



**Modifications for using Reading Kingdom Stage 2  
For children on the Spectrum  
Specifically for comprehension**

To use the program most effectively, implement the guidelines below:

1. Start with Reading Kingdom Stage 2 Level 3. The decoding demands at this level may be simple for the child – but the goal is not decoding. It is to use relatively easy material that will serve as a scaffold for teaching comprehension.
2. Complete at least 3 of the 4 books that are available at each level. This allows the child the repetition and time required to foster and consolidate new skills. It is good to complete all four books. Once a level is complete, you can move on to the next level of books.
3. The goal is to have 3 sessions a week – but 4 sessions may be done as well.
4. Each book is accompanied by a manual. The manual covers all the lessons needed to complete a book. Use the manual in each lesson. Each lesson lists the pages in the book that contains the content to be used in that lesson.
5. Each session in the manual presents a set of 3 new reading segments from the book.  
On **Day 1** segments 1-3 are read.  
On **Day 2** segments 1-6 are read (so that the child is reviewing what went before prior to dealing with new material).  
On **Day 3** segments 1-9 are read (so that the child is reviewing what went in the two previous sessions prior to dealing with new material).  
On **Day 4**, the cycle starts again, with the child facing 3 new segments, etc.
6. Each lesson is divided into the key components of literacy – reading, writing and comprehension. The lessons for the children with ASD will also contain these components. However, the components, as listed, are designed for neurotypical (NT) children. Accordingly, they need to following modifications for use with children on the spectrum.

The modifications are as follows:

- A. **Content:** Each lesson in the manual lists the pages containing the content in the book that is to be used for that lesson. For each lesson, use the pages listed.

- B. **Reading:** the reading component, as outlined in the manual, is designed to facilitate decoding. For the child with ASD, we are not aiming to facilitate decoding; instead we will use this material for facilitating comprehension. Specifically, either the adult or the child reads the designated text aloud.

Start by reading any material from previous sessions that is listed in the lesson. In the second or third lesson of a set, this will be previously read material. Read this material primarily as a review for the child. Do not stop and question his or her recall. If s/he asks a relevant question about the material, you should respond to it. If s/he makes an irrelevant comment, just shake your head and say "not now." (It is invaluable to stay on task and not permit irrelevancies to distract from the flow of the session.)

Then for the 3 new segments, do the following. For each sentence (or when appropriate for sets of 2-3 sentences) draw simple images of the meaning. These images help the child "see" the message that the sentence has been designed to impart (e.g., if the text says, "the wolf pups played outside the opening to the cave" you can draw a simple picture that represents the idea. In this case, it might be some circles to represent the wolves, and a big circle with an opening to represent the cave opening. You can also label these "rough" images to facilitate your child's understanding of what you are trying to do. As the work progresses, you may find that your child starts suggesting the images to be drawn or the words to be used and even to ask to do these on his/her own. Welcome this development if and when it occurs and try to incorporate the input into the lesson.

If you are comfortable, when possible, aim to link the content of the sentences to the child's reality. To do this, set up a well constructed idea that represents the text while connecting that idea to your child's experience. However, omit the last word or two so that the sentence is incomplete. Then have your child complete the sentence. For example, you might do the following: "*It says the cave children had wolves as pets*" (that comes from the text). What follows is what you might be introducing: "*Lots of people now also have pets--but they are not wolves. Some pets that people have are ...*"

Have your child complete the fill in (if s/he cannot, you add the fill in). Then have your child repeat the complete sentence (e.g., "*Some pets that people have are cats and dogs.*")

The goal is totally accurate recall of the sentence, Particularly at the outset, errors may occur. As soon as an error occurs, stop the child and repeat the task from the beginning (e.g., "*It says the cave children had wolves as pets....*") Repeat the task as many times as needed until the recall is totally accurate.

- C. **Writing** the writing component presents a set of sentences from the new segments that the child has read in that session. This activity, for the NT child, is designed to facilitate accurate spelling. For the child with ASD, this material is used to expand his or her

retention of sentences. The goal is to build up the retention and processing of increasingly complex sentences. Although not given the importance it merits, "sentence skill" is essential for the development of comprehension.

To achieve this, take the writing content that the manual has listed for that session.

Either

- a) say the sentences aloud to your child, or
- b) have the child read them aloud.

Then cover the sentence and have the child repeat it to you. The repetition has to be totally accurate. If it is not, as with the reading component above, start the task from the beginning and then, repeat as many times as necessary to get total accuracy. Several trials may be needed for the longer, more complex sentences. Carry out this procedure with each sentence listed in the Writing section (there are generally 2, 3 or 4 sentences a session). Do each sentence separately.

As indicated above, either you or the child can read the sentences aloud. If this procedure is working, you can switch from one session to the next so that in session 1, you do the reading aloud and in session 2, the child does the reading aloud. If the procedure is not working (e.g., the child does not seem able to recall the words s/he reads aloud) then make the necessary adjustment (e.g., you do the reading aloud).

- D. **Comprehension:** the core of effective comprehension is being able to grasp "the main idea." This component is aimed at empowering the child to achieve this key goal. Basically 3 (incomplete) summary sentences are provided for the session. These serve as models for formulating the key ideas that were read in a text.

The child's task is to complete each sentence (using one of three words that have been provided). When the individual sentences have been completed, the child is asked to repeat the entire set of sentences. The repetition of the three combined sentences need not follow the model "word by word" but it is essential that

- i. they reflect the key points in the modeled sentence, and
- ii. the child formulates a reasonable summary that closely follows the one s/he was offered. (Note: as can be seen from this example, a non-speaking child who can write can carry out the activity via writing rather than speaking).

As with the components above, the goal is accurate recall, As soon as an error occurs, stop the child and repeat the task from the beginning (go back to each sentence, have the child fill it in, etc).

This component is to be implemented "as is" in the manual (i.e. no modifications are required). However, it can be productive to include the following. If the child's handwriting or keyboarding skills are good, after the oral discussion, it is very helpful to have your child write the summary as s/he presented it. Then each summary can be placed in a workbook or file. This file can be reviewed when appropriate. If the child

cannot do this, you should write the summary (with the child sitting next to you) and enter it into the file or workbook

For example, before the comprehension activity is started, it is helpful to help your child recall what went before (in the earlier sessions). The written notes that either the child or you created are ideal for this purpose.