



Improve Your Child's 11+ Comprehension Skills: If you're preparing your child for the **Gloucestershire 11+**, one of the most common questions parents ask is, "**How can I improve my child's comprehension skills?**"

The answer isn't as simple as completing endless **11+ comprehension exercises** or working through worksheet after worksheet.

While practice papers have their place, constantly completing comprehension exercises can quickly become repetitive and doesn't always develop the deeper reading skills needed for success in the **Gloucestershire 11+ exam** or other **grammar school entrance exams**.

Instead, children need opportunities to **explore, understand and unpick texts**. Strong comprehension isn't just about finding the correct answer—it's about understanding language, recognising themes, making inferences and explaining ideas with confidence.

The Power of Shared Reading

One of the most effective ways to improve **11+ reading comprehension** is through **shared reading**.

No matter how old your child is, reading a book together is incredibly valuable. It creates opportunities to pause, discuss and think more deeply about what has been read—exactly the skills assessed in the **GL Assessment 11+**.

As you read together, encourage conversations about:

- the plot and how it develops
- the characters and their motivations
- emotions and relationships
- vocabulary and unfamiliar words
- predictions about what might happen next
- why the author has chosen particular words or phrases
- themes and messages within the story.



These rich discussions help children become active readers rather than simply decoding words on a page.

Use these questions in your daily reading - they WILL improve your child's comprehension.

1. **How do you think the character is feeling? What clues tell you that?**
 - Encourage your child to use actions, dialogue, and descriptions as evidence.
2. **Why do you think the character made that decision?**
 - Ask them to explain the character's motivation, not just what happened.
3. **What do you think might happen next? Why?**
 - Good predictions should be based on clues in the story, not guesses.
4. **What can you tell about the setting that the author doesn't say directly?**
 - For example, is it a wealthy neighbourhood, a dangerous forest, or a lonely place?
5. **Why do you think the author chose those particular words?**
 - Discuss how vocabulary creates mood, tension, or excitement.
6. **What does this tell us about the relationship between these characters?**
 - Encourage children to look at dialogue, body language, and behaviour.
7. **Can you find evidence that supports your answer?**
 - This is one of the most valuable follow-up questions because it teaches children to justify their opinions using the text.
8. **What is the character thinking, even though they don't say it out loud?**
 - Children learn to infer thoughts from actions and facial expressions.
9. **How would the story change if this event hadn't happened?**
 - This develops deeper understanding of plot and cause-and-effect.
10. **What lesson or message do you think the author wants the reader to learn?**
 - This encourages children to think beyond the plot and consider the story's themes.