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# INTRODUCTION

## What is the **FOCUS** series?

*FOCUS* is a reading-strategy practice series. Each student book in the series provides brief instruction and concentrated practice for students in one targeted Reading Strategy. *FOCUS* also allows students the opportunity for self-assessment of their performance. It allows teachers the opportunity to identify and assess a student's level of mastery.

### 6 Reading Strategies featured in the *FOCUS* series:

- Understanding Main Idea and Details
- Understanding Sequence
- Recognising Cause and Effect
- Comparing and Contrasting
- Making Predictions
- Drawing Conclusions and Making Inferences

The *FOCUS* series spans 8 reading levels (1.0–8.9). The reading passages in each book are designed so that the book can be used by all students performing at that reading level. The reading passages in each book progress from low to high along that reading level range.

Book	Reading Level
Book A	1.0–1.9
Book B	2.0–2.9
Book C	3.0–3.9
Book D	4.0–4.9
Book E	5.0–5.9
Book F	6.0–6.9
Book G	7.0–7.9
Book H	8.0–8.9

## What is Understanding Main Idea and Details, the Reading Strategy featured in this *FOCUS* book?

The main idea is the most important idea in a passage. The main idea tells what the passage is mostly about. Everything in the passage relates somehow to the main idea. Every passage has a main idea, and each paragraph in a passage also has a main idea. Details are pieces of information in the passage that tell about or explain the main idea. Details tell who, what, when, where, why or how about a person, place or thing. Details can tell about the order in which things happen, or they can explain how to do something.

## What is in each student book?

There are 48 student books in the *FOCUS* series. There is one student book for each of the 6 Reading Strategies, at each of the 8 reading levels. Each student book contains:

- *To the Student*  
This introduces the program and should be read and discussed with students to make sure they understand what they are to do in the book.
- *Table of Contents*
- *Learn About (Modelled Practice)*  
These two pages provide basic instruction and modelling in the understanding and application of the Reading Strategy. The Learn About should be read and discussed with students to make sure they understand the Reading Strategy. Additional tips for helping students understand and use the Reading Strategy are included in the Reading Strategy Tips for the Teacher on pages 12–13 of this teacher guide.
- *Lesson Preview (Guided Practice)*  
These two pages include a sample reading passage and two selected-response questions with explanations of why each of the eight answer choices is correct or not correct. The Lesson Preview should be read, worked through, and discussed with students to make sure they understand how to answer strategy-based questions.
- *20 Lessons (Independent Practice)*  
Each two-page lesson contains one reading passage, four strategy-based selected-response questions and one strategy-based constructed-response writing question.

**Reading Passages:** The reading passages progress across the reading level. The passage genres include:

—**Fiction:** personal narrative, realistic fiction, historical fiction, fantasy fiction, mystery, folktale, fable, legend

—**Nonfiction:** report, article, interview, letter, postcard, book report, movie review, diary entry, journal entry, biography, textbook lesson, directions, instructions, recipe, invitation, announcement, experiment

**Selected-response questions:** In each lesson, students apply the Reading Strategy to a reading passage and then choose the correct answers for four selected-response (multiple-choice) strategy-based questions. You should model how to answer these kinds of questions using information on the Lesson Preview pages.

**Constructed-response writing questions:** In each lesson, students apply the Reading Strategy to a reading passage and then write a short response to a strategy-based question. You should model how to answer these kinds of questions by using one of the sample answers provided on pages 28–29 of this teacher guide.

- *Tracking Chart*  
Students use this chart for noting their completion of and performance in each lesson.
- *Self-Assessments*  
These five forms allow students the opportunity for self-assessment of their performance.
- *Answer Form*  
Students may use this form to record their answers to the eighty selected-response questions and to indicate that they have answered each of the twenty constructed-response writing questions.

