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**How do the levels of comprehension relate to cognitive frameworks, such as Bloom’s taxonomy and Marzano’s framework?**

The levels of comprehension relate in a general (simplified and more accessible) way to the cognitive processes described in various cognitive frameworks.

The chart that follows shows the general correlations between the levels of comprehension and the levels of cognition described by Benjamin Bloom and by Robert Marzano.

<b>Bloom</b>	<b>Level(s) of Comprehension</b>
1. Knowledge	FI
2. Comprehension	FI, CI
3. Application	ATI
4. Analysis	ATI
5. Synthesis	ATI, GBI
6. Evaluation	GBI

<b>Marzano (as adapted by North Carolina)</b>	<b>Level(s) of Comprehension</b>
1. Knowledge (focusing, information gathering, remembering)	FI, CI
2. Organising	CI
3. (Applying)	CI, ATI
4. Analysing	CI, ATI
5. Generating	ATI, GBI
6. Integrating	ATI, GBI
7. Evaluating	GBI

**Key**

- FI = FIND IT
- CI = CONNECT IT
- ATI = ADD TO IT
- GBI = GO BEYOND IT

The chart on the next page gives more information about the levels of comprehension, with student and teacher information for each level.

While Bloom’s taxonomy and Marzano’s new taxonomy have significant similarities and differences, they share a common thread that connects them to the levels of comprehension featured in *Building Levels of Comprehension*. The common thread among the taxonomies and the levels of comprehension is the cognitive demand that comprehension questions can require of readers.

## WHY ARE LEVELS OF COMPREHENSION IMPORTANT TO TODAY’S READING CLASSROOMS?

### Effect on Students’ Achievement Scores

Students’ mastery of the levels of comprehension is related to the types of questions they are able to answer. **The way the answer information is attained from the passage text determines whether literal, analytical, inferential or critical thinking is involved.** Research has shown that limited mastery of levels of comprehension is equal to poor reading scores.

- We can define a proficient reader in the following manner: Year 8 students performing at the Proficient level should be able to show an overall understanding of the text, including inferential as well as literal information. When reading text appropriate to year 8, they should be able to extend the ideas in the text by making clear inferences from it, by drawing conclusions and by making connections to their own experiences—including other reading experiences (Lutkus, Rampey & Donahue, 2005).
- “A broad, general finding from the research base is that nearly all of the thinking skills programs and practices investigated were found to make a positive difference in the achievement levels of participating students” (Cotton, 1991).

Providing students with practice of various levels of comprehension will help them become proficient readers and will result in higher reading scores.

Marzano (1993) found that questioning is the most popular technique teachers use to stimulate students’ thinking. This technique is followed by writing techniques and general information processing strategies.

### Effect on Reading Experience

High mastery of the levels of comprehension indicates that students are able to experience a much greater appreciation of the materials they are reading. “Many children who can understand what they read at a literal level, find it difficult to understand a writer’s underlying meaning and intentions. There is a tendency for them to interpret only what the words say, not what they mean” (Fisher, 1990). Moving a student beyond the literal or concrete level will provide a richer, meaningful reading experience.

### Effect on Teacher Instruction

There is continuing documentation about the positive effect of higher-order thinking on students’ achievement scores. Standards also call for higher-order thinking experiences to take place in the classroom.

- “[New developments have] spurred a calling for tests. These tests have been studied by national education experts and are said to be assessments of basic skills. And yet, even basic skill questions may require higher levels of comprehension or thinking skills” (Guthrie, 2001).
- “Virtually every standards document makes explicit or implicit reference to the fact that thinking and

reasoning should be reinforced in the context of authentic tasks within their content areas” (Marzano, 1998).

While there is a recognised demand to have higher-order thinking practised in the classroom, there is also a recognised instructional struggle with bringing higher-order

thinking to life in the classroom. “Teachers see higher-order thinking tasks as difficult and highly demanding. Therefore, they refrain from assigning higher-order thinking tasks to students whom, the teachers believe, will find such tasks hard and frustrating. Despite good intentions, this creates a vicious cycle: Precisely those students whose thinking skills need the most care and teacher attention get less attention from teachers than their high-achieving peers. Exposing teachers to empirical findings regarding this particular issue may contribute to changing their beliefs and habits” (Zohar & Dori, 2003).

## Level Four GO BEYOND IT

**Modelled Instruction, page 61:** This passage is a legend and not a realistic-fiction story because it contains an event that could not happen in real life. A toy bird would not come to life. (Lit)

**Talk About It:** You apply what you already know to information in the passage. You put it all together and come up with an answer. The answer goes beyond what is in the passage.

