Congratulations on your purchase of this Really Good Stuff® Reading Comprehension Flip Chart, a versatile and complete set of graphic organizers that develop reading comprehension skills. This product received the 2011 Learning® magazine Teachers’ Choice Award® for the Classroom.

This Really Good Stuff® product includes:
• Reading Comprehension Flip Chart
• This Really Good Stuff® Teaching Guide

While focusing on the mechanical aspects of reading, early readers often struggle to remember what they’ve read and to understand the big picture. Recognizing the significance of a scene, a character, or a story’s main ideas makes reading a more fulfilling, personal experience and helps children practice critical thinking. Reading comprehension is a skill that challenges many students throughout their education. The Reading Comprehension Flip Chart is designed to help these students—and visual learners in general—get the big picture.

Importance of Reading Comprehension:
The Home Connection
Studies show that children who read more and at a younger age excel throughout their education and have much larger vocabularies that grow year by year. Children who read with understanding benefit in many skill areas from books they read for pleasure as well as from their assigned reading. Encourage students to seek out reading materials that appeal to them, and encourage their parents/guardians to take an interest in their children’s reading by accompanying them to the library, discussing their reading with them, and reading along with them.

By mapping out literature in various formats, students learn to glean meaning and enjoyment from the events in a story, poem, or nonfiction piece. They recognize the parts of a story and acquire important terminology for discussing literary elements. They also increase their vocabularies and oral and written language skills.

The focus of this guide is comprehension of fiction and nonfiction, and response to literature. However, we encourage you to find creative applications for the graphic organizers across the curriculum.

Building Context
In addition to helping students internalize and organize information, graphic organizers pinpoint aspects of reading material that excite students or inspire them to write. For example, a character in a story might have a similar home life to that of another character or of the reader. Sometimes students won’t notice these similarities until they see them organized on paper.

Help relate the stories and characters to the students’ own experiences. Allow students to “feel” story settings through tangible examples, such as period attire or weather, and document these examples on the pages of the Flip Chart.

Introducing the Reading Comprehension Flip Chart
Always begin using a new organizer with an interactive demonstration on the Flip Chart. After reading a book, poem, song, or other piece of literature, ask for the group’s input as you fill in graphic organizers to highlight story elements you want them to explore.

After your students have had plenty of practice with the organizers in the supportive setting of a small-group demonstration, provide student copies of the organizers (pages 8 to 24) and allow the students opportunities to respond to their reading using organizers in their homework or in small-group or center activities.

Use the organizers as springboards for writing. Following demonstration and independent center time, have students compile lists and other descriptions from their organizers into paragraphs, book reports, personal essays, critiques, or original stories.

Managing the Reading Comprehension Flip Chart
• In advance of your demonstration, photocopy the included reproducible organizers for distribution as class work or homework.
• If you decide to fill in headings before photocopying the Graphic Organizer Reproducibles for the students, remember to first set aside clean copies of all reproducibles.
• You can laminate copies of the organizers and provide them, along with reading materials and dry erase pens, as simple reading comprehension center activities.
Small-Group Demonstration

In this sample demonstration, the Weave a Web Graphic Organizer provides a helpful setting for recording information that can be sorted into categories. It also includes sample dialogue that could accompany filling out any of the graphic organizers with small group.

Materials: Flip Chart open to Weave a Web, Dry Erase Pen

1. Talk about what you plan to record on the Graphic Organizer, such as “What we learned about wolves,” from a book read in class. Tell the group you will be brainstorming together.
2. As students observe, write the word “Wolves” in the middle circle of the graphic organizer.
3. Say, “Let’s think of facts that we learned about wolves. What do we know about where wolves live?” As students respond with, for example, facts about the wolf’s habitat, fill in a bubble with the information, using the students’ words.
4. When a student brings up another type of fact, such as “Wolves live in packs,” point out that this belongs to a new category and so you will start filling in a new bubble.
5. Ask students for other facts about the new category. Have them help you name the bubble, for example, “Packs,” and complete the new bubble with additional facts the students provide about wolf packs.
6. Continue by filling in the remaining bubbles with fact categories that students offer.
7. When the web is complete, review the information. Discuss and make a list of any vocabulary that was challenging for students. Review these words later in the week.
8. Optional: Transfer the information from the web into an organized one-page essay. Have students help you title the essay, for example, “The Lives of Wolves.”

