

NON-FICTION



ANDREW JENNINGS

COMPREHENSION

NINJA

MASTERING COMPREHENSION: Photocopiable Activities to Improve Reading

FOR AGES 9–10



BLOOMSBURY

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NINJA
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ANDREW JENNINGS

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and informative for the reader.

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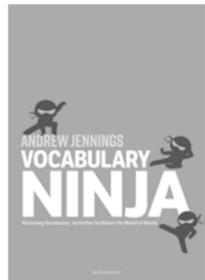
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ALSO AVAILABLE FROM ANDREW JENNINGS



VOCABULARY NINJA

Vocabulary Ninja is an essential toolkit of strategies and resources to supercharge primary pupils and transform them into vocabulary ninjas! This practical book features theory, teaching approaches and photocopiable activities, as well as key topic vocabulary, etymology and phrases to bring the primary curriculum to life.

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INTRODUCTION

Comprehension Ninja is designed to be a core part of your arsenal for teaching reading comprehension skills. *Comprehension Ninja* specifically focuses on the retrieval of information, using eight core comprehension skills that underpin the reading domains set out by the National Curriculum. This book contains 24 non-fiction texts that align themselves to the primary National Curriculum, the corresponding foundation subjects and subsequent topics taught within them. As the new curriculum develops, a greater focus has been placed on how pupils retain the knowledge they have learned within all lessons. *Comprehension Ninja* will allow schools to further embed reading opportunities across the curriculum while reinforcing the retention of pupil knowledge via the eight skills found below.

High-quality retrieval skills are the foundation of reading comprehension. If pupils can effectively and efficiently locate and retrieve information, then from there, inference, sequencing and explanation-type questions can be accessed. Without being able to retrieve information, none of this is possible. Many years ago, before SATs, these skills were known as comprehension skills! Now, sadly, they are known as question types. But the key principles still apply – and the eight skills below need to be taught, practised and mastered.

-  **Labelling**
-  **Matching**
-  **Fill in the gap**
-  **Multiple choice**
-  **True or false**
-  **Find and copy**
-  **123 Sequencing**
-  **Underline or highlight**

Most comprehension texts bombard pupils with a range of question types that they have not yet had time to master – meaning they quickly encounter questions they cannot answer. *Comprehension Ninja* places the emphasis on teachers to teach and model each skill, while pupils develop their understanding of each question type individually.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

This book contains 24 non-fiction texts for you to use in your classroom. Texts 1 to 12 have eight subsequent pages of questions built around each comprehension skill. These texts and questions have been created so that you can specifically target and teach each individual skill, and then have a plethora of questions for pupils to work on and answer. 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 opportunities to practise and master these skills before we move on. You now have in your hands 12 texts and associated questions to teach each skill – that's a minimum of 96 lessons from the first 12 texts.

Texts 13 to 24 look more like a traditional test. Each text has a corresponding set of questions. Each set of questions requires the pupil to use the comprehension skills mastered

from texts 1 to 12. 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. Don't allow pupils to flounder: if they require support, give it – teach!

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 where teachers support pupils to access texts and to master the eight 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 texts 13 through 24. Because of the versatility of this resource, it really is up to you how it is used. Plus, as pupils grow in confidence and skill level, they will relish completing these activities.

PROGRESSION AND DEVELOPMENT OF SKILLS

Normally, teachers and leadership teams love to see a polished skill development matrix that shows how each skill becomes more complex as the pupil learns and grows. The way that *Comprehension Ninja* grows in difficulty is 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. Some texts will include statutory words from the National Curriculum, plus a range of technical vocabulary related to each different subject. The length of texts that pupils are exposed to falls in line with statutory assessments at Year 2 and Year 6, growing in increments each year, thus increasing the demands on the pupil to retrieve information with accuracy and speed from larger and more complex texts.

Approximate text length progression in the *Comprehension Ninja* 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

PRE-READING AND KEY INFORMATION TO IDENTIFY IN THE TEXT

Ideally, before answering questions, we want to teach pupils to pre-read a text and identify key information in the text.

Pupils need to adopt a positive reading position, sit up straight and ready to read. Prompt children to read with their pencil, so they move it across the page underneath each line as they read it. This means that when it comes to underlining a key piece of information, their pencil is already in the correct location – it's efficient. If pupils need to look away from the text to pick up the pencil, they will need to relocate the key information and time will be lost in every instance they perform this inefficient action.

We often ask pupils to underline key information as they read, but what is this key information?

