

# Teaching *comprehension* strategies



*Developing reading comprehension skills*



	Understanding words	Identifying the main idea		
	Finding information	Sequencing		
	Finding similarities and differences	Predicting	Concluding	Summarising
	Inferring	Cause and effect	Fact or opinion	Point of view and purpose

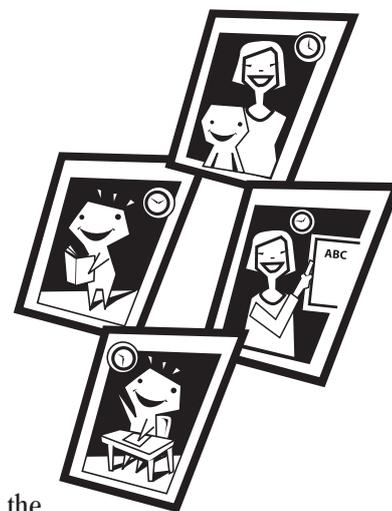
SAMPLE - NOT FOR SALE

# Foreword

*Teaching comprehension strategies* is a series of seven books using modelling, discussion and guided and independent practice to teach pupils strategies they can use to develop different reading comprehension skills.

Titles in this series include:

- *Teaching comprehension strategies—Book A*
- *Teaching comprehension strategies—Book B*
- *Teaching comprehension strategies—Book C*
- *Teaching comprehension strategies—Book D*
- *Teaching comprehension strategies—Book E*
- *Teaching comprehension strategies—Book F*
- *Teaching comprehension strategies—Book G*



Each book in this series is also provided in digital format on the accompanying CD.

## Contents

Teachers notes .....	iv – vii
Curriculum links .....	vii
Comprehension skills class test record .....	viii
Individual pupil evaluation .....	ix
<b>Teachers notes</b> .....	2–3
<i>Understanding words 1</i> – The Pyramids (recount) .....	4–7
<i>Understanding words 2</i> – The beach (poem) .....	8–9
<i>Finding information 1</i> – Crocodiles (report) .....	10–13
<i>Finding information 2</i> – Novus bus timetable (timetable) .....	14–15
<i>Identifying the main idea 1</i> – Surfing (report) .....	16–19
<i>Identifying the main idea 2</i> – A true performer (biography) .....	20–21
<i>Tests</i> – Mount Tambora (report) .....	22–25
<b>Teachers notes</b> .....	26–27
<i>Sequencing 1</i> – Fun with the Dunns (narrative) .....	28–31
<i>Sequencing 2</i> – Writing a spy novel (explanation) .....	32–33
<i>Finding similarities and differences 1</i> – Leopards and cheetahs (description) .....	34–37
<i>Finding similarities and differences 2</i> – Bigfoot? (recount) .....	38–39
<i>Predicting 1</i> – Lost! (narrative) .....	40–43
<i>Predicting 2</i> – Moonlight forest (diary entry) .....	44–45
<i>Tests</i> – Terrible twins' tale to hit big screen (report) .....	46–49
<b>Teachers notes</b> .....	50–51
<i>Concluding 1</i> – The mystery of <i>Mary Celeste</i> (report) .....	52–55
<i>Concluding 2</i> – Castle tour (narrative) .....	56–57
<i>Summarising 1</i> – Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (biography) .....	58–61
<i>Summarising 2</i> – Reality TV (discussion) .....	62–63
<i>Inferring 1</i> – Ballet on a board (narrative) .....	64–67
<i>Inferring 2</i> – To be sold by auction (narrative) .....	68–69
<i>Tests</i> – Aunty Belinda and Uncle Pete (narrative) .....	70–73
<b>Teachers notes</b> .....	74–75
<i>Cause and effect 1</i> – Easter Island (report) .....	76–79
<i>Cause and effect 2</i> – Exercise is good for you (explanation) .....	80–81
<i>Fact or opinion 1</i> – The beauty of Slovenia (report) .....	82–85
<i>Fact or opinion 2</i> – Fabulous French cuisine (report) .....	86–87
<i>Point of view and purpose 1</i> – Household chores (discussion) .....	88–91
<i>Point of view and purpose 2</i> – <i>The wind in the willows</i> (book review) .....	92–93
<i>Tests</i> – Stage fright (narrative) .....	94–97

SAMPLE - NOT FOR SALE

**Text 1**

**Cause and effect-1**

*Cause and effect is when one thing (the cause) makes something happen (the effect). If you want to understand what you read you must be able to work out the cause and effect of things that happen.*

Read the report.

