

# Table of Contents



## Overview

USING THE <i>CARS AND STARS PLUS SERIES</i> .....	4
THE CLASSROOM READING SYSTEM .....	10
FEATURES OF A <i>STARS PLUS</i> LESSON .....	12
RESEARCH SUMMARY .....	24
STRATEGY BOOKMARKS ( <i>Reproducibles</i> ) .....	28

## Lesson Plans

<b>Lesson 1</b>	FINDING MAIN IDEA .....	32
<b>Lesson 2</b>	RECALLING FACTS AND DETAILS .....	38
<b>Lessons 1-2</b>	REVIEW .....	43
<b>Lesson 3</b>	UNDERSTANDING SEQUENCE .....	44
<b>Lesson 4</b>	RECOGNISING CAUSE AND EFFECT .....	50
<b>Lessons 3-4</b>	REVIEW .....	55
<b>Lesson 5</b>	MAKING PREDICTIONS .....	56
<b>Lesson 6</b>	FINDING WORD MEANING IN CONTEXT .....	62
<b>Lessons 5-6</b>	REVIEW .....	67
<b>Lesson 7</b>	DRAWING CONCLUSIONS AND MAKING INFERENCES .....	68
<b>Lesson 8</b>	READING PICTURES .....	74
<b>Lessons 7-8</b>	REVIEW .....	79
<b>Lessons 1-8</b>	FINAL REVIEW .....	80

<b>Answer Form</b> ( <i>Reproducible</i> ) .....	82
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<b>Completed Answer Form</b> .....	84
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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 8 strategies, based on students' needs (differentiate instruction using Books P–H)



## What are the *CARS* and *STARS Plus series*?

The *CARS* 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 8 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 8 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 A in both the *CARS* and *STARS Plus series* features the following 8 reading strategies:

- Finding Main Idea
- Recalling Facts and Details
- Understanding Sequence
- Recognising Cause and Effect
- Making Predictions
- Finding Word Meaning in Context
- Drawing Conclusions and Making Inferences
- Reading Pictures



## How do I get started with the *CARS* 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* and *STARS Plus* series concentrate on 8 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.

# Quick-reference Chart:



## What is in the *STARS Plus* student book?

### Strategy Lessons

Each student book contains 8 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 two-page review lesson follows every two strategy lessons. Students read one longer passage and answer 6 selected-response questions that focus on the target reading strategies in the two previous lessons.

### Final Review

An eight-page final review gives practice in all 8 reading strategies. Students answer 32 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* 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 A* 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 A* 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 first-year students may work in the on-level Book A, which contains reading passages that don't extend beyond a first-year 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 two strategy lessons. The reviews may be used to assess students' mastery of the reading strategies taught in those two lessons in the *STARS Plus* student book.

### *STARS Plus* Final Review

A final review follows all 8 strategy lessons. The final review may be used upon completion of the student book to assess students' mastery of all 8 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 8 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 8 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 82 and 83 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
1	1	<b>Finding Main Idea</b> Introduction and Part One	30–45
2		Part Two	30–45
3		Part Three	30–45
4		Part Four	30–45
5		Part Five	30–45
6	2	<b>Recalling Facts and Details</b> Introduction and Part One	30–45
7		Part Two	30–45
8		Part Three	30–45
9		Part Four	30–45
10		Part Five	30–45
11	1–2	<b>REVIEW</b>	45–60
12	3	<b>Understanding Sequence</b> Introduction and Part One	30–45
13		Part Two	30–45
14		Part Three	30–45
15		Part Four	30–45
16		Part Five	30–45
17	4	<b>Recognising Cause and Effect</b> Introduction and Part One	30–45
18		Part Two	30–45
19		Part Three	30–45
20		Part Four	30–45
21		Part Five	30–45
22	3–4	<b>REVIEW</b>	45–60
23	5	<b>Making Predictions</b> Introduction and Part One	30–45
24		Part Two	30–45
25		Part Three	30–45
26		Part Four	30–45
27		Part Five	30–45

Day	Lesson(s)	Strategy	Minutes
28	6	<b>Finding Word Meaning in Context</b> Introduction and Part One	30–45
29		Part Two	30–45
30		Part Three	30–45
31		Part Four	30–45
32		Part Five	30–45
33		5–6	<b>REVIEW</b>
34	7	<b>Drawing Conclusions and Making Inferences</b> Introduction and Part One	30–45
35		Part Two	30–45
36		Part Three	30–45
37		Part Four	30–45
38		Part Five	30–45
39		8	<b>Reading Pictures</b> Introduction and Part One
40	Part Two		30–45
41	Part Three		30–45
42	Part Four		30–45
43	Part Five		30–45
44	7–8		<b>REVIEW</b>
45	1–8	<b>FINAL REVIEW</b> Parts One and Two	60
46	1–8	<b>FINAL REVIEW</b> Parts Three and Four	60
47	1–8	<b>FINAL REVIEW</b> Discussion of Parts One and Two	30–45
48	1–8	<b>FINAL REVIEW</b> Discussion of Parts Three and Four	30–45



This 12-page section guides teachers through a sample lesson plan from the teacher guide. Each lesson plan contains facsimiles of the student-book lesson. Numbered boxes point out and describe the key features in both the teacher guide and the student book.

