

Stephanie Harvey and Harvey "Smokey" Daniels (*Comprehension and Collaboration*, rev.ed. 2015) propose this **Comprehension Continuum** with teacher questions:

Answer Literal Questions:

What is...? Where did...? Who was...? How did...? How many...?

Retells:

Tell me what happened...Tell me what this was about... Retell what you read...

What comes first...second...third? What did...?

Merges Thinking with Content:

What do you think? What did you learn? What does this remind you of?

What do you wonder? What do you infer? What is this mostly about?

What makes you say that? How did you come up with that?

What makes you think that?

Acquires Knowledge:

What did you learn that you think is important to remember? Why does it matter?

What do you think the author most wants you to get out of this?

What evidence can you cite to make your claim? What difference does it make?

What do you think are some big ideas here? Say more about that...

Actively Uses Knowledge:

What do you want to do about this? Why do you want to take action? Is there a way you can get involved? How do you think you can help? How can you convince others to get involved? What is your plan?

Additional questions for reader response: *Guiding Readers and Writers* (2001)
by Fountas and Pinnell, Henieman. (See pages 280-297.)

Tanny McGregor proposes thinking stems for students in *Comprehension Connections* (2007).

Metacognition (thinking about our thinking): I'm thinking... I'm noticing...

I'm wondering ... I'm seeing ...I'm feeling ...

Schema (making connections using our prior knowledge): That reminds me of ...

I'm remembering ...I have a connection to...I have a schema for ... I can relate to ...

Determining Importance (what matters most): What's important here ...What matters to me

...One thing that we should notice ...I want to remember...It's interesting that...

Inferring (schema + evidence = inference): Maybe... Perhaps ...It could be that ...

This could mean ...I predict ...I infer ...

Questioning (generate questions before, during, after reading): I wonder...What if ... Why...

I don't understand...It confused me when ...How could...

Visualizing(create mental images—use your senses): I'm picturing ...I can imagine ...

I can feel ...see ... smell ...taste...touch ...hear ...My mental images include...

Synthesizing(Changing your thinking along the way): Now I understand why...

I'm changing my mind about...I used to think ___ but now I think...My new thinking is...

I'm beginning to think...

Email Kaye for student-friendly cards of Tanny McGregor's thinking stems:

kayepriehawkins@aol.com

CREST RoundTable Discussion – Fall 2015

The Question IS....

What's the Question?

Making a difference: Comprehension and Craft



COMPREHENSION

- ◆ Who are the characters?
- ◆ What is happening? What motivated the character to do this?
- ◆ How does the situation or character change?
- ◆ What are the problems/conflicts/difficulties faced by the main character (and other characters if appropriate)?
- ◆ How did the character (or characters) respond to these situations?
- ◆ How were the problems solved or the conflicts resolved?
- ◆ Where and when is the story taking place? What effect does the setting have on the story?
- ◆ What specific lines stand out to you? What purpose did this part of the text serve in advancing the story?
- ◆ What is the main idea?
- ◆ What is the lesson or moral?
- ◆ Can you summarize the story in two or three sentences?
- ◆ What vocabulary assisted or hindered your understanding of the story?

CRAFT

- ◆ How does the author use language to create the desired effect on the reader?
 1. figurative language (simile, metaphor, personification, onomatopoeia)
 2. repetition
 3. contrast
 4. irony
 5. striking changes in syntax
 6. punctuation and white space
 7. dialogue
 8. imagery (sensory details= picture)
- ◆ Why did the author choose to use certain rhetorical devices or literary elements?
- ◆ What is the relationship between word choices (diction) and the author's tone and mood in the selection?
- ◆ What is the theme or the big idea?
- ◆ How does the language change for varying genres?
- ◆ What text features did the author choose to contribute to the understanding of the piece?
- ◆ Make connections (e.g., thematic links, author analysis) between and across multiple texts of various genres and provide textual evidence.

Facilitated by Kaye Price-Hawkins, Priceless Literacy
2401 S. Willis, Suite 108; Abilene, TX 79605
www.pricelessliteracy.homestead.com

STAAR Released Question Stems (by genre-assorted grades):

Fiction

Fifth Grade (2014)

1. The narrator's actions in paragraphs # through # of the story show that he —
2. What is the meaning of the word ___ in paragraph #?
3. According to the story, the reason the narrator doesn't initially ___ is that—
4. Read the following sentence from paragraph #. XX What can the reader conclude about the narrator from this sentence?
5. The author uses the description of ___ to show —
6. Based on their actions described in the story, the narrator's (relatives) most likely think it's important to—
7. The narrator's actions in paragraph # imply that he will —
8. Which sentences best help to create suspense in the story?
9. (Character) contributes to solving the narrator's problem mostly by —

Literary Nonfiction:

Third Grade (2014)—Biography:

1. (Character) earned the nickname “___” because he —
2. Which words from paragraph # help the reader understand the meaning of expand?
3. What is one theme presented in the selection?
4. The photograph included in the selection shows readers that (character) —
5. In paragraph #, (word) means —
6. (Character) believes it is important for (group of people) to —
7. With which statement would the author most likely agree?