Names of people, places, companies, events, teams, etc.

Dates including days, months, years, times and periods of time from beginning to end.

Statistics and numbers including percentages, fractions, amounts, figures, etc.

Unknown vocabulary – words pupils don't understand. Identifying them may still help pupils answer a question.

Headings, subheadings and images help direct readers to the correct area of the text when answering a question.

As pupils read through the text with their pencils, we want to train them to underline these pieces of key information. A good guideline as to how much to underline is 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 this information, referring back to the information above.

KEYWORDS IN THE QUESTION

Once we have read the text and underlined key information, we can begin to answer questions about it. We now need to teach pupils to spot the keyword or phrase in a question. This is a word or phrase that signposts where to look in the text to find the answer. In the example question below, the keyword or phrase is **Morse code**.

*How did soldiers effectively use **Morse code** during World War II?*

If pupils have pre-read the text effectively, Morse code should be underlined, or they may even remember where it is mentioned. Pupils would skim (see below) the text to find the paragraph in which Morse code is mentioned, then scan that section for the exact word or phrase. Once located, pupils should be trained to read the sentence that comes before and the sentence after the one that contains the keyword or phrase. Doing this will give pupils a much greater chance of answering successfully.

In the example question, 'soldiers' or 'World War II' are not the keyword or phrase as it is likely that they would be mentioned numerous times throughout the text and would not help the reader locate the answer.

This is another instance where underlining unknown vocabulary could be effective. Pupils may not understand what Morse code is. However, they can see that it is a proper noun and should underline it when pre-reading as it is a name and unknown vocabulary. They can still answer the question correctly and receive a mark by efficiently locating the information and reading around the keyword, even though they may have no understanding of what Morse code actually is.

SKIMMING AND SCANNING

To be a good retriever of information, pupils must be able to locate information quickly. By skimming and scanning a text efficiently and methodically, pupils will have a much higher chance of locating the information they require.

It's crucial to agree a shared language amongst staff as to what skimming and scanning is. We don't want to use the phrase 'skimming and scanning' without everyone, including pupils, being very clear on what this means.

Skimming is a whole text process. Pupils skim across the text to locate a specific paragraph or area where the required information is likely to be. Skimming is like looking at the chapters of a DVD and choosing which one to start from. We won't necessarily find the answer when skimming, but we hope to locate the correct area of the text.

When asking pupils to skim the text to find the correct area, try asking them to remember first whether the information was in the beginning, the middle or the end of the text. Is there an image or a subheading that can help them skim the text? These strategies can help signpost pupils to the correct area of the text, thus increasing their chances of being successful in answering the question.

Scanning is then looking at that specific section with a greater level of scrutiny, possibly looking for a keyword or phrase. Following the film example, this is like watching a specific film chapter to locate the required information.

Introduce skimming and scanning with images, timetables, TV schedules, poems, lists, visual instructions, hidden word pictures. Ask pupils to locate specific items, objects and information – add a time limit to increase the fun factor.

LABEL / DRAW AND LABEL

Labelling asks pupils to look at an image and label parts of the image with a word from a word bank. As the skill develops, pupils will be asked to label statements with information retrieved from across a whole text. Identifying keywords in the statement or question is essential here.

Draw and label requires pupils to draw an image based on the information they have read and then to label it. The quality of the drawing here isn't necessarily important, focus on the accuracy of the retrieved labels.

Increase the difficulty of labelling by asking pupils to label more complex images without a word bank, but a short paragraph of text. Alternatively, use draw and label as part of your literacy lessons – read and share small yet detailed parts of the book you are using as part of your unit of work. For a task, ask pupils to draw what the text describes, then add labels. Share and discuss the differences in pupils' work and examples of effective labelling.

MATCHING

Matching is a simple skill where pupils are required to match together pieces of information that are in a jumbled state. Pupils must match the information together by drawing lines to the associated pieces of information. The activity becomes more challenging as pupils have a greater number of possible statements to match and larger texts to refer to in order to confirm the match.

Ask pupils to identify the keyword in each statement and then locate this in the text by skimming and scanning. Matching pair games are a great way of introducing this skill to younger pupils. Older pupils might benefit from this skill as part of a starter in foundation subject lessons. They could match information associated with the topic on cut up pieces of paper, thus embedding reading skills and providing an opportunity for pupils to demonstrate foundation subject knowledge.

