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Author

Deborah Adcock is a developer of curriculum materials in reading, English and mathematics.

Editor

Robert Forest Ed.D. is an editor and developer of curriculum materials in reading, English and mathematics.

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P.O. Box 580, Moorabbin, Victoria 3189, Australia
Phone: (03) 8558 2444 Fax: (03) 8558 2400
Toll Free Ph: 1800 334 603 Fax: 1800 150 445
Website: www.hbe.com.au
Email: orders@hbe.com.au

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FOR THE TEACHER

What is *Comprehensive Assessment of Reading Strategies (CARS Plus Series)*?

Comprehensive Assessment of Reading Strategies is a diagnostic reading series that allows you to identify and assess a student's level of mastery for each of 12 reading strategies (8 strategies in Book A, 6 strategies in Books P and AA).

This ten-level program is designed for students in years Prep to 8. *Comprehensive Assessment of Reading Strategies* helps teachers place students in *Strategies to Achieve Reading Success (STARS Plus Series)* for reading instruction and remediation.

What is in the *CARS Plus* student book?

- **Pretests, Benchmarks, Post Tests**
Book AA has 15 tests. Each of the 5 Pretests includes a visual story. Each of the 5 Benchmarks and the 5 Post Tests includes a short reading passage. Each test focuses on 6 strategies.
- **Self-assessment Forms**
Students complete, with teacher guidance, Self-assessment 1 after completing all 5 Pretests and Self-assessment 2 after completing all 5 Post Tests.

In *Comprehensive Assessment of Reading Strategies, Book AA*, students practise the following 6 reading strategies:

- Finding Main Idea
- Finding Details
- Putting Ideas in Order
- Understanding What Happens and Why
- Making a Guess
- Figuring Things Out

What is in the *CARS Plus* teacher guide?

- **Information for the Teacher**
Suggestions and instructions for using *Comprehensive Assessment of Reading Strategies* effectively in the classroom.
- **Research Summary**
A summary of the research that supports the *CARS Plus Series* is included in the teacher guide.
- **Guided Lessons**
Scripted text for administering each of the 15 tests (Pretests, Benchmarks, Post Tests) is provided.
- **Understanding the Strategies**
This three-page reproducible can be used with students as a skill-review summary. It can also be used to reinforce the strategies practised in the student book.
- **Teacher Assessments**
Teachers complete the assessments after the students have completed all 5 Pretests and then again after the students have completed all 5 Post Tests.
- **Class Performance Chart**
This reproducible is for recording class results for the Pretests and Post Tests.
- **Completed Answer Keys**
Teachers use the Answer Keys to easily correct the tests.

What is the difference between the Pretests, the Post Tests and the Benchmarks?

The 5 Pretests and the 5 Post Tests are designed to assess mastery. In the Pretests in Book AA, students study a visual story and then answer the 6 strategy-based questions based on the picture. In the Post Tests, students read a short passage and then answer the 6 strategy-based questions. Since each test contains only one strategy-specific question, it is important to administer all of the five Pretests in order to assess a student's overall performance and all of the five Post Tests to determine a student's overall progress. Administering multiple tests, and compiling the results, provides reliable information about each strategy.

In the Benchmarks, students read a short passage and then answer the 6 strategy-based questions. The Benchmarks allow you to assess how students are applying strategies over time. The Benchmarks are meant to be used as individual progress-monitoring tools to monitor progress in applying multiple reading strategies to a passage.

When should I use the *CARS Plus Series* in the classroom?

Students complete the tests in the *CARS Plus Series* in the following manner:

- **Pretests:** To get accurate results, administer all 5 Pretests within a five-day period at the beginning of the school year.
- **Benchmarks:** The 5 Benchmarks are progress-monitoring tools and may be completed at any time after the Pretests and before the Post Tests. Space out the administration of the Benchmarks to best meet your classroom needs.
- **Post Tests:** To get accurate results, administer all 5 Post Tests within a five-day period.

How do I use the *CARS Plus Series* with the *STARS Plus Series*?

Because *Comprehensive Assessment of Reading Strategies* is a diagnostic tool, you can determine areas where an individual student needs improvement.

