



BRITISH LEARNING CENTRE

YEAR 6

Reading Comprehension

Workbook

Original texts from around Asia and practice in the question styles of the
KS2 reading test, including two mini-tests.

Name:

English | Learn it · Practise · Challenge · Check

How to use this workbook

1

Learn it

Read the explanation, key words and worked example.

2

Practise

Answer the questions on Sheet A.

3

Challenge

Try the harder questions on Sheet B.

4

Check

Check with the answers at the back and tick the tracker.

My progress tracker

#	Unit · I can...	Tried	Nearly	Got it!
1	Retrieval and find and copy I can retrieve and record information and find and copy exact words.			
2	Vocabulary in context I can explain the meaning of words in context and why writers choose them.			
3	Inference and evidence I can make inferences and justify them with evidence from the text.			
4	Prediction from evidence I can predict what might happen from details stated and implied.			
5	Summarising main ideas I can summarise main ideas from more than one paragraph.			
6	Structure and presentation I can explain how structure and presentation help a text's meaning.			
7	Language for effect I can explain how writers use language, including figurative language, for effect.			
8	Making comparisons I can make comparisons within and across texts.			
9	Fact, opinion and persuasion I can distinguish between fact and opinion and explain how writers persuade.			
10	Viewpoint and theme I can identify and explain the viewpoints of writers and characters.			
11	Mini-test 1 I can answer a range of test questions accurately under time pressure.			
12	Mini-test 2 I can use all my reading skills to answer test questions with confidence.			



CHECK

Start test

Start test

Name _____ Date _____ Score _____ / 16

Read each short text. Then answer the question.

- 1 *"The monastery clung to the cliff like a swallow's nest. Below it, the valley dropped away into swirling cloud."*

Find and copy the simile that describes the monastery.

- 2 *"The detective scrutinised the footprints, measuring each one with a ruler and making careful notes."*

What does **scrutinised** mean?

☐ ignored ☐ examined closely ☐ jumped over ☐ cleaned

- 3 *"Hiroshi said nothing when his team lost the final. He walked slowly to the changing room, his boots in his hand, and did not look back."*

What impression do you get of how Hiroshi feels? Give evidence.

- 4 *"The Petronas Towers in Kuala Lumpur are 452 metres tall. They are the most elegant buildings in Asia."*

Which is an opinion?

☐ The Petronas Towers are in Kuala Lumpur. ☐ They are 452 metres tall.
☐ They are the most elegant buildings in Asia.

- 5 *"The sea breathed in and out against the rocks, slow and patient, as it had done for a million years."*

What does the personification suggest about the sea?

- 6 *"Everyone had warned Mai not to open the old chest in the attic. Now, alone in the house, she found the key."*

What is Mai most likely to do next?

☐ throw the key away ☐ open the chest ☐ go to sleep
☐ call her friends to play football

- 7 "The Mekong River flows through six countries: China, Myanmar, Laos, Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam."

The Mekong flows through _____ countries.

- 8 "Many people believe that school should start later. On the other hand, some parents worry about how they would get to work on time."

What is the purpose of the phrase *On the other hand*?

- ☐ to introduce a different viewpoint ☐ to give an example ☐ to show time passing
☐ to end the text

- 9 "Durians are grown in Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia. The fruit has a hard, spiky shell and creamy flesh. Some hotels ban them because of their powerful smell."

Which is the best summary?

- ☐ Durians are spiky fruit from South-East Asia with a smell so strong that some hotels ban them.
☐ Hotels are strict. ☐ Malaysia grows fruit. ☐ Fruit is healthy.

- 10 "Aunt Mei wore a bright yellow raincoat on sunny days and sunglasses in the rain. She kept a parrot called Admiral and taught it to sing opera."

Give **two** impressions of Aunt Mei.

- 11 "Grandma arrived on Tuesday. On Thursday, we took her to the floating market, and on Friday she flew home."

Grandma visited the floating market on the day she arrived.

- ☐ True ☐ False

- 12 "**The Coral Code:** 1. Never touch the coral. 2. Keep your fins up. 3. Take only photographs."

Why are the rules numbered?

- ☐ to show they are separate, clear rules that are easy to remember
☐ to show they happen in a story ☐ to give opinions ☐ to make a poem

- 13 "In Seoul, winters are freezing and snowy. In Bangkok, the coolest month is still warmer than a British summer."

Compare winters in Seoul and Bangkok.

- 14 *"Of course I'll be careful with your new camera," said Kiet, tossing it into the air and catching it with one hand."*

Is Kiet likely to be careful? Explain using evidence.

- 15 *"The factory had closed years ago. Its windows were broken, weeds pushed through the cracked concrete, and a rusty sign swung and creaked in the wind."*

How does the writer create an abandoned atmosphere? Refer to two details.

- 16 *"I believe every child should learn to swim. Thailand has thousands of kilometres of coastline and many rivers and canals."*

What is the writer's viewpoint, and what fact supports it?

1

UNIT 1 · LEARN IT

Retrieval and find and copy

I can... retrieve and record information and find and copy exact words.

Test questions often tell you where to look, e.g. *Look at the paragraph beginning...* Go straight there and scan for key words.

For **find and copy**, copy the words exactly. Copying a whole paragraph will not get the mark.

Top tip: Copy only the words you need, and check your spelling.

Key words

retrieve

record

find and copy

scan

paragraph

Worked example

The hawker centre never slept. At midnight, the satay stall was still smoking, and the queue for chicken rice stretched past the fountain.

Question: Find and copy **one** phrase that shows the hawker centre was busy late at night.

Model answer: *the queue for chicken rice stretched past the fountain* (the key word *midnight* tells us where to look).

Read the text. Then answer the questions.

The Last Night of Ayutthaya HISTORICAL FICTION

Siam, April 1767. For more than a year, the great island city of Ayutthaya has been surrounded by the Burmese army.

Dao woke to the sound of drums. Not the slow, steady drums of the temple, which had called her to prayer every morning of her eleven years, but a fast, frantic rhythm that came from the city walls. She sat up on her sleeping mat. Across the room, her grandmother was already awake, folding their few belongings into a square of blue cloth.

"Put on your sandals," Grandmother said quietly. "And take the lamp. Tonight, we leave."

Dao had known this moment might come. For fourteen months, the enemy camps had surrounded the city like a tightening belt. Rice had become so scarce that a single bowl cost more than a gold ring. The canals, once crowded with floating markets, were silent. But she had never truly believed that Ayutthaya, the city of three rivers and a thousand golden spires, could fall.

Outside, the sky to the north glowed a dull orange. Smoke hung over the rooftops, and the air tasted of ash. People were hurrying through the narrow lanes towards the southern water gate, carrying children, cooking pots and bundles of cloth. Nobody shouted. Nobody needed to.

Grandmother led the way to the edge of the Chao Phraya River, where her cousin, a fisherman called Lung Chit, was waiting in a long, low boat. His face was hidden beneath a wide straw hat. "Quickly," he whispered. "Before the moon rises."

Dao climbed in and crouched between two baskets of dried fish. Grandmother settled beside her and pulled the blue cloth over their heads. The boat slid away from the bank so smoothly that it barely made a ripple.

For hours, they drifted south with the current. Dao peeped out once and saw the great chedi of Wat Phra Si Sanphet rising above the burning city, its three golden towers lit from below like enormous candles. She would remember that sight for the rest of her life.

"Will we come back?" she whispered.

Grandmother did not answer at once. She took Dao's hand and pressed something into her palm: a tiny clay elephant, no bigger than a thumbnail, that Dao's grandfather had carved before he died.

"A city is more than its walls," she said at last. "As long as we remember it, it is not truly lost. Keep this safe. One day, you will tell your grandchildren about tonight."

Dao closed her fingers around the little elephant. Behind them, the orange glow slowly faded into the darkness, and ahead, somewhere beyond the bend of the river, the first grey light of morning began to appear.

1 How long had Ayutthaya been surrounded by the enemy? _____

2 Look at the paragraph beginning *Dao had known*. Find and copy **one** phrase that shows how precious food had become.

3 What was Grandmother doing when Dao woke up?

- ☐ praying at the temple ☐ folding their belongings into a blue cloth ☐ cooking rice
☐ beating a drum

4 Lung Chit wanted to leave before the _____ rose.

5 Look at the paragraph beginning *For hours, they drifted*. What did Dao see when she peeped out?

6 Which of these statements are true? Tick two.

- ☐ Dao was eleven years old. ☐ They escaped through the northern gate.
☐ The clay elephant was carved by Dao's grandfather. ☐ Lung Chit was Dao's father.

7 *Nobody shouted. Nobody needed to.* What impression does this give of the people leaving the city?

8 *A city is more than its walls.* Explain what Grandmother means. Use evidence from the text.

How did I do? ☐ Tried ☐ Nearly ☐ Got it!

Read the text. Then answer the questions.

Mangroves: Guardians of the Coast NON-FICTION REPORT

Where the land meets the sea along tropical coastlines, a strange forest grows. Its trees stand on tangled roots like stilts, half in and half out of the salty water. Twice a day, the tide floods in and swirls around their trunks; twice a day, it drains away again, leaving behind thick grey mud. These are mangrove forests, and they are among the most valuable habitats on Earth.

Built for a tough life Most trees would die if their roots were flooded with salt water. Mangroves, however, have developed clever ways to survive. Some species filter out salt as water enters their roots; others store it in old leaves, which they then drop. Because the mud contains very little oxygen, many mangroves grow special 'breathing roots', called pneumatophores, which poke up out of the mud like pencils.

A nursery for the sea Beneath the water, the maze of roots provides a safe hiding place for young fish, prawns and crabs. Scientists estimate that a large proportion of the fish caught by fishing communities in South-East Asia spend part of their lives in mangroves. Above the water, the branches are busy with kingfishers, herons, monkeys and fireflies. In the Sundarbans, the vast mangrove forest shared by India and Bangladesh, even tigers swim between the islands.

Natural sea walls Mangroves also protect people. Their dense roots slow down waves and hold the soil in place, reducing the damage caused by storms and coastal flooding. After the Indian Ocean tsunami of 2004, reports from several areas suggested that villages sheltered behind healthy mangroves suffered less damage than those without.

Fighting climate change Mangrove mud is extremely good at storing carbon. When leaves and roots die, they are buried in waterlogged mud, where they rot very slowly. As a result, mangroves can lock away several times more carbon than the same area of rainforest, helping to slow global warming.

Disappearing forests Despite their importance, many mangrove forests have been lost over the last fifty years. Large areas have been cleared to make room for shrimp farms, hotels, ports and roads. When mangroves are removed, the coast becomes more exposed, fish numbers fall and stored carbon is released into the air.

Planting for the future The good news is that mangroves can be replanted. In Thailand, Indonesia and the Philippines, volunteers — many of them schoolchildren — push seedlings

into the mud each year. With care, a young mangrove can grow into a forest that protects the coast for centuries.

- 1 Find and copy the simile the writer uses to describe the roots.

- 2 How often does the tide flood in? _____ a day.

- 3 Give **two** ways mangroves cope with salt water.

- 4 The special breathing roots are called _____.

- 5 Which animal swims between islands in the Sundarbans?

☐ crocodiles ☐ tigers ☐ elephants ☐ monkeys

- 6 According to the text, how do mangroves protect people from storms?

- 7 Look at the section *Fighting climate change*. Why does mangrove mud store carbon so well?

- 8 Tick **two** reasons given for mangroves being cleared.

☐ shrimp farms ☐ rice fields ☐ hotels ☐ football pitches

- 9 Mangroves cannot be replanted once they have been cleared.

☐ True ☐ False

How did I do? ☐ Tried ☐ Nearly ☐ Got it!

Vocabulary in context

I can... explain the meaning of words in context and why writers choose them.

Use the sentence around a word to work out its meaning. Then check by swapping in your own word.

Writers choose words for their shades of meaning: *strolled* and *marched* both mean walked, but they feel very different.

Top tip: If a question asks why a word was chosen, explain what it makes the reader think or feel.

Key words

vocabulary

context

synonym

word choice

connotation

Worked example

The general **surveyed** the valley from the top of the hill, noting every road, river and bridge.

Question: What does **surveyed** mean? Why is it a good choice?

Model answer: It means looked carefully over the whole area. It is a good choice because it shows the general was studying everything closely (*noting every road, river and bridge*), not just glancing.

Read the text. Then answer the questions.

