



How To Use Egorg R-1

A GUIDE FOR PARENTS

Strong reading comprehension isn't about knowing the words; it's about connecting the dots. Fortunately, reading comprehension can be learned and mediocre reading skills can be strengthened. Individual strategies have shown varying levels of effectiveness, but a combination of strategies works remarkably well. R-1 combines the best demonstrated strategies into a single, unified platform.

To get the most out of this system, engage your child using the "I do—we do—you do" approach. First, show your child how to do it. Next, do it together, letting her "help" you. Finally, let her do it while you occasionally monitor. This is an effective process for teaching her to work independently.

Here's what we suggest:

1. Begin a chapter book with your child. Before reading, look at the cover, the back, chapter titles, and so on to answer the three "prediction" questions in R-1's **Before Reading** section. Discuss your answers with her. Click the **Add New Section** button and predict what will happen in the first chapter. To the extent possible, focus on "Who, What, How and Why" when answering the before and after event questions. This prepares her mind so that she is reading with a purpose.
2. Have your child read the first chapter. Afterward, ask what happened. Fill in the answer side of the chapter's entry in the **Before Reading** section. Although we're only asking for a brief summary of the most important action, you can expect her to struggle with this. Help her skim through the chapter picking up the essential points of what happened. Again, have her focus on "Who, What, How and Why." Immediate summarization helps connect with the next part of the story.
3. Have your child help you make a prediction for the next chapter, again preparing her mind.
4. Click on **Character**. Ask your child what characters have been introduced so far. You may not have much to go on yet; just enter what you can. She will update it later. Starting the process now will get her to focus on the characters. If you know who the protagonist is, you probably don't yet know his or her primary objective. **Tell your child that she is trying to figure out the main character's primary objective as she reads.** Now

she will be reading with a purpose. Your goal is to have her continually monitor her own understanding of the story as she reads.

5. Click on **Plot**. Enter a brief description of what happened in the first chapter. Consider the event from the point of view of the protagonist trying to achieve his or her primary goal: every event moves the protagonist closer to or farther from it. You tell R-1 this by clicking the **C** icon on the event panel and answering the dialog. If you don't know who the protagonist is yet, or his or her primary goal, skip this step for now. But definitely come back to it when you do know. **As your child reads, for every event in the story she should be thinking: does this event move the protagonist closer to or farther from his or her primary goal?** We've shifted her "purpose" to "what did this event have to do with the story?" but we framed it in terms of a simple, easy-to-apply question.
6. Ask your child if there were any new words in the chapter. If so, click on **Vocabulary** and fill in the information. (Opening Dictionary.com in your browser will allow you to cut and paste the information straight from the web). Understanding the words will help her better understand the text.
7. Have your child read the next chapter.
8. Let your child enter the information in steps 2-7 above, while you stand by to help your child "talk out" the answers. Afterward, look at some of R-1's graphic organizers like **Compare Characters**, **Show Plot** and **Character Map**. You are helping her learn to do this independently.
9. If you are satisfied your child has gotten the hang of it, let her read a couple of chapters, entering the information after each one.
 - a. Sit down with her and view the **Show Plot** graphic organizer. Discuss what is happening in the story, and whether each event takes the protagonist closer to or farther from his or her primary goal. It's not unusual for your child to need some coaching here, as she may still be missing critical elements of the story. **Focus her attention on understanding the protagonist's primary goal, and using that as a reference for everything that happens in the story.**
 - b. Discuss any conflicts between the characters in the story. What opposing character traits (words entered under the **Characters** button) lead to the conflict? One character may be honest and another dishonest, for example, leading to a conflict between them. Discuss any alliances that arise between characters. What similarities of character traits lead to the alliance? This will allow her to understand why things happened in terms of the characters in the story.
 - c. Have your child fill in some information about the **Setting**. Did the story *have* to take place there?
10. As your child continues to read the story, monitor occasionally by looking at the graphic organizers. Discuss the importance of events and relationships among characters. Which characters are helping the protagonist achieve his

or her primary goal? Which are hindering? You'll be able to gauge her level of comprehension quickly and reliably.

11. When your child has read the climax, have her fill in the **Resolution** page. She should continue to read and fill in the plot events until she reaches the end of the book.
12. Use the **Vocabulary** tool as "flash cards": R-1 shows the word, and your child recites the definition (use the **Show Words** checkbox). Once she is comfortable with the words, have her use it backwards: R-1 shows the definition, and your child identifies the word (use the **Show Definitions** checkbox). This will allow her to integrate her new words into her working vocabulary.

To delve deeper, have your child answer a set of prompts in the **After Reading** section. The **Personal Reflection** questions, for example, help your child connect personally to the story, thereby getting its full emotional and spiritual benefit. The other prompts discuss the elements of literature. Initially, it may be easier to use these prompts for discussion rather than as written assignments. As your child becomes more proficient, you may want her to do a serious composition on some of them, using clip-art and what-not. But for such complex work don't use R-1's word processor! It is too simple.

Your child will achieve new levels of comprehension and, as a result, new confidence. She'll also be able to easily recall the story, even after a significant amount of time has elapsed, by reviewing R-1's graphic organizers. (A convenient **Print All** button in the **File** menu will cause R-1 to print out all completed graphic organizers with a cover page.) But most importantly, you'll have given your child the tools she'll need to understand and more fully enjoy literature.