

# Helping your child with comprehension

First Comprehension is aimed at children who may be new to answering written comprehension questions. With your support, your child will learn to:

- read, understand and enjoy a wide range of different stories, poems and non-fiction texts
- understand what they need to do in order to answer different types of comprehension question
- answer the questions accurately and thoughtfully.

## Helping your child get ready to answer the questions

A brilliant way to help your child is to **read and talk about** the story, poem, or non-fiction piece with them, before they even start looking at the questions. You may wish to read the piece aloud to them – or if they are confident and enjoy reading, you could ask them to read it aloud to you.

After reading the piece, talk about it with your child. For a story or poem, try asking the following questions.

- What happened?
- Who were the main characters and what did you think of them?
- Which was your favourite part and why?
- What do you think will happen next?

For a non-fiction piece, ask these questions.

- What was it all about?
- Did you enjoy it? Why, or why not?
- What was the most interesting thing you found out?

It is important to share your own thoughts about the piece with your child.

## Tackling the questions

To start with, you may want to discuss the questions together with your child, while they are working through them. Here are some ideas to help with this.

- Read the questions to your child (if necessary) and encourage them to answer the questions orally before they write down the answers. This allows you to discuss things if your child is puzzled or does not know what to do.
- If your child does not understand one of the questions, talk about it and see if you can work it out together.
- If your child gets stuck, you could ask questions to help them with their answer – for example, saying, “The question asks where we think the boots are walking. Well, the poem says that they ‘squelch through mud and trample roots’ – does that sound like the town or the countryside? Can you see anything else in the poem that tells us the boots might be in the countryside?”
- Once your child is comfortable answering the questions out loud, encourage them to work by themselves and only offer your own ideas if they get stuck.