FILL IN THE GAP

Pupils are given a sentence with a missing word. Pupils will need to locate this sentence in the text and identify the missing word. This skill becomes progressively more difficult as the amount of text increases and as the pupils are given fewer options to choose from.

Practise this skill regularly by giving pupils a page of their reading book and the same page with multiple words blanked out. Prompt pupils to spot keywords in each sentence to locate the specific sentences efficiently.

MULTIPLE CHOICE

These questions require pupils to choose an answer from a selection of three or 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.

Train pupils via discussion to discount illogical answers using what they already know from the pre-read of the text. Also ensure that pupils don't answer questions using their own knowledge of the subject. Prompt pupils to 'prove it' by showing where the exact information is found in the text. This type of question could also be played in the style of a 'Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?' or 'Million Pound Drop' game, where pupils have multiple answers to choose from based on a text of your own choice.

TRUE OR FALSE

Pupils will be 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 keyword in the question and locate this information in the text. By reading around this information, pupils will be able to discover whether the statement is true or false.

123 SEQUENCING

These questions require pupils to sequence information in the order it occurs in the text, from first to last. Younger pupils order the words in single sentences, progressing to pupils ordering information from across a whole text.

Teach pupils to allocate each word or statement (usually no more than five) a symbol – a square, a triangle, a rectangle, a star and 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. A very effective strategy to help pupils effectively sequence information.

FIND AND COPY

These word-level 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. In answering these questions, pupils may need to use a small amount of inference. Pupils may be directed to a certain part of the text at the beginning of the question, e.g. *Look at the paragraph beginning 'These word-level questions...'*

Example: Look at the paragraph beginning 'The voyage aboard'. Find and copy a word that suggests that the animals Darwin collected had been dead for millions of years. Answer: fossil.

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 will more often than not produce a correct answer.

UNDERLINE OR HIGHLIGHT

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

Regularly discuss 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. Teach Vocabulary Ninja's Word of the Day every day and be sure to explore definitions. Give pupils increasingly difficult words and ask them to create a definition of the word without using the word itself. You can also encourage them to start the definition with 'If someone is...' or 'If something is...'

1 FAIR TRADE

What is fair trade?

To understand the meaning of fair trade, we can look at each word: 'fair' means 'equal and without discrimination' and 'trade' is the action of buying and selling goods. By putting them together, we can begin to understand that fair trade is about ensuring everyone in the world is treated in the same way when it comes to buying and selling goods. Unfortunately, this isn't always the case.

Why do we need to address fair trade?

Fair trade focuses on producers in 'developing' countries: countries with economies that are weaker than average and have a high need to sell their products. Historically, farmers in developing countries haven't been paid the same as those in developed countries.

As a consequence, farmers don't always make enough money to live – even though they have worked day and night to produce a high-quality product. Large companies exploit farmers' and workers' need to sell, making a huge profit and passing none of it to their suppliers.

What does fair trade achieve?

The fair trade movement aims to ensure that producers are paid a price that is never below the world value of their product. This should allow producers to keep their businesses running.

In this way, fair trade aims to enable even the poorest farmers to feed their families, drink clean water, clothe their children and buy medicines when needed. This may allow them to develop their businesses and their communities, too.

As of 2019, more than 1.66 million farmers and workers are fair trade certified, and there are 1,411 certified producers in 73 countries across the world. In 2016, \$158.3 million was paid to these fair trade producers.

The fair trade of coffee

One of the fair trade movement's priorities is the trade of coffee. Coffee is one of the world's most popular drinks, and its sale is extremely profitable. The cost of producing it is low, and the price of coffee to customers is high.

Coffee is made from small beans that are roasted and ground down into a powder or granules. The beans are actually berries – they come from trees called 'coffea'. It's only after they're dried that they're called beans.

The origins of coffee can be traced back centuries to ancient coffea forests in Ethiopia. Legend says the goat herder Kaldi first discovered their potential after noticing that his goats became energetic after eating coffea berries. Monasteries started making them into a drink that kept them alert during evening prayer. From there, word moved east and coffee became popular across the globe.

Nearly all of the world's coffee is now grown in a region called the 'coffee belt', which is close to the equator. It includes India and Indonesia, and much of Africa and South America. Soil there is rich in nutrients, and the climate is warm and wet – perfect for growing coffea plants. Many countries in the coffee belt are classed as 'developing' countries.

Nowadays, small farms produce 80 per cent of the world's coffee, and it's estimated that 125 million people rely on the coffee trade for their livelihoods. Without the simple coffee bean, millions of people would be without work.