**Easter Island**

Easter Island (Rapa Nui) is an almost treeless island located in the South Pacific Ocean about 3500 kilometres west of Chile. Around 170 kilometres in area, it is one of the most isolated inhabited islands on earth. But it is most famous for its 600 enormous, god-like statues that were constructed hundreds of years ago. About 15 of these have been restored to their original standing positions.

Scientists believe that Easter Island was first inhabited between CE (Common Era) 300 and 800. The settlers were most likely a group of Polynesian seafarers. At the time, the island would have been a welcome sight, as it was once covered in giant palm trees. The new inhabitants began to use the palms for building boats and houses.

By 1500, the population on the island was around 8000. Evidence suggests that separate clans formed and were living in different areas on the island. All the clans seemed to be obsessed with a single goal—building statues called 'moai'. The moai were carved from the rock of one of the extinct volcanoes found on the island. Most of the moai are between four and six metres tall, but some are as tall as 12 metres and weigh up to 80 tonnes!

There are many theories to explain exactly how the islanders constructed and moved the moai. It is known that they used hand picks to carve each statue from the rock, chipping away until the moai was held in place by a thin 'keel'. Some unfinished statues, which weigh almost 300 tonnes, are not surprisingly still in place. When a statue was finished, it was broken off the keel and moved using ropes tied to palm trunks. After some final decorations, the trunks were somehow used again as rollers to transport the moai across the island. The moai were then placed on prepared stone platforms. In some cases, the moai were moved along 20-kilometre tracks, a journey which must have taken a very long time.

The island clans competed to construct bigger statues. An unfortunate consequence of this was that they had to cut down a huge number of palm trees. In fact, sadly, one day someone chopped down the very last palm. The island's soil was eroding and the islanders' crops failed. It seems that a violent war then broke out between the clans. Thousands of people died and villages were destroyed. The moai were toppled and broken—by 1840, none was left standing.

When the violent war ended, the remaining islanders were in a terrible state. There was little food and no materials for making boats. But they still managed to rebuild their society and survive. In 1862, slave traders landed on the island. Around 1500 islanders were kidnapped and taken to Peru. Almost all of these people died. A year later the survivors returned to the island, but they now carried diseases like smallpox, causing even more deaths on Easter Island. Then Christian missionaries arrived. In their efforts to convert the islanders to Christianity, many of the islanders' sacred objects were destroyed.

Today about 3000 people live on Easter Island. Most of these people are Polynesians and Chileans. There are only a few people left who are related to the original Easter Islanders.

The tragic story of Easter Island is often described as a 'story for our times'. It is up to us what we learn from it.



Teaching comprehension strategies **76** © PRIM-ED PUBLISHING

- The skill is identified and defined.
- The text is presented.

**Learning about the skill**

**Cause and effect**

**Learning about the skill**

Learn how you can work out the cause and effect.

- The cause leads to the effect and they are connected.
- You will be told one and you will need to work out the other.
- Look for keywords in the question and underline them.
- Find words in the text that are connected to the key question words.
- Always check all possible answers before making a decision.

1. Why is Easter Island an almost treeless island?

(a) The climate prevents trees from growing there.  
 (b) The trees were infected and lost through diseases brought from Peru.  
 (c) They were all used to make statues.  
 (d) The trees were felled for building boats and homes and transporting the huge moai around the island.

2. What caused the failure of the islanders' crops?

(a) The crops were infected and lost through diseases from Peru.  
 (b) A volcano erupted and destroyed all the crops.  
 (c) The crops could not grow because the soil was eroding.  
 (d) The crops had no shade from the sun because the trees had all been felled.

Choosing the best answer.

(a) There is nothing in the text to suggest this. This is not a good answer.  
 (b) It was not the trees that were affected by diseases from outside the island. This is not a good answer.  
 (c) Although the trees were required to transport the statues, they were not used to make them. This is not the best answer.  
 (d) This explains exactly why the island is treeless. This is the best answer.

