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Using the *CARS* and *STARS* Series

CARS Plus Series

Diagnose needs of the class by administering 5 Pretests

Benchmark during instruction to monitor progress, using 5 longer tests

Assess mastery by administering 5 Post Tests



STARS Plus Series

Instruct the class in 1 to 6 strategies, based on students' needs (differentiate instruction using Books P–H)



What are the *CARS Plus* and *STARS Plus Series*?

The *CARS Plus* and *STARS Plus Series* are a comprehensive resource that allows you to identify and teach essential reading comprehension strategies. As the diagram above indicates, the *CARS Plus Series* is the assessment component, and the *STARS Plus Series* is the instruction component.

CARS Plus Series

The *CARS Plus Series* is a diagnostic reading series that allows you to identify and assess a student's level of mastery for each of 12 reading strategies. It contains Pretests, Benchmarks and Post Tests. This ten-level series is designed for students in years P to 8. The *CARS Plus Series* helps teachers place students in the companion *STARS Plus Series* for reading instruction and remediation.

STARS Plus Series

The *STARS Plus Series* is a prescriptive reading series that provides essential instruction in the same 12 reading strategies as the diagnostic *CARS Plus Series*. This ten-level series is also designed for students in years P to 8. The *STARS Plus Series* provides precise instruction in and practice with the strategies students need to master in order to achieve reading success.

Book H in both the *CARS Plus* and *STARS Plus Series* features the following 12 reading strategies:

- Finding Main Idea
- Recalling Facts and Details
- Understanding Sequence
- Recognising Cause and Effect
- Comparing and Contrasting
- Making Predictions
- Finding Word Meaning in Context
- Drawing Conclusions and Making Inferences
- Distinguishing Between Fact and Opinion
- Identifying Author's Purpose
- Interpreting Figurative Language
- Summarising



How do I get started with the *CARS Plus* and *STARS Plus Series*?

As shown in the diagram on page 4, the *CARS Plus Series* is used to diagnose the needs of the class, monitor students' progress and assess students' mastery of the strategies. The *STARS Plus Series* is used to instruct the class in targeted reading strategies, based on the diagnosis from the *CARS Plus Series*.

To get started, use the following steps:

1. Diagnose

Administer the five pretests in the *CARS Plus Series* to diagnose the needs of the students in your class. (See the *CARS Plus* teacher guide for additional information.)

2. Instruct

Based on the results of the *CARS Plus* diagnosis, assign specific strategy lessons in the *STARS Plus Series* to remediate areas that need improvement and reinforcement. Or, you may have students complete an entire *STARS Plus* student book in order to build and reinforce students' basic knowledge of reading strategies. (See pages 7 and 10–11 for information about differentiating instruction.)

3. Benchmark

Use the five Benchmarks in the *CARS Plus Series* and the Review Lessons in the *STARS Plus Series* (see page 6) to monitor students' progress.

4. Assess

Use the five Post Tests in the *CARS Plus Series* and the Final Review in the *STARS Plus Series* (see page 6) to assess mastery of the strategies taught in the *STARS Plus Series*.



Why do the *CARS Plus* and *STARS Plus Series* concentrate on 12 reading strategies?

The reading strategies in these series were based on reviews of the following:

- Current research on reading comprehension
- Gaps in basal or core reading programs

The strategies in both series cover a range of areas that lead to success in reading comprehension:

- Literal comprehension
- Inferential comprehension
- Text structure and organisational patterns
- Vocabulary and concept development
- Metacognitive strategies

Practice in these reading strategies leads to success on tests as well as improves students' overall reading comprehension.



How do researchers define the relationship between skills and strategies?

According to Regie Routman (2000), strategies are the thinking, problem-solving processes that the learner deliberately initiates, incorporates and applies to construct meaning. At this point, the reading strategies become instinctively incorporated into one's reading.

According to Afflerbach et al. (2008), when a reading strategy becomes effortless and automatic, the strategy has become a skill. Reading skills operate without the reader's deliberate control or conscious awareness.



What is in the *STARS Plus* student book?