- **Pretests:** Use the results of the Pretests to identify areas of strength and weakness, and to place students in *Strategies to Achieve Reading Success*, the instructional companion of the *CARS Plus Series*.
- **Benchmarks:** Use the Benchmarks to evaluate students' needs and monitor progress in applying multiple reading strategies to a passage.
- **Post Tests:** Use the Post Tests to assess mastery of the strategies taught in the *STARS Plus Series*.

How much time is required to complete *Comprehensive Assessment of Reading Strategies*?

- Each of the 5 Pretests and each of the 5 Post Tests require 45 minutes for completion, correction and discussion.
- Self-assessments 1 and 2 each require about 20 minutes for completion. Students should complete self-assessments no more than one or two days after completion of Pretests 1–5 and Post Tests 1–5.
- Each of the 5 Benchmarks requires 45 minutes for completion, correction and discussion.

You can adjust these suggested times as needed to accommodate your daily schedule of instruction.

Where do students record their answers?

In Book AA, students record their answers directly in the student book.

What is the correction procedure?

For the best results, correct each test orally with students immediately following its completion. Explain concepts that students may not fully understand. Discuss why correct answer choices are correct and why the remaining choices are not correct. If possible, elicit from students their reasoning for choosing an incorrect answer. Incorrect answer choices often include a variety of misunderstandings about the question. Discussing why choices are correct and incorrect will help students review and clarify how they approached a particular strategy.

What forms of student assessment are featured in the *CARS Plus Series* and how do I use them?

In addition to the reading passages and strategy-based questions, *Comprehensive Assessment of Reading Strategies* contains two student self-assessments.

Student Assessments

Students become more successful in reading when they assess their own performance against known standards. Student self-assessment also helps teachers gain insight into a student's measure of performance. Difficulties that a student experiences are often revealed through self-assessment. Self-assessment focuses students on the process of *performance* rather than the *end result*.

For example, in the *CARS Plus* self-assessments, students see how well they recognise and apply reading strategies, rather than focus on how many responses are correct or incorrect. Therefore, the self-assessments become a valuable tool for both student and teacher.

There are 2 self-assessments in the student book. One student self-assessment is completed after all 5 Pretests and the second student self-assessment is completed after all 5 Post Tests.

SELF-ASSESSMENT 1 (page 37 of student book)

After completing Pretests 1–5, students, with teacher guidance, complete their first self-assessment. They answer questions that require thoughtful responses. The questions are designed to help students

- assess their performance.
- determine whether or not they are experiencing difficulty.

Before beginning, be sure each student has a student book open to page 37. For Self-assessment 1, students answer three questions about Pretests 1–5.

SAY: Open your book to page 37. (Pause to make sure all students are on page 37.) Put your finger on the number 1. The directions say: Listen. Choose the best answer. Listen carefully as I read a question aloud:
You did Pretests 1–5. How well do you think you went?

Notice that the answers have both pictures and words. Circle the letter of the answer that best tells how you think you went in Pretests 1–5. A is good. B is went OK. C is could be better.

Pause as the students respond.

SAY: Put your finger on the number 2. The directions say: Listen. Choose the best answer. Listen carefully as I read a question aloud:

How easy or hard were Pretests 1–5 for you?

Circle the letter of the answer that best tells how easy or hard Pretests 1–5 were for you. A is easy. B is a bit hard. C is very hard.

Pause as the students respond.

SAY: Put your finger on the number 3. The directions say: Listen. Choose the best answer. Listen carefully as I read a question aloud:

Did you do the best job you could do on Pretests 1–5?

Circle the letter of the answer that best tells whether you did the best job you could do on Pretests 1–5. A is yes. B is went OK. C is could be better.

Pause as the students respond.

Discuss student responses to Self-assessment 1 before allowing students to proceed to the remaining tests in the book. Arrange one-on-one conferencing after students, with teacher guidance, have completed their assessment. Help students identify their strengths and weaknesses, and provide instruction for clarifying a specific strategy, if needed.

SELF-ASSESSMENT 2 (page 39 of student book)

After completing Post Tests 1–5, students complete their second self-assessment with teacher guidance. Before students begin, have them review the responses to Self-assessment 1. This will help them focus on their performance for the pretests and will remind them of the performance goals they set.