Choosing the best answer.

(a) It was not the crops that were affected by diseases from outside the island. This is not a good answer.  
 (b) The text says nothing about active volcanoes. It refers only to the rock from extinct volcanoes, used to carve the moai. This is not a good answer.  
 (c) The soil was eroding. This is a very good answer, but you need to check all answers.  
 (d) It is possible that the crops would have been adversely affected by the lack of shade, but this is not the reason given in the text. This is not the best answer.

Teaching comprehension strategies **77** © PRIM-ED PUBLISHING

- The logo indicates that this is a teaching page.
- Steps and strategies are outlined.
- Multiple choice questions are presented and metacognitive processes for choosing the best answer are described.

**Practice page**

**Cause and effect**

**Practice page**

Use similar strategies to those on page 77 to practise working out cause and effect. (Clues are given to help you.)

1. What effect did the crop failure have on the island society?

(a) The people left the island.  
 (b) The clans engaged in a violent war in which thousands of people were killed.  
 (c) The clans stole food from each other.  
 (d) Many people died from starvation.

The best answer is  \_\_\_\_\_

2. What was the effect of kidnapping about 1500 islanders and taking them to Peru?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. What effect did seeing the island covered with palms have on the Polynesian seafarers?

\_\_\_\_\_

4. After the war, why were the islanders no longer able to build boats?

(a) There were no trees left from which to build the boats.  
 (b) The people were too weak from lack of food.  
 (c) They no longer had the tools for carving.  
 (d) All the boatbuilders had been killed in the war.

The best answer is  \_\_\_\_\_

5. Name the three events that had a huge impact on the island's population.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Teaching comprehension strategies **78** © PRIM-ED PUBLISHING

- The logo indicates that this is a teacher and pupil page.
- Some multiple choice questions and others requiring explanations are presented with prompts or clues to assist pupils.

**On your own**

**Cause and effect**

**On your own**

Think about the strategies you have been using and work out these answers.

1. Why do you think the islanders resorted to violence after the failure of the crops?

\_\_\_\_\_

2. By 1840, none of the moai was left standing. Why was this?

(a) They were blown over in the wind.  
 (b) During the war, clans toppled the moai of rival clans.  
 (c) They had been destroyed by the Christian missionaries.  
 (d) They were knocked down by the force of air currents.

The best answer is  \_\_\_\_\_

3. If moai were carved from rock, explain why so many palm trees were required.

\_\_\_\_\_

4. What effect did the arrival of the Christian missionaries have on the state of the moai?

\_\_\_\_\_

5. The survivors of the slave trade who had returned home to Easter Island had been exposed to many diseases. Explain why this would have had such a devastating effect on the island's population.

\_\_\_\_\_

6. Why are there so few people related to the original islanders left on Easter Island?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Teaching comprehension strategies **79** © PRIM-ED PUBLISHING

- The logo indicates that this is a pupil page.
- At least one multiple choice question and others requiring explanation are presented for pupils to complete.

**Text 2**

**Cause and effect-2**

Read the explanation.

**Exercise is good for you**

1. Exercise is good for you, but do you know why?

2. Exercise has a positive effect on the whole body, including the mind. During exercise, chemicals called endorphins are released which create a feeling of happiness and wellbeing. This in turn improves self-esteem, confidence and gives a positive body image. Exercise also increases energy levels and improves sleeping patterns.

3. Exercise also produces a visible improvement in the body. Because exercise burns calories as fuel and develops muscles, the body shape looks better and more toned. Excess calories consumed will not be stored as fat if they are used as fuel for exercise.

4. Keeping a healthy, stable weight can also prevent the development of some diseases, particularly type II diabetes, which is becoming more common in younger people. Weight-bearing exercises such as running and walking help to strengthen the bones and prevent bone weakness in later life.

5. It is recommended that everyone should do at least 30 minutes of exercise every day. When planning an exercise routine, it is important to choose enjoyable activities, otherwise it will be difficult to maintain motivation. There are three parts to a well-balanced exercise plan: aerobic exercise, strength development and flexibility training.

