comprehensive Assessment of Reading Strategies II (CARS Series II) is the assessment portion of a reading program that spans from diagnosis to assessment. This assessment tool identifies reading strategies that are understood, as well as those that need further study and reinforcement. The organisational design of the *CARS Series II* is grounded in several areas of research: reading comprehension, metacognition and self-assessment, and effectiveness of classroom assessment.

The *CARS Series II* Concentrates on Twelve Reading Strategies

The *CARS Series II* provides practice with twelve reading strategies that are the core reading tools students need in order to make sense of what they are reading. ‘. . . [M]any students have demonstrated difficulties with skills that are central to reading comprehension (i.e., identifying main topics, significant supporting information, and relations between a text’s main topics’ (Seidenberg, 1989). The reading skills of Finding Main Idea, Recalling Facts and Details, Understanding Sequence, Recognising Cause and Effect, Comparing and Contrasting, Making Predictions, Drawing Conclusions and Making Inferences, Distinguishing Between Fact and Opinion, Distinguishing Between Real and Make-believe (Books B–C) and Identifying Author’s Purpose may be difficult for some students to master because the thinking processes involved in applying the strategies are abstract in nature. These reading skills represent the unseen text structure of a reading passage. The reading strategies Finding Word Meaning in Context, Interpreting Figurative Language and Summarising (Books D–H) are direct tools readers can actively use to comprehend reading selections. Book A probes eight reading strategies. These reading strategies are essential because of the difficulty students experience with different styles of language. With *Comprehensive Assessment of Reading Strategies II*, teachers gain a clear road map of reading instruction for each student.

Metacognition and Self-assessment

Metacognitive training in reading is a very effective instructional technique. ‘Good readers often will reflect on what they have just read, perhaps evaluating the credibility of the material. . . . Monitoring also occurs at the conclusion of a reading. Thus, good readers can be aware of whether their understanding of the text is consistent with all the ideas expressed in it’ (Pressley, 2002, p. 297). The *CARS Series II* employs metacognitive questioning in the form of student self-assessment activities. The self-questioning in each student assessment brings to the forefront the student’s knowledge about a concept or strategy. They are sorting, organising and consolidating their thoughts about their reading performance through self-evaluation and monitoring.

Effectiveness of Classroom Assessment

Comprehensive Assessment of Reading Strategies II is an assessment tool that helps teachers focus their reading instruction and helps students recognise the reading strategies that need improvement. Trimble, Gay and Mathews (2005) summarise current findings about the benefits of using assessments to guide instruction. ‘Black and William (1998) and Guskey (2003) have documented the use of classroom assessments to improve instruction. Both *Turning Points 2000* (Jackson & Davis, 2000) and the Southern Regional Education Board (2001) recommend using data from ongoing assessments and access to more data is now well defined’ (p. 26). *Comprehensive Assessment of Reading Strategies II* offers teachers a flexible schedule in which to administer the assessments and record students’ performances. ‘In a standards-based classroom, assessment is an integral part of instruction and is aligned with the curriculum. The teacher collects evidence of the students’ knowledge, their ability to use that knowledge, and their disposition toward learning. Student performance is monitored to promote learning, to adjust instruction, and to report progress’ (Midgett, 2001).

UNDERSTANDING THE STRATEGIES

- **Finding Main Idea**

The main idea of a reading passage is a sentence that tells what the passage is mostly about. Questions about main idea might ask you to find what a passage is *mostly about* or *mainly about*. The questions might also ask you to choose the best title for a passage. When answering a question about main idea, ask yourself, *What is the passage mostly about?* Then choose your answer.

- **Recalling Facts and Details**

Every reading passage contains facts and details. The facts and details tell more about the main idea. Questions about facts and details ask you about something that was stated in the passage. To answer a question about a fact or detail, look back to the passage to find the answer.

- **Understanding Sequence**

Sometimes, a passage is told in order or sequence. Different things happen at the beginning, middle and ending of a passage. Questions about sequence ask you to remember and put events or details in order. Questions about sequence often contain key words such as *first, then, last, after* or *before*.

LESSON 1

Read this folktale from Africa. Then answer questions about the folktale. Choose the best answer for Numbers 1 to 12.

The Hungry Spider

Spider was hungry. He was always hungry. Spider was greedy as well. He was the most greedy animal in the jungle. All the animals knew that when it was mealtime, Spider had many tricks and for Spider, it was always mealtime.

One day, Turtle left his home in the pond and went on a long journey. He travelled slowly through the jungle and finally arrived at Spider's house. They had never met each other before this and Spider reluctantly invited Turtle to stay for dinner. Spider liked to talk to strangers because they had interesting stories to tell. But he hated to feed them because they ate food that he wanted for himself.