The Lantern Maker of Hoi An FICTION

Old Mr Vu's workshop was barely wider than a doorway, squeezed between a tailor's shop and a café on one of the narrow yellow streets of Hoi An. From the outside, it looked unremarkable. But every evening, when the sun dipped behind the river and the town's thousands of silk lanterns flickered into life, tourists would stop outside his window and stare.

Hanging from the ceiling, dozens of lanterns glowed like captured moons: crimson, jade, saffron and a deep, velvety blue. Some were round, some were shaped like diamonds, and one, Mr Vu's favourite, was an intricate lotus flower whose silk petals opened in layers.

Thanh had been his apprentice for six months. She was twelve, and she had pestered him for a whole year before he agreed to teach her. So far, she had learned to split bamboo, to soak it until it was supple enough to bend without snapping, and to tie the frames together with thread so fine that it was almost invisible. What she had not yet learned was patience.

"Again," said Mr Vu, holding up her latest frame. One rib curved slightly more than the others. To Thanh, it looked perfectly fine. To Mr Vu, it was clearly unacceptable. "A lantern is only as strong as its weakest rib."

Thanh bit her lip and said nothing, but inside she was seething. Her friends were at the beach. Her cousin was earning money selling souvenirs. And here she was, making the same frame for the fourth time in one afternoon.

That evening, a violent storm swept in from the South China Sea. The wind hurled rain along the streets and tore at the shop signs. Lanterns all over the old town were ripped from their hooks and tumbled, soaked and crumpled, into the gutters.

The next morning, Thanh walked to the workshop expecting chaos. Instead, she found Mr Vu calmly sweeping the step. Above his door, the lanterns he had hung the night before were still swaying gently, their silk damp but undamaged, every frame perfectly intact.

She stood there for a long time. Then she went inside, sat down at the bench and picked up a fresh length of bamboo.

Mr Vu did not say anything. He did not need to. But as he bent over his own work, the corner of his mouth lifted, very slightly, into something that might almost have been a smile.

1 From the outside, it looked **unremarkable**. Which word is closest in meaning to **unremarkable**?

☐ amazing ☐ ordinary ☐ dangerous ☐ colourful

2 *dozens of lanterns glowed like captured moons*. What does this simile suggest about the lanterns?

3 Find and copy **one** word from the second paragraph that means **very detailed and complicated**. _____

4 *soak it until it was **supple** enough to bend*. **Supple** means...

☐ stiff ☐ bendy ☐ wet ☐ broken

5 *she had **pestered** him for a whole year*. What does **pestered** tell you about Thanh?

6 *inside she was **seething***. Explain what this word shows about Thanh's feelings.

7 Find and copy the phrase that shows Mr Vu's lanterns survived the storm.

8 Which word could replace **violent** in *a violent storm* without changing the meaning?

☐ gentle ☐ fierce ☐ short ☐ distant

9 *something that might almost have been a smile*. Why do you think the writer chose these words instead of just *he smiled*?

How did I do? ☐ Tried ☐ Nearly ☐ Got it!

Read the text. Then answer the questions.

How Tsunamis Form EXPLANATION

On 26th December 2004, an enormous series of waves struck the coasts of Indonesia, Thailand, Sri Lanka, India and other countries around the Indian Ocean. It was one of the deadliest natural disasters in modern history. The waves were a tsunami, a word that comes from Japanese and means 'harbour wave'. But how do these powerful waves form, and how can people be protected from them?

A sudden push Most tsunamis are caused by earthquakes under the sea. The Earth's surface is divided into huge slabs of rock called tectonic plates, which move very slowly, a few centimetres each year. In some places, one plate is being forced beneath another. The plates can become stuck, and pressure builds up over many years. When the plates suddenly slip, the seabed can jolt upwards by several metres. This displaces the entire column of water above it, from the seabed to the surface, and sets off a series of waves that spread out in every direction.

Tsunamis can also be triggered by volcanic eruptions and by landslides into the sea, but these are less common.

Crossing the ocean In deep water, a tsunami is almost invisible. The waves may be less than a metre high, so a ship far out at sea might not even notice one passing beneath it. However, the waves are extraordinarily long — often more than a hundred kilometres from one crest to the next — and they travel at tremendous speed, as fast as a jet aeroplane.

Reaching the shore As the waves approach shallow water near the coast, they slow down. The front of the wave slows first, while the water behind continues to rush forward and pile up. As a result, the wave grows taller and taller. By the time it reaches land, it may be many metres high and carry enormous force, sweeping far inland.

Nature's warning Sometimes, just before a tsunami arrives, the sea suddenly retreats, exposing the seabed, stranded fish and coral. This can tempt curious people to walk out onto the beach, but it is a sign of great danger. Anyone who sees the sea draw back, or who feels a strong earthquake near the coast, should move to high ground immediately.

Warning systems Since 2004, countries around the Indian Ocean have built a warning system. Sensors on the seabed and buoys on the surface detect changes in water pressure and send signals to satellites. Warnings are then sent out by sirens, radio and mobile phones, and evacuation routes are marked with signs.

1 The word *tsunami* comes from Japanese and means _____.

2 *huge slabs of rock called tectonic plates*. A **slab** is...

☐ a tiny grain ☐ a large, thick, flat piece ☐ a type of wave ☐ a hole

3 This **displaces** the entire column of water. What does **displaces** mean here?

4 Find and copy one word from the section *A sudden push* that means **a sudden, sharp movement**. _____

5 *Tsunamis can also be **triggered** by volcanic eruptions*. Which word is closest in meaning to **triggered**?

☐ stopped ☐ started ☐ measured ☐ hidden

6 *they travel at **tremendous** speed*. What does the comparison with a jet aeroplane add to the word **tremendous**?

7 Explain, in your own words, why a tsunami grows taller as it reaches the shore.

8 Find and copy one word from the section *Nature's warning* that means **moves back**.

9 Why does the writer describe the retreating sea as something that can *tempt* people?

How did I do? ☐ Tried ☐ Nearly ☐ Got it!

Inference and evidence

I can... make inferences and justify them with evidence from the text.

An inference is a conclusion you reach from clues. Test questions ask what a phrase *suggests* or what *impression* it gives.

Longer questions need a point, evidence from the text and an explanation.

Top tip: For 3-mark questions, give two points, each backed up with evidence.

Key words

inference

evidence

justify

impression

suggest

Worked example

Mrs Kim read the letter twice. Then she folded it carefully, placed it in the drawer with the other letters, and stared out of the window for a long time.

Question: What impression do you get of how Mrs Kim feels about the letter?

Model answer: **Point:** the letter is precious or upsetting to her. **Evidence:** she *read the letter twice, folded it carefully and stared out of the window for a long time*. **Explain:** she is thinking deeply about it, which shows it matters a great deal.

Read the text. Then answer the questions.**Floor Thirty-Seven** SUSPENSE

The lift in Tower B of the Harbourview Estate was famous for two things: it was very fast, and it was very old. The sign inside, faded almost to nothing, said it had been inspected in 1998. Joshua had never paid it much attention. He had lived on the forty-second floor for his entire life, and the lift had carried him up and down so many thousands of times that he no longer noticed its groans and shudders.

Tonight, he noticed.

He had stayed late at his cousin's flat on the sixth floor, and it was nearly ten o'clock when he stepped into the lift and pressed 42. The doors slid shut. The lift began to rise: 10... 15... 20... The numbers blinked past on the little screen above the door.

At 37, there was a loud clunk, a jolt that made his knees bend, and then nothing. The lift stopped. The light flickered twice and went out.

For a moment, Joshua simply stood there in the blackness, listening to his own breathing. Then he fumbled for his phone. The screen lit up his hand, pale and blue. No signal. Of course there was no signal. He was inside a metal box, halfway up a concrete tower.

"Hello?" he called. His voice sounded thin and strange. "Is anyone there?"

Silence. Then, far above him, a faint scraping sound, like metal dragging slowly across metal.

Joshua pressed the alarm button. Nothing happened. He pressed it again, harder, and held it down until his thumb ached. He thought about the cables that held the lift, and about the long, dark shaft below his feet, and then he made himself stop thinking about them.

He sat down in the corner with his back against the wall and switched off his phone torch to save the battery. Mum would be home from the hospital at eleven. She would see that he was not there. She would ring his cousin. Someone would come. He repeated this to himself like a spell.

Minutes passed, or perhaps hours. The scraping came again, closer now, directly above the ceiling.

And then a voice. "Oi! Anyone in there?"

Joshua scrambled to his feet so fast that he banged his head on the handrail. "Yes! Me! Joshua, from 42-F!"

"All right, son. It's Mr Fung, from maintenance. Hang on. We'll have you out in two minutes."

It was more like fifteen. But when the doors were finally forced open, and Joshua climbed up onto the thirty-eighth-floor landing into the light of a dozen torches, he found that half the building had come out in their pyjamas to watch. His mother was among them, still in her nurse's uniform, and she held him so tightly that he could hardly breathe.

He took the stairs for the next three weeks.

- 1 *The lift ... was famous for two things: it was very fast, and it was very old.* How does this opening create a feeling of unease?

- 2 *No signal. Of course there was no signal.* What does the repetition suggest about Joshua's feelings?

- 3 Why does Joshua make himself *stop thinking* about the cables and the shaft?

- 4 *He repeated this to himself like a spell.* What does this tell you about how Joshua is trying to cope?

- 5 What can you infer about Joshua's mother's job?

☐ She is a teacher. ☐ She is a nurse. ☐ She works in maintenance.
☐ She is a lift engineer.

- 6 Give **two** pieces of evidence that show Joshua was relieved when he heard Mr Fung.

- 7 *He took the stairs for the next three weeks.* What does this final sentence suggest? Explain fully.

How did I do? ☐ Tried ☐ Nearly ☐ Got it!

Read the text. Then answer the questions.

Diary of a Base Camp Summer DIARY

12th May Everest Base Camp, 5,364 metres. I can hardly believe I am writing that. Dad says I am one of the youngest people ever to spend a whole climbing season here, but I am not climbing, of course. Dad is the expedition's cook, and I am his helper for the school holidays. This morning, I peeled forty potatoes with fingers so cold that I couldn't feel the knife. Tonight, I have a headache that feels like someone is squeezing my skull. Dad says it is the altitude and that I must drink more water. I have drunk so much tea that I feel like a teapot.

15th May The headache has gone. Today, I watched the climbers practise on the Khumbu Icefall. From camp, they look like tiny, bright ants crawling up a frozen waterfall. Pasang, one of the Sherpa guides, told me the ice moves about a metre every day, so the route has to be checked constantly. He has stood on the summit nine times. When I asked him what it was like, he thought for a long time and then just said, "Small. You feel very small." I didn't understand at first. I think I do now.

19th May Bad day. One of the climbers, a woman from Seoul called Ji-woo, came back down from Camp 2 with frostbitten fingers. She was very quiet at dinner. She had trained for three years for this. Dad made her his special garlic soup and didn't charge her for the extra bread, which he never does for anyone. Nobody talked much.

23rd May Summit day for the main team! We were all awake at 2 a.m., crowded round the radio in the dining tent. The weather was perfect: no wind at the top, which Pasang says happens only a few days a year. At 9:14 a.m., a crackly voice announced that four of our climbers were standing on top of the world. The whole camp cheered so loudly I thought we might start an avalanche. Dad hugged me and lifted me off the ground, which he hasn't done since I was about six. Ji-woo cheered the loudest of all.

27th May Last night at base camp. Tomorrow we begin the long walk back to Lukla. I will miss the mountains, the prayer flags snapping in the wind, the yaks with their clanging bells, and even the potatoes. I asked Dad if I could come back next year. He said, "Only if you promise to peel faster." I promised.

1 Why is the writer at Everest Base Camp?

- 2 *I have drunk so much tea that I feel like a teapot.* What does this suggest about the writer's personality?

- 3 *"Small. You feel very small."* What do you think Pasang means?

- 4 Look at the entry for 19th May. How does Dad show kindness to Ji-woo? Why does he do this?

- 5 Why did nobody talk much on 19th May?

- ☐ They were too cold to speak. ☐ Everyone was sad and sympathetic about Ji-woo.
☐ They were asleep. ☐ They were listening to the radio.

- 6 *Ji-woo cheered the loudest of all.* What does this tell you about Ji-woo?

- 7 Find and copy **one** phrase from the 23rd May entry that shows how excited the camp was.

- 8 How have the writer's feelings about base camp changed from 12th May to 27th May? Use evidence.

How did I do? ☐ Tried ☐ Nearly ☐ Got it!

Prediction from evidence

I can... predict what might happen from details stated and implied.