6. Aerobic exercise develops the heart and increases the lungs' capacity for taking in and using oxygen. The cardiovascular system, the heart and blood vessels, work more efficiently distributing oxygen around the body. Activities such as swimming, running, cycling and dancing can provide an excellent aerobic workout, but they must be performed at a level that requires you to breathe more rapidly.

7. Strength development activities provide specific workouts for particular muscle groups, such as cycling and running for leg muscles and swimming for the arms and upper body. As the muscles develop, they allow exercise to be maintained for longer periods before getting tired and they help to protect the body from strain and injury during exercise. Muscle is more efficient than fat at burning calories so the more muscle you have, the more effective your body is at burning fuel.

Exercise helps to maintain the body's flexibility, allowing the muscles and joints to move freely. This improves performance as the body moves more easily and efficiently. A flexible body is less prone to injury, strains and sprains than a stiff body. Performing simple stretching exercises during activity improves flexibility. To prevent injury, these must only be done when the body has warmed up.

Just as an engine requires fuel to work, so the body requires fuel in the form of calories, which we get from food. To maintain a healthy weight, it is necessary to consume sufficient calories to allow the body to exercise and function normally. Sometimes, an engine malfunctions and needs time off in the workshop to be repaired. Our bodies also malfunction at times, giving in to injuries and infections. When this occurs, it is essential to rest and recuperate and when exercise is resumed, it is done gradually, increasing the effort as the body regains its strength.

Exercise is good for you! Now you know why.



Teaching comprehension strategies **80** © PRIM-ED PUBLISHING

- The skill is identified.
- The text is presented.

**Try it out**

**Cause and effect**

**Try it out**

Use the strategies you learnt and practised in *Easter Island* to work out cause and effect.

- The cause leads to the effect and they are connected.
- You will be told one and you will need to work out the other.
- Look for keywords in the question and underline them.
- Find words in the text that are connected to the key question words.
- Always check all possible answers before making a decision.

1. What effect does exercise have on the brain?

(a) It makes you so tired you feel confused.  
 (b) It prevents you from sleeping.  
 (c) It produces endorphins, which make you sleep better.  
 (d) It produces endorphins, which make you feel happy.

The best answer is  \_\_\_\_\_

2. What would be the effect of choosing an exercise program of activities you did not enjoy?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. List some of the obvious effects of an exercise program.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Name some activities that you do or could participate in to improve your health.

\_\_\_\_\_

5. What would be the effect of performing stretching exercises before the body is warmed up?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Teaching comprehension strategies **81** © PRIM-ED PUBLISHING

- The logo indicates that this is a pupil page.
- Multiple choice questions and some requiring explanation are included.

SAMPLE - NOT FOR SALE

Test text

**Student tests**

The tests on pages 94 to 97 will show how well you can work out:

**Cause and effect**      **Fact or opinion**      **Point of view and purpose**

Read the narrative.

**Stage right**

1. 'Oh Cerys, you look fabulous!' cried Emma as her best friend walked into the room, showing off the first of her stage costumes. 'I'm so excited for you.'

2. 'Me too, sweetie,' squealed Cerys as she leant forward to kiss the air on each side of Emma's head. 'Well, tonight's the night! Let the world see a future Oscar winner!'

3. The two girls were members of the local youth theatre group and Cerys had been chosen for a speaking role in the latest production. She had never performed on stage before and, even more amazingly, six months ago would have run a mile if anyone had suggested speaking in front of even a small group. But since reading the flyer, her life had been transformed.

4. At the theatre, there was an atmosphere of great excitement with greetings from fellow thespians and best wishes from friends and families. Last minute jobs were hurriedly being attended to by the stagehands and make-up artists were adding final touches to the actors' faces. Cerys enjoyed being a part of the excitement in the dressing room and it wasn't until she was waiting in the wings for her first cue that she felt a raw sensation in her throat. She began to feel very strange. She couldn't stop shaking and beads of perspiration dampened her forehead and the back of her neck. In her mind, she saw a sea of faces laughing at her as she struggled to remember her lines and stage positions.

5. 'I can't do it. I can't go on!' she hissed to George, the prompter, who was standing beside her with his clipboard. 'I can't do it. I just can't.'