Strategy Lessons

Each student book contains 12 strategy lessons, one lesson for each reading strategy. Each ten-page lesson provides instruction and practice in the targeted reading strategy. Students read several passages and answer 16 strategy-based selected-response (multiple-choice) questions.

The strategy lessons are scaffolded, providing a gradual release of support. Each lesson moves from modelled instruction to guided instruction to modelled practice to guided practice to independent practice. (See Features of a *STARS Plus* Lesson on pages 12–23 for more information about the strategy lessons.)

Review Lessons

A four-page review lesson follows every three strategy lessons. Students read two longer passages and answer 12 selected-response questions that focus on the target reading strategies in the three previous lessons.

Final Review

A twelve-page final review gives practice in all 12 reading strategies. Students read four longer passages and answer 48 selected-response questions that focus on all the reading strategies in the book.



What is in the *STARS Plus* teacher guide?

Overview

Information about using the *CARS Plus* and *STARS Plus Series* and the Classroom Reading System, including:

- Suggested Pacing Chart
- Features of a *STARS Plus* Lesson
- Research Summary
- Reproducible Strategy Bookmarks

Lesson Plans

Six-page guides for each *STARS Plus* student-book lesson, including a facsimile of each student-book page with correct answers, teacher tips, and these special features:

- ELL Support
- Genre Focus
- Teacher's Corner
- Reteaching
- Connecting with Literature

Reproducible Answer Form

A reproducible bubble sheet that students may use to record their answers to Parts Two–Five of each lesson

Completed Answer Form

A filled-in bubble sheet that may be used for correction purposes



How can I provide differentiated instruction using the *STARS Plus Series*?

There are two easy ways to provide differentiated instruction in the classroom using the *STARS Plus Series*.

By Reading Strategy

Use the results from the Pretests in the *CARS Plus Series* to diagnose the individual needs of the students in your classroom.

Then use *STARS Plus Book H* to provide targeted instruction in one specific strategy or in several strategies to remediate areas that need improvement and/or reinforcement.

Or, you may wish to provide instruction using the entire *STARS Plus Book H* to build students' basic knowledge of all the reading strategies.

By Reading Level

Students in the same classroom are likely to be reading at different skill levels (below year level, at year level or above year level). You can use the levelled books in the *STARS Plus Series* (Books P–H) to meet this need.

To enable this type of differentiated instruction, the sequence of the strategies and the page numbers across the books in the *STARS Plus Series* are the same from lesson to lesson (with some exceptions in Books P–C). So all students in the classroom receive the same reading-strategy instruction but work with appropriately levelled reading passages.

For example, some year-eight students may work in the on-level Book H, which contains reading passages that don't extend beyond a year-eight reading level. At the same time, other students in the class may be assigned an above-level book, while other students may be assigned a below-level book.



How can I assess students' progress in the *STARS Plus Series*?

After students have been placed into the *STARS Plus Series*, based on the diagnosis from the *CARS Plus* Pretests, several methods may be used to assess students' progress in the *STARS Plus Series*.

You may use classroom observation to monitor and informally assess students' mastery of the strategies taught in each *STARS Plus* lesson.

You may also use the following to formally assess students' mastery of the strategies:

STARS Plus Review Lessons

A review lesson follows every three strategy lessons. The reviews may be used to assess students' mastery of the reading strategies taught in those three lessons in the *STARS Plus* student book.

STARS Plus Final Review

A final review follows all 12 strategy lessons. The final review may be used upon completion of the student book to assess students' mastery of all 12 reading strategies.

CARS Plus Benchmarks

These five tests may be used throughout instruction in the *STARS Plus* student book (after the *CARS Plus* Pretests and before the *CARS Plus* Post Tests) as individual progress-monitoring tools to monitor students' progress in applying all 12 reading strategies.

CARS Plus Post Tests

These five tests may be used upon completion of the *STARS Plus* student book to assess students' overall mastery of all 12 reading strategies. The results of the *CARS Plus* Post Tests may be compared with the results of the *CARS Plus* Pretests to assess students' mastery of the reading strategies.

