CMS SATS EVENING: READING PAPER.

tips + resources for parents/carers supporting their children at home with their reading
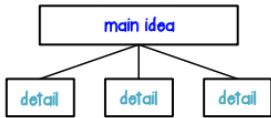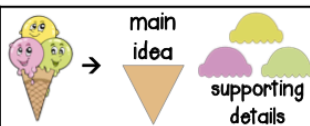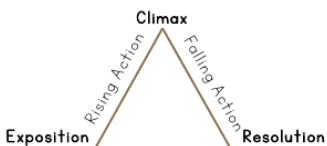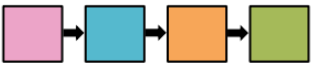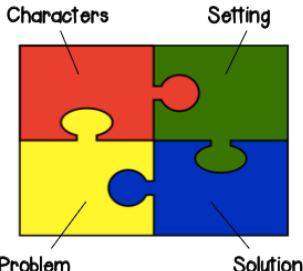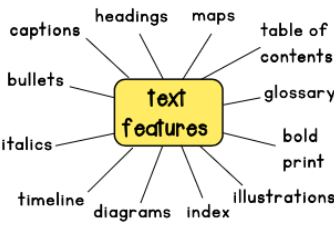
The 2025 SATs reading test will take place on **Tuesday, May 13, 2025.** The test will be 60 minutes long.

Which skills are the children tested on?

2a	2b	2c	2d
2a – give / explain the meaning of words in context	2b – retrieve and record information / identify key details from fiction and non-fiction	2c – summarise main ideas from more than one paragraph	2d – make inferences from the text / explain and justify inferences with evidence from the text
Vocabulary	Retrieve / Question / 123 Sequence	Summarise	Infer

2e	2f	2g	2h
2e – predict what might happen from details stated and implied	2f – identify / explain how information / narrative content is related and contributes to meaning as a whole	2g – identify / explain how meaning is enhanced through choice of words and phrases	2h – make comparisons within the text
Predict	Explain	Vocabulary	Compare

Areas to focus on:

Inferences

Readers use the clues in the text along with their background knowledge (schema) to understand the text deeper.

Text Clues + Schema = Inference

Main Idea & Details

Readers determine what a text is mostly about and can support that idea with details from the text.

main idea

detail — detail — detail

main idea → supporting details

Plot Structure

Readers determine the important events and parts of a story in the order they occurred.

Climax

Rising Action — Falling Action

Exposition — Resolution

Exposition: characters, setting, main problem told
Rising Action: events that build suspense
Climax: the big, turning point of the story
Falling Action: conflict and climax are taken care of
Resolution: story wraps up with the ending

Predictions

Readers use what they know and have read to think about what is going to happen next.

Before	During	After
Look at the cover and title.	What could happen next?	Check your prediction.

Point of View

Readers determine from which perspective the author chose to write the text.

1st Person	2nd Person	3rd Person
I, me, my, we, us, our	you, your	he, she, his, her, it, they, them, their

Sequence

Readers determine the correct order of the steps and events that took place in the text.

Beginning: First, In the beginning, Initially, To begin, To start

Middle: Next, In the middle, After that, Then, To continue

End: Last, At the end, To end, To conclude

Story Elements

Readers read to identify the characters, setting, problem, and solution in a story.

Characters — Setting

Problem — Solution

Text Features

Readers use the various elements in a nonfiction text to help them learn new information and understand it better.

captions, headings, maps, table of contents, bullets, text features, glossary, italics, bold print, timeline, diagrams, index, illustrations

Theme

Readers determine the message, or lesson, that the author wanted them to take away from the story.

lesson, moral, message

courage	honesty	respect
kindness	friendship	hard work
jealousy	family	acceptance

Using Prior Knowledge

Readers use what they already know to respond to their reading.

- your experiences
- people you know
- your memories
- your ideas
- what you know
- things you've seen
- things you've heard
- how you feel
- what you've learned
- places you've been

Making Connections

Readers connect what they know to what they are reading.

| Text – Self | Text – Text | Text – World |

Making Inferences

Readers "read between the lines" and make an educated guess using their knowledge and text evidence.

Text Clues	+	Schema	=	Inference
What does the text say?		What is your background knowledge?		What guess can you make?

Understanding Characters

Readers follow the words and actions of characters to determine their different traits and feelings.

Traits describe how a person is on the inside or outside. Traits do not change often or at all.

Feelings can change quickly due to certain events and situations.

Summarizing

Readers identify the most important ideas of what they read and restate them in their own words.

SWBST: (Somebody… Wanted… But… So… Then…)
BME: (Beginning… Middle… End)
Fiction: characters, setting, problem, solution
Nonfiction: a main idea, sentences to explain each subsection, supporting details

Using Context Clues

Readers use their knowledge and text clues to figure out the meaning of unknown vocabulary.

Look for clues in the actual sentence and in the sentences that surround the unknown word.

Visualizing

Readers picture what is happening while they are reading.

Use your 5 senses!

| sight | touch | smell | sound | taste |

Questioning

Readers think about their reading and ask questions about it.