Fifth Grade (2014)—Biography:

1. Having access to the ___ during her childhood made (person) realize that she —
2. (Character)'s actions in paragraphs # and # support the message that —
3. What is the best summary of the section titled “___”?
4. What does the first photograph in this selection show?
5. Read this sentence...The author included this quotation to show the reader that (character)-
6. The author says that (character) “quote” to emphasize character's belief that —

Eighth Grade (2014)—Memoir:

1. What can the reader conclude about (writer)'s relationship with (___)?
2. (Writer) uses paragraph # to convey to the reader —
3. The reader can best identify this selection as a memoir because it —
4. (Writer) includes paragraphs # and # in the selection most likely to illustrate that —
5. (Writer) wrote this selection most likely to —

Poetry

Third Grade (2013):

1. Read line # from the poem. The poet uses this line to show that the speaker is—
2. Why does the poet use the exclamation points in the first stanza?
3. Read lines # and # from the poem. The poet uses these lines to show —
4. Which of these lines from the poem rhyme?
5. Read lines # s (lines not numbered) from the poem. These lines best support the idea that the speaker-
6. How does the speaker feel throughout the poem?

Fourth Grade (2014):

1. What identifies this poem as an example of free verse?
2. Which line from the poem shows that the speaker is not worried about___?
3. What is the speaker's main purpose in the poem?
4. The poet uses lines # through # mainly to--
5. What is the meaning of the word ___ in line #?
6. What is emphasized by the repetition of the words “___” in the poem?
7. What is the message of the poem?

English II EOC (2014):

1. Which quotation can best be described as conveying the idea of ___ (i.e. freedom)?
 1. In the first #_ lines, the poet uses imagery to describe —
 2. In line #, it is significant to the theme of the poem that___ because this shows that they are —
 3. In lines # through #, the (something in the poem) is a symbol for the speaker's —
 4. Read this sentence from lines # through #. The reader can conclude that the speaker is —
 5. In the last three lines, the tone of the poem shifts from —

Check the 2015 released questions for additional ways these questions are asked.

STAAR Released Question Stems (by genre-assorted grades):

Expository

Third Grade (2014):

1. Look at the diagram below. Which of the following completes the diagram?
2. Which number on the diagram shows ___?
3. The photograph next to paragraph # shows that—
4. Which word is a synonym for ___ in paragraph #?
5. Which sentence from the article tells something that could be a problem with ___?
6. The author wrote this article mainly to —
7. Which text feature in the article helps the reader understand how ___?
8. The main reason for ___ in (place) is to —
9. After reading paragraph #, the reader can conclude that (person) was —
10. The author included paragraph # most likely to —
11. Which words from paragraph # help the reader understand what ___ means in paragraph #?
12. Which sentence best explains what is happening in the photograph or tells something that___?
13. Which word best describes (person)'s behavior toward ___?

Seventh Grade (2014):

1. In paragraph #, the examples of ___ suggest that a major role of an (occupation) is to —
2. Read the dictionary entry for the word ___. Which definition represents the meaning of (word) as it is used in paragraph #? **OR** In paragraph #, the word ___ means —
3. Based on information in the selection, which of these would (company) most likely ___?
4. Which sentence suggests the author thinks (___)'s work is important **OR** expresses an opinion?
5. Which emotion is the photograph most likely intended to evoke in the reader?
6. Which sentence expresses an opinion?
7. What is the most likely reason that the author has included paragraph # in the article?
8. The images included with the article help the reader understand —

Drama

Fourth Grade (2013/2014):

1. Which words in paragraph # help the reader understand the meaning of the word ___?
2. Read these lines from the play. “xxx” These lines suggest that (character) believes ___ —
3. Which line supports the idea that (character) has done something to feel___?
4. What lesson does (one character) learn from (another character)?
5. Which quotation from the play best explains ___ reason for (doing something)?
6. Read this stage direction from the play. What does this suggest about (character)?
7. How does (character 2) contribute to the plot of the play?
8. The playwright creates a surprise by —

Sixth Grade (2014):

1. Read this line from the play. What is the most likely purpose of this line?
2. What is the best summary of the play?
3. The (characters)' conversation in Scene # is important because it —
4. Which words from Scene # help the reader know what (word) means?
5. Why are the stage directions at the end of Scene # important?
6. What causes the (character) to realize he made a mistake?
7. The language used in paragraph # helps the reader infer that—

Persuasive Questions

Fifth Grade (2011):

1. Based on information in the letter, (Writer) would most likely agree/disagree with which statement?
2. Which of these sources does (Writer) use to support his/her argument?
3. (Writer) organized the information in his/her letter mostly by—
4. What can the reader infer from the last sentence of (Writer's) letter?
5. (Writer) uses the information in paragraphs 2, 3 and 6 to show that...
6. What does (Writer) hope to accomplish by writing his/her letter?
7. (Writer's) main argument is that —

English I EOC (2014):

1. Why does the author use sensory images in paragraph #?
2. In which line does the author use alliteration to support the primary message of the selection?
3. Read this sentence from paragraph #. The author makes this statement to suggest that —
4. In which line from the article does the author reveal how she would like others to respond to _
5. Why does the author conclude the article by addressing the reader directly?

Check the 2015 released questions for additional ways these questions are asked.