FINDING MAIN IDEA

★ ★ ★ ★ LESSON OBJECTIVES

Students will learn to:

- Find the main idea by figuring out the most important idea in a reading passage
- Identify when test questions are asking them to find the main idea

★ ★ ★ ★ GETTING STARTED

Introduce the Strategy

Tell students that today they will learn how to find the main idea when they read.

SAY: Good readers find the main idea by figuring out the most important idea in a reading passage. You already know about main idea because you think about what is most important about things that happen to you every day.

Model the Strategy

Introduce the strategy by describing a situation and asking students to think about what is happening.

SAY: Suppose you are collecting donations for your soccer team. Someone who is interested in donating to your team approaches you. She asks you to tell her briefly about your fund-raiser. You tell her about your fund-raiser in one sentence.

Point out to students that since they were asked to be brief in their explanation, they figured out the most important information to relate. Telling more than the most important information would require a longer conversation, and the person asking for information might lose interest. Explain that this is an example of finding the main idea.

ELL Support**Past Tense of Regular Verbs**

Explain to students that verbs are action words. The past tense of a verb tells that the action has already happened. The past tense of a regular verb ends in *ed*.

Work with students to identify and form the past tense of regular verbs. Write the sentence *It rained* on the board. Work with students to identify the verb (*rain*) and the verb's ending (*ed*). Then write the verbs *erupt*, *study* and *sob* on the board. Work together to form the past tense of each verb and to tell how it is formed (*erupt*: add *ed*; *study*: change *y* to *i* and add *ed*; *sob*: add *bed*). Explain that there are several ways to form the past tense of verbs.

Point out the past tense verb *erupted* on student book page 11.

Genre Focus**Report**

Tell students that on page 6, they will read a section of a report. Define this genre for students. Explain that a report is a piece of writing that provides information and analysis about a specific topic. The beginning of a report introduces the topic. The body of the report gives facts about the topic and may also provide examples and supported observations. Reports may include photographs and captions to make it easier for readers to understand the information presented. Different sections of a report may have subheadings that organise the information. The ending usually sums up the ideas of the report or presents an important or interesting point. Have students share reports that they may have read or heard.

RECALLING FACTS AND DETAILS

★ ★ ★ ★ LESSON OBJECTIVES

Students will learn to:

- Recall facts and details by identifying information that supports or explain the main idea in a reading passage
- Identify when test questions are asking them to recall facts and details

★ ★ ★ ★ GETTING STARTED

Introduce the Strategy

Tell students that today they will learn how to recall facts and details when they read.

SAY: Good readers recall facts and details in a reading passage by thinking about the main idea, knowing that facts and details tell more about the main idea. You already know how to recall facts and details because you do it every day.

Model the Strategy

Introduce the strategy by describing a situation and asking students to think about what is happening.

SAY: Imagine you just witnessed an incredible event. A newspaper reporter comes to interview you. She wants you to tell her everything you can recall about the event. You describe everything you saw and everything you felt about the event.

Point out to students that when they are being interviewed as a witness, they are telling what they remember about what they witnessed. Since the reporter was not there, and wants to create a story about the event, students can assume they should tell more than just the main idea. They should provide details that tell more about the main idea of the event. Explain that this is an example of recalling facts and details.

ELL Support

Past Tense of Irregular Verbs

Explain to students that verbs are action words. The past tense of a verb tells that the action has already happened. The past tense of a regular verb ends in *ed*. The past tense of an irregular verbs does not end in *ed*. Irregular verbs have special forms in the past tense. Work with students to recognise the past tense of irregular verbs. On the board, write the sentence *Please put the book here*. Work together to identify the irregular past tense verb in the sentence (*put*). Explain to students that the present tense verb *put* has the same form as the past tense of the verb, *put*. Tell students that since irregular verbs have special forms in the past tense, their past tense forms need to be remembered.

Point out the irregular past tense verb *put* on student book page 23.