6. She turned to run but as she did so, she heard the familiar lines signaling her entry onto the stage. She stopped suddenly, turned to George and mouthed, 'I'm on George. I'm on right now!' The wooden floorboards creaked as she strode on to centre stage and delivered her well-rehearsed lines.

7. At the interval, Emma embraced her friend. 'Oh, Cerys, you were magnificent! George told me what happened. Was it nerves? Are you okay now?'

8. 'Okay? You're asking me if I'm okay?' Cerys was ecstatic. 'Emma, I thought I'd be able to see all the faces but it was all black out there. I just focused on the centre of the blackness and I was fine! It was fantastic. I felt such a buzz. I can't wait to get on again!'

9. For the rest of the evening, Cerys was in a trance. Each time she walked on stage, she felt as though she owned it, speaking her lines as naturally as if they were her own. As the curtain fell after the final scene, Cerys knew she would be auditioning for the next production, and the one after that...

10. Preparing for bed that night, the sound of applause still ringing in her ears, Cerys thought of how much she had changed since joining the youth theatre, such a short time ago. From her bedside table she took out a well-thumbed piece of paper. Reading it again, she thought, 'Well, it certainly worked for me!'



**\*\*\*ATTENTION\*\*\***  
**ALL 11-15 YEAR OLDS**  
**can benefit from**

**Reading Comprehension Strategies**

Head office: 01273 833909  
Head office fax: 01273 833908  
Head office email: [info@prim-ed.com](mailto:info@prim-ed.com)  
Head office website: [www.prim-ed.com](http://www.prim-ed.com)  
Customer support: 01273 833909  
Customer support email: [customer.support@prim-ed.com](mailto:customer.support@prim-ed.com)

Tests 1-3

**Cause and effect**

**Test 1**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

- The cause leads to the effect and they are connected.
- You will be told one and you will need to work out the other.
- Look for keywords in the question and underline them.
- Find words in the text that are connected to the key question words.
- Check all possible answers before making a decision.

1. Why were Cerys and Emma so excited?  
(a) Cerys was performing in a play at the theatre.  
(b) Cerys was showing off new clothes.  
(c) They were going to the theatre.  
(d) They were playing chess.

The best answer is  \_\_\_\_\_

2. Why did Cerys feel strange while waiting in the wings?  
(a) She was feeling ill.  
(b) She didn't want to go on stage.  
(c) The audience was laughing at her.  
(d) She had an attack of stagefright.

The best answer is  \_\_\_\_\_

3. What effect did stagefright have on Cerys?  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. How did Cerys feel after the production finished?  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. How do you think the youth theatre had changed Cerys?  
\_\_\_\_\_

6. What caused Cerys to change her mind about running away and not performing?  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Test 2**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

It be checked.  
an.

mail.

paragraph.

fact      opinion

**Test 3**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

e to work it out.  
use to help you to do this.  
ok.

do you think Cerys felt at the end of the performance?  
She couldn't wait to leave the stage.  
She was glad the first night was over.  
She had enjoyed herself so much, she wanted to perform in more plays.  
She felt happy and relieved.

best answer is  \_\_\_\_\_

by a few months before?  
\_\_\_\_\_

number of the youth theatre and  
\_\_\_\_\_

st?  
\_\_\_\_\_

Teaching comprehension strategies

- The three skills to be tested are identified.
- The text is presented.
- Logo to indicate that this is a pupil page.
- The comprehension skill to be tested is identified and appropriate strategies and steps revised.
- Multiple choice questions and others requiring more explanation are presented.

