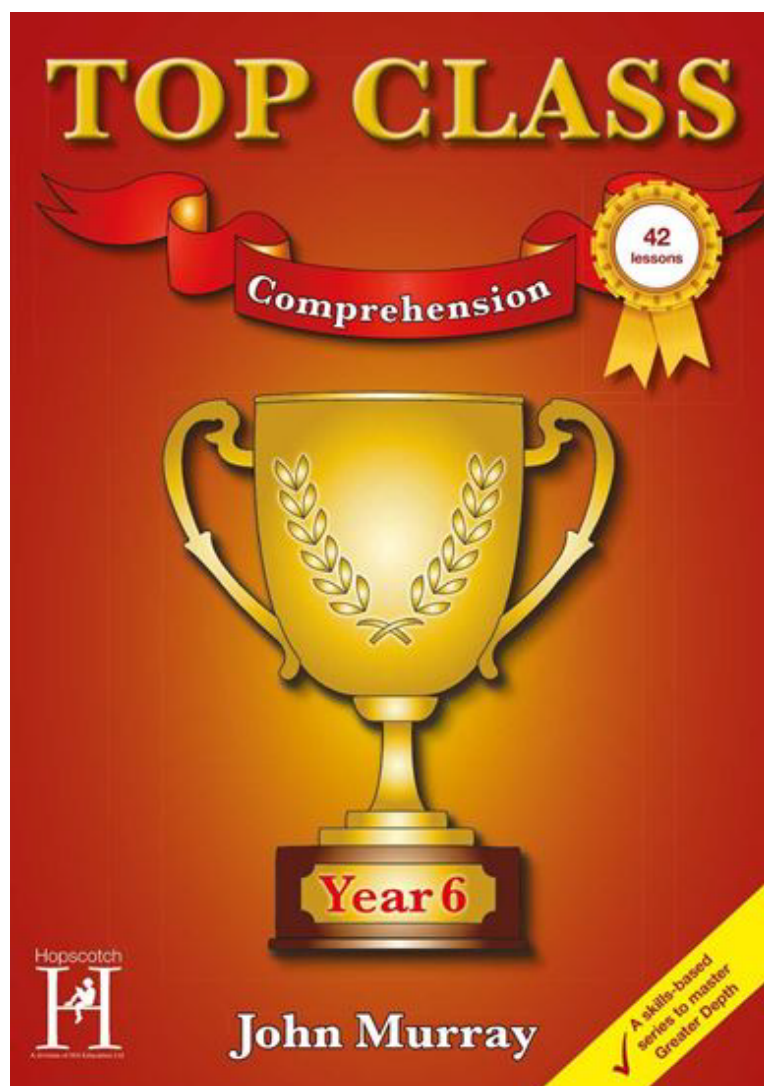


Top Class Comprehension Year 6



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Introduction

Top Class Comprehension is a skills-based series designed to help learners develop higher order reading skills and secure Greater Depth.

Each book contains 42 lesson plans and uses a variety of texts to promote wider reading. There are four books in the series:

- **Year 3 (Ages 6-7)**
- **Year 4 (Ages 7-8)**
- **Year 5 (Ages 9-10)**
- **Year 6 (Ages 10-11)**

The Lesson Plan: A Layered Approach

Before embarking upon the text, it is important that you cue in the reader. This can be found in the *Think about...* section in each lesson plan. This section is included for two reasons: to reduce the anxiety learners can face when jumping into a text blindly and, more importantly, to encourage the reader to start forming crucial reference points that will support them as they delve deeper into the text provided.

After the reader has been cued in, give them the text.

- First, the teacher reads the text to the learners. This will help them gain the gist of what the text is about and is a great opportunity for you to model the reading process and bring the text to life.
- Then, learners read the text themselves. This will allow them to become orientated with the text and pick out one or two words or phrases that they would like to explore as a group.
- After you have clarified the meaning of any unfamiliar language and explored its impact upon both the text and its reader, then you are ready to begin reading for deeper understanding.

A range of skills have been included within the lesson plan. These link directly to the Question Cards that have been supplied beneath the text.

Each card asks a single question and explores a specific reading skill. Each particular skill is referenced in an accompanying spy glass:



Literal: Retrieval of Specific Information.
Can the reader locate detail within the text?