**Guided Instruction (Multiple Choice), page 63:** D (A/P)

**Guided Instruction (Short Response), page 63:** The author wrote the article to explain to readers how to catch frogs. The author gives directions, or steps, that tell what to do first, next and last. (A/P)

### PART ONE: MULTIPLE CHOICE

**Modelled Practice, page 64:** C (Cor)

**Guided Practice, page 65:** A (Res)

**Explain It:** I thought about where I would look if I wanted more information based on a historical event. I decided that an encyclopedia article about South Australian history would be the best choice.

**Independent Practice, page 67:**

1. A (A/P)
2. C (T/F)
3. D (Res)
4. B (Lit)
5. C (Lit)
6. D (Cor)

### PART TWO: SHORT RESPONSE

**Modelled Practice, page 68:** The letter A began as a picture of an ox and then changed to the form of A that we know today. The picture helps readers see the steps that the letter A went through. (T/F)

**Guided Practice, page 69:** Yes, I think they should ask the window. They are worried, and the window might show them that their dad is okay. OR No, I don't think they should ask the window. Their mother said their dad was okay, and they should just wait for him to come home. Then he can tell them where he sailed. (Opn)

**Explain It:** I thought about the whole story. Corina and Christopher were worried, but their mum said their dad was okay. I thought about the situation in the story and about what I felt or believed about such things. Then I gave my opinion.

**Independent Practice, pages 70–72:**

1. The passage tells about the life of an actual person, who was called Señor Wences. That is the main feature of a biography. (Lit)
2. The author wrote this passage to explain about the life of a real person. The passage is a biography of the life of Señor Wences, a master ventriloquist. (A/P)
3. You could look in the library for a book that tells how to do ventriloquism. (Res)
4. You could search on the Internet for a clip from a TV show that featured Señor Wences and Pedro. (Res)
5. This situation is similar: One time, I made a clay model of a volcano. But I dropped it on the way to school. I had to give a speech about it that day, so I used the model anyway, even though it was squashed. (Cor)
6. It was a good idea to put Pedro's head in a box. Señor Wences knew that the show must go on, and he did what he had to in order to make it happen. It was a success, too. OR I don't think he should have put Pedro's head in a box. Some people in the audience might have been scared. (Opn)

**Summing Up, page 73:** Student responses should reflect the following key ideas from the Introduction page: Sometimes you can't find the answer in one place, and there are no pieces of information or clues to help you out. But don't give up. You can still answer the question. The answer isn't given in the passage. But the answer is based on, or supported by, information in the passage. Think about what you already know. Apply what you know to the information in the passage. Then you can put it all together and come up with an answer that goes beyond what is in the passage.

## Levels One–Four REVIEW

### PART ONE: MULTIPLE CHOICE

#### FIND IT, page 75:

1. C (Seq)
2. B (Det)
3. B (C/E)

#### CONNECT IT, page 75:

4. D (C/C)
5. A (C/E)
6. B (Voc)

#### ADD TO IT, page 76:

7. C (F/L)
8. D (M/P)
9. A (F/O)

#### GO BEYOND IT, page 76:

10. D (A/P)
11. C (Lit)
12. B (Cor)

### PART TWO: SHORT RESPONSE

#### FIND IT, page 78:

1. Excessive means “too much”. (Voc)
2. You dip the first newspaper strip into the papier-maché paste. (Det)
3. After the rhino form has thoroughly dried for about 24 hours, an adult should cut the coin slot. (Seq)

#### CONNECT IT, page 79:

4. A creation is something that is produced, or made. In this case, the creation is the rhino form that will become a rhino bank. (Voc)
5. Squeeze off any loose paste. (Seq)
6. A rhino bank is shaped to look like a rhino. A piggy bank looks like a pig. (C/C)

#### ADD TO IT, page 80:

7. You tape a cone to the front of the balloon to make the form look like a rhino. A rhino has a horn at the front of its head. (C/I)
8. The author says, “a rhino bank is much better than a piggy bank”. This is an opinion because not everyone would agree with that statement. It can’t be proven. (F/O)
9. Another good title would be “A Rhino Bank Is Unique”. The article states that a rhino bank is different and unique. The article includes statements about how a rhino bank is different from a piggy bank. (M/I)

#### GO BEYOND IT, page 81:

10. The author wrote this article to explain how to make a bank that looks like a rhino. The steps help readers know “how to” do it. (A/P)
11. You could look in a book that has photos of rhinos, such as an encyclopedia article or a book about African animals. You might find photos on the Internet, too. (Res)
12. The recipe for making papier-maché paste is in a separate box so that it will stand out for readers to follow when they are making the paste. The other steps for making the rhino bank stand out because they are preceded by bold headings. (T/F)