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# Introduction

Asking questions is an important part of understanding the world around us. Questions are also helpful in learning to understand what we read. These five interrogative words—*who*, *what*, *when*, *where*, and *why*—are commonly known as the five W questions in journalism. When used together, they are an excellent formula that can help students recall facts and other details. As they answer these questions, students will learn to gather information from a reading passage. In time, children will begin to ask these questions automatically as they read.

Although the five Ws are traditionally used with news articles, children’s reading is clearly not limited to journalism. The five Ws are useful for understanding all types of reading. This book is comprised of a wide variety of reading passages: news articles, stories, science articles, letters, recipes, postcards, fliers, advertisements, and more. To challenge students’ thinking, not all of the questions can be easily answered by recalling details. Some of the *why* questions require students to make inferences.

## How to Use This Book

**Reading Levels:** Each page in this book contains a reading passage. Most of the passages are rated between levels 2.0 and 3.0. At the beginning of the book there are some reading passages leveled at slightly below 2.0. At the end of the book there are several passages leveled higher than 3.0 for more advanced readers.

**Diagnostic:** Use any passage in this book as a diagnostic to help determine a child’s reading level. Let her read a passage and answer the questions. If she struggles, have her try an easier passage. If the passage seems too easy, let her try a more difficult passage. Once you find a reading level that seems appropriate for the child, you can then help her select books that are near her reading level.

**Reading Practice:** You can use this book to give students more reading practice. Make a copy of the Student Progress Charts on pages 5 and 6. Write each child’s name along the left edge. Then, use the charts to record each student’s progress. Finally, remember that good reading is not limited to silent reading. To strengthen fluency and verbal skills, pair students and let them take turns reading passages aloud and answering the questions orally. This direction has been stated for some of the passages; however, students may also enjoy reading other selections aloud.

**Writing Practice:** You can use the question section to improve writing and comprehension skills. As they work through the passages, let students copy the questions and answer them in complete sentences on another sheet of paper. Or, let students compose entirely new questions and answer them. Children who are reading the same passages may even want to trade questions. You can also use the passages as a jumping-off point for writing activities. For example, allow children to do research about some of the passages that depict real places or people, and then ask children to write nonfiction articles about them. Let students compose and share their own stories, letters, recipes, jokes, fliers, and so on, as appropriate.