Comprehension Questions for Selected Frog Stories
in Spanish and English

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<u>Background</u>

As an SLP using story retells in my elementary school practice, it became clear that a good addition to this evaluation would be comprehension questions for each of the stories. Every classroom teacher uses comprehension as a measure of reading ability, and reading assessments use comprehension as a way to gauge a student's reading level. Often teachers mention that the student can decode the text of a book, but not accurately answer comprehension questions about the story. The initial set of questions were developed with the help of my colleagues in the Madison Metropolitan School District and used with students from our district for evaluation and progress monitoring. The feedback was positive and our group felt that comprehension questions add a simple but powerful tool to aid in evaluation and therapy for SLPs.

Comprehension questions were developed for the frog stories used to elicit samples from English learners (ELs) whose primary language is Spanish and for monolingual Spanish speakers. These questions were developed in English and translated into Spanish.

<u>The Comprehension Questions</u>

Comprehension questions were developed in Spanish and English for the following frog stories used to elicit samples for the SALT Bilingual Spanish/English Story Retell, Bilingual Spanish/English Unique Story, and Monolingual Spanish Story Retell databases:

- *Frog, Where Are You?* (Mayer, 1969)
- *Frog Goes to Dinner* (Mayer, 1974)
- *Frog On His Own* (Mayer, 1973)
- *One Frog Too Many* (Mayer & Mayer, 1975).

Bloom's Taxonomy (Bloom, et al., 1956), revised by Anderson, Krathwohl, & Bloom (2001) and explained by Leslie Owen Wilson (2013), provides a framework for six types of questions with each level requiring more cognitive demand and higher order thinking. These questions help inform the SLP about the student's thinking skills and where comprehension breakdowns occur. Each story has 18 corresponding questions (three for each category). The hierarchy of the question categories includes:

1. <u>Remembering</u> requires the student to recall information by recognizing, listing, describing, retrieving, naming, and finding.
2. <u>Understanding</u> requires the student to explain ideas or concepts by interpreting, summarizing, paraphrasing, classifying, and explaining.
3. <u>Applying</u> requires the student to use information in another familiar situation by implementing, carrying out, and executing.
4. <u>Analyzing</u> requires the student to break information into parts to examine understanding and relationships by comparing, organizing, deconstructing, and interrogating.
5. <u>Evaluating</u> requires the student to justify a decision or course of action by checking, hypothesizing, critiquing, experimenting, and judging.
6. <u>Creating</u> requires the student to generate new ideas, products, or ways of viewing things by designing, constructing, planning, producing, and inventing.

<u>Administration</u>

After the student finishes retelling the story, ask him/her to answer the comprehension questions for that story. Ask the questions in order of occurrence, following the Bloom's Taxonomy hierarchy for comprehension. Prompts for further detail are acceptable, such as "can you tell me more?". These prompts should be noted as they may provide further language information about the student's learning style.

Scoring

Using the response form, score the student's response to each question based on the 0-2 scale. Scoring guidelines are provided. There is room below each question to write the student's response if necessary or desired. A slash between options on the scoresheet indicates that any one of those responses is correct. Accept reasonable variations, e.g., deer (animal), rana (sapo), and do not penalize for syntax errors; the purpose is to evaluate critical thinking skills. A score of 2 is given for correct and complete answers. A score of 1 is given for less complete answers and/or heavily prompted responses. A score of 0 is given for questions that are not answered, responses unrelated to the question, or incorrect responses. There are 36 possible points, with higher scores indicating better comprehension skills. Note that, although it is possible to score the student's responses in real time, you may find it easier to score them later from an audio recording.

Interpretation

The real value comes from looking at the type of question the student *can* answer. The questions become more difficult as they require higher intellectual ability beyond basic knowledge of facts. Sharing this outcome and receiving corroborating information from classroom teachers and parents is important and illuminating. It enables the SLP to form a more complete picture of the student's abilities as well as highlight areas for goal development and the direction of therapy. The questions, which can be related to other comprehension measures, provide another opportunity to have reluctant speakers expand on their thoughts and express what they know. Comparing the student's ability to answer in Spanish compared to English can provide insight into their ability to use each language effectively in the classroom. Teachers may use questions in the student's strongest language to scaffold comprehension in their second language. *Please note that comprehension scoring was not applied to the samples included in the SALT reference databases.*

Summary

Working on goals that encompass comprehension issues will impact the student's classroom performance. The same framework of hierarchical questions can be used with other short stories to promote comprehension (Fisher & Frey, 2014), and providing practice in the student's first language may help support their second language. This is a meaningful, engaging, and practical way to use literature to develop comprehension with language impaired students.

Acknowledgements

References

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Sample Comprehension Questions

The following comprehension questions are selected from the various categories and stories. 25-sheet scoring pads with the complete set of comprehension questions for each story are included in the Grades K - 3 Elicitation Materials (Bilingual S/E & Monolingual Spanish).