## What is in each teacher guide?

There are 48 teacher guides in the *FOCUS* series, one for each student book. Each teacher guide contains:

- suggested instructions for using the *FOCUS* series effectively in the classroom
- Reading Strategy Tips for the Teacher, a facsimile of the Learn About on pages 2–3 of the student book, with tips for additional discussion related to understanding and using the Reading Strategy
- four reproducibles: three Teacher Assessments to be used for individual student assessment in the Reading Strategy and one Class or Group Performance Graph to be used for class or group assessment in the Reading Strategy
- summary of research that supports the *FOCUS* series
- a completed Answer Form for the eighty selected-response questions in the student book
- Answers for the eighty selected-response questions, plus sample answers for the twenty constructed-response writing questions in the student book

## How should I use the Reading Strategy Tips for the Teacher?

These pages contain a facsimile of the Learn About on pages 2–3 of the student book, along with extended information about the Reading Strategy, which you can use as a basis for in-depth discussion to make sure students understand the strategy and how to use it for better reading comprehension.

## Where do students record their answers?

Students should fill in their answers to the selected-response questions on the Answer Form on page 53 of the student book. If students use the Answer Form, they may detach it from the book. Alternatively, students may fill in the correct answers directly on the student book page.

Students should write their answers to the constructed-response questions directly on the lines provided in the student book. Students who use the Answer Form for the selected-response questions should fill in the circle on the Answer Form to show that they have answered the constructed-response question, which is the fifth question in each lesson.

## What is the correction procedure?

For the best results, correct each lesson orally with students immediately following its completion. You may correct the lessons with the students individually or as a class or group. Allow approximately 30 minutes for students to read the passage and answer the five questions. Allow 15 minutes for correction and discussion.

For the selected-response questions, read the correct responses. Discuss why the correct answer choices are correct and why the remaining answer choices are not correct, as modelled on page 5 of the Lesson Preview in the student book. Explain to students any content or concepts that they may not fully understand. Allow time for students to share their strategies for answering the questions.

For the constructed-response question, invite students to read their responses. Discuss why various responses are correct or not correct. A correct student response will be similar in content and scope to the sample answer provided on page 28 or 29 of this teacher guide. You might choose to read the sample answer to the students.

You may decide to correct and discuss lessons after students have completed each group of five lessons, instead of after each lesson.

After the whole class or group of students has completed each group of five lessons, allot about 25 minutes of class time for discussion of all the lessons.

## What is the Tracking Chart, and how is it used?

The Tracking Chart on page 47 of each student book allows students to track completion of and performance in each lesson in the book. Students record the date they have completed each lesson and then, after their work has been corrected, they record the number of questions that they answered correctly out of the five questions in the lesson. You should check to make sure that students accurately correct their answers and record their information.

The chart is grouped in sections of five lessons (Lessons 1–5, 6–10, 11–15 and 16–20). After students have finished each group of five lessons, they complete a Self-Assessment, which helps them assess their performance and set goals.

## What forms of assessment are featured in the *FOCUS* series, and how are they used?

In addition to reading passages and strategy-based questions, *FOCUS* also contains student Self-Assessments and Teacher Assessments.

### Self-Assessments

Students become more successful in reading after they have assessed their own performance against known standards. Some difficulties that students experience can be best revealed through self-assessment. This is especially important if the difficulties have been previously unknown to the teacher. Self-assessment enables students to focus on the process of performance as well as on end results. Student self-assessments are a valuable tool for students, and they help the teacher gain insight into each student's measure of performance.

After students have completed Lessons 1–5 and have recorded their performance on the Tracking Chart, they complete Self-Assessment 1. After Lessons 6–10, they complete Self-Assessment 2. After Lessons 11–15, they complete Self-Assessment 3. After Lessons 16–20, they complete Self-Assessment 4. After they have completed all twenty lessons in the book, they complete Self-Assessment 5.