Self-assessment 2 contains questions that require thoughtful responses. The questions are designed to help students

- assess their performance.
- determine whether or not they are experiencing difficulty.

Before beginning, be sure each student has a student book open to page 39. For Self-assessment 2, students answer three questions about Post Tests 1–5.

SAY: Open your book to page 39. (*Pause to make sure all students are on page 39.*)

Put your finger on the number 1. The directions say: **Listen. Choose the best answer.** Listen carefully as I read a question aloud:

You did Post Tests 1–5. How well do you think you went?

Notice that the answers have both pictures and words. Circle the letter of the answer that best tells how you think you went in Post Tests 1–5. **A is good. B is went OK. C is could be better.**

Pause as the students respond.

SAY: Put your finger on the number 2. The directions say: **Listen. Choose the best answer.** Listen carefully as I read a question aloud:

How easy or hard were Post Tests 1–5 for you?

Circle the letter of the answer that best tells how easy or hard Post Tests 1–5 were for you. **A is easy. B is a bit hard. C is very hard.**

Pause as the students respond.

SAY: Put your finger on the number 3. The directions say: **Listen. Choose the best answer.** Listen carefully as I read a question aloud:

Did you do the best job you could do on Post Tests 1–5?

Circle the letter of the answer that best tells whether you did the best job you could do on Post Tests 1–5. **A is yes. B is went OK. C is could be better.**

Pause as the students respond.

What forms of teacher assessment are featured in the *CARS Plus Series* and how do I use them?

Teacher Assessments

There are 3 teacher assessments. These 3 assessments are completed for each student after they have completed Pretests 1–5 and Post Tests 1–5.

Teacher Assessments help facilitate individualised instruction in the classroom. For example, by using the results of student assessments and your teacher assessments, reading groups are easily established for instruction with the *STARS Plus Series*. You will be able to determine how to organise student groups based on reading level and mastery over specific reading strategies.

The purposes of the teacher assessments are to

- identify an individual student’s areas of strength and weakness when applying a reading strategy.
- determine in which specific areas, if any, remediation is needed.

TEACHER ASSESSMENT 1

(reproducible on page 28 of teacher guide)

This assessment is completed using the student’s answers to questions. This assessment reveals a student’s performance for each of the reading strategies.

TEACHER ASSESSMENT 2

(reproducible on page 29 of teacher guide)

This assessment is completed using Teacher Assessment 1. Using the data from Teacher Assessment 1, you create a bar graph that provides a visual comparison of a student’s level of mastery for each of the reading strategies.

TEACHER ASSESSMENT 3

(reproducible on page 30 of teacher guide)

This assessment is completed using Teacher Assessments 1 and 2. Using the data from these assessments, you are able to provide a review of a student’s overall strengths and weaknesses, as well as provide an analysis of those areas that need improvement. This analysis allows you to document what action will be taken – remediation or further instruction – to help the student achieve mastery as well as document the student’s progress after those steps have been taken.

Benchmark I

(Student Book pages 16 and 17)

Before beginning, be sure each student has a student book open to page 16. In this lesson, students listen to a story that is read aloud and then answer six strategy questions about the picture:

SAY: Put your finger at the top of the page next to the directions. Follow along as I read the directions aloud:

Read this story about Mrs Potts. Then answer questions about the story. Choose the best answer for Numbers 1 to 6.

Listen while I read the story aloud.

Mrs Potts loves flowers. She decided to plant a garden so she could have flowers all the time. Mrs Potts planted lots of seeds. Days and days went by, but nothing grew. Mrs Potts planted more seeds. Days and days went by. Still, nothing grew.

Mrs Potts looked out at her empty garden. "What am I doing wrong?" she wondered. Soon a flock of birds swooped down into the garden. The birds began pecking at the dirt. They were eating what was left of Mrs Potts' seeds!

Mrs Potts ran outside and shoed the birds away. Then she went to the shop and bought herself some flowers instead.

Now look at the top of the next page. Put your finger on the number 1. Follow along as I read the question and the answer choices aloud:

1. What is the story mostly about?
A a woman who has flowers all the time
B a woman who cannot get her garden to grow
C a woman who does not like birds

Circle the letter of the correct answer.

Pause to allow students time to consider their answer.