## INTRODUCTION

Lesson
4

RECOGNISING CAUSE AND EFFECT

**1** ★ ★ ★ ★ **LESSON OBJECTIVE**

Students will learn to:

- Recognise cause and effect in a reading passage by understanding what happens and why it happens.
- Identify when test questions are asking them to recognise cause and effect.

**2** ★ ★ ★ ★ **GETTING STARTED**

Tell students that today they will learn how to find what happens in a story and why.

**SAY:** Good readers think about what happens in a story and why. Knowing what happens in a story and why it happens helps the reader understand the events in the story. You already know about why things happen because you see this in your everyday life.

**Model the Strategy**

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

**SAY:** Today is a school day, but you have a fever. Your stomach doesn't feel well. You stay home from school. Why do you stay home from school?

Students should say that they stayed home from school because they were sick. Point out staying home is what happened in this example. Being sick is why it happened. This is an example of recognising cause and effect.

**3** **ELL Support**

**Past Tense of Irregular Verbs**

Draw the chart below on the board:

bake	play	feel	make
baked	played	felt	made

Point out to students that the ending *-d* or *-ed* is added to many words to show something that already happened. Explain that this rule of adding *-d* or *-ed* is not true for all words, however. Two of these words are *feel* and *made*. The sentence, "I feel sick" tells about something that is happening now. The sentence, "I felt sick yesterday" tells you about something that already happened. Point out that *-ed* cannot be added to *feel* to show what already happened. The same is true for the word *make*. Tell students that as they read the stories in this lesson, they will find the words *feel* and *felt* in one story (page 39) and the word *made* in another story (page 40).

**4** **Genre Focus**

**Fable**

Define this genre for students. Explain that a fable is a story that usually, though not always, contains animals that can talk. A fable is told in order to teach a lesson. Discuss with students that examples of cause and effect show up in all kinds of stories, especially fables. For example, in the fable *The Boy Who Cried Wolf*, the boy cries "wolf" so many times that the townspeople don't come to his aid when a real wolf appears. The lesson in this story is that no one believes a person who lies even when that person tells the truth. Students will read a fable on page 46.

50

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## RECALLING FACTS AND DETAILS

## ★ ★ ★ ★ LESSON OBJECTIVES

Students will learn to:

- Recall and identify details within a reading passage that support the main idea.
- 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 find details that tell more about the main idea as they read.

**SAY:** Good readers know that the most important idea of a story tells what the story is mostly about. Good readers also know that all of the ideas in a story tell something about the main idea. These ideas are called details. You already know how to find details because you do it in your everyday life.

**Model the Strategy**

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

**SAY:** Someone asks you “What did you do at school today?” You tell about the things you did.

Point out to students that when they tell about the things they did, they are remembering things that happened. Explain that this is an example of recalling facts and details.

**ELL Support****Compound Words**

Tell students that words made up of two smaller words are called compound words. Explain that the meaning of a compound word can usually be found by looking at the two words that make it up. Guide students to identify the two words in *snowman* (*snow* and *man*). Discuss how each of the two words has its own meaning. Together, they make a new word with a new but similar meaning. Write the words *everyone* and *birdhouse* on the board. Discuss the meanings of these compound words. Tell students that as they read the stories in this lesson, they will find the compound words *everyone* (page 16), *birdhouse* (page 18) and *snowman* (page 21).

**Genre Focus****Nonfiction**

Define this genre for students. Explain that some stories they read tell about people and events that are real. Stories that tell about real information are full of facts and details. Illustrate the difference between stories that are made up (fiction) and stories that are true (nonfiction) by providing examples of both types of books. Choose a theme, such as bears. Show students books about the Berenstain Bears. Point out that these bears wear clothes and talk and do things real bears cannot do. Next, show students books about actual bears. Point out examples that show these books tell about real bears – where they live, what they look like, what they eat and so on. These bears do not wear clothes or behave like people. Students will read nonfiction on pages 16, 20, 21 and 22.

## RECOGNISING CAUSE AND EFFECT

## ★ ★ ★ ★ LESSON OBJECTIVES

Students will learn to:

- Recognise cause and effect in a reading passage by understanding what happens and why it happens.
- Identify when test questions are asking them to recognise cause and effect.

## ★ ★ ★ ★ GETTING STARTED

Tell students that today they will learn how to find what happens in a story and why.

**SAY:** Good readers think about what happens in a story and why. Knowing what happens in a story and why it happens helps the reader understand the events in the story. You already know about why things happen because you see this in your everyday life.

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## Fable

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