

FICTION & POETRY



**ANDREW JENNINGS
WITH ADAM BUSHNELL**



COMPREHENSION NINJA

MASTERING COMPREHENSION: Photocopiable Activities to Improve Reading

FOR AGES 7-8



BLOOMSBURY

COMPREHENSION
NINJA

**FOR AGES 7–8:
FICTION & POETRY**

**ANDREW JENNINGS
WITH ADAM BUSHNELL**

BLOOMSBURY EDUCATION
Bloomsbury Publishing Plc
50 Bedford Square, London, WC1 3DP, UK
29 Earlsfort Terrace, Dublin 2, Ireland

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A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN: PB: 978-1-4729-8985-7; ePDF: 9-781-4729-9122-5

2 4 6 8 10 9 7 5 3 1

Text design by Marcus Duck Design

Printed and bound in the UK by Ashford Colour Press



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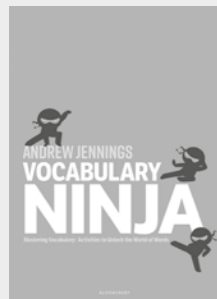
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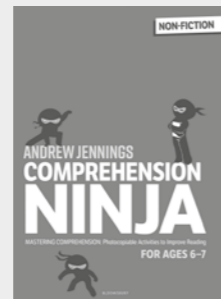
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FOR TEACHERS



VOCABULARY NINJA

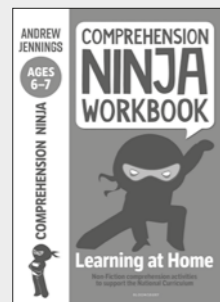
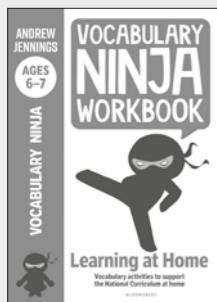
A practical guide containing strategies and photocopiable activities to help transform pupils into vocabulary ninjas. Featuring theory and teaching approaches, as well as key topic vocabulary, etymology and phrases, this book will bring the primary curriculum to life.



COMPREHENSION NINJA NON-FICTION

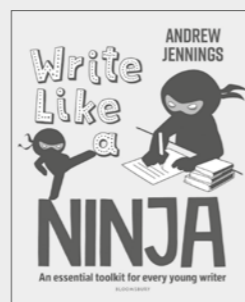
A set of six books for ages 5–11 that provide strategies and photocopiable resources to teach comprehension. Each book presents 24 high-quality non-fiction texts and photocopiable activities with strong links to the National Curriculum.

FOR CHILDREN



NINJA WORKBOOKS

Vocabulary and comprehension workbooks to support learning at home. Each workbook contains bespoke non-fiction texts and hundreds of questions that are linked to the National Curriculum. Perfect for developing literacy skills and boosting children's confidence in literacy and reading comprehension.



WRITE LIKE A NINJA

A pocket-sized book full of all the grammar, vocabulary and sentence structures that children need in order to improve and develop their writing skills. Fully aligned to the Key Stage 2 National Curriculum, this book is designed to be used independently by pupils both in the classroom and at home.

FURTHER RESOURCES FOR SCHOOLS, TEACHERS AND CHILDREN ONLINE

Head to www.vocabularyninja.co.uk and follow @VocabularyNinja on Twitter for more teaching and learning resources to support the teaching of vocabulary, reading, writing and the wider primary school curriculum.



INTRODUCTION

THE COMPREHENSION NINJA: FICTION & POETRY SERIES

The Comprehension Ninja: Fiction & Poetry series has been designed to be an essential resource for teaching reading comprehension skills and building pupil confidence. The books focus on information retrieval, using core comprehension skills that underpin the reading domains set out by the National Curriculum.

Each of the six books in the series contains 24 awesome fiction and poetry texts, followed by comprehension activities. The texts have been curated to feature a range of authors, genres and text types from the world of children's literature and poetry.

Quite often, comprehension activities can bombard pupils with a range of question types that they have not yet had time to master – meaning they quickly encounter questions that they find extremely challenging. This series places the emphasis on teachers being able to teach and model each skill, while pupils develop their understanding of each question type individually.

