



reading comprehension assessment

STUDENT TEXTS

ORIGINAL STORIES BY
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PROBE2 Reading Comprehension Assessment™ - Student Texts

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This is an assessment to help your teacher find out what you understand when you read.

THE DETERMINER

1. You may be asked to read this list of words.
2. Focus on the task of reading, not on what the teacher is doing.

READING THE STORIES

3. You will be asked to read more than one story.
4. You will be asked to read each story TWICE.
5. Focus on the task of reading, not on what the teacher is doing.

LIKES AND DISLIKES

6. There are 40 different stories. You may like some more than others.
7. You don't have to like any of them. They are not for your enjoyment.
8. They are to find out how well you can understand written English.

THE QUESTIONS

9. You will be asked the questions written below the story.
10. Answer them carefully.
11. When you are asked the questions, look at the questions.
12. It is not a memory test. Use the story to answer the questions.
13. Focus on the task of answering questions, not on what the teacher is doing.
14. When a teacher needs a little more information you will be asked ...
"Show me where it says that." or "Can you tell me more?"

YOUR KNOWLEDGE

15. Answer the questions from information in the story, even if you disagree with it.
16. You won't know about some things or words in the stories.
This assessment is not a general knowledge test.
The purpose is to see how you work things out.

YOUR RESULTS

17. You might be told your result, but not the correct answers to questions.
This will spoil future tests.

SET 1

cat day bird tree fish swim hill food

SET 2

garden night do

SET 3

water rain anim

SET 4

talk teeth grow

SET 5

mouth insects gla

SET 6

truck tired leaves

SET 7

summer scratchy

SET 8

movement nephew in expensive

SET 9

events though h

SET 10

peace chemist warmth advantages glance rhythm reliable barely

TEXTS

and questions

Most times we are awake in the day and asleep at night.

In the day, if we look up at the sky, we can see the sun.

The sun is a very, very long way away, but it gives us lots of light and keeps us warm.

At night, we can see the moon in the sky. It is a long way away.

The moon gives us some light, but not as much as the sun.

It does not keep us warm.

QUESTIONS

1. Where do we look to see the sun?
2. What are two ways that the sun is different to the moon?
3. Which is further away - the sun or the moon? How do you know that?
4. 'The moon gives us *some light ...*' What do the words ***some light*** mean here?
5. Why is it colder at night than in the daytime?
6. Would you like to sleep in the day and be awake at night? Why do you think that?

Round and round and round the small, black bird flew, calling loudly again and again. No matter how hard it tried, it just couldn't find the nest or the tree that it was in.

Mrs Jones looked up at it and said, "Noisy thing. Why doesn't it just go away?"

"I think it's looking for something," said the man who had cut her old, rotting tree down that morning. He put the wood onto the back of his truck and slowly drove away. He would come back tomorrow and remove the stump of the tree.

Mrs Jones cleaned up the leaves and went inside. She didn't give the bird another thought.

As the sun sank low in the sky, a very tired, small, black bird settled down for the night in a tree at the end of the road.

QUESTIONS

1. Who said "*Noisy thing ...*"?
2. Why was the bird flying round and round?
3. What were the three things the man had to do?
4. Which tree was the bird's nest in?
5. Did Mrs Jones know the bird had a nest in the tree? How do you know that?
6. '... remove the *stump* ...' What does the word **stump** mean here?
7. Why did the bird have to settle in a tree at the end of the road?
8. Was it a good idea to chop the tree down? Why do you think that?

Big cats, great cats, large cats - all are names for the largest members of the cat family. Included are lions, tigers, jaguars, and leopards. Also in the family are cheetahs - big African cats; the fastest land animals in the world.

Cheetahs are different to the other big cats. They can't draw their claws back into their paws, but this is useful for extra gripping power when moving at high speeds.

Unlike other large cats, cheetahs cannot growl. They make a hissing noise or a sound like a bird chirping.

They have black marks on their faces that go from their eyes down to their mouths. The shape of the head, the very long legs, the large heart and lungs and the rough foot pads all combine to make the cheetah a very fast runner.

They don't live very long compared to other large cats. Many cubs don't survive into adulthood. They die from starvation, disease, or are killed by other animals.

An old African story says the black marks on the cheetahs' faces are the tear stains of the mothers, crying for their lost children.

QUESTIONS

1. What three names are all given to the largest members of the cat family?
2. What animals are in the large cat family?
3. In what ways is a cheetah different to other big cats?
4. Where do cheetahs live?
5. What noise is made by all big cats except the cheetah?
6. '... *combine* to make the cheetah ... fast ...' What does the word **combine** mean here?
7. 'They can't *draw* their claws ...' What does the word **draw** mean here?
8. Why are the black marks on a cheetah's face called 'tear stains'?
9. What two things about the cheetah's feet help it when running at speed?
10. Should cheetahs be kept in zoos? Why do you think that?

