

Comprehension Bookmarks

Comprehension bookmarks will focus your children's attention on specific story elements, thus strengthening their understanding of those elements.

Supplies

- file folders
- marker or pen
- book
- crayons or colored pencils (optional)

Preparation

Cut the file folders into (four) 4-inch x 9-inch rectangles. These will be your bookmarks. Write a story element (*Character*, for example) on the top of one of the bookmarks. Then write several or all of the bulleted questions underneath that heading. Do this for each story element listed below. When finished, you will have four *Comprehension Bookmarks*.

Hint: The bookmarks will be much easier to read if you type the headings and questions on the computer and then paste them onto the bookmarks!

Character

- Name the main character. What is he or she like?
- Who are the other characters in your story?
- Describe or draw what one of the characters looks like.
- Think about the main character's actions. Why do you think he or she did that?
- Pretend you are one of the characters in the story. Would you behave the same way, or differently? Why?
- Write a list of 7 words that describe the main character.
- If the character was your friend, what would you say to them about the problem they are having in the story?

Setting

- Close your eyes and visualize a clear picture of the setting (where the story takes place.) Describe what you see in your mind's eye.
- Does the setting of this story remind you of any of the places you know? If so, which ones?
- If you could, would you like to visit the place in the story?
- Write a list of 7 words that best describe the setting.

Plot/Main Idea

- What was the most important thing that happened in the story/chapter?
- Tell something that happened in the beginning, middle, and end of the story/chapter.
- Was the character's behavior different at the end of the story/chapter, compared to the beginning?
- Do you think the title of the story/chapter is a good one? If you could change it, what would it be?

Problem/Solution

- What went wrong in the story?
- What is the main character doing about the problem?
- Did he or she solve the problem? If not, what do you think he or she should have done?
- What was the solution to the problem?
- Was there a lesson learned? If so, what was it?

What to Do

Give one of the bookmarks to your child when he or she starts reading a new book. Explain that the focus points and questions are going to help him or her understand that story element better. Encourage your learner to think about those focus points as he or she reads the story/chapter. When reading is completed, go over one or two of the bulleted items. There is no need to answer all of them, as this bookmark can be used again with other stories.

If desired, your child can decorate his or her bookmarks to personalize them!