## Curriculum links

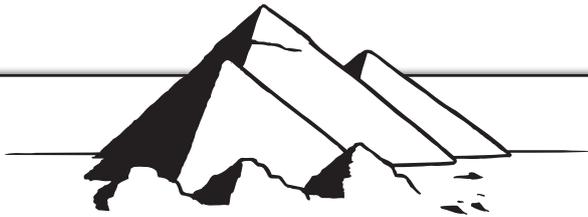
Country	Subject	Level	Objective
England	Literacy	Year 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand underlying themes, causes and points of view.</li> <li>• Explore how word meanings change when used in different contexts.</li> </ul>
		Years 6-7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read between the lines and find evidence for their interpretation.</li> </ul>
Northern Ireland	Language and Literacy	Year 7 extension	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participate in modelled, shared, paired and guided reading experiences.</li> <li>• Read, explore and understand a wide range of texts.</li> <li>• Justify their responses logically, by inference, deduction and/or reference to evidence within the text.</li> <li>• Use a variety of reading skills for different reading purposes.</li> </ul>
Republic of Ireland	English	6th Class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage with an increasing range of text.</li> <li>• Use comprehension skills to aid deduction, problem-solving and prediction.</li> <li>• Develop study skills such as skimming, scanning and summarising.</li> <li>• Support arguments and opinions with evidence from the text.</li> <li>• Distinguish between fact and opinion.</li> </ul>
Scotland	English	D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete practical reading tasks.</li> <li>• Discuss characters, events, conflicts, inter-relationships, content, underlying main ideas and make predictions about them.</li> <li>• Practise sequencing and predicting.</li> </ul>
		E	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use fact and opinion.</li> <li>• Read, understand and select relevant information.</li> <li>• Use highlighting, underlining and other textual markers in identifying relevant information.</li> <li>• Make use of previous knowledge and skills to predict content and structure and to locate main points.</li> <li>• Evaluate, infer and make judgements.</li> <li>• Know about the idea of target audience and writer's purpose.</li> <li>• Explore similarities and differences in texts.</li> </ul>
Wales	English	KS 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read with increasing understanding.</li> <li>• Use inference, deduction and prediction to evaluate the texts they read and refer to relevant passages to support their opinions.</li> <li>• Adopt appropriate strategies; e.g. posing pertinent questions, identifying the precise information that they wish to know and distinguishing between fact and opinion.</li> </ul>

# Understanding words – 1

Words are the building blocks we use to communicate with others. It is important that we understand what they mean and that we know some ways to work out their meanings in different sentences.

Read the recount.

## The Pyramids



1. My mum has always been captivated with the Pyramids of Egypt. Whenever anything came on the TV about it, she would look at Dad and sigh, 'I'm going there one day!'
2. Dad would always smile and say, 'Sure, honey, when we win Lotto!'
3. Well, that Saturday night finally arrived. Mum always picked the same numbers every time and, sure enough, she had six numbers! You should have seen the carry on, anyone would have thought she had just won Lotto! She smiled and turned to Dad and said, 'Guess where we're going, honey? EGYPT! Finally, my dream can come true!'
4. Dad was so happy for her, he gave her a huge hug and kiss and cheered at the top of his voice.
5. They danced around the room for ages. It was really quite infectious; I ended up joining in and jumping around like a total idiot! Thankfully, my friends couldn't see me.
6. Over the next few weeks, Mum and Dad madly organised our trip to Egypt. Yeah, that's right, I said 'our trip'. I had to go with them. Can't believe my bad luck really, who'd want to see a bunch of stinky old mummies in broken-down old pyramids? Not me, I'd rather go scuba diving on the Great Barrier Reef!
7. The day finally arrived when we boarded our flight to Egypt. How horrid having to spend the night on a plane deprived of sleep. Mum knows how much I like my sleep, but she didn't seem to be vexed that I would be missing out!
8. We touched down in Cairo and it was blazing hot. The heat shimmered across the tarmac. I'm surprised the soles of my shoes didn't melt! Our personal tour guide, Baruti, greeted us in the terminal. We would be spending the next two weeks with him as he showed us around the sights of Egypt. Mum was so excited, I'm surprised she could stand up!

9. After recovering briefly from our flight, we had something to eat and set out on our first excursion. There was heaps Mum and Dad wanted to see—it was going to be totally exhausting and boring.

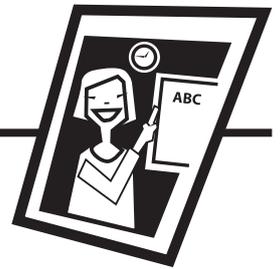
10. Because it was still early in the day and not too hot, the Giza Pyramids were our first stop. Awestruck is the only word to describe how I felt. They are absolutely huge—I can't believe the ancient Egyptians managed to build them! The Sphinx of Giza and the Great Pyramid would have to be the most amazing structures I've ever seen. The Sphinx has a body of a lion and a head of a king; Baruti said these were used to symbolise strength and wisdom. Later in the day we went to the Khan—a local bazaar. I found it all a bit stifling really with the heat, cooking smells and noise of the merchants.