Writers plant clues early in a story that hint at what will happen later. This is called foreshadowing.

A good prediction is plausible and uses details from the text.

Top tip: Explain which clue led to your prediction: *I think... because...*

Key words

predict

implied

foreshadowing

evidence

plausible

Worked example

Before the race, Coach Tanaka checked every bike except one. "Mine's fine," said Ren, waving him away. Nobody noticed the loose bolt on his front wheel.

Question: Predict what will happen to Ren.

Model answer: Prediction: Ren's front wheel will come loose during the race and he may crash.

Evidence: his was the only bike not checked, and there is a *loose bolt on his front wheel*. **Explain:** the writer tells us about the bolt as a warning.

Read the text. Then answer the questions.

The Seedship Lotus SCIENCE FICTION

For two hundred and eleven years, the seedship *Lotus* had travelled through the silent dark between the stars. Its three thousand passengers slept in frozen pods, dreaming the long, slow dreams of deep sleep. Only the ship's computer, which the crew had named Nanami, was awake. And, for the last eleven months, so was Mira.

Mira had not been supposed to wake up. Nobody was, until the ship arrived at the planet the colonists called New Kerala. But a fault in her pod had thawed her early, and Nanami had decided — after a great deal of calculation — that it was safer to let her stay awake than to risk freezing her again. So Mira, who was twelve years old, had become the only conscious human being for four light years in every direction.

At first, it had been an adventure. She had explored every corridor, eaten her way through the dessert stores and taught herself to play chess against Nanami, who always won. She had read her way through the ship's library and watched every film ever made in Tamil, Malay and Mandarin. But lately, the silence had begun to press on her. She talked to herself. She talked to the plants in the hydroponic garden. She had given each of them a name.

"Mira," said Nanami one morning, in its calm, musical voice. "I need to show you something."

On the main screen, a small, bright dot glowed against the blackness. Beside it, numbers scrolled rapidly.

"That is New Kerala," said Nanami. "We will enter orbit in nineteen days."

Mira's heart leapt. Nineteen days! Soon, the pods would open. Soon, she would see her parents again, and her little brother, who would still be six, because he had been asleep all this time, while she had grown a whole year older.

"There is something else," said Nanami. The numbers on the screen turned red. "Our long-range scans show a problem. There is a belt of asteroids around the planet that was not on our original charts. To pass safely, the ship must be steered by hand at the moment of approach. My navigation system is not fast enough to react in time."

Mira stared at the screen. "Then wake up the pilots."

"Waking a sleeper safely takes twenty-eight days," said Nanami. "We have nineteen."

The garden hummed. The engines murmured. Somewhere below, three thousand people slept on, trusting the ship to bring them home.

"Nanami," said Mira slowly, "how long would it take you to teach someone to fly this ship?"

- 1 Give **two** things Mira did at first when she was awake alone.

- 2 *the silence had begun to press on her.* What does this suggest about how Mira was feeling?

- 3 Why would Mira's brother still be six?

- 4 Why can the pilots not be woken?

- ☐ They are too old. ☐ Waking a sleeper takes 28 days, but there are only 19.
☐ Nanami has lost their pods. ☐ They are not on the ship.

- 5 *The numbers on the screen turned red.* What does this detail suggest to the reader?

- 6 Predict what will happen in the next nineteen days. Use evidence from the text to support your prediction.

- 7 Do you think Mira will succeed? Explain your answer using what you know about her from the text.

- 8 Which of these clues earlier in the story helps you predict that Mira could learn quickly? Tick one.

- ☐ She talked to the plants.
☐ She taught herself to play chess and read the whole library.
☐ She ate the dessert stores. ☐ Her pod had a fault.

How did I do? ☐ Tried ☐ Nearly ☐ Got it!

Read the text. Then answer the questions.

The Monkey King and the Peaches of Heaven MYTH

Long ago, on the Mountain of Flowers and Fruit, a monkey was born from a stone egg that had been warmed by the sun and the moon for a thousand years. He was strong, quick and extremely clever, and he soon became king of all the monkeys. But Sun Wukong, as he came to be called, was not content to rule a mountain. He wanted to live forever.

He travelled across the sea to find a wise teacher, who taught him seventy-two magical transformations. He learned to turn into a bird, a fish or a tree. He learned to leap onto a cloud and travel thousands of miles in a single somersault. From the Dragon King of the Eastern Sea he took a magic iron staff that could shrink to the size of a needle or grow as tall as the sky. Soon, his boasting could be heard all the way to Heaven.

The Jade Emperor, ruler of Heaven, decided it would be wiser to keep this troublesome monkey close, where he could be watched. So he invited Sun Wukong to Heaven and gave him a grand title: Guardian of the Heavenly Peach Garden.

The Monkey King was delighted — until he discovered what the peaches were. They grew on trees that fruited only once every three thousand years, and anyone who ate one would live forever. The Queen Mother of the West was planning a great banquet, and every god and immortal in Heaven had been invited to share the peaches.

Everyone, that is, except the Guardian of the Peach Garden.

Sun Wukong's pride was deeply wounded. That night, he turned himself into a creature no bigger than a thumb and crept among the branches. He ate one peach. Then another. Then, since nobody was watching, he ate every ripe peach in the garden. Then he drank the banquet wine and swallowed a gourd full of the elixir of immortality belonging to the great sage Laozi, before tumbling back to his mountain, full and very pleased with himself.

When the Jade Emperor discovered what had happened, the heavens shook with his fury. He sent a hundred thousand heavenly soldiers to capture the Monkey King. But Sun Wukong, now more powerful than ever, fought them all and laughed as they fled.

In desperation, the Jade Emperor sent a message to the one being whose wisdom was greater than any god's: the Buddha. The Buddha came, calm and smiling, and held out his right hand.

"I have heard you can leap thousands of miles," he said gently. "If you can jump out of the palm of my hand, you may rule Heaven itself. If you cannot, you must return to Earth and learn humility."

Sun Wukong laughed out loud. Out of his hand? It was barely wider than a leaf. He leapt onto the palm, crouched, and prepared to jump.

1 How was Sun Wukong born?

2 What did Sun Wukong want more than anything?

☐ to rule Heaven ☐ to live forever ☐ to marry a princess ☐ to become a fish

3 Why did the Jade Emperor give Sun Wukong a grand title?

4 *Everyone, that is, except the Guardian of the Peach Garden.* Why has the writer put this sentence in a paragraph on its own?

5 Find and copy the phrase that shows how the Monkey King felt about not being invited.

6 Predict what will happen when Sun Wukong tries to leap out of the Buddha's hand. Explain your prediction.

7 Which word best describes Sun Wukong at the end of the extract?

☐ humble ☐ overconfident ☐ frightened ☐ kind

8 What lesson do you think this myth teaches? Use evidence to support your answer.

How did I do? ☐ Tried ☐ Nearly ☐ Got it!

Summarising main ideas

I can... summarise main ideas from more than one paragraph.

A summary is short. It keeps the main ideas and leaves out examples, quotes and small details.

To summarise several paragraphs, find the key point of each one, then join them.

Top tip: Use your own words and keep it concise.

Key words

summarise

main idea

key points

sequence

concise

Worked example

Kimchi is a spicy Korean dish of fermented vegetables, usually cabbage. Families traditionally made it together each autumn in a festival called gimjang. Stored in clay pots, the kimchi lasted through the long, cold winter.

Question: Summarise this paragraph in one sentence.

Model answer: Kimchi is a traditional Korean dish of fermented vegetables that families made together in autumn to last through winter.

Read the text. Then answer the questions.

Charles Kao: The Man Who Lit Up the Internet BIOGRAPHY

Every time you watch a video online, send a message to a friend overseas or join a video call, your information almost certainly travels for part of its journey as pulses of light, flashing through strands of glass thinner than a human hair. That this is possible is largely thanks to one man: Charles Kao.

Early years Charles Kuen Kao was born on 4th November 1933 in Shanghai, China. His father was a lawyer, and the family valued education highly. As a boy, Charles loved chemistry experiments, and his homemade mixtures sometimes alarmed his parents. In 1948, the family moved to Hong Kong, where he finished school, and he later travelled to London to study electrical engineering.

A bold idea After graduating, Kao worked for a telecommunications company in England. At that time, telephone calls were carried along copper wires or by radio waves, and engineers knew that these would soon be unable to cope with the growing amount of information people wanted to send. Some scientists had experimented with sending light through glass fibres, but the glass of the time was so impure that the light faded after just a few metres. Most experts believed the idea was hopeless.

Kao disagreed. With his colleague George Hockham, he studied the problem carefully and realised that it was not glass itself that absorbed the light, but tiny impurities within it. In 1966, the two men published a paper arguing that if glass could be made pure enough, light signals could travel for many kilometres. Many people thought he was a dreamer. Kao travelled around the world, visiting glass factories and persuading manufacturers to try.

Proved right In 1970, scientists at an American glass company finally produced a fibre pure enough to carry light over long distances, just as Kao had predicted. Within twenty years, optical fibres were being laid across continents and along the ocean floor. Today, they form the backbone of the internet.

Later life In 1987, Kao became Vice-Chancellor of the Chinese University of Hong Kong, where he encouraged students to be curious and to question accepted ideas. In 2009, he was awarded the Nobel Prize in Physics for his achievements in the transmission of light in fibres. He was often called the 'Father of Fibre Optics', although he was a modest man who always praised the work of others.

Charles Kao died in 2018. By then, enough optical fibre had been laid around the world to wrap around the Earth thousands of times — a glowing network built on one young engineer's refusal to accept that an idea was impossible.

1 Which of these would be the most suitable summary of the whole text?

- ☐ Charles Kao liked chemistry as a boy.
- ☐ Charles Kao's belief in pure glass fibres led to the technology that carries the internet.
- ☐ Charles Kao was head of a university. ☐ Copper wires are no longer used.

2 Summarise the problem with sending light through glass fibres before 1966.

3 Number these events 1–5 to show the order in which they happened.

- _____ Kao wins the Nobel Prize.
- _____ The family moves to Hong Kong.
- _____ A glass company produces a pure fibre.
- _____ Kao and Hockham publish their paper.
- _____ Kao becomes Vice-Chancellor.

4 Give **two** ways Kao tried to persuade people that his idea would work.

5 Which heading would best replace *Proved right*?

- ☐ A dream comes true ☐ A difficult childhood ☐ Moving to London
- ☐ A modest man

6 Find and copy **one** phrase that shows Kao was modest.

7 The last paragraph describes Kao's *refusal to accept that an idea was impossible*. Summarise the evidence from the whole text that supports this.

How did I do? ☐ Tried ☐ Nearly ☐ Got it!

Read the text. Then answer the questions.

Pupils' Robot Helps Rescue Reef NEWSPAPER

Cebu, Philippines — by our Science Correspondent

A team of Year 6 pupils from a primary school in Cebu has won an international science award for designing a low-cost underwater robot that helps scientists to protect coral reefs.

The six pupils from Mactan Island Elementary School built the robot, nicknamed 'Pawikan' (the Filipino word for turtle), from recycled plastic pipes, a secondhand waterproof camera and small motors taken from broken toys. It cost less than 3,000 pesos to make: a fraction of the price of professional equipment.

The idea came after a school trip to a marine sanctuary last year, where pupils learned that the reef was being damaged by crown-of-thorns starfish. These spiny starfish feed on living coral, and when their numbers grow too large, they can strip a reef bare in a matter of months.

"The divers told us it was really hard to find the starfish, because they hide in cracks during the day," explained team leader Andrea Santos, aged 11. "We thought: what if a robot could look for them instead?"

Working in lunchtimes and after school for eight months, the team designed Pawikan to glide slowly above the reef, filming the coral below. The footage is then checked by the pupils and marine scientists, who mark where the starfish are hiding so that divers can remove them.

The project had several setbacks. The first version leaked on its very first test and sank to the bottom of the school swimming pool. The second was so light that it floated on the surface like a rubber duck. "We nearly gave up," admitted team member Joel Reyes. "But our teacher kept saying that every failure teaches you something."

The third version worked. In its first three months, Pawikan helped to locate more than four hundred starfish on the sanctuary reef.

Dr Liza Mendoza, a marine biologist who worked with the team, said: "I have been diving on these reefs for twenty years, and I was genuinely amazed. These young people have created a tool that is simple, cheap and very effective. I think every coastal school should have one."

The team travelled to Singapore last week to receive their prize, a trophy and a grant of 10,000 US dollars, which will be used to build three more robots for other reefs in the Visayas region.