Most questions start with the words…		
who	what	when
where	why	how

Monitoring & Clarifying

Readers stop to think about their reading and use reading strategies to help make sense of any confusion.

text clues   my schema

"I am thinking…"

Synthesizing

Readers' thoughts grow and change as they read new information and gather more details.

At first I was thinking… → As I was reading, I was thinking… → After reading, I now think…

Which style of questions commonly occur on the SATs paper?

Vocabulary Questions
2a: Give/explain the meaning of words in context.

Vocabulary questions are all about the words that a writer uses and the meaning of those words. This can include the child's ability to:

- explain and understand the meaning of words in a text;

- decipher the meaning of unfamiliar words by using clues from the text;

- identify the correct usage of a word by its context (i.e. bat – a piece of sports equipment or an animal);

- recognise synonyms (words with the same meaning) and antonyms (words with an opposite meaning).

Example questions include:
'Find and copy a word in the text that means relatives from long ago?'

'The mud flats would have formed a freshwater oasis in an otherwise parched environment. Give the meaning of the word parched in this sentence.'

The best way to support the development of your child's vocabulary is through lots of talk and lots of reading. Don't be afraid to use more advanced vocabulary and to explain its meaning to your child (which teachers do all the time). When reading to your child or hearing them read to you, discuss the meanings of words they come across and talk about how we could use those words in different situations.

Retrieval Questions

2b: Retrieve and record information/identify key details from fiction and non-fiction.

Retrieval questions simply ask pupils to find information within the text. They test pupils' basic understanding of what they have read and may ask about characters, the setting of the story, key events and in non-fiction texts, just the facts.

Example questions include:

'Who is telling this story?'

'Where is the story set?'

'Write down one fact you have learnt about spiders.'

When answering questions like this, it is important that pupils are able to pick out the key information rather than copying out chunks of text in the hope that the answer is in there somewhere.

The best way to support your child with retrieval is to talk about books you have shared together and ask questions about them. Encourage your child to focus on what the question is asking. For example, if you ask, 'Who is the main character in this story?' They shouldn't just name all the characters but should think about who takes a main part in the story and could, therefore, be called the main character.

Summary Questions
2c: Summarise main ideas from more than one paragraph.

Summary questions will test your child's ability to summarise (or retell) the most important points of a text without giving a detailed and in depth summary of what they have read.

S

Example questions include:

'Can you describe what has happened in this chapter?'

'What is the most important message in the leaflet?

'What is the main argument of the letter?'

It is very important that your child reads these types of questions carefully. For instance, the topic of a text may be the rainforest but there could be a section about deforestation section. Therefore, if the question was, 'what is the author's main point in this section?' and they wrote 'the rainforest', then this would be classed as incorrect as the correct answer should have been 'deforestation'.

To support your child at home, ask them to summarise the key points of a chapter or section of a book they have read. You could also ask them to summarise films and television shows (or segments of them) that they have watched to reinforce this skill.

Inference Questions
2d: Make inferences from the text/explain and justify inferences with evidence from the text.

Inference questions involve being a 'reading detective' as children have to use clues from a text to infer meaning. This could be about the author's intentions, the layout of a text or a character's thoughts and feelings.

I

For example, a text may read:
'It's not fair!" shouted Jack as he slammed the door shut and flung himself onto his bed. He picked up his pillow and screamed loudly into it.

Inference questions about this section of text may include:
'How is Jack feeling?'

'Where do you think Jack is?'

Your child needs to use the clues within the text to work out an answer and justify it, e.g. 'He is feeling angry because it says he slammed the door and screamed into his pillow,' or 'He is in his bedroom because it says he was on his bed and picked up a pillow'.

Inference questions are very much about asking pupils what they think but they must be able to justify their answer by referring back to the text.

To support your child with inference questions, talk about what you have been reading together and ask lots of questions that begin with 'why', 'where', 'who', 'how', 'what', 'do you think….?' Encourage your child to explain why they think something and to refer back to the story to find evidence to back up their ideas.

Prediction Questions
2e: Predict what might happen from details stated and implied.

Prediction questions ask pupils to say what they think will happen next, based on what they have read so far.

P

Example questions include:

'What do you think will happen to Sam when he goes into the forest?'

'How do you think the story will end?'

'What features would you expect to see in this type of text?

As with inference questions, children need to use their understanding of the text to justify their answer.

To help your child with these types of questions, stop regularly when reading together to ask, 'What do you think will happen next?'

Discuss your child's ideas and share your ideas too. Try to model your thinking aloud about what you already know about the story and the characters to help you to make predictions about what may come next.

Compare, Contrast And Comment Questions
2f: Identify/explain how information/narrative content is related and contributes to meaning as a whole.
2h: Make comparisons within the text.

For these types of questions, children are expected to identify links between different parts of a text, and also explain how a whole text conveys a message or idea. These questions also ask children to make compare different sections, people, and places within a text. They may be asked to compare different characters, settings or themes within the text.

C

Example questions include:

'At what point did the character's mood change?'

'How do the characters react differently to the situation?'

Author Choice Questions

2g: Identify/explain how meaning is enhanced through choice of words and phrases.