Independent/Center Work:

Extend your small-group work into centers, using the same organizers in reproducible form.

Materials: Student copies of the Weave a Web Graphic Organizer Reproducible, pencils, crayons (optional)

1. After you have demonstrated how to use the Weave a Web Graphic Organizer on the overhead, distribute student copies of the Weave a Web Graphic Organizer Reproducible.
2. Allow students to fill in the webs independently as a follow-up to any non-fiction book or video presentation. They can use text, pictures, or a combination of both, depending on the level of challenge you deem appropriate. This will help them retain what they learned and better understand how most factual information fits into categories.
3. Have students record new words they encountered in their reading and look up their definitions.
4. Adapt the now-familiar format of the Weave a Web Graphic Organizer to any type of brainstorming or organized recording activity.

Story Mapping and Summarizing

Making story maps and summarizing what we’ve read can be fun and interactive. These two skills help the reader get a bird’s-eye view of a story and its events.

For visual learners who will benefit from writing the three main story elements—plot, characters, and setting—in different areas of the page, use the Story Map:

Understand and remember information by organizing the text.

Record new vocabulary for later review.
The Story Map (List) is a more detailed guide for story description. Students organize story elements in categories laid out in a list format. This organizer asks students for specific details about a story they've read, therefore, it also makes a wonderful brainstorming tool when students plan stories they're writing.

Students can use the more detailed Story Map (List) to get clarity on the setting(s) of a story; the main character(s); the primary conflict, problem, or situation and how it is resolved; and details relevant to the main idea of the story. (For more on main idea and details, see page 4.)

Alternatively, the student can design an original story map that includes whatever literary elements seem important for the reading material. Other categories might include theme(s), character details, sequence of events, etc.

Summarization is part of the standards and is a useful communication skill. Though summarizing may seem simple, it takes practice to be both general and accurate in describing events.

Early-level students can use pictures combined with words to synopsize a story's plot on the Storyboard. With equal emphasis on graphic and written summarization, the Storyboard includes a place to draw four important scenes from the story and write descriptive text beneath. Each can be a short sentence.

This organizer can also be a timeline that describes the highlights of someone's life, a biography, or one's own life events, an autobiography. (For more on biography and autobiography, see Character Analysis, page 5).

The Snapshot also provides a place for readers to describe a story through words and drawings. Students can show one scene or event from the story, a chapter, or a full plot summary. There is room for them to write a phrase, a sentence, or a short paragraph and, optionally, a list of describing words from the reading that go with the scene.

Using the Plot Summary, they practice writing paragraphs and recording information in chronological order.


Draw and describe the parts of a story. Draw/describe highlights of a character's life or your own.
Often, story-mapping activities provide the makings of a rough draft for a book report. By describing the parts of a story or each of its chapters on a graphic organizer, students have increased clarity about the meaning of the story and a better focus on the most important aspects.

Main Idea and Details
The most important aspect of a story for a student to understand is its main idea. This can be the story’s most important message or a very general description of the plot. Using Main Idea & Details, show students how the main idea of a story grows out of the details sprinkled throughout its scenes.

Discuss the story as a group and decide on its main idea. Have students help identify at least two details from the story that contribute to this main idea. The main idea and each detail should be a short sentence. Afterward, come together and share the details. Discuss how the details fit in with the main idea of the story. Use this organizer to explore how any theme or statement can be supported by details in both fiction and nonfiction texts. As a follow-up activity, each student brainstorm a statement of fact or opinion and lists details that back it up. This exercise helps with the reading comprehension, critical thinking, and expository writing skills that they’ll need in the intermediate grades.