Deductive Reasoning
Can the reader use clues and evidence in the text to infer meaning?



Inference
Can the reader read between the lines to infer meaning?



Authorial Intent
Does the reader understand why the author has chosen a particular word, phrase or punctuation mark and explain the effect this has?



Vocabulary
Does the reader understand what a certain word or phrase means?



Evaluative
Can the reader evaluate and reflect upon the text as a whole?

Each lesson plan has been designed so that a large proportion of the session is dedicated to the development of higher order reading skills, with a particular focus being placed upon Inference.

Important Note: Orientation

Should you feel your learners need more time to orientate themselves with the text, either independently or with support, then you may find it useful to ask more Literal questions and model how each answer can be found.

This, together with clarifying any contextualised language proving difficult to understand or that may have been misinterpreted, will help ensure that learners are better equipped to answer the main inference questions later on.

If learners have not secured their initial understanding of the text and the vocabulary within it, then they will struggle to engage with the main section of the lesson plan and fail to develop and explore important higher order reading skills.

There are two ways that you may wish to consider using the lesson plan and accompanying Question Cards.

Option One: A Warm Application

When using as part of a Guided Reading session, a conversational style ought to be adopted as you begin to walk through and around the text. This helps you to open up and explore the text more fully and encourages learners to engage with both the text and with each other. It supports collaborative learning and places value on it.

Once the questions contained within the lesson plan have been explored orally (learners annotating the text when

and where appropriate) a follow up lesson can then be undertaken, whereby the Question Cards are given to the group for them to supply their answers in written form.

Whether you give your learners all ten Question Cards at once or one card at a time is up to you. The important aspect here is that they are given sufficient time and opportunity to engage with the text.

Answers can then be shared, peer marked and modelled by the teacher to help individuals structure their answers more robustly. In this sense, the teaching and learning focus of this session is firmly maintained.

Option Two: A Cold Application

This is when no support or guidance has been given and the text has not been seen before written answers are required. As such, the focus here is on assessment. Answers provided are to be marked and monitored by the teacher in order to identify gaps in learning and inform future planning, both for individuals and for the group as a whole.

Whether you still wish to cue in your learners before undertaking this cold task is a matter of preference. However, a gentle reminder of the contents, themes and skills explored in previous sessions will help to calm learners and enable them to showcase their confidence and competence at unpicking a text more fully. This is not a test and still needs to be an engaging and enjoyable experience.

Verbal Reasoning & Written Answers

When answering questions in the written form we often use a different skill set than when we are developing thinking and reasoning skills for comprehension.

Some learners who are adept at answering questions in a collaborative setting, can sometimes find it difficult to provide a well-structured written answer when working independently.

For these learners, being exposed to a range of opportunities to have written answers modelled is crucial.

Separating this understanding of the text with how to answer questions more formally is important.

It allows learners to focus clearly on the learning and application of a particular skill and affords them a greater opportunity to learn collaboratively, as well as apply various reading and writing skills with greater success.

In truth, a combination of both types of application sessions, are needed to support your learners on their journey to becoming a successful independent reader and thinker.

Indeed, each text within the book has been carefully sequenced so that it links with other texts provided. This will allow you to share the first two texts as a Guided Reading experience but then use the third text as a means of monitoring a learner's reading progress and assessing to what extent a specific reading skill is being applied.

It is hoped that this layered approach to the teaching, learning and applying of reading comprehension is but one facet of your school's enriched Reading Curriculum, one that will support and engage your learners as they become an authentic Reading Community.



The texts considered within this book have been selected from the *Top Class* series.

Should you wish to support and apply wider aspects of Literacy to a given text in terms of grammar, punctuation and vocabulary, then further guided, independent and extension activities can be found in the following books:

- **Top Class Vocabulary – Year 6**
- **Top Class Punctuation – Year 6**
- **Top Class Grammar – Year 6**

This will give learners the opportunity to explore the various strands of English in context, so important when adopting a 'Reading into Writing' approach and supporting the developing learner.

Comprehension



Think about...
You are alone. There is no power.
You begin to read a book by candlelight.
What genre of book would you read? Why?
Suddenly, there is a rap on the door.
Dare you unlock the door and answer it?