Genre Focus

Myth

Tell students that on page 17, they will read about a myth. Define this genre for students. Explain that a myth is a fictional story set in the past. The purpose of a myth is often to explain something about human behaviour or the natural world. Myths are closely tied to the religious beliefs and ideals of the particular culture from which they came. Usually, the characters in myths are gods, goddesses or godlike beings. These characters usually have extraordinary powers and can make impossible things happen. The hero of a myth often possesses the exemplary traits most valued by the culture. Have students share myths that they may have read or heard.

FINDING WORD MEANING IN CONTEXT

★ ★ ★ ★ LESSON OBJECTIVES

Students will learn to:

- Find word meaning in context by using other words or phrases in a reading passage as clues
- Identify when test questions are asking them to find word meaning in context

★ ★ ★ ★ GETTING STARTED

Introduce the Strategy

Tell students that today they will learn how to find word meaning in context when they read.

SAY: Good readers know that they can find word meaning in context by using other words or phrases in the reading passage as clues. Whenever you figure out the meaning of a word without looking it up in a dictionary, you are finding word meaning in context.

Model the Strategy

Introduce the strategy by describing a situation and asking students to think about what is happening.

SAY: Suppose you notice that the chain on your bicycle is rattling. You decide to wait until later to find out what is wrong with it. Next week, while you are riding with a friend, the chain breaks and you have to walk your bike home for two kilometres. Your friend smirks and says, “It reminds me of the wise old adage, ‘A stitch in time saves nine.’” What does the word *adage* mean? How do you know?

Point out to students that they can figure out that *adage* means “wise saying”. An example of an adage is given in the sentence. The adage is described as being wise and old, and it is spoken by the friend. Students can use the example and the descriptions in the context of the situation to figure out what *adage* means. Explain that this is an example of finding word meaning in context.

ELL Support**Prefixes**

Explain to students that many English words have prefixes. A prefix is group of letters added to the beginning of a word to change its meaning.

Work with students to show how the meaning of a word changes with a prefix. Write the word *reread* on the board. Ask students if they can identify the prefix (*re-*) and the base word (*read*). Explain to students that the prefix *re-* means “again”. Tell students that adding the prefix *re-* to *read* has changed the meaning to “read again”. Tell students to be careful identifying prefixes. The word *uniform*, for example, does not have the prefix *un-*.

Point out the prefix *un-* in *unsharpened* on student book page 76. Say that the prefix *un-* changed *sharpened* to mean “not sharpened”.

Genre Focus**Folktale**

Tell students that on page 76, they will read a folktale. Define this genre for students. Explain that a folktale is a fiction story that comes from specific country or culture and usually reflects the customs or beliefs of the people. A folktale has often been told and retold many times before being written down. The characters in the tale may be people or animals. Human characters may be ordinary people, or they may have superhuman qualities. A folktale often contains a lesson about human nature or explains something in the natural world. Have students share folktales that they may have read or heard.

Modelled Instruction

Lesson FINDING WORD MEANING IN CONTEXT

PART ONE: Think About the Strategy

What Is Word Meaning in Context?

Sometimes when you speak with someone, you hear a word that you've never heard before. Many times you can figure out the meaning of the word by thinking about how the person uses it.

- 1 Write what you think the word *constituents* means. It's okay if you don't know the real meaning. Just make a good guess.
Sample response: part of Australia's Constitution.
- 2 You read a newspaper article that says: Senator Wong is now in favour of the bill after many of her constituents said they would not vote for her again if she failed to support it. Write what you think the word *constituents* means now.
Sample response: people who are represented by someone who is elected; voters
- 3 Write the clues in the underlined sentence that helped you figure out what the word *constituents* means.
Sample response: said they would not vote for him

Work with a Partner

- Make a list of five challenging words that you know the meaning of. Ask your partner which words he or she doesn't know.
- Use each of the words your partner doesn't know in a sentence or two that give good hints about the word's meaning. See if your partner can figure out what the word means.
- Then have your partner do the same for you.

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How Do You Find Word Meaning in Context?

You can find word meaning in context when you come to a new word in a reading passage. Look for clues to help you figure out what the word means. Clues might be in the sentence where the word is found. Clues may also be in the sentence just before or just after the one where the word is found.

Read this passage about wildflowers. See if you can figure out what the word *scant* means.