In addition to a main idea or a message in a story, through discussion students can discover many themes. Most often a story has more than one theme, and brainstorming is a great way to discover more themes. Record the themes on Weave a Web.

Character Analysis
Characters drive a story, especially in children’s literature. Details about each character, and especially the main character, often hold great relevance to the plot. For readers to understand a story and its meaning(s), they need to understand the characters and what motivates them. Character development serves a dual purpose of helping to tell the story and making the characters interesting, believable, and relatable.

Illustrate a scene, and describe it in words. Summarize the parts of a story in your own words. Make a statement and provide details that back it up. Brainstorm and record a story’s ideas and themes. Describe the details that feed the main idea of a story.
### What I Know

**Title:**

**Author:**

### What I Want to Know

### What I Learned

Students can make a word portrait of a character that includes his or her interests, strengths and weaknesses, family, friends, etc. using the Character Portrait. Then, students can make their own character self-portraits.

Another aspect of character development that can be explored on a graphic organizer is a character’s family tree. Follow up by having students fill out their own family trees. Creating family trees can bring up sensitive feelings for children or privacy issues for families, so make this an optional activity.

Comparing and contrasting characters is also a helpful comprehension exercise.

For example, the fact that one character, Violet, enjoys swimming in the ocean might seem minor, but a comparison of details provided early in the story shows that this hobby might prove useful, because James, the other main character, is not so comfortable swimming in the ocean.

After looking at the two characters side by side, what prediction can we make?

Perhaps Violet will help James in the ocean.

**Plot Analysis**

Explore how story events progress and how they’re resolved. Students build interest in reading as they begin to notice signs of what’s to come, or foreshadowing.

Make predictions based on clues or foreshadowing and write the predictions on the Prediction Chart. Record the book’s title and author along with the clue(s) that led to one or more predictions. Later, record what actually happened. Discuss whether the predictions were correct. If not, talk about the missed clues or clue that came later.

This table is a good format for a lesson on the reading comprehension strategy of inference: making informed guesses based on one’s reading. Predictions are based on inferences readers make from clues found in the text, as well as on what the author directly states.

As homework, students can use the Prediction Chart in their reading and for other story formats, such as plays, movies, and television shows. They’ll start to notice patterns in the way stories often provide clues. They may grow to appreciate less predictable stories—after all, who doesn’t love to be surprised?

### K-W-L Chart

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Title:</th>
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- **What I Learned**
  - Describe a character from a story, putting the information in different sections.
  - Make a character self-portrait with words and drawings.

- **What I Want to Know**
  - Understand a character’s family or your own family.
  - Describe how two characters or families are alike and how they’re different.

- **What I Know**
  - Describe a character from a story, putting the information in different sections.
  - Make a character self-portrait with words and drawings.

- **Plot Analysis**
  - Explore how story events progress and how they’re resolved. Students build interest in reading as they begin to notice signs of what’s to come, or foreshadowing.
  - Make predictions based on clues or foreshadowing and write the predictions on the Prediction Chart. Record the book’s title and author along with the clue(s) that led to one or more predictions. Later, record what actually happened. Discuss whether the predictions were correct. If not, talk about the missed clues or clue that came later.

- **Character Portrait**
  - Describe a character from a story, putting the information in different sections.

- **Family Tree**
  - Understand a character’s family or your own family.

- **Prediction Chart**
  - Make predictions based on clues or foreshadowing.
Recognizing a chain of events is an important critical thinking skill that can help students learn from their mistakes and resolve conflicts. Fill in the links of the first chain on Chain of Events, describing a series of events in a story that lead to a negative end result. Discuss what the character(s) could have done differently to achieve a better result.

Have students use the second chain to explore a sequence of personal events that took place at home, at school, or in their community.

Put a positive spin on this activity. Fill in a chain of events that has a positive end result. For example, talk about doing good deeds, and how this has a domino effect in society.