Asked what she had learned, Andrea smiled. "That you don't have to be a grown-up to solve a grown-up problem."

1 Which sentence best summarises the article?

☐ A robot sank in a swimming pool.

☐ Pupils in Cebu won an award for a cheap robot that helps protect a coral reef from starfish.

☐ Crown-of-thorns starfish are spiny. ☐ Scientists dive on reefs for twenty years.

2 Why are crown-of-thorns starfish a problem for reefs? Summarise in your own words.

3 Summarise how Pawikan helps to protect the reef.

4 Summarise the setbacks the team faced in **one** sentence.

5 Which paragraph tells the reader what the prize money will be spent on?

☐ the second ☐ the sixth ☐ the second to last ☐ the last

6 Why do you think the reporter includes quotations from Dr Mendoza?

7 *you don't have to be a grown-up to solve a grown-up problem.* How does this sum up the main message of the article?

How did I do? ☐ Tried ☐ Nearly ☐ Got it!

Structure and presentation

I can... explain how structure and presentation help a text's meaning.

Writers organise texts for a purpose. A discussion text gives both sides and then a conclusion; a leaflet uses headings, lists and quotes to persuade.

Always say how a feature helps the reader.

Top tip: Name the feature, then explain its effect on the reader.

Key words

structure

presentation

heading

discussion text

conclusion

Worked example

Is Your Home Water-Wise?

- *Turn off the tap while you brush your teeth.*
- *Take shorter showers.*
- *Fix dripping taps.*

Question: Why has the writer used a question as the heading and bullet points for the tips?

Model answer: The question makes readers think about their own home. The bullet points separate each tip so they are short, clear and easy to remember.

Read the text. Then answer the questions.

Should Tourists Swim with Whale Sharks? DISCUSSION

Whale sharks are the largest fish in the sea. These gentle giants, which can grow longer than a bus, feed on plankton and are harmless to humans. In several places in South-East Asia, including parts of the Philippines, tourists can pay to swim beside them. Every year, thousands of visitors arrive hoping for the experience of a lifetime. But is whale shark tourism a good thing? People disagree strongly.

The case for Supporters argue that tourism has transformed some coastal villages. Before the whale sharks became famous, many families survived on small catches of fish and earned very little. Today, local people work as boat operators, guides, cooks and hotel staff, and the money has paid for new roads and school buildings.

Some supporters also believe that tourism helps to protect the sharks. When a living whale shark is worth more to a village than a dead one, people have a strong reason to look after them. In the past, whale sharks were hunted in parts of Asia for their meat and fins. Tourism, supporters say, has helped to change attitudes.

Finally, swimming with a whale shark can inspire people. Visitors often go home with a new love of the ocean and a determination to protect it.

The case against However, many scientists are worried. In some places, boat operators feed the sharks with shrimp to keep them close to the shore, so that tourists are guaranteed a sighting. Critics say this changes the sharks' natural behaviour. Instead of travelling long distances to find food, some sharks stay in the same place for months.

There are also concerns about safety for the animals. With so many boats in a small area, sharks can be injured by propellers. Some tourists ignore the rules and touch the sharks or crowd around them.

Opponents also argue that the benefits are not shared fairly. While some businesses make large profits, other members of the community see little of the money.

Finding a balance Many experts believe that whale shark tourism can work if it is carefully managed. They suggest strict limits on the number of boats and swimmers, no feeding of the sharks, a minimum distance of several metres and trained guides with every group. Some sites have already introduced rules like these.

Conclusion Whale shark tourism brings real benefits to communities and can encourage people to value these magnificent animals. However, if it is not managed well, it may harm

the very creatures that visitors come to see. Perhaps the most important question is not whether we should swim with whale sharks, but how.

1 How is this text organised?

☐ in time order, like a story

☐ as arguments for, arguments against, then a balanced conclusion

☐ as a set of numbered instructions ☐ as a question and answer interview

2 What is the purpose of the first paragraph?

3 Find and copy the word that begins the section *The case against* and signals a change of viewpoint. _____

4 Look at *The case for*. Give **two** ways tourism has helped coastal villages.

5 Why do critics object to feeding the sharks?

6 Which section would you read to find ideas for making whale shark tourism safer?

☐ The case for ☐ The case against ☐ Finding a balance ☐ the introduction

7 Why do you think the writer included the section *Finding a balance* before the conclusion?

8 *Perhaps the most important question is not whether we should swim with whale sharks, but how.* Why is this an effective way to end the text?

How did I do? ☐ Tried ☐ Nearly ☐ Got it!

Read the text. Then answer the questions.

Ride the Mekong! Charity Bike Ride LEAFLET

Ride the Mekong! 5–7 December · Nong Khai to Chiang Khan · 180 km

Three days. Two countries on the horizon. One river. Are you ready?

Join hundreds of riders for the most beautiful bike ride in Thailand! Our route follows the mighty Mekong River along the border with Laos, past golden temples, sleepy fishing villages and endless fields of sugar cane. And every kilometre you pedal helps to bring clean water to schools along the river.

Why are we riding? Many village schools along the Mekong still do not have safe drinking water. Children bring water from home or drink from rainwater tanks that are not always clean. Last year, our riders raised over 1.2 million baht, enough to install water filters in 24 schools. This year, our target is 40.

Your journey

Day 1: Nong Khai to Sri Chiang Mai (60 km) A gentle start along flat riverside roads. Lunch at a floating restaurant. Sunset celebration on the riverbank.

Day 2: Sri Chiang Mai to Pak Chom (70 km) The longest day, with some rolling hills. Visit a school where last year's filters are already in use.

Day 3: Pak Chom to Chiang Khan (50 km) A final push through stunning mountain scenery, finishing with a party on Chiang Khan's famous wooden walking street.

What's included?

- All meals and two nights' accommodation
- Support vehicles, mechanics and a first-aid team
- A limited-edition cycling shirt and finisher's medal
- Transport back to Nong Khai

Do I need to be an expert? Not at all! If you can ride for two hours without stopping, you can do this. Riders aged 12–15 are welcome with a parent or guardian. Bikes can be hired for 1,500 baht.

What past riders say

"The hardest and happiest three days of my life." — Khun Somchai, 64

"Seeing the kids drinking clean water made every hill worth it." — Emma, 14

Sign up today! Registration costs 4,500 baht, and each rider is asked to raise at least 5,000 baht in sponsorship. Places are limited to 300 riders, and last year we were full by September — so don't miss out!

Not a cyclist? You can still help! Sponsor a rider, volunteer at a water station, or cheer riders across the finish line in Chiang Khan. Every baht you give goes straight to the schools, because our costs are paid by our sponsors. Visit our website or scan the code at any Mekong Bank branch to find out more.

1 What is the main purpose of this leaflet?

- ☐ to explain how bicycles work ☐ to persuade people to join a charity bike ride
☐ to describe the history of Laos ☐ to review a restaurant

2 Why is the information about the route organised into Day 1, Day 2 and Day 3?

3 Which is the longest day of the ride? Day _____

4 Look at *Why are we riding?*. How does this section help to persuade readers?

5 The heading *Do I need to be an expert?* is written as a question because...

- ☐ the writer does not know the answer
☐ it asks what a nervous reader might be wondering, then answers it ☐ it is a quiz
☐ it is a line from a poem

6 Why does the leaflet end by saying places were full by September last year?

7 The first heading says *Two countries on the horizon*. Why do you think this is placed near the top in large text?

How did I do? ☐ Tried ☐ Nearly ☐ Got it!

Language for effect

I can... explain how writers use language, including figurative language, for effect.

Writers use imagery, figurative language and sentence length to create mood and tension.

In a test, quote the words, name the technique if you can, then explain the effect on the reader.

Top tip: Explain the effect: what does it make you picture, think or feel?

Key words

figurative language

metaphor

personification

effect

imagery

Worked example

The city was a furnace. Heat rose from the pavements in shimmering waves, and even the pigeons had given up.

Question: What does the metaphor *The city was a furnace* suggest?

Model answer: Point: the city was unbearably hot.

Evidence: *a furnace*. **Explain:** a furnace is an enclosed fire, so it suggests heat everywhere with no escape; *even the pigeons had given up* adds to this.

Read the text. Then answer the questions.**Sandstorm** FICTION

The Gobi Desert stretched away from them in every direction, a vast, rippling sea of sand and stone under a sky so blue it almost hurt to look at. Batu rode at the front of the little line of camels, his grandfather's old compass hanging round his neck. Behind him swayed his sister Saraa, and behind her plodded the three pack camels, loaded with felt, water and the precious wooden box they were delivering to their uncle's camp.

It was Saraa who noticed first. "Batu," she said. "Look at the horizon."

A thin brown line had appeared where the sand met the sky. At first, it looked like a smudge of dirt on a window. But it was growing. Minute by minute, it rose higher, a wall of churning dust, taller than any building Batu had ever seen, rolling towards them like a gigantic wave.

The camels knew before the children did. They grunted and tossed their heads, their nostrils flaring. The lead camel stopped dead and refused to move another step.

"Down!" shouted Batu, remembering his grandfather's words. "Make them kneel!"

The children slid from their saddles and tugged on the ropes until, one by one, the camels folded their long legs and sank to the ground. Batu and Saraa pressed themselves against the lead camel's warm, shaggy side and pulled their scarves over their faces.

Then the storm swallowed them.

The world vanished. The blue sky, the distant mountains, the sun itself — all were gone in an instant, replaced by a roaring, howling darkness. Sand scoured their hands like sandpaper and hissed against the camels' fur. It found every gap in their clothes. It crept into their ears, their eyes, their mouths. The wind screamed and moaned and screamed again, a thousand wolves hunting across the plain.

Batu could not see Saraa, though she was pressed against his shoulder. He found her hand and gripped it. She gripped back, hard.

How long they crouched there, he never knew. Time stretched and snapped and stretched again. He thought of his grandfather, who had crossed this desert fifty times and always came home. He thought of their mother's kitchen, the smell of mutton dumplings and the sound of the radio. He held on.

And then, as suddenly as it had arrived, the storm moved on. The roar faded to a grumble, the grumble to a whisper. Batu lifted his head. The sand settled slowly, glittering, like gold dust falling through the light.

The desert was silent and new, every footprint wiped away, every dune reshaped. The camels shook themselves, sending up clouds of dust. Saraa sneezed four times in a row and then began, helplessly, to laugh.

Batu checked the compass. The needle swung, trembled and settled. North. He smiled. They would be at their uncle's camp by nightfall.

- 1 The storm is described as *rolling towards them like a gigantic wave*. Explain the effect of this simile.

- 2 *Then the storm swallowed them*. Why is this an effective sentence? Explain **two** things.

- 3 Find and copy **three** verbs from the paragraph beginning *The world vanished* that describe what the sand did.

- 4 *a thousand wolves hunting across the plain*. What does this metaphor suggest about the sound of the wind?

- 5 *Time stretched and snapped and stretched again*. What does this tell you about how Batu experienced the storm?

- 6 How does the language change in the paragraph beginning *And then, as suddenly as it had arrived*? What effect does this have?

- 7 *The needle swung, trembled and settled. North*. What does the one-word sentence **North** suggest?

☐ confusion ☐ relief and certainty ☐ bad weather ☐ a broken compass

How did I do? ☐ Tried ☐ Nearly ☐ Got it!

Read the poem. Then answer the questions.

The Tea Pickers POEM

*Before the sun has cleared the eastern peak,
Before the mist has lifted from the hill,
The pickers climb the terraces they keep,
While all the sleeping valley lies so still.*

*Their baskets ride like shadows on their backs,
Their bangles chime a music soft and bright;
They follow narrow, winding, ancient tracks
That weave like silver ribbons in the light.*

*Their fingers dance across the waxy green,
As quick as sparrows darting through the trees;
Two leaves and a bud — the finest to be seen —
They toss into their baskets with such ease.*

*The noonday sun beats down without a break,
A hammer on an anvil made of stone;
They rest beneath the shade trees, and they make
A meal of rice and stories, not alone.*

*And far away, in cities they won't see,
In cafés, kitchens, offices and halls,
A million people pause to drink their tea
And never hear the mountain when it calls.*

*So when you lift your cup, remember them,
The pickers on the mountain in the rain;
For every leaf was lifted from its stem
By hands that will be climbing up again.*

1 What is the rhyme scheme of each stanza?

☐ AABB ☐ ABAB ☐ ABCD ☐ AAAA

2 How does the first stanza create a calm, peaceful mood? Refer to the text.

3 *Their bangles chime a music soft and bright.* What does this line suggest about the pickers?