PROGRESSION AND DEVELOPMENT OF SKILLS

The books in the Comprehension Ninja: Fiction & Poetry series grow in difficulty via the complexity and length of the texts. The vocabulary in the book for ages 7–8 is more challenging than the vocabulary in the book for ages 5–6, for example. The length of the reading texts falls in line with statutory assessments at Year 2 and Year 6, growing in increments each year, thus increasing the demands on pupils to accurately retrieve information from larger and more complex texts.

Approximate text length* in the Comprehension Ninja: Fiction & Poetry series:

Ages 5-6:	100-150 words
Ages 6-7:	200-250 words
Ages 7-8:	300-450 words
Ages 8-9:	500-600 words
Ages 9-10:	650-700 words
Ages 10-11:	700-800 words

*Within each age range, the poetry texts can vary from the word count ranges shown above. In these instances, the reduced word count is complemented by more complex vocabulary and sentence structures.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

This book contains 24 fiction and poetry texts for you to use in your classroom. Part 1 includes 12 texts that have eight subsequent pages of questions built around different comprehension skills. These texts and questions have been developed so that you can specifically target and teach each individual skill, and then have a plethora

of questions for pupils to work on. In maths, you wouldn't jump from division one day into 3D shapes the next. The same must apply to reading – we should teach each skill and give pupils the opportunity to practise and master the skills before we move on. You now have in your hands 12 texts with associated questions to teach each skill – that's a minimum of 96 lessons from Part 1 of the book.

Part 2 includes texts 13 to 24 and these look more like traditional tests. Each text has a corresponding set of questions. Each set of questions requires pupils to use the comprehension skills mastered in Part 1. You could choose to use these texts formatively across the year to inform which skills require further attention, but here lies a fantastic opportunity for pupils to apply their new skills to each question type independently and with confidence.

It is important to note that this resource hasn't been designed to be a testing tool but rather a teaching and learning tool. A tool whereby teachers support pupils to access texts and to master core comprehension skills. However, because of the nature of testing in schools, it is important that children see and experience test-type texts and questions – as they will from Part 2.

This is a versatile resource: it's up to you how it is used. As pupils grow in confidence and skill level, they will relish completing these activities.

PRE-READING AND KEY INFORMATION TO IDENTIFY IN THE TEXT

Before they answer questions, teach pupils to pre-read a text and identify key information using a pencil or a highlighter.

Here are some examples of the key information pupils could be encouraged to look out for when they read fiction or poetry.

Who or which? Characters, people, animals, events, and so on.

When? Time periods, including times of the day, days, months, years, and so on.

Where? Locations or changes in location.

What or how? Actions that characters perform, linked to verb phrases.

Vocabulary: Key vocabulary that is relevant to understanding and words that pupils are unfamiliar with.

Dialogue: Conversations between characters.

We want to train pupils to underline or highlight pieces of key information as they read through the text. A good guideline is to underline or highlight three-to-six pieces per paragraph. Key information should be single words, or small groups of words, not full sentences. Model this skill to pupils and discuss why you have underlined certain information. As well as physically marking the text, model your thought processes too, showing pupils how you make mental notes about locations, characters, actions, and so on.

KEYWORDS IN THE QUESTION

Once pupils have read the text and underlined key information, they can begin to answer questions about it. We now need to teach pupils to spot keywords or key phrases in a question. These are words or phrases that signpost where to look in the text to find the answer. Take a look at this question:

Why was the dinosaur near to tears?

Pupils should be taught to underline 'near to tears'. They would then need to skim through the text to find the section where the phrase 'near to tears' can be found, then scan that section to find the exact phrase. After this, pupils should be taught to read the sentences or lines before and after the one that contains the key phrase. This will help them find the answer. Pupils might understand that the word 'dinosaur' is not necessarily a helpful keyword, as it is likely to be repeated many times in the text.

Pupils might not understand what the keywords in the question mean. However, they can still answer the question by finding the keyword or key phrase and reading around it.

THE QUESTION TYPES

FILL IN THE GAP

Pupils are given sentences with missing words. They will need to locate the sentences in the text and identify the missing words. Refer pupils back to their pre-reading and marking of the text, which should increase their retrieval speed.

Practise this skill by giving pupils a page of their reading book and the same page with multiple words blanked out. Can they fill in the blanks? Prompt pupils to spot keywords in the rest of the sentence in order to locate the full sentences in the original text.

FIVE Ws AND HOW

These are classic reading comprehension question stems: what, where, who, which, when and how. All of these require pupils to retrieve information from the text to demonstrate their understanding.