It is recommended that you review student responses for each Self-Assessment before you have students proceed to the next group of lessons. Using the information from the Self-Assessment, along with the performance information that you recorded on Teacher Assessment 1, arrange one-on-one conferencing with students as needed. Provide reinforcement, additional instruction or extra practice as appropriate. See further suggestions for remediation under the heading **Assessment, Conferencing and Remediation** on page 6 of this teacher guide.

#### **Self-Assessment 1** (page 48 of student book)

After Lessons 1–5 have been completed and corrected, students complete the first self-assessment. They answer questions that require thoughtful written responses.

These questions are designed to help students

- rate their performance in Lessons 1–5
- determine areas where they may be having difficulty with questions or reading passages
- describe any difficulties they may be having
- set a goal for completing Lessons 6–10

#### **Self-Assessment 2** (page 49 of student book)

After Lessons 6–10 have been completed and corrected, students complete the second self-assessment. They answer questions that require thoughtful written responses.

These questions are designed to help students

- rate their performance in Lessons 6–10
- determine areas where they may be having difficulty with questions or reading passages
- describe any difficulties they may be having

- compare or contrast the difficulties with any they may have had in Lessons 1–5
- assess how well they met the goal they set in Self-Assessment 1 for Lessons 6–10
- set a goal for completing Lessons 11–15

#### **Self-Assessment 3** (page 50 of student book)

After Lessons 11–15 have been completed and corrected, students complete the third self-assessment. They answer questions that require thoughtful written responses.

These questions are designed to help students

- rate their performance in Lessons 11–15
- determine areas where they may be having difficulty with questions or reading passages
- describe any difficulties they may be having
- compare or contrast the difficulties with any they may have had in Lessons 6–10
- assess how well they met the goal they set in Self-Assessment 2 for Lessons 11–15
- set a goal for completing Lessons 16–20

#### **Self-Assessment 4** (page 51 of student book)

After Lessons 16–20 have been completed and corrected, students complete the fourth self-assessment. They answer questions that require thoughtful written responses.

These questions are designed to help students

- rate their performance in Lessons 16–20
- determine areas where they may be having difficulty with questions or reading passages
- describe any difficulties they may be having
- compare or contrast the difficulties with any they may have had in Lessons 11–15
- assess how well they met the goal they set in Self-Assessment 3 for Lessons 16–20

#### **Self-Assessment 5** (page 52 of student book)

After students have completed all twenty lessons in the book, they complete the fifth self-assessment. They answer two questions that require thoughtful written responses. These two questions are designed to help students

- rate their performance in the whole book, Lessons 1–20
- analyse and describe their performance in the whole book, Lessons 1–20

## Teacher Assessments

You complete the Teacher Assessments after students have completed groups of lessons and their work has been corrected. The purpose of teacher assessment is to let you track and graph students' performance in the *FOCUS* book so that you can move each student forward or provide remediation before moving a student forward.

### Teacher Assessment 1

*(reproducible on page 14 of teacher guide)*

Teacher Assessment 1, like the student Tracking Chart, is grouped in four sections of five lessons each. Group 1 spans Lessons 1–5, Group 2 spans Lessons 6–10, Group 3 spans Lessons 11–15, and Group 4 spans Lessons 16–20. After students have finished each group of five lessons and their work has been corrected, use the information from the Tracking Chart to fill in the corresponding section of Teacher Assessment 1.

For each lesson in a group, record the total number of correct responses out of 5 possible correct responses, in ratio form. For example, if a student answered 3 out of 5 questions correctly, the ratio would be  $3/5$ . Then record the percentage of correct responses in the lesson. In each lesson, each correct response is worth 20%. For example, a student with 3 correct responses would have  $3 \times 20\%$ , or 60% correct responses.

When you have filled in all the lessons in a group, record the total number of correct responses out of 25 possible correct responses in the group, in ratio and percentage form. For the group total, each correct response is worth 4%.

When you have filled in all four groups of lessons, record the total number of correct responses out of 100 possible correct responses in the book, in ratio and percentage form. For the whole-book total, each correct response is worth 1%.