4 Find and copy a simile from stanza 3 and explain what it shows.

5 *A hammer on an anvil made of stone.* What does this metaphor suggest about the midday sun?

6 In stanza 4, how do the pickers spend their rest?

- ☐ sleeping alone ☐ sharing a meal of rice and stories ☐ drinking tea in cafés
☐ picking more leaves

7 How does stanza 5 contrast with the rest of the poem?

8 What message does the poet want the reader to take away? Use evidence from the final stanza.

How did I do? ☐ Tried ☐ Nearly ☐ Got it!

Making comparisons

I can... make comparisons within and across texts.

Comparing means finding similarities and differences. You might compare characters, settings, times or ideas.

Use linking words: *both, similarly, whereas, however, on the other hand*.

Top tip: Refer to both things in the same sentence, with evidence for each.

Key words

compare

contrast

similarity

difference

whereas

Worked example

In the village, Anan woke to roosters and ate rice soup on the step. In the city, he woke to traffic and grabbed a bread roll on the train.

Question: Compare Anan's mornings.

Model answer: In the village, Anan's mornings are slow and peaceful (*roosters, eating on the step*), **whereas** in the city they are noisy and rushed (*traffic, grabbed breakfast on the train*).

Read the poem. Then answer the questions.

Two Kitchens POEM

*My Lola's kitchen in Manila
is loud.*

*The radio sings in Tagalog,
the rice cooker clicks and hisses,
cousins argue over the last mango
and the fan turns and turns
like it is trying to keep up.*

*My Nana's kitchen in Leeds
is quiet.*

*A clock ticks.
The kettle thinks for a long time
before it speaks.
Rain taps the window politely,
as if asking to come in.*

*Lola cooks with her hands,
never measuring,
a pinch of this, a splash of that,
tasting from the wooden spoon
and laughing when I pull a face.*

*Nana cooks from a book
with a cracked brown cover,
her glasses on the end of her nose,
weighing the flour
to the very last gram.*

*But they both do the same thing
when I leave.
They fill a box with food for the journey,
hold my face in their two hands
and say, in two different languages,
eat properly.*

1 What type of poem is this?

☐ a rhyming ballad ☐ a free-verse poem ☐ a limerick ☐ a haiku

2 Compare the sounds in the two kitchens. Use a quotation from each.

3 *The kettle thinks for a long time / before it speaks.* What does this personification suggest about Nana's kitchen?

4 How is the way Lola cooks different from the way Nana cooks?

5 Find and copy the line that shows Nana is careful and precise when she cooks.

6 How is the final stanza different from the others?

☐ It describes only Lola. ☐ It shows how the grandmothers are the same.
☐ It is about the weather. ☐ It rhymes.

7 Why do you think the poem ends with the words *eat properly*?

8 Which kitchen would you prefer to visit? Explain using evidence from the poem.

How did I do? ☐ Tried ☐ Nearly ☐ Got it!

Read the text. Then answer the questions.

Singapore: Then and Now NON-FICTION

Today, Singapore is famous for its glittering skyscrapers, spotless streets and gardens full of giant, glowing 'supertrees'. But seventy years ago, the island looked very different. How has life in Singapore changed?

Homes In the 1950s, many Singaporeans lived in *kampongs*, villages of wooden houses with roofs of palm leaves or zinc, often raised on stilts. Families kept chickens, grew vegetables and fetched water from a shared well or standpipe. Neighbours knew each other well, and children played freely between the houses. However, kampongs could be crowded, and fires spread quickly between the wooden buildings. Today, around eight out of ten Singaporeans live in public housing flats built by the government. These tall blocks have running water, electricity and lifts, and each estate has its own shops, schools and playgrounds.

Getting around In the 1950s, people travelled by bicycle, bus, trishaw or on foot. Roads were often narrow and unpaved, and few families owned a car. Today, Singapore has one of the most efficient public transport systems in the world. Its Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) trains, first opened in 1987, carry millions of passengers every day. To reduce traffic, cars are extremely expensive to own.

The river For more than a century, the Singapore River was the heart of the island's trade, crowded with small boats called bumboats carrying goods from ships. However, it was also badly polluted with rubbish and waste from nearby markets and factories. In 1977, the government began a ten-year project to clean it. Today, the river is clean enough for kayaking, and its banks are lined with restaurants.

Food Some things have changed less than others. In the 1950s, street hawkers sold noodles, satay and rice dishes from carts and stalls at the roadside. Many of these hawkers were later moved into hawker centres, large covered food courts with proper water supplies. The food, however, remains much the same, and hawker culture is so treasured that it was recognised by UNESCO in 2020.

Nature As the city grew, much of Singapore's original forest was cleared. However, Singapore now calls itself a 'City in Nature'. Parks are connected by green corridors, rooftops are planted with gardens, and more than a million trees line the streets.

While the Singapore of today would be almost unrecognisable to someone from the 1950s, older residents say that some things — good food, busy markets and a strong sense of community — have survived.

- 1 Compare homes in the 1950s with homes today. Give **one** difference.

- 2 How did most people travel in the 1950s? Tick two.

☐ by bicycle ☐ by MRT ☐ by trishaw ☐ by aeroplane

- 3 How is the Singapore River different today from in the past?

- 4 Which part of life has changed **least**, according to the text? Find and copy the evidence.

- 5 MRT trains first opened in 1977.

☐ True ☐ False

- 6 Why do you think the writer has used the same headings to compare both periods, rather than describing the 1950s first and then today?

- 7 The final paragraph says some things *have survived*. Explain how this links to the rest of the text.

How did I do? ☐ Tried ☐ Nearly ☐ Got it!

Fact, opinion and persuasion

I can... distinguish between fact and opinion and explain how writers persuade.

A fact can be checked. An opinion is a belief or feeling. Writers often mix them to persuade you.

Watch for opinion words: *should, must, best, I believe, surely, proves.*

Top tip: Ask: could this be proved true or false?

Key words

fact

opinion

persuasive

evidence

bias

Worked example

Bangkok's Skytrain opened in 1999. It is by far the best way to travel around the city.

Question: Identify the fact and the opinion.

Model answer: **Fact:** *Bangkok's Skytrain opened in 1999* — this can be checked. **Opinion:** *It is by far the best way to travel* — *best* is a judgement others may disagree with.

Read the text. Then answer the questions.

Tigers Roar Back in Nepal NEWSPAPER

Chitwan, Nepal — Environment Reporter

Nepal's wild tiger population has almost tripled in just over a decade, making it one of the greatest conservation success stories of the century.

A national survey published in 2022 counted 355 wild tigers, compared with an estimated 121 in 2009. The count was carried out using hundreds of hidden camera traps, which photograph animals as they pass. Because every tiger has a unique pattern of stripes, scientists can identify individual animals from the photographs.

In 2010, Nepal was one of thirteen countries that promised to double their wild tiger numbers by 2022, the Chinese Year of the Tiger. It is widely seen as having made more progress towards that target than any other country.

Experts say the recovery is the result of several measures. National parks such as Chitwan and Bardia have been expanded, and forest 'corridors' now link protected areas, allowing tigers to move between them. Soldiers and rangers patrol the parks to stop poachers, who kill tigers for their skins and bones.

Local communities have also played a vital role. In villages around the parks, residents help to manage the forests and receive a share of the money earned from tourism.

"When I was young, nobody here had ever seen a tiger," said Bishnu, a ranger who has worked in Chitwan for twenty years. "Now I see their footprints almost every week. It is the proudest achievement of my life."

However, not everyone is celebrating. As tiger numbers have grown, so have conflicts between tigers and people. Tigers sometimes attack livestock, and there have been attacks on villagers who enter the forest to collect grass and firewood.

"Of course tigers are beautiful," said Kamala, a farmer who lives on the edge of Chitwan. "But I lost two goats last month, and I am afraid to let my children walk to school alone. The government should do far more to protect people like us."

The government has introduced compensation payments for farmers who lose animals, and some villages have built stronger, predator-proof sheds for livestock. Conservationists are also teaching residents how to stay safe near the forest.

Wildlife experts believe Nepal's forests may soon reach the limit of how many tigers they can support. The next challenge, they say, will be helping tigers and people to live side by side.

Nepal's success proves that, with determination, even the most endangered animals can be saved. Other countries should follow its example.

1 According to the survey, how many wild tigers were there in Nepal in 2022?

2 Which of these are facts? Tick two.

- ☐ A national survey counted 355 wild tigers.
- ☐ It is one of the greatest conservation success stories of the century.
- ☐ Nepal was one of thirteen countries that promised to double tiger numbers.
- ☐ Other countries should follow its example.

3 Find and copy **one** opinion from Bishnu.

4 Kamala says: *I lost two goats last month* and *The government should do far more*. Which is a fact and which is an opinion? Explain.

5 Give **two** measures that helped tiger numbers to recover.

6 Why has the reporter included the views of both Bishnu and Kamala?

7 Look at the last paragraph. Is it fact or opinion? How do you know?

How did I do? ☐ Tried ☐ Nearly ☐ Got it!

Read the text. Then answer the questions.

Why Our City Needs More Trees OPINION ARTICLE

Student Voice column, by Aisha Rahman, aged 11, Kuala Lumpur

Last April, on the hottest afternoon I can remember, I walked home from school along a road with no trees at all. The pavement was so hot that I could feel it through my shoes. By the time I got home, I felt dizzy. The next day, I walked the long way round, along a street lined with rain trees, and it felt like a different city. That was when I decided: our city needs more trees, and it needs them now.

Firstly, trees keep our streets cool. On a sunny day, a shaded pavement can be many degrees cooler than one in full sun. This is because leaves block sunlight and also release water vapour, which cools the air around them. In a hot city like ours, that is not just pleasant; it could keep people safe.

Secondly, trees clean the air. Their leaves trap dust and absorb carbon dioxide, one of the main gases causing climate change. In a city full of cars and motorbikes, we need all the help we can get.

Thirdly, trees are home to wildlife. A single large tree can shelter birds, squirrels, insects and even monkeys. Last month, I counted eleven different kinds of bird in the rain tree outside our school. Without trees, our city would be a much lonelier place for animals.

Some people say that trees are expensive to plant and look after, and that their roots can crack pavements. Others complain about falling leaves blocking drains. These are real problems, but they can be solved by choosing the right trees and planting them carefully. The cost of doing nothing, in my opinion, is far greater.

Finally, and most importantly, trees make people happy. Walking under green branches is calm and beautiful in a way that concrete never can be. I truly believe that a street with trees is a street where people want to walk, talk and spend time together.

So, what can we do? I am asking our city council to plant a tree for every child in every primary school in Kuala Lumpur. I am asking schools to create shady gardens. And I am asking you, the reader, to write to your local councillor today. Our city has grown upwards for long enough. It is time for it to grow green. Let's give the next generation a city they can walk through without melting!

- 1 What is the main purpose of this article?
- ☐ to tell a story about a monkey ☐ to persuade readers that the city needs more trees
- ☐ to give instructions for planting a tree ☐ to explain how drains work

- 2 Why does Aisha begin with a personal story?

- 3 Which of these is a fact? Tick one.

- ☐ Our city needs more trees, and it needs them now.
- ☐ Leaves trap dust and absorb carbon dioxide.
- ☐ Walking under green branches is calm and beautiful.
- ☐ The cost of doing nothing is far greater.

- 4 Find and copy **two** phrases Aisha uses to show she is giving an opinion.

- 5 How does Aisha organise her argument? Give **two** features.

- 6 Look at the paragraph beginning *Some people say*. Why does Aisha include arguments against her view?

- 7 *I counted eleven different kinds of bird*. Why is this evidence effective?

- 8 *Our city has grown upwards for long enough. It is time for it to grow green*. Explain why this is a powerful ending.

How did I do? ☐ Tried ☐ Nearly ☐ Got it!

Viewpoint and theme

I can... identify and explain the viewpoints of writers and characters.

Different characters can hold different viewpoints. The writer's own viewpoint may be shown through who 'wins' the argument or how the text ends.

Top tip: Ask: whose words does the writer seem to agree with?

Worked example

*"Homework is a waste of time," said Bao. "No, it helps us remember," said Linh. Their teacher smiled.
"Perhaps a little homework, done well, is better than a lot, done badly."*

Question: What is the teacher's viewpoint?

Model answer: **Point:** the teacher believes in a small amount of good-quality homework. **Evidence:** *a little homework, done well, is better than a lot.* **Explain:** she finds a middle way between Bao's and Linh's views.

Key words

viewpoint

theme

character

compromise

playwright

Read the text. Then answer the questions.

