



READING COMPREHENSION KEY WORDS

This is a great resource to help students decode essay, exam, or homework questions. Many children have difficulty understanding what the question is really asking them to do.

IF THE WORD SAYS

YOU SHOULD

Describe:	Give more details and examples
Discuss:	Tell all you know about it
Explain:	Tell how and why
List:	Just give the information that is asked for – nothing more!
Compare:	Find similarities
Contrast:	Find differences
Illustrate:	Give examples to show what you know
Trace:	List chronologically
Identify:	Recognize and explain
Argue:	Prove points by using facts
Infer:	Decide what you think from what you read
Show cause and effect:	Tell what happened and why
Criticize and Evaluate:	Show strengths and weaknesses