Literal: Retrieval of Specific Information

In which hotel is Faye staying?

The Mal Maison in Room 827.

Why is she reading by candlelight?

There has been a power cut.

Deductive & Inferential

Is the hotel Faye is staying in large or small?

Large. Faye is staying in Room 827. This suggests a hotel at least eight floors tall that has hundreds of rooms. It also implies the hotel is situated somewhere that many people visit. Remember, the power cut is citywide.

Has the power cut just happened?

No. A candle is 'crouched by her side'. This image infers that the short and stumpy candle has been burning for a long time. The hotel has had enough time to supply the candles and inform their residents to stay indoors while they look for a generator.

Is the power cut expected to last much longer?

Yes. Candles have been provided, only one of which has been used. Two more are available and the porter is still looking for a generator.

Does Faye feel scared during this time?

No. She settles down to read a book and relaxes with a drink. If she was scared, she would not have been able to relax or answer the door to an unknown knock. Even when she sees her replica, she is more confused than scared and does not scream.

Is Faye enjoying her book?

Yes. If we presume that she has been reading by candlelight and the candle is short, she has been reading a long time. She steps deeper into the pages, becoming so engrossed that she no longer hears the police sirens. She feels she is on the train and has to disembark to answer the door.

What do you think an Automatron is?

An emotionless robot. The auto prefix relates to a machine. As the sense of danger grows, we fear for Faye's safety and recognise that this may not be an ordinary hotel after all.

Authorial

How does the writer create a scary atmosphere?

The following elements can be explored more fully as to how they increase tension and give the reader a sense of impending doom: The victim is alone, with little or no chance of help. It is dark and eerily silent. The book Faye is reading is about murder. A sharp knock breaks the silence without warning and nobody answers the question 'Who is there?' All this combines to create a strong sense of danger and us wanting to shout to Faye 'Don't answer the door!'

How is Fear personified?

The use of the word 'stalked' conjures up an image of a wild animal hunting down its prey, a murderous unsentimental beast intent to kill. It may take time but eventually it will capture and kill its victim. Interestingly, the font and hotel name echoes this, 'mal' meaning bad or evil in French.

Why did Faye not scream or call for help?

She is confused and puzzled by what she sees before her and is in shock. Her utter disbelief means she hasn't the time to scream or understanding the danger in which she is in.

Evaluative

How effective do you feel this opening chapter is?

Allow for personal response but one that explores the fact that it raises questions such as what has happened to Faye, why and will she ever return, as well as the need to read on to have these questions answered.

The original extract can be found in the Top Class series; Top Class **Vocabulary** – Year 6, pages 12-15.
Unit focus: **Word Families**

CHAPTER ONE

FEAR STALKED THE CORRIDORS OF THE MAL MAISON SEARCHING FOR ROOM 827.

Faye sat alone. A candle crouched by her side, about to take its last few gasps before flickering out of existence. Two fresh candles lay nearby.

The power cut was citywide and the porter had advised her not to venture out due to the looting.

Heeding that advice, she had curled up on the sofa with an Agatha Christie and a large glass of red to keep her company. And as she stepped deeper into the pages of *Murder on the Orient Express* the police sirens faded. Silence reigned.

Suddenly, there was a sharp rap on the door.

'Who is it? Who's there?'

Nobody answered.

She wasn't expecting Henry to arrive until tomorrow. Surely he'd have text her if he'd arrived early. Perhaps it was the porter returning to tell her the generator was about to kick in. Whoever it was, the knocking had caused her to disembark from the train and begin walking towards the door.

She opened the door and stared at the conundrum. An exact replica of herself stared back, a twin of extraordinary detail. From her long red hair to the hole in her left sock, an exquisite reflection stood before her.

'Hello Faye. I'm Faye and I've come to replace you.'

And without another word, the Automatron stepped inside.



Read this opening chapter and answer the questions below.

Where is Faye staying?



Is this hotel large or small?



Which book is Faye reading?



Why is Faye reading her book by candle light?



Is Faye enjoying her book?



How does the author create a scary atmosphere?



Why does Faye not scream for help?



How is Fear personified?



What might an Automatron be?



How likely are you to want to read the next chapter?