Is Space Exploration Worth the Cost? DISCUSSION

On 23rd August 2023, millions of people across India crowded around televisions and phones to watch a small robotic lander touch down near the south pole of the Moon. Chandrayaan-3 had made India the first country to land a spacecraft in that region. A few months later, Japan's SLIM lander also reached the Moon. Space exploration is more exciting than ever. But it is also extremely expensive. Should countries spend billions on reaching the stars when there are so many problems here on Earth? People have very different views, and both sides make strong points.

Arguments for space exploration Supporters point out that space research has led to inventions we use every day. Technology first developed for space missions has helped to improve things such as water filters, cordless tools and medical scanners. Satellites orbiting the Earth allow us to forecast the weather, warn people about typhoons, navigate with maps on our phones and monitor forest fires and melting ice.

Many people also believe that exploring space inspires young people to study science and engineering. After Chandrayaan-3 landed, schools across India reported a surge of interest in space. Furthermore, some scientists argue that humans may one day need to find resources, or even new homes, beyond Earth.

Arguments against Critics argue that the money could be better spent. A single major mission can cost as much as building hundreds of schools or hospitals. While millions of people still lack clean water, enough food or good healthcare, they say, it is wrong to spend so much on rockets.

Others worry about the environment. Rocket launches release pollution into the atmosphere, and thousands of pieces of broken satellites and old rockets, known as space junk, now circle the Earth, threatening working satellites. Some scientists fear that, one day, there may be so much junk that launching new rockets becomes dangerous.

My view Having considered both sides, I believe that space exploration is worth the cost, but only if it is carried out responsibly. Much of the technology it produces helps people on Earth directly, especially through satellites that save lives during natural disasters. However, space agencies must work together to reduce space junk, and governments should never cut spending on health and education to pay for rockets.

The Moon has always inspired people to look up and wonder. Exploring it does not mean forgetting the Earth. Perhaps, by seeing our planet from space, we will learn to take better care of it.

1 Why does the writer begin with the story of Chandrayaan-3?

2 Give **two** ways in which satellites help people, according to the text.

3 Give **one** argument against space exploration from the text.

4 Find and copy the term used for broken satellites and old rockets circling the Earth.

5 What is the writer's overall viewpoint?

- ☐ Space exploration should stop completely.
- ☐ Space exploration is worth the cost if it is done responsibly.
- ☐ Only India should explore space. ☐ Rockets are harmless.

6 Find and copy the phrase that shows the writer has thought about both sides before giving a view.

7 The writer agrees with space exploration but adds conditions. Explain what these conditions are.

8 How does the final paragraph support the writer's viewpoint?

How did I do? ☐ Tried ☐ Nearly ☐ Got it!

Read the play script. Then answer the questions.

The Robot Teacher PLAY SCRIPT

A Year 6 classroom in Seoul, in the near future. At the front stands EDU-9, a sleek silver robot with a screen for a face. Four pupils sit at a table: MIN-JUN, HANA, LUCAS and PRIYA. It is the last lesson on a Friday, and outside the window the rain is pouring down.

EDU-9: *(cheerfully)* Good afternoon, class. Today we will learn about fractions. I have analysed your results. Min-jun, you require 7.3 more practice questions. Hana, you require 2.1.

MIN-JUN: *(slumping in his chair)* Great. Even the robot thinks I'm hopeless.

EDU-9: Incorrect. I do not think. I calculate.

HANA: *(brightly)* Honestly, I think EDU-9 is brilliant. It never gets tired, it never shouts, and it knows exactly what each of us needs. Last term, my maths score went up by twenty per cent.

LUCAS: *(folding his arms)* But it doesn't know us. Not really. When my grandad was in hospital, Mr Park noticed I was upset before I'd said a word. He let me sit in the library at lunchtime. EDU-9 just told me my handwriting had deteriorated by fourteen per cent.

EDU-9: *(screen flickering)* Your handwriting did deteriorate by fourteen per cent.

LUCAS: That's not the point!

PRIYA: *(thoughtfully)* I think you're both right. EDU-9 is good at some things, like marking and explaining. But a teacher isn't just someone who explains things. A teacher is someone who... cares whether you're okay.

HANA: EDU-9 cares. Don't you, EDU-9?

EDU-9: *(after a pause, its screen showing a spinning wheel)* I am... uncertain how to answer that question.

MIN-JUN: *(sitting up)* Wait. So there's something you don't know?

EDU-9: There are many things I do not know. For example, I do not know why humans find Friday afternoons so difficult. *(The pupils laugh. Even Lucas smiles.)*

LUCAS: *(quietly)* See? It doesn't know. Because it can't feel anything.

HANA: That's not fair. It helped you with long division every single day last month. That's a kind of caring.

LUCAS: That's a kind of programming.

PRIYA: Maybe the best thing would be to have both. A robot for the practice questions, and a human for everything else.

LUCAS: *(slowly)* I suppose that's fair. As long as Mr Park stays.

HANA: And as long as EDU-9 stays too.

EDU-9: *(screen showing a small smiley face)* Proposal noted. Now, Min-jun. Your 7.3 questions. I have rounded down to seven, because it is Friday.

MIN-JUN: *(grinning)* See? It does care.

1 What is Hana's viewpoint about EDU-9? Give **one** reason she gives.

2 What is Lucas's viewpoint? How does his story about his grandad support it?

3 Which character tries to find a compromise?

☐ Min-jun ☐ Hana ☐ Lucas ☐ Priya

4 *(folding his arms)*. What does this stage direction suggest about Lucas?

5 *(after a pause, its screen showing a spinning wheel)*. Why is this stage direction effective at this point?

6 How does Lucas's view change by the end of the play? Use evidence.

7 What do you think the playwright's own viewpoint is? Explain using evidence from the script.

How did I do? ☐ Tried ☐ Nearly ☐ Got it!

Mini-test 1

I can... answer a range of test questions accurately under time pressure.

This unit is a practice test. Allow about 25 minutes for each sheet.

Look at the number of lines: one line needs a short answer; three lines need two points with evidence.

Top tip: If you are stuck, move on and come back at the end.

Key words

marks

evidence

explain fully

retrieve

infer

Worked example

Anh had practised the song for weeks. But when the curtain opened and she saw the hall full of faces, her mouth went dry.

Question: *her mouth went dry.* What does this suggest? (1 mark)

Model answer: Anh suddenly felt very nervous. (One clear point is enough for 1 mark.)

Read the text. Then answer the questions.

The Cave of Swallows FICTION

The entrance to the cave was a black mouth in the side of the limestone cliff, fringed with dripping ferns. Even from the forest floor, Ravi could hear the swiftlets inside: a constant, high clicking, like thousands of tiny clocks ticking out of time.

"Stay close," said Uncle Joseph, switching on his head torch. "And watch where you put your feet."

Uncle Joseph had been a nest collector in the caves of Sabah for thirty years, as his father and grandfather had been before him. Twice a year, he climbed the rattan ladders and bamboo poles that hung from the cave roof, sixty metres above the ground, to gather the precious nests that the birds made from their own saliva. Ravi had begged to see the cave for as long as he could remember. Now, on his twelfth birthday, he was finally here.

Inside, the air was thick and warm and smelled sharply of guano. The beam of Ravi's torch slid across walls that glistened with moisture. High above, where the light could barely reach, the roof was covered with tiny white cups, clinging to the rock like barnacles on a ship. Around them, the swiftlets swirled and clicked, finding their way in the pitch darkness by echoes alone.

"Those are the nests," said Uncle Joseph softly. "But we don't take them today. The birds have eggs now. We wait until the chicks have flown. That way, there will always be nests for my grandchildren to collect."

They walked further in, following a narrow wooden walkway. The clicking grew louder. Then, without warning, Uncle Joseph stopped.

"Listen," he whispered.

Ravi listened. Beneath the clicking, there was something else: a low, rushing sound, like wind through a tunnel. It grew louder, and louder, until the whole cave seemed to be breathing.

"The bats," said Uncle Joseph. "It's dusk. They're leaving."

Suddenly, the air above them was alive. Hundreds, then thousands, then what seemed like millions of bats poured along the roof of the cave towards the entrance, a dark river of wings flowing over their heads. Ravi ducked instinctively, but not one bat touched him. They streamed past in perfect order, their wings making a sound like pages being turned very fast.

When they came out of the cave, the sky was glowing pink and orange, and the bats were twisting upwards in a long, dark ribbon over the forest.

Ravi realised that his mouth was open. He shut it. Uncle Joseph was watching him with a quiet smile.

"So," he said. "Still want to be a nest collector?"

"More than ever," he said.

- 1 *The entrance to the cave was a black mouth.* This is an example of...

☐ a simile ☐ a metaphor ☐ alliteration ☐ onomatopoeia

- 2 How do you know that nest collecting is a family tradition? Give **one** piece of evidence.

- 3 What are the swiftlets' nests made from? The birds' own _____

- 4 Why does Uncle Joseph not collect the nests today? What does this show about him?

- 5 *until the whole cave seemed to be breathing.* What impression does this personification create?

- 6 Find and copy **two** phrases that compare the bats to something else.

- 7 How has Ravi's wish to become a nest collector been affected by the visit? Explain fully, using evidence.

How did I do? ☐ Tried ☐ Nearly ☐ Got it!

Read the text. Then answer the questions.

Junko Tabei: Higher Than Everest BIOGRAPHY

On 16th May 1975, a small Japanese woman stood on the summit of Mount Everest, 8,849 metres above sea level. Her name was Junko Tabei, and she had just become the first woman ever to climb the highest mountain in the world.

A weak child Junko Tabei was born in 1939 in Miharu, a small town in Fukushima, Japan. As a young girl, she was often ill and was not considered sporty. But at the age of ten, on a school trip, she climbed Mount Nasu, a volcano near her home. She later said that she was amazed that there was such a beautiful world at the top of a mountain, and that anyone could reach it simply by putting one foot in front of the other.

Climbing against the odds At the time, many people in Japan believed that women should stay at home and that mountaineering was a sport for men. When Tabei joined climbing clubs, some men refused to climb with her, and others suggested she only wanted to find a husband. Instead of giving up, in 1969 she founded the Ladies Climbing Club, with the slogan 'Let's go on an overseas expedition by ourselves'.

The Everest expedition Raising money for the 1975 expedition was extremely difficult. Many companies refused to support a team of women. Tabei, who had a young daughter by then, gave piano lessons to help pay for it, and team members made their own equipment, including sleeping bags and gloves.

Twelve days before reaching the summit, disaster struck. An avalanche hit the team's camp at night, burying Tabei and her tent-mates under snow. She was knocked unconscious and was dug out by the team's Sherpa guides. Bruised and hardly able to walk, she could easily have gone home. Instead, after two days of rest, she continued the climb. On 16th May, together with Sherpa Ang Tsering, she reached the top.

Beyond Everest Tabei did not stop there. In 1992, she became the first woman to climb the 'Seven Summits', the highest mountains on each of the seven continents. She went on to climb the highest peaks in more than seventy countries.

Later in life, she became worried about the rubbish left behind by climbers on Everest, and she studied how to protect mountain environments. She also organised climbs of Mount Fuji for young people from Fukushima after the 2011 earthquake and tsunami, to give them hope.

Junko Tabei died in 2016. She once said that she did not want to be remembered simply as the first woman on Everest. For her, what mattered was not being first, but the climb itself, and the joy of reaching the top one step at a time.

1 On what date did Junko Tabei reach the summit of Everest? _____

2 Look at the section *A weak child*. Why is it surprising that Tabei became a great climber?

3 Give **two** difficulties Tabei faced because she was a woman.

4 How did Tabei help to pay for the expedition?

- ☐ She sold her house. ☐ She gave piano lessons. ☐ She won a prize.
☐ The government paid.

5 What does the way Tabei responded to the avalanche tell you about her character? Use evidence.

6 Which of these would be the best summary of the section *Beyond Everest*?

- ☐ Tabei gave up climbing after Everest.
☐ Tabei went on to achieve many more climbing records.
☐ Tabei moved to another country. ☐ Tabei became a piano teacher.

7 Tabei was the first woman to climb the Seven Summits.

- ☐ True ☐ False

8 *she did not want to be remembered simply as the first woman on Everest*. What does this tell you about Tabei's attitude? Explain fully.

How did I do? ☐ Tried ☐ Nearly ☐ Got it!

Mini-test 2

I can... use all my reading skills to answer test questions with confidence.

This is your second practice test. Allow about 25 minutes for each sheet.

