

Language Comprehension & Reading Comprehension

Information For Parents

What is Language Comprehension and Reading Comprehension?

Language Comprehension
Gaining or making meaning from
speech 



Reading Comprehension
Gaining or making meaning from
print 

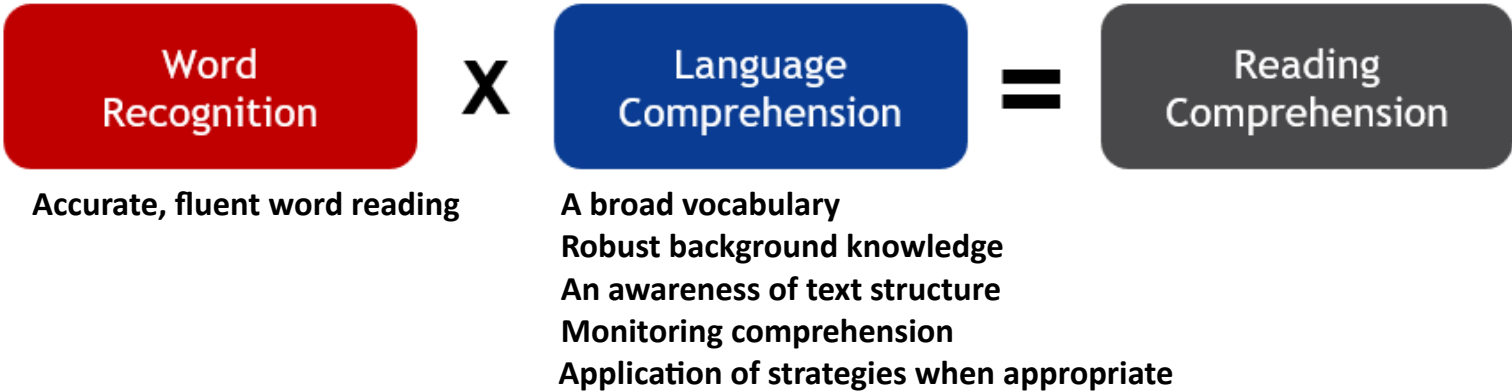
Language comprehension involves **gaining or making meaning from speech**. Children begin developing language comprehension skills, or an understanding of spoken language, from birth. Listening and speaking are naturally occurring processes that children acquire as they grow and are exposed to vocabulary, language structures, and knowledge of the world around them.

Reading comprehension involves the reader **gaining or making meaning from print**. Reading comprehension relies on the ability to accurately and fluently read the words on the page and use knowledge of language to make meaning from the text.

(Brown & Stollar, 2025)

Why are Language Comprehension and Reading Comprehension Important?

Research is clear that the primary factors of a **skilled reader's** comprehension of text include:



Reading comprehension requires more than just accurately reading the words on the page. **The components of language comprehension are equally essential for the outcome of strong reading comprehension to occur.**

(Carlisle & Rice, 2002; Gough & Tunmer, 1986)

What Do Language Comprehension and Reading Comprehension Look Like at School?

Schools help children understand **how language works**, develop their **text comprehension skills**, and teach **reading strategies** to support a reader's comprehension.



In **primary grades**, as students are acquiring word recognition skills, comprehension instruction primarily occurs through listening to text read aloud.



In **intermediate grades** and beyond, once students can read grade-level text on their own, the focus of instruction shifts to reading comprehension with language comprehension skills providing the foundation.

Listening Comprehension

Reading Comprehension

(Brown & Stollar, 2025; Shanahan et al., 2010)

How Can You Support Language Comprehension and Reading Comprehension at Home?

Support Language Comprehension

- Have **conversations** together to expand your child's vocabulary using your home language.
- **Go on adventures** together to develop your child's background knowledge through experiences.



Support Reading Comprehension

- Create a **literacy-friendly environment** in your home with books, word games, and cozy places to read.
- **Talk together while you read** to make reading fun for everyone.



(Reading Tips for Families, 2025)

Additional Resources

Please visit the [Colorado Department of Education \(CDE\) Parent Resource website](#) for more information about the Colorado READ Act, READ Plans, and the Science of Reading.



[CDE Parent Resources Website](#)

References

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