A standard reading comprehension strategy is the K-W-L Chart. K-W-L stands for Know–Want to Know–Learn. Before reading a book or beginning a new chapter, discuss content comprehension goals. In reading nonfiction, what factual information does the reader want to obtain? For use with comprehending fiction, the K-W-L Chart provides a pause in which students can express what intrigues them about the story, or perhaps a plot point that is confusing. The Prediction Chart can provide validation for a student’s questions. It’s also a reminder of what students learned and a record of information they can compile in a follow-up writing activity.

A story’s plot often turns on a problem, conflict, limitation, or misunderstanding, as discussed earlier. (See Story Mapping and Summarizing, page 3.) The Road Block uses a common problem-solving metaphor. Students look at how we can find one or more detours, or creative solutions, to bypass a personal road block and reach a destination, or goal. This graphic organizer makes a great story-analysis tool as well as a conflict-resolution skill builder for interpersonal communication.

Students who are reading independently can keep track of books they’ve read using the Book Log. This organizer appears as a series of library reference cards to remind students of its use. The cards are a good way to get a bird’s-eye view of students’ reading choices and to make sure they are pursuing a variety of books at an appropriate level of challenge.

Students can use this recording tool for their language arts notebooks. For students who read many books, you can copy the Book Log front-and-back to minimize paper use. Make additional copies of the page for students as they fill them up.

Demonstrate how to use the four blank lines on each card. Ensure students understand the terms title, author, illustrator, and type of book. They should know that many books don’t have an illustrator, and sometimes the author is also the illustrator.

If your students are studying genre, have them use genre terms for the last entry on each card. Early readers might list the type of book as scary, funny, science, or whatever descriptions they come up with.
Compare and Contrast

Some details simply add color to a story and its characters. However, details often reveal important points in the story or aspects that a student can relate to their own lives. Readers can practice comparing and contrasting stories, characters, and settings as early as kindergarten.

Graphic organizers offer a perfect format for compare/contrast exercises. By simply drawing a straight line down a page, students have two sides for comparing any aspect of their reading, such as character A/character B, book A/book B, fact/opinion, pro/con, actions/outcome, etc.

Using the Venn Diagram, make a comparison that shows overlapping qualities. For example, the outer part of two circles could represent different qualities about two sisters, while the "meet in the middle," overlapping area lists qualities the sisters have in common.

In the example below, students look back at two stories they've read that appear to have completely different settings. They discover that the settings actually have some similarities. Meanwhile, students have the opportunity to ask questions and be reminded about the time period or geographical location of each story.

Another way to compare and contrast on the same page is using Alike/Different. Have students suggest two things to compare and contrast; fill these in at the top. As students contribute a pair of details to record in each column, have them tell whether the points demonstrate how the two things are alike or different.

Explore how two characters, stories, settings, etc., differ and how they are alike.
Story Map Graphic Organizer Reproducible

Alike/Different Graphic Organizer Reproducible

Alike/Different Graphic Organizer Reproducible

Let's compare and contrast

Alike

Different
Weave a Web Graphic Organizer Reproducible

Snapshot Graphic Organizer Reproducible
**Plot Summary**

First, __________  
Next, __________  
Then, __________  
At the end, __________

**Main Idea and Details**

Main Idea: __________  
Details: __________
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Describe how your family, story, or setting is different from a character's.
Recognizing a chain of events is an important critical thinking skill that can help students learn from their mistakes and resolve conflicts. Fill in the links of the first chain on Chain of Events, describing a series of events in a story that lead to a negative end result. Discuss what the character(s) could have done differently to achieve a better result.

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**What I Learned**

- Students can make a word portrait of a character that includes his or her interests, strengths and weaknesses, family, friends, etc. using the Character Portrait. Then, students can make their own character self-portraits.

- Another aspect of character development that can be explored on a graphic organizer is a character's family tree. Follow up by having students fill out their own family trees. Creating family trees can bring up sensitive feelings for children or privacy issues for families, so make this an optional activity.

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- For example, the fact that one character, Violet, enjoys swimming in the ocean might seem minor, but a comparison of details provided early in the story shows that this hobby might prove useful, because James, the other main character, is not so comfortable swimming in the ocean.