11. We set out early the next day to stay at a place called Hurghada. Mum and Dad were really excited and just kept saying, 'You are going to absolutely love this place'. The following morning, we awoke early to begin an adventure I would never forget. Mum and Dad took me down to the marina and we got on board a dive boat. Yee-hah! Something I wanted to do; we were going snorkelling! This area of the Red Sea is renowned for its warm waters, rare fish life and amazing sea gardens—a subaquatic paradise. I had read about this area in books and seen pictures on the Internet, but it was so different to actually be seeing it with my own eyes. We snorkelled for hours—it was truly amazing and I didn't want the day to end. We had lunch on the boat and then after a short rest returned to the water. This day would stay with me forever. Totally awesome! Apparently Mum and Dad had organised the day especially for me because they knew how much I wanted to go to the Great Barrier Reef—how cool!

12. At least we didn't spend the entire holiday looking at odorous old mummies in broken-down old pyramids!

# Understanding words

## Learning about the skill



Learn how you can work out the meaning of words.

- First find and underline the word in the text.
- Read the sentence the word is in—this will be very helpful.
- Think about the other words in the sentence to find out what clues they give you.
- If you are still not sure, read the sentences before and after that one and the whole paragraph if you need to.
- Always check all the possible answers before choosing one.

1. Find and underline the word **structures** in paragraph 10.

Does it mean:

- (a) the features of rocks and their texture?
- (b) the social organisation of the Egyptian people?
- (c) a natural phenomenon?
- (d) something built or constructed?

*Choosing the best answer*

- (a) The stone used to build the structures would have texture and be very attractive to look at, but in the context of the sentence, this is not the correct meaning for structures.
- (b) The paragraph doesn't mention the Egyptian people and their social organisation. So this answer seems unlikely.
- (c) The structures were actually built by the Egyptian people, which means they are not natural. So this answer would not be the best choice.
- (d) The Pyramid and Sphinx were actually built by the ancient Egyptians. So this would be the best answer.

2. Find and underline the words **deprived of** in paragraph 7.

Do they mean:

- (a) enjoying lots of?
- (b) having no need for?
- (c) experiencing a lack of?
- (d) experiencing an increase of?

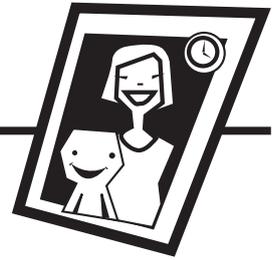
*Choosing the best answer*

- (a) The next sentence mentions that the writer likes his or her sleep and would be missing out on it during the flight. This is not the best answer.
- (b) Having no need for sleep is not something the writer would think to do. This is not the best answer.
- (c) This could be the best answer as the writer would think it was terrible to experience a lack of sleep. You must check all answers.
- (d) This answer does not match what the writer says about sleep in the rest of the paragraph.

SAMPLE - NOT FOR SALE

# Understanding words

## Practice page



Use similar strategies to those on page 5 to practise the skill.  
(Clues are given to help you!)

1. Find and underline the word **vexed** in paragraph 7.

Does it mean:

- (a) to become agitated and upset?
- (b) to become hot?
- (c) worried?
- (d) pleased?

The best answer is .

**Think!**  
The whole sentence is a very good clue.

2. Find and underline the word **stifling** in paragraph 10.

Does it mean:

- (a) exciting?
- (b) overwhelming?
- (c) frightening?
- (d) explosive?

The best answer is .

**Think!**  
Read the remainder of the sentence to give you an idea.

3. What is meant by the words **carry on** in paragraph 3?

---

---

**Think!**  
The following sentences and two paragraphs will help.

4. Does the word **renowned** in paragraph 11 mean ...

- (a) famous?
- (b) unknown?
- (c) regarded?
- (d) enjoyed?

The best answer is .

**Think!**  
The rest of the sentence and the one following it will give you a clue.

5. Find and underline the word **odorous** in paragraph 12.

Write another word which could be used in its place.