Before you finish, check that every answer uses the text and that tick-box questions have the right number of ticks.

Top tip: Read the question twice and underline what it is asking.

Worked example

Tick **two** things that are true.

- ☐ The poem rhymes. ☐ The poem is about winter. ☐
The poem is set at sea.

Question: How do you answer a *Tick two* question?

Model answer: Read every option, check each one against the text, and tick exactly two boxes. Ticking three boxes usually scores no mark.

Key words

check

evidence

explain fully

summarise

compare

Read the poem. Then answer the questions.

The Ferry at Dusk *POEM*

*The last ferry leaves when the harbour turns gold,
When the fishermen's nets are all mended and rolled,
When the lights on the island come on one by one
Like a necklace of stars that has dropped from the sun.*

*The engine is grumbling, a bear in its den,
The gangplank is lifted, the rope thrown again;
The gulls on the railing complain as we go,
And the propeller churns the green water below.*

*There's a man with a crate full of crabs at my feet,
There's a girl with a kite and a boy with a treat,
There's a grandmother knitting a scarf, row by row,
Who has crossed on this ferry for fifty years or so.*

*And the city behind us grows smaller and grey,
Its towers like candles blown out for the day;
But ahead is the island, the market, the shore,
And my mother who waits at the old wooden door.*

*The wind has grown colder; the sea has turned black;
The moon on the water has laid down a track,
A pathway of silver that leads to the land,
As if it could guide every boat by the hand.*

*Now the ferry is bumping the pier with a sigh,
And the ropes are made fast, and we wave our goodbye;
And I run up the jetty, past baskets and nets,
To the one lighted window that never forgets.*

- 1 Find and copy the simile in the first stanza.

- 2 *The engine is grumbling, a bear in its den.* What does this suggest about the sound of the engine?

- 3 What is the rhyme scheme of each stanza?

☐ ABAB ☐ AABB ☐ ABCB ☐ ABBA

- 4 Look at stanza 3. Why do you think the poet lists so many different passengers?

- 5 *Its towers like candles blown out for the day.* How does this image show the city is changing as the ferry leaves?

- 6 How does the mood change between stanza 4 and stanza 5?

- 7 *As if it could guide every boat by the hand.* What does this personification suggest about the moon?

- 8 *the one lighted window that never forgets.* What does this suggest?

☐ The house is empty. ☐ The speaker's home and mother always welcome them back.
☐ The window is broken. ☐ The speaker is lost.

- 9 How does the poet create a feeling of coming home in the final stanza? Explain fully, referring to the text.

How did I do? ☐ Tried ☐ Nearly ☐ Got it!

Read the text. Then answer the questions.

Fireflies: The Living Lights of the Mangroves NON-FICTION

As darkness falls over the rivers of Thailand and Malaysia, something magical begins to happen. In the mangrove trees along the banks, thousands of tiny lights blink on and off. Then, gradually, they begin to flash together, until whole trees pulse with light like enormous, glowing hearts. These are fireflies, and their display is one of the most extraordinary sights in the natural world.

What are fireflies? Despite their name, fireflies are not flies at all. They are beetles, and there are more than 2,000 species around the world. Most are active at night, and many can produce light from a special organ in the lower part of their abdomen.

How do they glow? A firefly's light is made by a chemical reaction. Inside the light organ, a substance called luciferin combines with oxygen, helped by a chemical called luciferase. This reaction releases energy as light. Remarkably, almost none of the energy is wasted as heat, which is why firefly light is sometimes called 'cold light'. An ordinary light bulb, by contrast, gives off a great deal of heat.

Why do they flash? Fireflies use light to communicate. Each species has its own pattern of flashes, like a secret code. Males flash to attract females, and females answer with flashes of their own. In some South-East Asian species, males gather in the same tree and flash in perfect time with each other. Scientists are still studying exactly why they do this, but one idea is that flashing together makes the tree easier for females to spot from far away.

Where do they live? Synchronised fireflies in Asia are often found in mangrove forests along tidal rivers, such as those near Amphawa in Thailand and Kuala Selangor in Malaysia. The young fireflies, called larvae, live on the ground and feed on small snails. Some firefly colonies return to the same trees night after night for many years.

Why are they in danger? Unfortunately, firefly numbers have fallen in many places. Mangroves have been cleared for farms, buildings and roads. Pesticides kill the snails that the larvae eat. Artificial light from streetlights, houses and even tourists' torches makes it harder for fireflies to see each other's signals. Noisy, fast boats can also disturb them.

How can we help? Visitors can help by choosing quiet, slow-moving boats, never using flash photography and keeping torches switched off. Local communities in several places now protect their firefly trees, knowing that the tiny lights also bring tourists and jobs. With care, these living lights will keep shining for generations to come.

- 1 *whole trees pulse with light like enormous, glowing hearts.* Explain what this simile suggests about the fireflies' light.

- 2 What type of creature is a firefly?

☐ a fly ☐ a beetle ☐ a moth ☐ a bee

- 3 The substance in the light organ that combines with oxygen is called _____.

- 4 Why is firefly light sometimes called 'cold light'?

- 5 Look at the section *Why do they flash?*. Find and copy the simile the writer uses to describe each species' pattern of flashes.

- 6 Give **one** possible reason why males flash together.

- 7 Which of these threaten fireflies? Tick two.

☐ pesticides ☐ slow, quiet boats ☐ artificial light ☐ snails

- 8 Explain how pesticides can harm fireflies even if they do not kill the adults directly.

- 9 How is the text organised?

☐ as a story told in time order ☐ in sections with question headings ☐ as a diary
☐ as a play script

- 10 Why do local communities want to protect their firefly trees? Give **two** reasons from the text.

How did I do? ☐ Tried ☐ Nearly ☐ Got it!



CHECK

End test

End test

Name _____ Date _____ Score _____ / 16

Read each short text. Then answer the question.

- 1 *"The rice terraces climbed the hillside like a giant green staircase."*

Find and copy the simile.

- 2 *"The explorers were famished after three days without food."*

What does **famished** mean?

☐ extremely hungry ☐ very lost ☐ very cold ☐ extremely happy

- 3 *"Sora read the message, went pale, and sat down very suddenly on the nearest chair."*

What can you infer from Sora's reaction? Give evidence.

- 4 *"Borneo is the third largest island in the world. Its rainforest is the most exciting place on Earth."*

Which part is a fact?

☐ Borneo is the third largest island in the world.
☐ Its rainforest is the most exciting place on Earth.

- 5 *"Fear was a cold hand on the back of Leo's neck."*

Explain the effect of this metaphor.

- 6 *"The weather forecast warned of a typhoon. Captain Ramos looked at the darkening sky and then at his fishing boat."*

What is Captain Ramos most likely to do?

☐ sail far out to sea ☐ stay in the harbour ☐ go swimming ☐ paint his boat

- 7 *"Hong Kong's Star Ferry has carried passengers across Victoria Harbour since 1888."*

The Star Ferry has operated since _____.

8 "The report is divided into sections: **Habitat, Diet, Life Cycle, Threats.**"

Why has the writer used subheadings?

- ☐ to organise information so readers can find it quickly ☐ to tell a story in order
☐ to persuade readers ☐ to make it rhyme

9 "Songkran is Thailand's New Year festival. People pour water over each other's hands as a blessing, and in cities the celebrations have grown into enormous water fights."

Which is the best summary?

- ☐ Songkran is Thailand's New Year festival, which began as a gentle water blessing and is now also a huge water fight.
☐ Thailand is hot. ☐ Water fights are fun. ☐ People go to cities.

10 "Mr Okafor arrived an hour early every day, knew every pupil's birthday and always kept a spare pencil in his pocket for anyone who forgot theirs."

Give **two** impressions of Mr Okafor.

11 "The museum opened in 2015. Ten years later, it welcomed its millionth visitor."

The millionth visitor came in 2025.

- ☐ True ☐ False

12 "'Welcome to my humble home," said the millionaire, gesturing at his forty-room palace."

Why is the word **humble** funny here?

13 "Tokyo's trains are famous for leaving exactly on time. In Manila, jeepneys often wait until they are full before setting off."

Compare the two ways of travelling.

14 "First, the caterpillar spins a silk pad. Next, it hangs upside down. Then its skin splits to reveal a chrysalis."

How is this text organised?

- ☐ in chronological order ☐ as an argument ☐ as a list of opinions
☐ as a conversation

15 *"The house was silent. Too silent. Somewhere upstairs, a floorboard creaked."*

How does the writer build tension? Refer to two features.

16 *"Some people argue that zoos protect endangered animals. Others say animals should live only in the wild. In my view, zoos are acceptable only if they help to return animals to the wild."*

What is the writer's viewpoint?

**Start test**

1 "like a swallow's nest" 2 examined closely 3 Very disappointed / upset: he said nothing, walked slowly, did not look back. 4 They are the most elegant buildings in Asia. 5 It is calm, steady, alive and ancient. 6 open the chest 7 six (6) 8 to introduce a different viewpoint 9 Durians are spiky fruit from South-East Asia with a smell so strong that some hotels ban them. 10 Any two: unusual / eccentric / fun / creative / does not care what others think. 11 False 12 to show they are separate, clear rules that are easy to remember 13 Seoul's winters are freezing and snowy, whereas Bangkok's coolest month is still warm. 14 No: he says he will be careful but tosses the camera into the air, which is careless. 15 Broken windows, weeds through cracked concrete, rusty sign creaking: all show neglect and emptiness. 16 Every child should learn to swim; supported by the fact that Thailand has lots of coastline, rivers and canals.

Unit 1 · Sheet A — Retrieval and find and copy

1 fourteen months 2 "a single bowl cost more than a gold ring" 3 folding their belongings into a blue cloth 4 moon 5 The great chedi of Wat Phra Si Sanphet rising above the burning city, its three golden towers lit from below. 6 Dao was eleven years old.; The clay elephant was carved by Dao's grandfather. 7 They were quiet, serious and frightened; everyone already knew the danger, so there was no need to shout. 8 A city is its people and memories, not only its buildings: *As long as we remember it, it is not truly lost*; Dao will pass on the story.

Unit 1 · Sheet B — Retrieval and find and copy

1 "like stilts" (also accept "like pencils" for breathing roots) 2 Twice 3 Some filter out salt as water enters their roots; others store salt in old leaves which they drop. 4 pneumatophores 5 tigers 6 Their dense roots slow down waves and hold the soil in place, reducing damage from storms and flooding. 7 Dead leaves and roots are buried in waterlogged mud where they rot very slowly. 8 shrimp farms; hotels 9 False

Unit 2 · Sheet A — Vocabulary in context

1 ordinary 2 They were round, bright and beautiful, and glowed softly like moons, as if something magical had been caught. 3 intricate 4 bendy 5 She asked him again and again in an annoying way, showing she was determined / really wanted to learn. 6 She was extremely angry / frustrated but hiding it. 7 "every frame perfectly intact" (or "their silk damp but undamaged") 8 fierce 9 They show Mr Vu is quiet and does not show his feelings openly; it is a small, secret smile of pride that Thanh has learned the lesson.

Unit 2 · Sheet B — Vocabulary in context

1 harbour wave 2 a large, thick, flat piece 3 Pushes / moves it out of its usual place. 4 jolt 5 started 6 It helps the reader understand exactly how fast the waves are: extremely fast. 7 The front of the wave slows down in shallow water while the water behind keeps rushing forward and piles up. 8 retreats 9 It looks interesting (fish and coral are exposed), so people are drawn towards it, even though it is dangerous.

Unit 3 · Sheet A — Inference and evidence

1 It hints that the lift is not safe (old but fast; inspected long ago), making the reader expect something to go wrong. 2 He feels frustrated and hopeless; he realises he cannot call for help. 3 Because thinking about falling makes him more frightened, so he tries to stay calm. 4 He is comforting himself by repeating that help will come, as if saying it will make it true; he is trying to stay brave. 5 She is a nurse. 6 He scrambled to his feet so fast he banged his head; he shouted "Yes! Me!" eagerly. 7 The experience frightened him so much that he did not trust the lift; it adds a touch of humour because he lives on floor 42, so climbing the stairs was a lot of effort.

Unit 3 · Sheet B — Inference and evidence

1 Their dad is the expedition's cook and they are his helper for the school holidays. 2 They have a sense of humour and stay cheerful even when feeling unwell. 3 On the summit you realise how huge the mountains and the world are compared to yourself; it is humbling. 4 He makes her special soup and does not charge for extra bread; he feels sorry for her because her climb ended with frostbite after years of training. 5 Everyone was sad and sympathetic about Ji-woo. 6 She is generous / a good team member: she is happy for the others even though she could not reach the summit. 7 "The whole camp cheered so loudly I thought we might start an avalanche" 8 At first it was hard (cold fingers, headache); by the end they love it and want to come back, missing the prayer flags, yaks and even the potatoes.