For questions about the author's words and phrases, children must be able to explain and comment on writers' use of language. They have to explain how words and phrases add extra meaning to the text.

A

Example questions include:

'…they crossed the glassy surface of the lake…

What two impressions does this give of the water?'

'Why has the author used the verb 'zoomed' in this sentence?'

'Find and copy three words or phrases that the writer has used to show that the children are in a dangerous situation.'

Questions to discuss with your child when reading:

Vocabulary Questions

V

- What does this word tell us about the character/setting/atmosphere?

- Look at a sentence/passage and find a word that means the same as …

- Which words/phrase in this text give us the impression that the main character is…?

- Which words/phrase in this text give us the impression that the setting is…?

- Which words/phrase in this text give us the impression that the atmosphere is…?

- What do phrases such as … tell you about…?

Retrieval Questions

R

- Where is the story set?

- Put the events of the story in the order in which they have happened?

- What is the name of the main character?

- How does the main character look/behave/speak?

- When is the story set?

- What are the names of the characters in the book?

- Where would you find a section about…?

- What does the word… mean?

- Find a fact about …

- What information have you learnt about …?

Summary Questions

- What is the main argument in this paragraph?

- What is the main message in this paragraph? Can you describe what has happened in this chapter?

- Describe how to …. (based on a concept in the text)

- Using less than 20 words, describe/write a blurb for this book.

- Which is the most important message in this book?

- Can you describe what happened in 3 sentences?

Inference Questions

- What does…think?

- How did … react?

- What makes you think that? Give evidence for your opinions.

- Explain why the author chose to…?

- How was… different after…?

- How did…?

- Why did…?

- What ideas are we given about…?

- What impression do we get about…?

- What do you think will happen to the main character now? Can you give reasons for your opinion?

- What makes you think this?

- Why did the character behave like this?

Prediction Questions

- Who is on the front cover? What is in the background? How might these details give us clues about the content of the book?

- Based on what you know about the character/event what do you think the story will develop next?

- How do you think the story will end? What clues in the text make you think that will happen?

- Think about the author's other stories. Are there any familiar themes/characters/settings to the story we are reading? How did the story end? How might this story end?

- Do you think the character will change his/her behaviour in the future? What makes you think this?

- The character is in a tricky situation. What will the character do next? What would you do? Why?

Compare, Contrast And Comment Questions

C

- Describe how the character reacts to this problem. How is this different/similar to his/her previous reactions?

- Compare how two characters are reacting to this problem. Who deals best with the situation?

- How has the character changed during the text?

- Which is the most important section in this book? Justify your choice.

- How did people in the past understand this topic, compared to how we understand it today? Why have these views changed?

- Compare one setting to another in the book. Why are the two settings significant to the story?

Author Choice Questions

A

- What does the word …tell us about the character/setting/atmosphere?

- Look for a phrase that implies that the setting is…

- The author uses the word …to describe… What impression does this give us?

- Look for an example of a simile in the text. How does this add meaning?

- How have the headings/chapter names been chosen for this book?

- Explain why the word…is used to describe…

- Why does the writer compare… to…?

- What does the word/phrase… tell you about …?

Sentence starters to help your child express their ideas/opinions:

Readers respond to their reading in a variety of ways.

Using Prior Knowledge
- I am remembering...
- I have schema for...
- From my experience...
- I already know...
- From my knowledge...
- ___ reminds me of...
- I remember hearing about...

Making Connections
- My connection is...
- This reminds me of...
- This is similar to... different than...
- I understand... because...
- I remember a time...
- I can connect to... because...
- This book made me think of...

Making Inferences
- I can infer...
- I can figure out that...
- From the text clues, I can infer...
- Based on what I know and read, I think...
- My guess is...
- After I read, I concluded that...
- I think... because...

Evaluating Text
- I liked the part where... because...
- I disliked... because...
- I liked/disliked the way the author...
- I learned...
- I would/would not recommend this to... because...
- This book could be better if...

Summarizing
- A summary of this text is...
- In the beginning... middle... end...
- This book/story is about...
- The big events in sequence are...
- First... next... then... finally...
- The main idea is... Details are...
- In my own words, this is about...

Predicting
- I can predict...
- Based on the title and cover, I think...
- I think ___ will happen next because...
- I think the story will end with...
- My prediction was... but now I think...
- After reading, I predict...
- I think the character will ___ because...

Visualizing
- I can imagine...
- In my mind, I can picture...
- I am visualizing...
- The movie I see in my head shows...
- I am making a mental picture of...
- I am seeing...
- I can envision...

Questioning
Who... What... When... Where... Why... How...
- I wonder...
- I don't understand...
- What would happen if...
- I have a question about...
- I am trying to figure out...
- I am unsure about...

Monitoring & Clarifying
- I had to slow down when...
- I was confused by...
- I had some difficulty understanding...
- I needed to reread the part where... because...
- I used ___ (strategy) to help me understand...

Synthesizing
- At first I was thinking... but now...
- While reading, I changed my thinking when...
- At the end of reading, I now think...
- My thinking changed by...
- My thoughts grew differently when...
- I'm changing my mind about...