Category: **Remember** (recall information)
Story: **Frog, Where Are You?** (in Spanish)

PREGUNTA	RESPUESTA DEL ESTUDIANTE	PUNTAJE
¿Quién está buscando a la rana?	El niño Y el perro	2
	El niño O el perro	1
	No sé/respuesta no relacionada/respuesta incorrecta	0
¿Qué persiguió al perro?	Abejas	2
	Otros insectos similares, *p. ej. avispones, avispas*	1
	No sé/respuesta no relacionada/respuesta incorrecta	0
¿Dónde encontró finalmente el niño a la rana?	Detrás de un tronco Y en un estanque (lago) (charco)/cerca del agua (estanque) (lago) (charco)	2
	Detrás de un tronco/sobre un tronco/en un estanque (lago) (charco)/cerca del agua (estanque) (lago) (charco)	1
	No sé/respuesta no relacionada/respuesta incorrecta	0

Category: **Understand** (explain ideas or concepts)
Story: **Frog Goes to Dinner** (in English)

QUESTION	STUDENT RESPONSE	SCORE
What is a fancy restaurant?	It's really nice/it's not a fast food place/ it's decorated nicely/there are waiters and waitresses	2
	Somewhere to eat/not like McDonald's	1
	Don't know/unrelated/wrong answer	0
Explain two problems the frog caused at the restaurant.	Jumping into the saxophone/jumping into the salad/jumping into the drink/getting kicked out of the restaurant (lists 2 of 4)	2
	Jumping into the saxophone/jumping into the salad/jumping into the drink/getting kicked out of the restaurant (lists 1 of 4) OR states the frog made people mad	1
	Don't know/unrelated/wrong answer	0
What is this story about?	A frog goes to a restaurant AND gets in trouble	2
	Going to a restaurant OR getting in trouble	1
	Don't know/unrelated/wrong answer, *e.g., a frog/a boy/a restaurant*	0

Category: **Apply** (use information in another familiar situation)
Story: **Frog On His Own** (in Spanish)

PREGUNTA	RESPUESTA DEL ESTUDIANTE	PUNTAJE
¿Por qué no funcionaba el saxofón?	La rana estaba (a)dentro Y no podía salir el sonido	2
	La rana estaba (a)dentro O no podía salir el sonido	1
	No sé/respuesta no relacionada/respuesta incorrecta, *p. ej., estaba roto/no funcionaba*	0
¿Por qué estaba tan molesta la familia del niño al final del cuento?	Porque tuvieron que regresarse a casa sin cenar Y porque la rana había causado problemas	2
	Porque no cenaron O se tuvieron que regresar a casa	1
	No sé/respuesta no relacionada/respuesta incorrecta, *p. ej., estaban enojados con la rana*	0

¿Por qué iba a sacar el mesero a la rana?	La rana había causado muchos problemas/las personas no querían a la rana en el restaurante	2
	No quería a la rana/cosas se rompieron/el mesero fue grosero (malo)	1
	No sé/respuesta no relacionada/respuesta incorrecta	0

Category: **Analyze** (break information into parts to explore relationships)
Story: **One Frog Too Many** (in English)

QUESTION	STUDENT RESPONSE	SCORE
How can you tell the big frog did not like the little frog?	He made faces/he stuck his tongue out at him/he kicked him (lists 2 of 3)	2
	He made faces/he stuck his tongue out at him/he kicked him (lists 1 of 3)	1
	Don't know/unrelated/wrong answer	0
How do you know the dog and the turtle wanted to be friends with the little frog?	They smiled at him/they didn't like it when the big frog was mean to him/they searched for him/they were happy when he came back (lists 2 of 4)	2
	They smiled at him/they didn't like it when the big frog was mean to him/they searched for him/they were happy when he came back (lists 1 of 4)	1
	Don't know/unrelated/wrong answer	0
What part of the story did you like best? Why?	Lists an event WITH rationale, *e.g., when the big frog bit the little frog because of the look on the frog's face*	2
	Lists an event WITHOUT rationale	1
	Don't know/unrelated/wrong answer, *e.g. it was funny*	0

Category: **Evaluate** (justify decision or course of action)
Story: **Frog, Where Are You?** (in Spanish)

PREGUNTA	RESPUESTA DEL ESTUDIANTE	PUNTAJE
¿Cómo se sintió el niño cuando el venado lo levantó?	Sorprendido/asustado/con miedo	2
	Furioso/enojado (enfadado)	1
	No sé/respuesta no relacionada/respuesta incorrecta	0
¿Piensas qué es una buena idea tener a una rana como mascota? ¿Por qué sí, o por qué no?	Sí/no CON lógica	2
	Sí/no SIN lógica	1
	No sé/respuesta no relacionada/respuesta incorrecta	0
¿Cuál es la mejor mascota y por qué?	Se enlistan mascota(s) CON lógica	2
	Se enlistan mascota(s) SIN lógica	1
	No sé/respuesta no relacionada/respuesta incorrecta	0

Category: **Create** (generate new ideas or ways of viewing things)
Story: **Frog Goes to Dinner** (in English)

QUESTION	STUDENT RESPONSE	SCORE
What would happen if you found a frog in your food at the restaurant?	I would scream/tell the waiter/jump out of my chair/leave/complain	2
	I would cry/take the frog out	1
	Don't know/unrelated/wrong answer	0
What would it be like to live in a house if you were a frog?	There would be no water to jump in/there would be no other frogs/it's not a natural habitat	2
	The frog could sleep on a bed/the frog would be scared	1
	Don't know/unrelated/wrong answer	0
Why do you think the boy and the frog are laughing at the end of the story?	The frog caused trouble AND it was funny/the people's reactions were funny	2
	It was funny/they were naughty/the punishment wasn't bad	1
	Don't know/unrelated/wrong answer	0