'Friend Turtle,' said Spider, 'you must be tired after your long trip. Go down to the river and refresh yourself. I'll prepare our dinner while you are gone.'

'How kind of you,' said Turtle. 'I'll hurry, as I am quite hungry.'

Turtle followed the trail to the water's edge and scrambled in. It was good to cool down and feel clean again. He crawled out of the river and hurried back to Spider's house. Delicious odours filled the air. It was time to eat!

Turtle walked in and saw the food on the table. 'Thank you for inviting me to stay for dinner, Spider,' said Turtle. 'I haven't eaten all day.'

'You are most welcome, Turtle,' said Spider with a frown. 'But in this part of the country, we don't sit at the table with muddy feet.'

Turtle looked at his feet. Indeed, they were muddy. His feet were wet from the river and the trail was thick with dust. He was most embarrassed. He excused himself and walked all the way back to the river to wash them off. He dried them carefully on the grass and hurried back to Spider. But he was too late. Spider had eaten all the food. Turtle was disappointed, but, being polite, he held his tongue. He slept hungry that night and left for home in the morning even hungrier!

Several months later, Spider went on a long journey. He arrived at Turtle's house and asked if he could spend the night.

'Of course, friend Spider,' said Turtle. 'I remember how good you were to me.'

<p>Finding Main Idea</p> <p>1. What is the folktale mostly about?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ⓐ a spider who does not know how to swim Ⓑ a spider and a turtle who become unlikely friends Ⓒ a spider who is treated the same way he has treated another Ⓓ a spider who is unfriendly toward a turtle 	<p>Recognising Cause and Effect</p> <p>4. Spider put pebbles into his coat pocket because he wanted to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ⓐ learn to swim. Ⓑ hide them from Turtle. Ⓒ weigh himself down. Ⓓ bob in the water.
<p>Recalling Facts and Details</p> <p>2. Where does the folktale take place?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ⓐ in the forest Ⓑ in the jungle Ⓒ in a meadow Ⓓ in the country 	<p>Comparing and Contrasting</p> <p>5. When Spider bobbed in the water, he looked like a</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ⓐ fish. Ⓑ cork. Ⓒ pebble. Ⓓ top.
<p>Understanding Sequence</p> <p>3. The boxes show some things that happened in the folktale.</p> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center; gap: 10px;"> <div style="border: 1px solid gray; padding: 5px; width: 150px;">Turtle dived to the bottom of the pond and prepared a feast.</div> <div style="font-size: 2em;">→</div> <div style="border: 1px solid gray; padding: 5px; width: 150px;">Turtle told Spider that it was considered bad manners to eat with his coat on.</div> <div style="font-size: 2em;">→</div> <div style="border: 1px solid gray; width: 100px; height: 80px; background-color: #e0e0e0;"></div> </div> <p>What belongs in the empty box?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ⓐ Spider stuffed heavy pebbles into his coat pocket. Ⓑ Spider tried to dive down to the bottom of the pond. Ⓒ Spider watched Turtle eat all the food. Ⓓ Spider asked Turtle if they could eat right away. 	<p>Making Predictions</p> <p>6. Predict what would have happened if Spider had shared his dinner with Turtle.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ⓐ Turtle would not have left the following morning. Ⓑ Turtle would have asked Spider to visit him. Ⓒ Turtle would not have let Spider stay with him later. Ⓓ Turtle would have later shared his dinner with Spider.

TEACHER ASSESSMENT 2

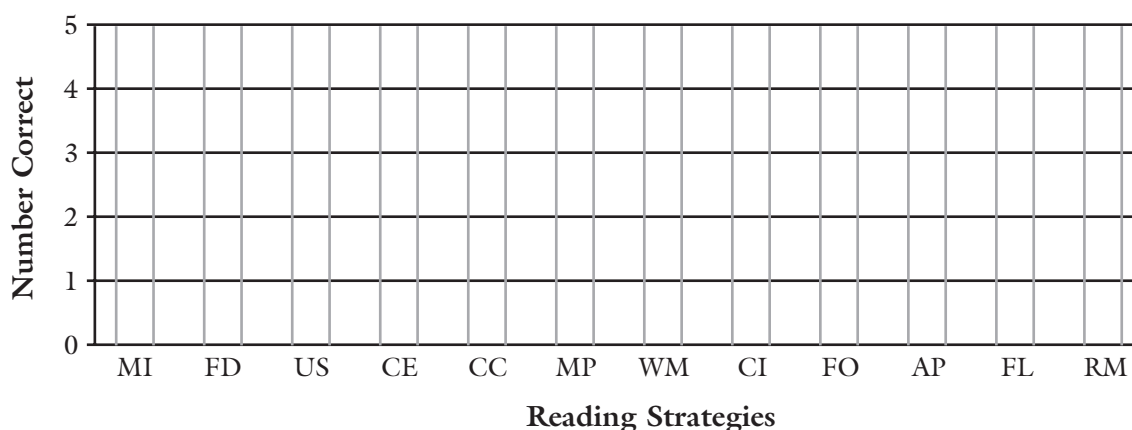
Complete this page after the student has completed Lessons 1–5.