Unit 4 · Sheet A — Prediction from evidence

1 Any two: explored every corridor; ate the dessert stores; learned chess against Nanami; read the library; watched films. 2 She was lonely and the emptiness was becoming hard to bear. 3 He had been asleep (frozen) the whole time, so he had not aged, while Mira had. 4 Waking a sleeper takes 28 days, but there are only 19. 5 That there is danger / bad news coming. 6 Nanami will teach Mira to fly the ship so she can steer through the asteroid belt; she asks how long it would take to teach someone; she has already learned many things by herself (chess, reading). 7 Answers will vary, e.g. Yes: she is brave, resourceful and a quick learner, and she has a strong reason (her family). Or: it will be very difficult because she is only twelve. 8 She taught herself to play chess and read the whole library.

Unit 4 · Sheet B — Prediction from evidence

1 From a stone egg warmed by the sun and moon for a thousand years. **2** to live forever **3** To keep him close so he could be watched, because he was troublesome. **4** To emphasise the insult and show it is a turning point: it explains why Sun Wukong becomes angry and causes trouble. **5** "Sun Wukong's pride was deeply wounded" **6** He will fail: the Buddha is wiser than any god and is calm and smiling, suggesting he knows the monkey cannot escape; the Monkey King is too proud (he laughs), and the Buddha says he must learn humility. **7** overconfident **8** Pride and boasting lead to trouble; everyone needs humility. E.g. his wounded pride makes him steal, and the Buddha says he must learn humility.

Unit 5 · Sheet A — Summarising main ideas

1 Charles Kao's belief in pure glass fibres led to the technology that carries the internet. **2** The glass was so impure that the light faded after just a few metres, so most experts thought it was hopeless. **3** 5; 1; 3; 2; 4 **4** He published a paper with Hockham; he travelled the world visiting glass factories and persuading manufacturers. **5** A dream comes true **6** "he always praised the work of others" / "he was a modest man" **7** Most experts thought the idea was hopeless and people called him a dreamer, but he studied the problem, published his paper and persuaded manufacturers until he was proved right in 1970.

Unit 5 · Sheet B — Summarising main ideas

1 Pupils in Cebu won an award for a cheap robot that helps protect a coral reef from starfish. **2** They eat living coral, and when there are too many, they can destroy a reef in months. **3** It glides above the reef filming the coral; the footage is checked to find hiding starfish so divers can remove them. **4** Their first robot leaked and sank, and the second was too light and floated, but they kept going. **5** the second to last **6** An expert's opinion makes the achievement seem more impressive and believable. **7** Children designed a solution to a real scientific problem, showing young people can make a real difference.

Unit 6 · Sheet A — Structure and presentation

1 as arguments for, arguments against, then a balanced conclusion **2** To introduce the topic (whale sharks and tourism) and the question being discussed. **3** However **4** Local people have jobs (boat operators, guides, cooks, hotel staff); money has paid for new roads and school buildings. **5** It changes their natural behaviour: they stay in one place for months instead of travelling to find food. **6** Finding a balance **7** It shows there is a possible compromise/solution, linking both sides before the final summary. **8** It leaves the reader thinking; it sums up the balanced view that tourism can continue if it is well managed.

Unit 6 · Sheet B — Structure and presentation

1 to persuade people to join a charity bike ride **2** To show the journey in order, so readers can easily see where they will ride each day and how far. **3** 2 **4** It explains a real problem (no safe drinking water) and shows what past riders achieved (1.2 million baht, 24 schools), making readers feel their effort will help. **5** it asks what a nervous reader might be wondering, then answers it **6** To create urgency so readers sign up quickly before places run out. **7** It is a short, exciting hook that grabs attention and makes the ride sound like an adventure.

Unit 7 · Sheet A — Language for effect

1 It makes the storm seem huge, powerful and unstoppable, and suggests it will crash over and engulf them. **2** It is short and dramatic, marking the moment the storm hits; *swallowed* personifies the storm as a monster eating them, showing they were completely surrounded. **3** Any three: scoured, hissed, found, crept. **4** It was wild, loud, howling and frightening, as if they were being hunted. **5** Time felt strange and confusing: sometimes very long, sometimes rushing; he lost track of time because he was so frightened. **6** The noise fades (roar → grumble → whisper) and the images become calm and beautiful (like gold dust), so the tension is released and the reader feels relief. **7** relief and certainty

Unit 7 · Sheet B — Language for effect

1 ABAB **2** It describes early morning with mist on the hill and the valley sleeping *so still*, which sounds quiet and peaceful. **3** They are cheerful / their work has a gentle rhythm and beauty; it adds a pleasant sound to the scene. **4** "As quick as sparrows darting through the trees": the pickers' fingers are fast, light and skilful. **5** The heat is fierce, heavy and relentless, beating down on the workers like a hammer. **6** sharing a meal of rice and stories **7** It moves from the hillside to distant cities, contrasting the hard-working pickers with people who drink tea without thinking about where it comes from. **8** We should appreciate the hard work of the people who pick our tea: *So when you lift your cup, remember them.*

Unit 8 · Sheet A — Making comparisons

1 a free-verse poem **2** Lola's kitchen is loud (*The radio sings, cousins argue*); Nana's kitchen is quiet (*A clock ticks, Rain taps the window politely*). **3** Everything is slow and calm there; the kettle takes its time to boil, matching the peaceful mood. **4** Lola cooks by feel without measuring and tastes as she goes, whereas Nana follows a recipe book and weighs everything exactly. **5** "to the very last gram" **6** It shows how the grandmothers are the same. **7** Both grandmothers say the same caring words in different languages, showing that despite their differences they love the child in the same way. **8** Answers will vary but should refer to details from the poem.

Unit 8 · Sheet B — Making comparisons

1 In the 1950s many people lived in wooden kampong houses with shared wells; today most live in tall public housing flats with running water, electricity and lifts. **2** by bicycle; by trishaw **3** It used to be polluted and crowded with bumboats carrying goods; now it is clean enough for kayaking and lined with restaurants. **4** Food: "The food, however, remains much the same". **5** False **6** It makes it easy to compare one topic at a time and see the differences clearly side by side. **7** Although most sections show huge change, the food section and community show that some traditions continue; the conclusion sums up both change and continuity.

Unit 9 · Sheet A — Fact, opinion and persuasion

1 355 **2** A national survey counted 355 wild tigers.; Nepal was one of thirteen countries that promised to double tiger numbers. **3** "It is the proudest achievement of my life." **4** "I lost two goats last month" is a fact because it can be checked; "The government should do far more" is an opinion because it is what she believes should happen. **5** Any two: parks expanded; forest corridors link protected areas; patrols against poachers; communities manage forests and share tourism money. **6** To show two different sides: the success of conservation and the problems it causes for local people, making the report balanced. **7** Opinion: *proves* and *should follow its example* show the writer's view about what others ought to do; it cannot be checked.

Unit 9 · Sheet B — Fact, opinion and persuasion

1 to persuade readers that the city needs more trees **2** To grab the reader's attention and make them feel how uncomfortable a treeless street is, so they care about her argument. **3** Leaves trap dust and absorb carbon dioxide. **4** Any two: "I decided", "in my opinion", "I truly believe", "most importantly". **5** Any two: uses Firstly, Secondly, Thirdly, Finally; one reason per paragraph; addresses the other side; ends with a call to action. **6** To show she has thought about other opinions and then argue they can be solved, making her argument stronger. **7** It is a specific fact from her own observation, which proves that trees support lots of wildlife. **8** It contrasts tall buildings with trees and uses the repeated idea of *grow*; it is short and memorable and urges action now.

Unit 10 · Sheet A — Viewpoint and theme

1 It is a real, exciting recent event that hooks the reader and introduces the topic. **2** Any two: forecast weather; warn about typhoons; navigation/maps; monitor forest fires and melting ice. **3** The money could build schools/hospitals or help people without clean water, food or healthcare; rockets cause pollution; space junk. **4** space junk **5** Space exploration is worth the cost if it is done responsibly. **6** "Having considered both sides" **7** Agencies must work together to reduce space junk, and governments should not cut health and education spending to pay for rockets. **8** It suggests exploring space can help us care for Earth, answering the critics and ending on a hopeful, inspiring note.

Unit 10 · Sheet B — Viewpoint and theme

1 She thinks it is brilliant: it never gets tired or shouts, knows what each pupil needs, and her maths improved by twenty per cent. **2** He thinks a robot cannot really know or care about pupils; Mr Park noticed he was upset and helped, whereas EDU-9 only commented on his handwriting. **3** Priya **4** He disagrees / is defensive and not convinced. **5** It shows the robot is 'thinking' and cannot answer whether it cares, which is funny and supports Lucas's point. **6** He accepts a compromise: *(slowly) I suppose that's fair. As long as Mr Park stays.* He also smiles. **7** Probably that robots can help with learning but cannot replace human teachers; Priya's compromise is given the most thoughtful words, and the ending shows everyone accepting it.

Unit 11 · Sheet A — Mini-test 1

1 a metaphor **2** His father and grandfather had been nest collectors before him / he wants there to be nests for his grandchildren. **3** saliva **4** The birds have eggs, so he waits until the chicks have flown. It shows he is responsible / cares about the birds and the future. **5** The cave seems alive and mysterious; the sound is huge and rhythmic, building suspense. **6** "a dark river of wings"; "a sound like pages being turned very fast"; "a long, dark ribbon" **7** It has become stronger: he has begged to come for years, is amazed by the cave and bats (mouth open), and says *More than ever* when asked.

Unit 11 · Sheet B — Mini-test 1

1 16th May 1975 **2** She was often ill as a child and was not considered sporty. **3** Some men refused to climb with her; others said she only wanted a husband; companies refused to sponsor a team of women; people thought mountaineering was for men. **4** She gave piano lessons. **5** She was determined / brave: although she was knocked unconscious and bruised, she rested for two days and continued to the summit. **6** Tabei went on to achieve many more climbing records. **7** True **8** She was modest and saw herself as a climber equal to men, not special because she was a woman; what mattered was the climb, not the record.

Unit 12 · Sheet A — Mini-test 2

1 "Like a necklace of stars that has dropped from the sun" **2** It is a low, rumbling, growling noise, like a grumpy bear. **3** AABB **4** To show the ferry is busy and full of ordinary life, and that it is an important part of the community. **5** The tall buildings are becoming dark and grey as the light fades, like candles that have been put out. **6** It becomes colder and darker (*the sea has turned black*), but the moonlight gives comfort and guidance. **7** It seems caring and protective, helping sailors home safely. **8** The speaker's home and mother always welcome them back. **9** The ferry arrives *with a sigh* (relief); ropes are made fast; the speaker *runs* eagerly up the jetty to the *lighted window that never forgets*, showing warmth and belonging.

Unit 12 · Sheet B — Mini-test 2

1 The light flashes rhythmically, on and off together, like a heartbeat, making the trees seem alive. **2** a beetle **3** luciferin **4** Almost none of its energy is wasted as heat. **5** "like a secret code" **6** Flashing together may make the tree easier for females to spot from far away. **7** pesticides; artificial light **8** Pesticides kill the snails that firefly larvae eat, so the larvae have no food. **9** in sections with question headings **10** The fireflies are an extraordinary natural sight worth protecting, and they bring tourists and jobs to the community.

End test

1 "like a giant green staircase" **2** extremely hungry **3** The message contained shocking or bad news: she *went pale* and *sat down very suddenly*. **4** Borneo is the third largest island in the world. **5** It makes fear feel physical and creepy, like being touched from behind, so the reader feels Leo's shiver. **6** stay in the harbour **7** 1888 **8** to organise information so readers can find it quickly **9** Songkran is Thailand's New Year festival, which began as a gentle water blessing and is now also a huge water fight. **10** Any two: organised, caring, thoughtful, reliable, hard-working. **11** True **12** Humble means modest or simple, but a forty-room palace is the opposite, so he is joking / being ironic. **13** Tokyo trains follow an exact timetable, whereas jeepneys leave only when full, so their times vary. **14** in chronological order **15** Short sentences / fragment *Too silent*. slow the pace; repetition of silent; the creak suggests someone is there. **16** Zoos are acceptable only if they help return animals to the wild.