How can we support fair trade?

The most important thing you and your family can do is to buy fair trade products. Keep an eye out for the Fairtrade Foundation's circular green, black and blue logo on packaging. It can be seen on lots of products, including coffee. This logo informs the consumer that the producer of the product is guaranteed to receive a fair price.



FILL IN THE GAP



Read the sentences and choose the correct word or words to fill the gap.

To understand the meaning of fair trade, we can look at each word: 'fair' means 'equal and without _____' and 'trade' is the action of buying and selling goods.

By putting them together, we can begin to understand that fair trade is about ensuring everyone in the world is _____ in the same way when it comes to buying and selling goods.

Fair trade focuses on producers in '_____ ' countries.

As a _____, farmers don't always make enough money to live – even though they have worked day and night to produce a high-quality product.

Large companies _____ farmers' and workers' need to sell, making a huge profit and passing none of it to their suppliers.

The fair trade movement aims to ensure that _____ are paid a price that is never below the world value of their product.

This should allow producers to keep their _____ running.

In this way, fair trade aims to enable even the poorest farmers to feed their families, drink _____ water, clothe their children and buy medicines when needed.

The beans are actually berries. They come from trees called '_____':

Legend says the goat herder _____ first discovered their potential after noticing that his goats became energetic after eating coffea berries.

_____ started making them into a drink that kept them alert during evening prayer.

Soil there is rich with nutrients, and the _____ is warm and wet.

Nowadays, small farms produce _____ of the world's coffee.

Without the simple coffee bean, _____ of people would be without work.

The most important thing you and your family can do is to buy _____ products.

MATCHING



Draw a line with a ruler to match the information.

- fair trade focuses on
- number of certified producers
- goat herder
- close to the equator

- farmers don't have enough
- large companies
- coffee growing region
- fair trade ensures

- paid to fair trade producers
- Fairtrade Foundation logo
- coffee
- coffea

- trade means
- Fairtrade Foundation logo
- fair means
- fair trade countries

- 1.66 million
- energetic goats ate
- small farms produce
- farmers use money for

- Kaldi
- 'developing' countries
- coffee belt
- 1,411

- exploit farmers
- the coffee belt
- everyone treated the same
- money

- guarantee the producer has been paid a fair price
- a tree
- a very popular drink
- \$158.3 million

- equal and without discrimination
- 73
- buying and selling goods
- green, black and blue

- coffea berries
- clothes, food and medicines
- fair trade certified farmers and workers
- 80 per cent of the world's coffee



Label the statements with the correct information.

coffee bean tree	
berries become	
region coffee is grown	
legendary goat herder	
one of the world's most popular drinks	
trade means	

Label the statements with the correct information.

farmers and workers were being	
fair trade ensures	
fair trade allows producers	
close to the equator	
roasted and ground down	
equal and without discrimination	

Label the statements with the correct information.

number of certified fair trade workers	
many coffee belt countries are classed as	
paid to producers in 2016	
extremely profitable	
number of countries with certified producers	
guarantees producers an agreed fair price	



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

- Fair means to be treated equally. True False
- Trade means the action of buying and selling. True False
- It is always the case that people are treated in the same way. True False
- Poor and rich countries' farmers will be paid the same. True False
- Fair trade focuses on producers in 'developed' countries. True False
- Fair trade protects farmers from being exploited. True False
- Fair trade aims to help even the poorest farmers. True False
- Large companies pass their profits on to their supplier. True False
- Fair trade allows farmers to feed and clothe their families. True False
- Fair trade allows farmers to sell their businesses. True False
- Coffee is one of the world's most popular drinks. True False
- Coffee is produced from a leaf. True False
- Coffee comes from a tree called coffea. True False
- Nearly all of the world's coffee is grown in factories. True False
- The coffee belt is close to the equator. True False
- Coffee became popular across the globe when word moved west. True False
- Small farms produce 100 per cent of the world's coffee. True False
- Monasteries made a drink with the berries of the coffea tree. True False
- Kodi the cow herder discovered the coffee bean. True False
- The Fairtrade Foundation logo is on all products. True False

MULTIPLE CHOICE



Circle the correct answer for each of the following questions.

What does the word 'fair' mean?

 everyone is equal

 everyone is different

 everyone is treated the same

 everyone knows the same

What does the word 'trade' mean?

 buying and selling goods

 a market

 the same products

 giving away your product

Where is most coffee produced?