Lily is the old lady who owns the kennels on Hinton Avenue, looking after dogs when their owners go away. Everybody knows how much she loves dogs, but her opinion of them has not always been so high. She told me her story for my magazine.

In her youth Lily had been ill. She had spent a long time in hospital. Back home, her recovery was slow and she was often lonely. There was an armchair by a low window overlooking the garden and when she regained her strength, Lily was able to sit in it for a short time each day.

Ruff, the neighbour's dog, would sometimes sit outside the window. Lily didn't like dogs, so gave him no encouragement, shooing him away. She had very little appetite, but was told that to get better she must eat everything that was cooked for her.

One afternoon, Lily was sitting in the armchair by the open window. She looked with dismay at the meal on the tray on her lap. 'I can't eat all of this,' she thought.

She looked up and saw Ruff, tongue hanging out, staring at the tray. That, she said, was when she realised Ruff could be useful.

"Yes. I gave him some," she said with amusement. "Well, from then on, Ruff came every day. We both enjoyed it and I slowly got better."

QUESTIONS

1. Where were Lily's kennels?
2. When was Lily in hospital?
3. Where was Ruff when he was staring at the tray?
4. Was Lily's illness serious? How do you know that?
5. Who was Lily talking to?
6. '... her *recovery* was slow ...' What does the word **recovery** mean here?
7. 'She looked with *dismay* ...' What does the word **dismay** mean?
8. Had Lily been able to sit up when she first came home from hospital? How do you know that?
9. What two things did Ruff do to change Lily's opinion of dogs?
10. Should Lily have fed Ruff? Why do you think that?

When the conditions are very foggy or very dark and there are no lights, therefore no visible landmarks, people lose all sense of direction. When attempting to walk directly to their destination, they usually walk around in circles. The circles are surprisingly small; on average only twenty metres in diameter. Most people end up close to where they started, but don't know it. They are totally confused.

This strange occurrence used to be explained away by saying that humans have one leg stronger than the other and that we would veer off in the direction of the weaker leg. Experiments with blindfolded people have proved this to be wrong.

Homing pigeons find their way home no matter where they start from. Like humans, they will use visual clues. They have been seen following highways, even going around roundabouts and turning at intersections.

But they are equipped with more than one method of navigation. They have iron-based crystals called magnetite in their brains. Somehow this enables them to use the Earth's magnetic field to find their way.

'Follow your nose' is a saying used if someone doesn't have a map or has only been given vague directions for getting to an unknown place. This means to act on instinct. Interestingly, the bones in our noses contain magnetite - if only just a trace. This could suggest that early humans may have been better at finding their way through unknown territory, without relying on vision.

QUESTIONS

1. What is magnetite?
2. What two ways do homing pigeons use for navigation?
3. In finding their way home how are humans like pigeons?
4. Do people know exactly how pigeons use Earth's magnetic field? How do you know that?
5. Is the theory about one strong leg and one weak leg true? How do you know that?
6. 'When the *conditions* are ...' What does the word **conditions** mean here?
7. '... only just a *trace*.' What does the word **trace** mean here?
8. Why did the people in the experiment walk around in circles?
9. How would a homing pigeon navigate its way across a sandy desert?
10. Would you like to have more magnetite in your body? Why do you think that?

The designer of the magnificent fountain in the city park couldn't have imagined what was happening to it a hundred years later. It had been built on a grand scale to celebrate the city's 300th anniversary. Water flowed into the fountain's large, round pool from several outlets in the beautiful central fish sculpture.

This summer was particularly hot. Temperatures had soared and people were unable to find relief. The daytime was sweltering. Nights were long and sleep was not a certainty.

Nessa was in the park. She was one of many who chose a shady position near the fountain to eat lunch daily. Weary from lack of sleep in the last week, she found she was often losing her temper over minor issues that normally wouldn't have troubled her.

She opened her backpack and took out her sandwiches. Then she felt around for her water bottle. To her frustration, it wasn't there.

A small child ran past and then his mother in pursuit. She looked at them with irritation. 'How can they have the energy to move like that?' she wondered.

The child climbed up onto the edge of the fountain and dropped into it. She heard his shrieks of delight. The temptation was just too much. Kicking off her sandals and abandoning her belongings, Nessa ran to join him.

The mood quickly spread and before long the fountain pool was alive with people wading around or just sitting with their feet in the cooling water.

QUESTIONS

1. What shape was the fountain's pool?
2. How old is the city?
3. What things did Nessa abandon?
4. Were this city's summers normally hot? How do you know that?
5. Was the pool very deep? How do you know that?
6. '... his mother *in pursuit*.' What does the phrase ***in pursuit*** mean?
7. '... losing her temper over *minor* issues ...' What does the word ***minor*** mean here?
8. Why was she irritated by the child and his mother?
9. Was the pool intended for people to get into? How do you know that?
10. Should these people have used the fountain pool in this way? Why do you think that?