

Our most recent Blogs at **Linguistic Foundations** have focused on some of the Language Skills and Cognitive-Thinking Abilities that are a fundamental part of the Reading and Writing Process.

Language Skills

- *Phonological Awareness (Oct.29th, Nov 13th & Dec 12th)
- *Vocabulary
- *Knowledge of Sentences
- *Comprehension
- *Higher-level Language

Cognitive Abilities

- *Retrieval (March 19th)
- *Working Memory (April 8th)
- *Organizational Skills

This Blog will begin to address **Comprehension**. **Comprehension** is **THE** real goal of Reading. **The reason we read is to understand**. And as a Parent or Teacher, we want to know a child's strengths and weaknesses in this area, so we can teach her most effectively.

Reading Comprehension emerges from Language Comprehension and is the application of overall language understanding into reading. In many ways – *but not in all ways* – a child's **Reading Comprehension** depends on her Language Comprehension skill.

It makes sense that if – as a parent – you want to learn more about your child's **Reading Comprehension**, you would want to learn about both her Language Comprehension and Reading Comprehension. However, assessing your child's **Reading Comprehension**, I think, is complicated.

Some classroom teachers might specifically assess their students' **Reading Comprehension** as they teach reading to their students, and you want to find out that information!

Classroom-based standardized tests like the *Stanford Achievement Tests* have sections that specifically test Language- and **Reading-Comprehension**, but the results might not be useful to describe a child's strengths and weaknesses. So these results don't really help a teacher to build a teaching plan for each child.

Educational tests that a School Psychologist or Special Education Teacher might use – like the *Wechsler Individual Achievement Test-III (WIAT-III)* or *Woodcock-Johnson-IV (WJ-IV)* – have **Comprehension** subtests, but there may be only a couple of subtests available among a lot of other areas to assess.

Speech-Language Pathologists usually address Language Comprehension very carefully. But Speech Pathologists sometimes do not target **Reading Comprehension**, and so the complete picture of Comprehension may be missing from this testing.

In Massachusetts, children are tested using the *MCAS* or *PARCC*; both target some Language and **Reading Comprehension**. Teachers often analyze these test areas for their classrooms and develop specific points to bring into their instruction. But it is sometimes difficult for a teacher to really *differentiate* toward each child's individual needs when an entire class is being studied.

In summary, the best first step you can make to learn how your child understands the books and texts that she reads is to speak to her Classroom Teacher and any other Specialist Teachers (like a Speech-language Pathologist or Special Education Teacher) she might have.

If you have any general questions about **Reading Comprehension** or specific questions related to your child, please contact us at **Linguistic Foundations**. In addition, as a part of our testing process, we address **Language Comprehension** and **Reading Comprehension** in a very complete way.