

RESEARCH AND STANDARDS

Teaching reading comprehension strategies to students with reading difficulties is particularly important, according to recent research. As Sousa notes, "Students with reading disorders often have difficulty deriving meaning from what they read. If little or no meaning comes from reading, students lose motivation to read. Furthermore, meaning is essential for long-term retention of what they have read. Strategies designed to improve reading comprehension have been shown to improve students' interest in reading and their success" (2001).

Basic Reading Series was created to provide multiple opportunities for students to read short passages at their independent reading levels and then complete targeted reading comprehension activities based on those passages. This approach is in line with Lyon's testimony on learning disabilities research. "The average child needs between 4 and 14 exposures to automatize the recognition of a new word. Therefore, in learning to read, it is vital that children read a large amount of text at their independent reading level (with 95 percent accuracy) and that the text provide specific practice in the skills being learned" (*Literacy: Why Children Can't Read*, 1997).

Reading comprehension involves the coordination of both the implicit and explicit information provided by a text passage. Therefore, *Basic Reading Series* focuses on specific practice in ten of the most commonly tested comprehension skills (context clues, cause and effect, details, main idea, story elements, sequencing, predicting outcomes, drawing conclusions, summarizing, and fact and opinion). Students have the opportunity to learn each skill individually and then integrate it with other skills in the Reflect and Review activities, as well as in the final assessment. As stated in the *Put Reading First* document from the National Institute for Literacy, "Although it can be helpful to provide students with instruction in individual comprehension strategies, good readers must be able to coordinate and adjust several strategies to assist comprehension" (2001).

Basic Reading Series meets both state and national standards (including the Standards for the English Language Arts, which are sponsored by the National Council of Teachers of English and the International Reading Association) regarding reading comprehension. As students read the passages and complete the activities in this book, they will:

- read a wide range of both fiction and nonfiction passages.
- learn and use a variety of reading comprehension strategies, including word identification, recognition of cause and effect, and identification of main idea and supporting details.
- paraphrase and summarize written passages.
- draw inferences based upon evidence in written passages.
- identify story elements, including character, setting, events, and problem resolution.

Armbruster, B. B., Lehr, F., & Osborn, J. (2001). *Put Reading First: The Research Building Blocks for Teaching Children to Read: Kindergarten Through Grade 3*. Washington, DC: The National Institute for Literacy.

Literacy: Why Children Can't Read: Hearing before the Committee on Education and the Workforce, House of Representatives, 105th Cong., 12 (1997) (testimony of Reid Lyon).

Sousa, D. A. (2001). *How the Special Needs Brain Learns*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, Inc.