- After looking at the two characters side by side, what prediction can we make? Perhaps Violet will help James in the ocean.

**What I Want to Know**

- Describe a character from a story, putting the information in different sections.

- Make a character self-portrait with words and drawings.

**What I Know**

- Understand a character's family or your own family.

- Describe how two characters or families are alike and how they're different.

- Make predictions based on clues or foreshadowing.

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**Plot Analysis**

Explore how story events progress and how they're resolved. Students build interest in reading as they begin to notice signs of what's to come, or foreshadowing.

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- This table is a good format for a lesson on the reading comprehension strategy of inference: making informed guesses based on one's reading. Predictions are based on inferences readers make from clues found in the text, as well as on what the author directly states.

- As homework, students can use the Prediction Chart in their reading and for other story formats, such as plays, movies, and television shows. They'll start to notice patterns in the way stories often provide clues. They may grow to appreciate less predictable stories—after all, who doesn't love to be surprised?
Roadblock Graphic Organizer Reproducible

Main Idea and Details

The most important aspect of a story for a student to understand is its main idea. This can be the story’s most important message or a very general description of the plot. Using Main Idea & Details, show students how the main idea of a story grows out of the details sprinkled throughout its scenes.

Discuss the story as a group and decide on its main idea. Have students help identify at least two details from the story that contribute to this main idea. For students who are able, have them independently fill in additional details on their reproducibles. The main idea and each detail should be a short sentence. Afterward, come together and share the details. Discuss how the details fit in with the main idea of the story. Use this organizer to explore how any theme or statement can be supported by details in both fiction and nonfiction texts. As a follow-up activity, each student brainstorm or details that back it up. This exercise helps with the reading comprehension, critical thinking, and expository writing skills that they’ll need in the intermediate grades.

In addition to a main idea or a message in a story, through discussion students can discover many themes. Most often a story has more than one theme, and brainstorming is a great way to discover more themes. Record the themes on Weave a Web.

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Characters drive a story, especially in children’s literature. Details about each character, and especially the main character, often hold great relevance to the plot. For readers to understand a story and its meaning(s), they need to understand the characters and what motivates them. Character development serves a dual purpose of helping to tell the story and making the characters interesting, believable, and relatable.

Illustrate a scene, and describe it in words.

Summarize the parts of a story in your own words.

Describe the details that feed the main idea of a story.

Make a statement and provide details that back it up.

Brainstorm and record a story’s ideas and themes.
The Story Map (List) is a more detailed guide for story description. Students organize story elements in categories laid out in a list format. This organizer asks students for specific details about a story they've read, therefore, it also makes a wonderful brainstorming tool when students plan stories they're writing.

Students can use the more detailed Story Map (List) to get clarity on the setting(s) of a story; the main character(s); the primary conflict, problem, or situation and how it is resolved; and details relevant to the main idea of the story. (For more on main idea and details, see page 4.)

Alternatively, the student can design an original story map that includes whatever literary elements seem important for the reading material. Other categories might include theme(s), character details, sequence of events, etc.

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A story map benefits visual learners at almost any reading level. Draw and describe the parts of a story. Draw/describe highlights of a character's life or your own. Plan a story. Even brainstorm a rhyming poem.

Describe elements of a story in detail.
Small-Group Demonstration

In this sample demonstration, the Weave a Web Graphic Organizer provides a helpful setting for recording information that can be sorted into categories. It also includes sample dialogue that could accompany filling out any of the graphic organizers with small groups.

Materials: Flip Chart open to Weave a Web, Dry Erase Pen

1. Talk about what you plan to record on the Graphic Organizer, such as “What we learned about wolves,” from a book read in class. Tell the group you will be brainstorming together.
2. As students observe, write the word “Wolves” in the middle circle of the graphic organizer.
3. Say, “Let’s think of facts that we learned about wolves. What do we know about where wolves live?” As students respond with, for example, facts about the wolf’s habitat, fill in a bubble with the information, using the students’ words.
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