Many gardeners collect seeds for their gardens from their favourite wildflowers. In the autumn, gardeners collect seeds from the dying blooms. Then they put the seeds in plastic bags and save them until spring. They sow the seeds in their garden when the danger of frost has passed. Wildflowers are popular because they thrive in dry conditions and in areas where soil is poor. Since water is in scant supply in many communities, you may want to consider wildflowers for your garden. Many gardeners who live in a city or town with a water ban have thriving wildflower gardens.

1. Let's narrow down the clues to figure out what the word *scant* means.
Look at the chart below. It shows three sentences: the one that comes before the word *scant*, the one that contains the word *scant* and the one that comes after the word *scant*.
Look carefully at the sentences that come before and after the word *scant*.

Wildflowers are popular because they thrive in dry conditions and in areas where soil is poor.	Since water is in scant supply in many communities, you may want to consider wildflowers for your garden.	Many gardeners who live in a city or town with a water ban have thriving wildflower gardens.
Before		After

2. Now think about what the clues in the sentences tell you:
Wildflowers grow well even in areas that are dry and have poor soil.
Wildflowers are good for gardeners who live in areas that have a water ban, or limits on the use of water.
3. So, the word *scant* must mean
"limited; not sufficient"

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AT A GLANCE

Students activate their background knowledge about finding word meaning in context and then learn how to apply this strategy to a short reading passage.

STEP BY STEP

Page 72

- Tell students that today they will practise finding word meaning in context.
- Read out the information at the top of the page.
- Direct students to respond to items 1, 2 and 3.
- Discuss student responses as a class.

Work with a Partner

- Organise students to work in pairs to complete the Work with a Partner activity.
- Encourage volunteers to share their words and meanings with the class.

Tip: If students have difficulty explaining their hints for a challenging word, ask, "What did you say in your sentence or sentences that helped your partner figure out the meaning of the challenging word?"

Page 73

- Read out the information that precedes the reading passage.
- Direct students to read the passage in the box.
- Tell students that after they read the passage, they will use a graphic organiser to help them figure out the meaning of a word in context.
- Guide students through steps 1–3 for completing the graphic organiser by having them follow along as you read the steps aloud.
- Direct students to write the meaning of the word on the blank lines in step 3.
- Discuss student responses.
- Be sure students have a clear understanding of how they found word meaning in context.

Tip: If students are having trouble determining the meaning of the word *scant*, ask them to think more about the clues in the first and third boxes. In dry conditions, there isn't much water. When there is a ban on water, not much water can be used. Wildflowers grow well in these conditions. So you could consider wildflowers if water was in scant, or limited, supply.

Modelled Practice

PART THREE: Check Your Understanding

REVIEW

- Similes, metaphors, personification and idioms are types of figurative language. Authors use figurative language to help readers create pictures in their mind.
- Look for things that are compared in a reading passage. See if the word *like* or *as* is used, or if a sentence says that one thing is another thing. Think about what the things being compared have in common.
 - Look for animals, objects or ideas that are given human characteristics.
 - Look for groups of words whose meaning is different from their usual meaning.

Read this article about the Hmong people of Laos. As you read, ask yourself, "What pictures come to mind?" Then answer the questions.

Hmong Story Cloths

Today Hmong people live in isolated villages in the mountains of Laos, in Southeast Asia. The Hmong grow rice, corn and vegetables, and, after the harvest in November, they celebrate the new year. The new year celebration consists of food, dancing and games, and lasts one week. Everyone enjoys showing off his or her new clothes embellished with the traditional art of *pa ndau*, which means "flower cloth".

Pa ndau is a sewing technique similar to embroidery and appliqué. Grandmothers, mothers and older sisters teach young Hmong women the intricate designs of this traditional art. The women patiently duplicate the designs on jackets, skirts, sashes, pillow covers and quilts.

For centuries, the Hmong lived peacefully in the forests of China. During the nineteenth century, rulers launched a campaign to extinguish the Hmong language. As a result, the Hmong fled south. *Pa ndau* became a way to document the history of the Hmong people, as well as preserve their cultural identity. Today, the Hmong use the flower cloths to tell the story of their lives.