 India, Indonesia, Africa and South America

 Japan

 London, England

 North America

What is coffee made from?

 a cactus

 a plant

 an animal

 a tree

Before fair trade, farmers were being...

 harmed

 exploited

 cheated

 bullied

Fair trade was introduced to ensure profits were shared with...

 producers

 sellers

 large companies

 investors

What are coffee beans turned into?

 liquid

 berries

 powder or granules

 tea

What is the name of the plant that produces coffee?

 coffea

 coffee

 cofea

 cofee

What is the name of the region that produces most of the world's coffee?

 the coffee centre

 the coffee equator

 the coffee lands

 the coffee belt

What shape is the Fairtrade Foundation's logo?

 a square

 a triangle

 a hexagon

 a circle

123 SEQUENCING



Look at *Fair trade*. Number the statements from 1 to 5 to show the order they occur in the text. Look at the first line of each paragraph to help you.

Fair trade focuses on producers in 'developing' countries: countries with economies that are weaker than average and have a high need to sell their products.

One of the fair trade movement's priorities is the trade of coffee.

The fair trade movement aims to ensure that producers are paid a price that is never below the world value of their product.

Nowadays, small farms produce 80 per cent of the world's coffee, and it's estimated that 125 million people rely on the coffee trade for their livelihoods.

The origins of coffee can be traced back centuries to the ancient coffea forests in Ethiopia.

Look at the last two paragraphs in *Fair trade*. Number the statements from 1 to 5 to show the order they occur in the text.

Without the simple coffee bean, millions of people would be without work.

This logo informs the consumer that the producer of the product is guaranteed a fair price.

The most important thing you and your family can do is to buy fair trade products.

It can be seen on lots of products, including coffee.

Nowadays, small farms produce 80 per cent of the world's coffee, and it's estimated that 125 million people rely on the coffee trade for their livelihoods.

Look at *Fair trade*. Number the statements from 1 to 5 to show the order they occur in the text.

Large companies exploit farmers' and workers' need to sell, making a huge profit and passing none of it to their suppliers.

Historically, farmers in developing countries haven't been paid the same as those in developed countries.

As of 2019, more than 1.66 million farmers and workers are fair trade certified, and there are 1,411 certified producers in 73 countries across the world.

Legend says the goat herder Kaldi first discovered their potential after noticing that his goats became energetic after eating coffea berries.

Coffee is one of the world's most popular drinks, and its sale is extremely profitable.

 **FIND AND COPY**


These questions are about *Fair trade*.

Look at paragraph one. Find and copy a word that suggests that people should be treated the same.

Look at the 'Why do we need to address fair trade?' section. Find and copy a word that suggests that some countries are not as rich as others.

Look at the 'What does fair trade achieve?' section. Find and copy a word that suggests that fair trade helps to develop the locations where people live, as well as the business.

Look at the 'The fair trade of coffee' section. Find and copy a word that suggests that coffee can make companies huge amounts of money.

Look at the paragraph beginning 'Coffee is made from...'. Find and copy a word that suggests that coffee beans are crushed.

Look at the paragraph beginning 'The origins of coffee...'. Find and copy a word suggests that coffee beans had something to offer that no one has realised.

Look at the paragraph beginning 'Nearly all of the world's coffee...'. Find and copy a word that suggests that coffee is best grown around the central line of the Earth.

 **UNDERLINE OR HIGHLIGHT**


Read the paragraphs below and then follow the instructions.

Coffee is made from small beans that are roasted and ground down into a powder or granules. The beans are actually berries – they come from trees called 'coffea'. It's only after they're dried that they're called beans.

The origins of coffee can be traced back centuries to the ancient coffea forests in Ethiopia. Legend says the goat herder Kaldi first discovered their potential after noticing that his goats became energetic after eating coffea berries. Monasteries starting making them into a drink that kept them alert during evening prayer. From there, word moved east and coffee became popular across the globe.

Nearly all of the world's coffee is now grown in a region called the 'coffee belt', which is close to the equator. It includes India and Indonesia, and much of Africa and South America. Soil there is rich in nutrients, and the climate is warm and wet – perfect for growing coffea plants. Many countries in the coffee belt are classed as developing countries.

Underline or highlight a word that means to find out how something starts or begins.

Underline or highlight a word that means belonging to the distant past.

Underline or highlight a word that means being aware of something.

Underline or highlight a word that means enjoyed or liked by a lot of people.

Underline or highlight a word that means that a substance contains a lot of something.

Underline or highlight a word that means able to pay full attention.