Constantly refer back to the pre-reading process and model this skill to pupils, demonstrating how, as a reader, you are constantly identifying the five Ws as you read. Say your thoughts as you read the text aloud, demonstrating how you make mental notes of the question words as you read. Model to pupils how you can begin to predict what the questions are likely to be.

MULTIPLE CHOICE

These questions require pupils to choose an answer from a selection of four possible answers. Prompt pupils to locate the required information by spotting keywords in the question and locating them in the text, then reading around this information to find the correct answer.

Teach pupils to discount illogical answers using what they already know from their pre-read of the text. Also ensure that pupils don't answer questions using their own prior knowledge. Prompt pupils to 'prove it' by finding the exact information in the text.

TRUE OR FALSE

Pupils are given a statement and asked if it is true or false. Younger year groups will begin to learn this skill by answering yes or no, before progressing to true or false.

Ensure pupils are not guessing. Train pupils to spot the keywords in the questions and locate this information in the text. By reading around this information and pre-marking the text, pupils will be able to discover whether the statements are true or false.

SUMMARISE

Summary questions require pupils to understand the main idea or main piece of action in a section of text. For some questions, pupils will have to select the correct summary statement from multiple options, while for other questions they will need to write a short summary.

Refer to the concept of summarising as 'What is the main idea of this section of text?'. Try to find opportunities for pupils to summarise information during reading sessions and in other subjects such as history or science.

DRAW AND LABEL

Draw and label requires pupils to draw an image based on the information they have read and then to add their own labels.

Increase the difficulty of labelling by asking pupils to label more complex images. Alternatively, use draw and label as part of your literacy lessons.

123 SEQUENCING

These questions require pupils to sequence information in the order it occurs in the text, from first to last.

Teach pupils to allocate each word or statement (usually no more than five) a symbol – for example, a square, a triangle, a rectangle, a star or a cross. Pupils should then find these statements in the text and mark the corresponding symbol on the text. Once pupils have done this, it is easy to look at the text and see which symbol comes first, second, third and so on. This is a very effective strategy to help pupils sequence information.

FIND AND COPY

These questions require pupils to identify a word when provided with a contextual description rather than a contextless definition. Pupils will need to use keywords to locate the correct area of the text and then find and copy the correct word. For older pupils, questions may direct pupils to a certain part of the text at the beginning of the question, for example, *Look at the verse beginning 'Maggie just froze...'*

This skill is much more challenging than its name suggests. Teach pupils to follow the instructional part of the question to locate the correct area of the text efficiently. Although counterintuitive, teaching pupils to apply a 'best guess' approach if they are struggling to find the correct word is still a worthwhile strategy and more often than not will produce a correct answer.

CIRCLE A WORD

This skill requires pupils to locate words based on an explicit definition of the word. Pupils may be required to circle words from a single sentence or from a paragraph of the text.

Regularly discuss definitions via Vocabulary Ninja's Word of the Day. Ensure that you explore definitions, play matching games where pupils match words and definitions, and apply the 'best guess' strategy where pupils answer with their own logic without necessarily knowing the answer for certain.

READING AND EXPLOITING FICTION AND POETRY TEXTS WITH YOUR PUPILS

The Comprehension Ninja: Fiction & Poetry series offers so much more than information retrieval. The series offers an unrivalled and unique collection of texts and poetry from a range of poets and authors.

So, how else could you use this treasure trove of texts in your classroom or school?

- Use the high-quality texts to develop lessons focusing on other reading domains such as inference, prediction, comparison and explanation.
- Use the texts and question sets to complement your writing units based on the same text. If children have done lots of comprehension activities related to a text, they will have a better overall understanding of the characters, settings and events depicted in the text.
- Use the extracts as ways to hook children into reading new books and genres. If you're using a text that is an extract from a book, have a physical copy of the book available to give to children once they are hooked.
- Rather than reading a whole book, develop writing units based on the short extracts of books or poems so that children gain a greater understanding of a far smaller extract. This is great for interventions or time-sensitive writing opportunities.



AN UNUSUAL CAKE

ADAM BUSHNELL

FICTION: DIALOGUE

"Can I help, Dad?" asked Anya.

"Of course!" Dad replied, taking a mixing bowl from the cupboard.

"What do we need?"

"You get the self-raising flour and caster sugar," smiled Dad. "I'll get the margarine and an egg."