In recent years, war and strife in Laos have forced many of the Hmong into refugee camps in Thailand. Some Hmong have settled in Australia and elsewhere. In Thailand and these other countries, Hmong women continue to create story cloths of people and customs. These story cloths speak a history that details life in China, as well as life in a new country. Like the Hmong people themselves, the cloths are pieced together from scattered bits and sewn with pride and love.



3. Which of these is an example of personification?

- Ⓐ The women patiently duplicate ...
- Ⓑ These story cloths speak a history ...
- Ⓒ ... use the flower cloths to tell the story of their lives.
- Ⓓ Everyone enjoys showing off his or her new clothes ...

4. In the last paragraph, the author compares the flower cloths made by the Hmong refugees to

- Ⓐ flowers.
- Ⓑ a patchwork quilt.
- Ⓒ life in refugee camps.
- Ⓓ the Hmong people themselves.

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Which Answer Is Correct and Why?

Look at the answer choices for each question. Read why each answer choice is correct or not correct.

3. Which of these is an example of personification?

- Ⓐ The women patiently duplicate ...
This answer is not correct because an animal, object or idea is not given a human characteristic. These words are about women only.
- Ⓑ These story cloths speak a history ...
This answer is correct because an object is given a human characteristic. The author gives the cloths the human characteristic of speech.
- Ⓒ ... use the flower cloths to tell the story of their lives.
This answer is not correct because an animal, object or idea is not given a human characteristic. These words describe how the Hmong use the flower cloths to tell about their history. The words do not imply that the cloths do the actual telling.
- Ⓓ Everyone enjoys showing off his or her new clothes ...
This answer is not correct because an animal, object or idea is not given a human characteristic. These words describe people who enjoy showing off their new clothes during new-year celebrations.

4. In the last paragraph, the author compares the flower cloths made by the Hmong refugees to

- Ⓐ flowers.
This answer is not correct because there is no comparison made in the last paragraph between the cloths and flowers. The article states only that the cloths that the Hmong make are called "flower cloths".
- Ⓑ a patchwork quilt.
This answer is not correct because there is no comparison made in the last paragraph between the cloths and a quilt. The article does state that the cloths are pieced and sewn together, which is similar to how a quilt is made, but this is not a comparison that is directly stated.
- Ⓒ life in refugee camps.
This answer is not correct because there is no comparison made in the last paragraph between the cloths and a refugee camp. The article does state that some of the Hmong live in refugee camps in Thailand. However, no comparison between the camps and the cloths is made.
- Ⓓ the Hmong people themselves.
This answer is correct because the article states that "Like the Hmong people themselves, the cloths are pieced together from scattered bits and sewn with pride and love." The author compares the Hmong people and their history to the cloths, both of which seem to be filled with scattered bits but bound with love.

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AT A GLANCE

Students reinforce their understanding of strategy concepts through reading a passage, answering questions, and discussing why answers are correct or not correct.

STEP BY STEP

Page 120

- Read out the information in the Review box.
- Direct students to read the passage and answer the questions on the page.
- Remind students to use the information in the Review box to help them.

Page 121

- Tell students that this page models how to find the correct answers and explains why each one is correct.
- Share the correct answers.
- Read out the explanations for all the answer choices for questions 3 and 4. Solicit questions and comments from the class.

Tip: Point out that in the example of personification in question 3, the author doesn't mean that cloth can actually speak, but this use of figurative language elicits an image of story cloths that are like living things.



Teacher's Corner

Personification attributes human characteristics to nonliving things. For example: *the river crawled slowly toward home; the waterfall sang a vibrant song; the sun winked at me; the wind cried a lament; the flowers danced in the field; hunger crouched on the side of the road; death laid its cold hands on them.*

The term *anthropomorphism* has traditionally meant attributing human form or characteristics (love, hatred, jealousy) to nonhuman beings, such as the gods and goddesses of mythology. But anthropomorphism has come to have a broader interpretation and is sometimes used synonymously with the term *personification*.