Student's Name: _____ Date: _____

Teacher's Name: _____

Comparing Levels of Mastery

Use the chart on Teacher Assessment 1 to complete the graph below. For each reading strategy, shade the number correct to form a bar. A completed bar graph compares a student's level of mastery for each reading strategy.



Key

MI = Finding Main Idea
FD = Recalling Facts and Details
US = Understanding Sequence
CE = Recognising Cause and Effect
CC = Comparing and Contrasting
MP = Making Predictions

WM = Finding Word Meaning in Context
CI = Drawing Conclusions and Making Inferences
FO = Distinguishing Between Fact and Opinion
AP = Identifying Author's Purpose
FL = Interpreting Figurative Language
RM = Distinguishing Between Real and Make-believe

*Comprehensive Assessment
of Reading Strategies II, Book C
Answer Form*

Name _____
Teacher _____
Class _____

Key

MI = Finding Main Idea
FD = Recalling Facts and Details
US = Understanding Sequence
CE = Recognising Cause and Effect
CC = Comparing and Contrasting
MP = Making Predictions
WM = Finding Word Meaning
in Context
CI = Drawing Conclusions and
Making Inferences
FO = Distinguishing Between Fact
and Opinion
AP = Identifying Author's Purpose
FL = Interpreting Figurative
Language
RM = Distinguishing Between Real
and Make-believe

Date: _____

LESSON 1

- MI 1. (A) (B) ● (D)
FD 2. (A) ● (C) (D)
US 3. (A) (B) ● (D)
CE 4. (A) (B) ● (D)
CC 5. (A) ● (C) (D)
MP 6. (A) (B) (C) ●
WM 7. (A) (B) ● (D)
CI 8. (A) (B) ● (D)
FO 9. (A) (B) ● (D)
AP 10. ● (B) (C) (D)
FL 11. (A) ● (C) (D)
RM 12. (A) (B) (C) ●

Date: _____

LESSON 3

- MI 1. (A) ● (C) (D)
FD 2. (A) ● (C) (D)
US 3. ● (B) (C) (D)
CE 4. (A) ● (C) (D)
CC 5. (A) (B) ● (D)
MP 6. (A) (B) ● (D)
WM 7. (A) (B) ● (D)
CI 8. (A) (B) ● (D)
FO 9. (A) ● (C) (D)
AP 10. (A) (B) (C) ●
FL 11. (A) (B) ● (D)
RM 12. (A) (B) ● (D)

Date: _____

LESSON 5

- MI 1. (A) ● (B) (D)
FD 2. (A) (B) ● (D)
US 3. (A) ● (C) (D)
CE 4. ● (B) (C) (D)
CC 5. (A) (B) (C) ●
MP 6. (A) (B) ● (D)
WM 7. (A) ● (C) (D)
CI 8. (A) ● (C) (D)
FO 9. (A) ● (C) (D)
AP 10. (A) (B) (C) ●
FL 11. (A) (B) ● (D)
RM 12. (A) ● (C) (D)

Date: _____

LESSON 2

- MI 1. (A) (B) (C) ●
FD 2. (A) (B) (C) ●
US 3. (A) ● (C) (D)
CE 4. (A) ● (C) (D)
CC 5. (A) (B) ● (D)
MP 6. ● (B) (C) (D)
WM 7. (A) (B) (C) ●
CI 8. (A) (B) ● (D)
FO 9. (A) ● (C) (D)
AP 10. (A) ● (C) (D)
FL 11. (A) (B) (C) ●
RM 12. (A) (B) (C) ●

Date: _____

LESSON 4

- MI 1. (A) (B) (C) ●
FD 2. ● (B) (C) (D)
US 3. (A) (B) ● (D)
CE 4. (A) ● (C) (D)
CC 5. (A) ● (C) (D)
MP 6. (A) (B) (C) ●
WM 7. (A) (B) (C) ●
CI 8. (A) (B) ● (D)
FO 9. (A) (B) (C) ●
AP 10. (A) (B) (C) ●
FL 11. (A) ● (C) (D)
RM 12. (A) (B) ● (D)