**Pedagogy Overview: Comprehension**

**What is Comprehension?**

Comprehension is an active process that incorporates the understanding of spoken and written language. It involves not just the meanings of words in isolation but the relationship among words within sentences and paragraphs. In Lexia Reading Core5, comprehension activities develop the ability to understand information at a concrete level as well as at an abstract level through the application of higher order thinking skills. Activities develop comprehension skills through interaction with increasingly complex narrative and informational texts.

**What is the role of Comprehension in learning to read?**

The National Reading Panel describes comprehension as an active process that requires an intentional and thoughtful interaction between the reader and the text. Skilled readers use their prior knowledge and experience, in combination with their understanding of vocabulary and knowledge of language structure to gain meaning. As they read, skilled readers also think critically and check their understanding, constantly monitoring their comprehension. This analytical approach to reading is often referred to as close or deep reading.

Comprehension instruction must support the development of both listening comprehension as well as reading comprehension because underlying language skills are the foundation for reading comprehension.

**What is the approach to developing Comprehension in Lexia Reading Core5®?**

The goal of the comprehension strand of Lexia Reading Core5 is to develop active reading skills by having students engage with information they hear and read and by teaching them to think critically about this information. Early comprehension activities aim to build a student’s language comprehension skills through listening activities. Students hear stories as they think about the sequence of events and the details as well as what the story is mainly about. This teaches early learners about the structure of text and provides a framework for later reading comprehension. They learn to use context clues by analyzing pictures as they begin to develop imaging skills. Foundational critical thinking skills are fostered through questioning around details and what the stories are mainly about.

Once reading skills emerge, students are asked to associate decodable words and phrases to pictures, reinforcing comprehension at the word level. Students then engage more deeply with the structure of language as they sequence sentences within a story and then words within a sentence. Students are later required to think about the components of a sentence by attending to question words that identify key parts of a sentence (e.g., Who is the sentence about?). These activities encourage an active engagement with language while fostering the application of critical thinking skills.

As students move through the program, they are required to apply skills to independently read and comprehend multi-paragraph narratives and informational texts. After reading, they are asked comprehension questions that require an increasing focus on developing higher order thinking skills, such as making inferences and drawing conclusions. They must consistently monitor the meaning of what they are reading in order to complete the activities.