### Assessment, Conferencing and Remediation

Use the information on Teacher Assessment 1 to determine each student's performance. A student scoring 100% correct responses in two or more groups of lessons may be ready to go on to another book in the *FOCUS* series. A student scoring 72% or fewer correct responses in one or more groups of lessons may be having difficulty. Set up a one-on-one conference. Use the student's Self-Assessment for that group of lessons as a base for discussion to determine the nature of the difficulty. Is the difficulty related to reading the passages, to understanding specific vocabulary or content, or to understanding how to apply the Reading Strategy?

If the student is having difficulty reading the passages, have the student return to the previous *FOCUS* book for that Reading Strategy before continuing in the current *FOCUS* book. For example, if the student is having difficulty reading the passages in a *FOCUS* Book C, have the student return to the corresponding *FOCUS* Book B before continuing with Book C. When the student returns to Book C, track the student's performance on a lesson-by-lesson basis.

If the student is having difficulty understanding vocabulary or content concepts in specific reading passages, work through those passages with the student to determine the nature of the difficulty. Then provide clarification or instruction, as appropriate. You may wish to pair students who are having difficulty with students who are not having difficulty.

If the student is having difficulty applying the Reading Strategy, work through a lesson or two with the student, using the process modelled on page 5 of the Lesson Preview in the student book. Discuss with the student why each answer choice is correct or not correct.

If the student is still having difficulty applying the Reading Strategy, provide additional instruction. You may review with the student the instruction of the specific Reading Strategy in the *Strategies to Achieve Reading Success Series (STARS)* or the *Making Reading Connections Series*.

When the student returns to the *FOCUS* book, track the student's performance on a lesson-by-lesson basis. You may wish to pair students who are having difficulty with students who are not having difficulty.

### **Teacher Assessment 2**

*(reproducible on page 15 of teacher guide)*

Use this assessment to visually graph a student's performance in each group of lessons in the *FOCUS* book. Use information from Teacher Assessment 1 after the student has completed each group of lessons and the answers have been corrected. For each lesson, shade the vertical bar to show the number of correct responses out of 5 possible correct responses. The shaded bars provide a visual depiction of the student's mastery in that group of lessons. The completed bar graph provides a visual depiction of the student's mastery in the whole *FOCUS* book.

### **Teacher Assessment 3**

*(reproducible on page 16 of teacher guide)*

Use this assessment to analyse a student's mastery at any point in the *FOCUS* book. It is recommended that you use this assessment after a student has completed each group of five lessons and the answers have been corrected. Use what you have determined from any one-on-one conferences, along with the appropriate Teacher Assessments and student Self-Assessment. On Teacher Assessment 3, note the student's performance in the Reading Strategy at that point and note an action plan based on the performance. After the action plan has been instituted, note the student's progress. Use these assessments as often as needed, including at the end of each *FOCUS* book.

### **Class or Group Performance Graph**

*(reproducible on page 17 of teacher guide)*

Use this graph to visually compare levels of student mastery in the *FOCUS* book. You may complete the graph for the whole class or for a group of students using the book. When each student has completed the first group of five lessons, use information from Teacher Assessment 1 to shade the total number of correct responses for Group 1.

Continue shading the bar by adding the total number of correct responses for each of the other three groups, Groups 2, 3 and 4. Use a different colour texta or pen to shade each total. Begin the shading for each total where the shading for the previous total left off, to create a solid bar. For example, if the student got 13 total correct responses in Group 1 and 18 total correct responses in Group 2, the bar would stop at the mark for 31 after you had shaded for both totals. When the whole bar has been completed, it will provide a visual depiction of the student's level of mastery for the whole *FOCUS* book, with the various shadings highlighting mastery for each group of lessons within the book. When the whole graph has been completed, it will provide a visual comparison of the levels of mastery of all the students using the *FOCUS* book.