SAY: Put your finger on the number 2. Follow along as I read the question and the answer choices aloud:

2. What did Mrs Potts want?
A to feed the birds
B to have vegetables to eat
C to have flowers all the time

Circle the letter of the correct answer.

Pause to allow students time to consider their answer.

SAY: Put your finger on the number 3. Follow along as I read the question and the answer choices aloud:

3. Which of these happened first?
A Mrs Potts looked out at her empty garden.
B Mrs Potts planted lots of seeds.
C Birds swooped down into her garden.

Circle the letter of the correct answer.

Pause to allow students time to consider their answer.

SAY: Put your finger on the number 4. Follow along as I read the question and the answer choices aloud:

4. Flowers did not grow in Mrs Potts' garden because
A birds ate the seeds.
B she did not plant any seeds.
C she did not water the seeds.

Circle the letter of the correct answer.

Pause to allow students time to consider their answer.

SAY: Put your finger on the number 5. Follow along as I read the question and the answer choices aloud:

5. What will probably happen if Mrs Potts plants more seeds?
A The seeds will grow.
B The seeds will blow away.
C The birds will eat the seeds.

Circle the letter of the correct answer.

Pause to allow students time to consider their answer.

SAY: Put your finger on the number 6. Follow along as I read the question and the answer choices aloud:

6. You can tell that Mrs Potts will probably
A plant more seeds.
B buy some flower pots.
C give up her idea of having a flower garden.

Circle the letter of the correct answer.

Pause to allow students time to consider their answer.

When the lesson is complete, instruct the students to close their book.

Benchmark 2

(Student Book pages 18 and 19)

Before beginning, be sure each student has a student book open to page 18. In this lesson, students listen to a letter that is read aloud and then answer six strategy questions about the letter.

SAY: Put your finger at the top of the page next to the directions. Follow along as I read the directions aloud:

Read this letter Emma wrote. Then answer questions about the letter. Choose the best answer for Numbers 1 to 6.

Listen while I read the letter aloud.

Dear Haley,

Thank you taking care of Fred while I visit my aunt. Fred is easy to care for. But there are a few things you need to know.

Fred eats only once each day. He gets his main meal of vegetables in the morning. He also gets lots of fresh water. He likes lettuce, beans and carrots. Of course, carrots are his favourite. You can let Fred out of his cage for a while in the afternoon. He likes to hop around the yard and nibble the grass. I give Fred a treat just before dinner time. He likes slices of banana or strawberries.

I will be back in three days to pick up Fred. I hope you and Fred will have fun together.

Your friend,

Emma

Now look at the top of the next page. Put your finger on the number 1. Follow along as I read the question and the answer choices aloud:

1. The letter is mostly about
A what an animal likes to eat.
B where an animal lives.
C how to care for an animal named Fred.

Circle the letter of the correct answer.

Pause to allow students time to consider their answer.

SAY: Put your finger on the number 2. Follow along as I read the question and the answer choices aloud:

2. Which of these is something Fred does not eat?
A beans
B carrots
C ice-cream

Circle the letter of the correct answer.

Pause to allow students time to consider their answer.

SAY: Put your finger on the number 3. Follow along as I read the question and the answer choices aloud:

3. What should Haley do first each day?
A give Fred vegetables
B give Fred a treat
C let Fred out of his cage

Circle the letter of the correct answer.

Pause to allow students time to consider their answer.

SAY: Put your finger on the number 4. Follow along as I read the question and the answer choices aloud:

4. Haley is taking care of Fred because
A Emma is visiting her aunt.
B Emma cannot care for Fred anymore.
C Haley takes better care of Fred than Emma does.

Circle the letter of the correct answer.

Pause to allow students time to consider their answer.

SAY: Put your finger on the number 5. Follow along as I read the question and the answer choices aloud:

5. What will happen in three days?
A Fred will get his first treat.
B Emma will return for Fred.
C Haley will begin caring for Fred.

Circle the letter of the correct answer.

Pause to allow students time to consider their answer.

SAY: Put your finger on the number 6. Follow along as I read the question and the answer choices aloud:

6. You can tell that Fred is probably a
A mouse.
B toad.
C rabbit.

Circle the letter of the correct answer.

Pause to allow students time to consider their answer.

When the lesson is complete, instruct the students to close their book.