"Is this caster sugar?" Anya asked, putting the flour and sugar on the kitchen bench.

"Yes, that's it."

"Anything else?"

"We need cocoa powder and chocolate chips. Do you know where they are?"

Anya nodded, "Of course!"

Dad switched on the electronic scales.

"Measure out 50 grams of caster sugar into a bowl," Dad said. "Then we add 25 grams of margarine."

"25 grams, right?"

"Then we cream those together until they're light and fluffy."

"Can we use the mixer please?" Anya asked. "It takes ages with a spoon."

"Of course," smiled Dad as he brought the mixer down from a tall cupboard.

"It's so noisy!" called Anya above the sound of the mixer stirring the ingredients into a creamy, light and fluffy texture.

"What's next?" she asked after her Dad turned the mixer off.

"We add the egg, 50 grams of self-raising flour, 15 grams of cocoa

powder and 15 grams of chocolate chips and mix it all together."

They measured the ingredients out and Anya then put them in the bowl. The mixer was turned back on.

"Right," Dad smiled. "Now, a courgette!"

"A what?" asked Anya.

"We grate a courgette into the mixture."

"Urgh! That sounds disgusting!"

"Trust me," said Dad.

"This is weird," said Anya, as she grated a whole courgette into the mixture before Dad turned on the mixer.

"Now what?"

"Now we pour the mixture into a greased tin and bake it in the centre of a pre-heated oven at 180°C for 20 to 25 minutes."

"Is this OK?" asked Anya as she grabbed the tin and margarine.

"Yes," her dad nodded, rubbing the margarine around the inside of the tin.

"It smells lovely!" Anya said as she spooned the mixture into the tin.

After 20 minutes, Dad checked the cake with a skewer.

"It's ready!" she called.

"I can't wait to taste it!"

"Now we wait," said Dad as he put the cake onto a cooling rack.

When the cake was cool, Dad sliced it up.

"I can't believe there's a courgette in this!" Anya gasped as she tasted the cake. "It's really delicious!"

"I have my tricks," laughed Dad.



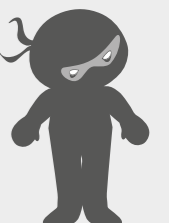
FILL IN THE GAP



Read the sentences and choose the correct word to fill in each gap.

- 1 "Of course!" Dad replied, taking a mixing bowl from the _____.
- 2 "You get the self-raising _____ and caster sugar," smiled Dad.
- 3 "We need cocoa powder and _____ chips. Do you know where they are?"
- 4 "Measure out _____ grams of caster sugar into a bowl," Dad said.
- 5 "It takes ages with a _____."
- 6 "It's so noisy!" called Anya above the sound of the mixture stirring the _____ into a creamy, light and fluffy texture.
- 7 "This is weird," said Anya, as she grated a whole _____ into the mixture before Dad turned on the mixer.
- 8 "Now we pour the mixture into a _____ tin and bake it in the centre of a pre-heated oven at 180°C for 20 to 25 minutes."
- 9 "Is this OK?" asked Anya as she grabbed the tin and _____.
- 10 "It smells _____!" Anya said as she spooned the mixture into the tin.
- 11 "It's really _____!"

? FIVE WS AND HOW



Answer the questions below. Look back at *An Unusual Cake* to find the correct answers.

- 1 What is the name of the character who asks to help?

- 2 What type of flour is used in the mixture?

- 3 How many grams of caster sugar are used?

- 4 How many grams of margarine are used in the mixture?

- 5 What do they mix the ingredients with?

- 6 How many eggs are used in the mixture?

- 7 What temperature is the oven?

- 8 How long does Dad wait to check the cake?

- 9 What does Dad check the cake with?

- 10 When does Dad slice up the cake?

- 11 What can't Anya believe is in the cake?

- 12 Who has cooking tricks?

MULTIPLE CHOICE



Circle the correct answer to the following questions.

1 Where is the mixing bowl taken from?

draining board	wardrobe	cupboard	drawer
----------------	----------	----------	--------

2 How many eggs are used in the mixture?

1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---

3 What temperature is the cake baked at?

160°C	170°C	180°C	190°C
-------	-------	-------	-------

4 How long is the cake baked for?

20 to 25 minutes	25 to 30 minutes	30 to 35 minutes	35 to 40 minutes
------------------	------------------	------------------	------------------

5 What is the tin greased with?

butter	oil	margarine	coconut oil
--------	-----	-----------	-------------

6 After how many minutes does Dad check the cake?

10	15	20	25
----	----	----	----

7 What does Dad check the cake with?

a knife	a thermometer	a fork	a skewer
---------	---------------	--------	----------

8 What are Anya and her dad baking?

carrot cake	chocolate cake	cookies	courgette cake
-------------	----------------	---------	----------------

TRUE OR FALSE



Read the sentences. Put a tick in the correct box to show which sentences are true and which are false.

1 Dad asks Anya to help. True False

2 The first item taken from the cupboard is a mixing bowl. True False

3 Three eggs are needed. True False

4 Anya doesn't know where to find the cocoa powder. True False

5 The scales are electronic. True False

6 50 grams of margarine is used. True False

7 Anya wants to use a spoon to mix with. True False

8 The mixer is very noisy. True False

9 The courgette is added to the mixture first. True False

10 Anya grates half of the courgette. True False

11 The mixture is baked for 20 to 25 minutes. True False

12 Anya rubs the tin with margarine. True False

13 Dad checks the cake with a skewer. True False

14 Anya slices the cake. True False

15 The cake tastes disgusting. True False

SUMMARISE **DRAW AND LABEL**



SUMMARISE

1 Look at the first five lines of the text. Tick the statement which best summarises this section.

- Anya tasted the cake when it was ready.
- Anya's dad got the mixer out from the cupboard.
- Anya started to help her dad find the ingredients.
- Anya found out that the cake had courgettes in it.

2 Look at the section beginning 'They measured...' until the end of the text. Write one sentence to summarise what's happening in this section.

DRAW AND LABEL

Draw the statements in the boxes. Add your own labels to your drawings.

Anya using the mixing machine	Dad checking the cake with a skewer

123 SEQUENCING



1 Look at the sentence below. Write the numbers 1 to 4 to show the order the words occur in the sentence.

"It's so noisy!" called Anya above the sound of the mixer stirring the ingredients into a creamy, light and fluffy texture.

ingredients	mixer	noisy	fluffy

2 Look at the section from 'After 20 minutes...' until the end of the text. Number the sentences from 1 to 5 to show the order they occur in the text.

- "Now we wait," said Dad as he put the cake onto a cooling rack.
- When the cake was cool, Dad sliced it up.
- "It's ready!" she called.
- "I can't wait to taste it!"
- "I have my tricks," laughed Dad.

3 Look at *An Unusual Cake*. Number the sentences from 1 to 5 to show the order they occur in the whole text.

- "We need cocoa powder and chocolate chips. . ."
- "Urgh! That sounds disgusting!"
- "Measure out 50 grams of caster sugar into a bowl. . ."
- "I have my tricks," laughed Dad.
- After 20 minutes, Dad checked the cake with a skewer.

 **FIND AND COPY**


These questions are about *An Unusual Cake*.

- 1 Look at the section beginning to read: "We need cocoa powder. . .". Find and copy a word that tells us that Anya moved her head up and down.

- 2 Look at the section beginning 'Dad switched on...'. Find and copy a word that shows that Dad wanted to know the exact amount of caster sugar.

- 3 Look at the section beginning "It's so noisy!". Find and copy a word that tells us that Anya and her Dad were using many different types of food in the recipe.

- 4 Look at the section beginning "Now we pour the mixture...". Find and copy a word that means that margarine has been rubbed in the tin to stop the cake from sticking.

- 5 Look at the section beginning "It smells lovely!" Find and copy a word that tells us that Anya used a spoon.

- 6 Look at the section beginning "When the cake was cool...". Find and copy a word that tells us that Dad cut the cake.

 **CIRCLE A WORD**


Read the paragraphs below and then follow the instructions.

"It's so noisy!" called Anya above the sound of the mixer stirring the ingredients into a creamy, light and fluffy texture.

"What's next?" she asked after her Dad turned the mixer off.

"We add the egg, 50 grams of self-raising flour, 15 grams of cocoa powder and 15 grams of chocolate chips and mix it all together."

- 1 Circle a word that means that something is making a lot of sound.
- 2 Circle a word that means that something is soft, light and contains air.
- 3 Circle a word that means how something looks or feels.
- 4 Circle a word that means fine, dry particles.
- 5 Circle a word that means to combine or put together.