---

**Think!**  
You need to think of a synonym. A clue is in paragraph 6.

SAMPLE - NOT FOR SALE

# Understanding words



## On your own

Think about the strategies you have been using and work out these answers.

1. What does the word **captivated** mean? (Paragraph 1)

- (a) had a strong belief
- (b) been captured
- (c) been intensely interested
- (d) had an admiration for

The best answer is .

2. Does the word **bazaar** in paragraph 10 mean ...

- (a) a barber's shop?
- (b) a sports arena?
- (c) a school?
- (d) a market?

The best answer is .

3. Explain what is meant by this phrase from paragraph 8—**heat shimmered across the tarmac**.

---

---

4. What does the phrase **a subaquatic paradise** mean? (Paragraph 11)

---

---

5. What word could best replace **apparently** in paragraph 11?

- (a) occasionally
- (b) evidently
- (c) however
- (d) thankfully

The best answer is .

6. Find and underline the word **merchants** in paragraph 10. Write another word which could be used in its place.

---

7. Explain what is meant by the phrase **really quite infectious** used in paragraph 5.

---

---

SAMPLE - NOT FOR SALE

The tests on pages 23 to 25 will show how well you can:

*Understand words*

*Find information*

*Identify the main idea*

You will be working on your own.

Read the report.



## Mount Tambora

1. Mount Tambora can be found on Sumbawa Island in Indonesia. It is most famous for being responsible for the most powerful volcanic eruption in recorded history. The VEI is a scale used to measure the intensity of a volcano, determined by the volume of ash erupted from the explosion. The rating begins at zero which is non-explosive, through to eight which is considered to be mega-colossal. The explosion of Mount Tambora was rated seven on the VEI, four times more powerful than the explosion which destroyed Krakatoa (VEI = 6) in 1883.
2. The word 'volcano' originates from the island of Vulcano in the Mediterranean Sea. Long ago, the people in this area thought that Vulcano was the chimney of the forge of Vulcan (the blacksmith of the Roman gods). They believed that the hot lava fragments and clouds of dust erupting from Vulcano came from the forge as Vulcan created thunderbolts for Jupiter (king of the gods) and weapons for Mars (the god of war).
3. A volcano is a vent in the surface of the Earth. Magma, gas and ash erupt through these vents to cause explosions. There are six different types of volcanoes: shield volcanoes, strato volcanoes, rhyolite caldera complexes, monogenetic fields, flood basalts and mid-ocean ridges. Mount Tambora is a strato volcano; one of the most common types of volcanoes and one which is capable of causing the most number of casualties. It is dangerous because the magma builds up inside and causes bulges in the mountain which are then responsible for landslides, avalanches and lahars (very hot, fast moving mudflows). More often than not, the side of the mountain (flank) will also break away from the pressure that has built up inside.
4. In 1812, Mount Tambora woke after a long slumber. For three years locals experienced small eruptions, steam and gas explosions. The first major eruption came on 5 April 1815. A column of gas, ash and rock rose 25 kilometres into the sky, but worse was still to come. The main explosion began on 10 April 1815 and continued for five days. Three distinct columns of pyroclastic flow reached 40 kilometres into the sky. Pyroclastic flows are earth-hugging clouds of

hot ash, rocks and pumice which can kill in minutes. The explosions were heard up to 2700 kilometres away and 150 cubic kilometres of ash erupted and fell as far as 1300 kilometres from Mount Tambora. Roofs of houses 65 kilometres away collapsed from the weight of the ash and all vegetation on nearby islands was eradicated. The immense heat caused a huge whirlwind which blew down almost every house in the village. Trees were torn up by their roots and hurled around like toy cars. The eruption also caused a tsunami which recorded a wave height of ten metres; which in turn destroyed a number of islands close by. It is estimated that around 10 000 people died immediately as a direct result of the eruption, while another 82 000 people died as a result of starvation and disease caused by the effects of the explosion.

The enormous volcanic cloud was responsible for lowering global temperatures by about 3 °C. This change in temperature caused farmers to lose crops, which in turn created widespread famine and starvation. The summer of 1816 was called 'the year without summer' as parts of Europe and North America were denied their regular summer temperatures. These cooler temperatures were said to be caused by over 200 million tonnes of sulfur dioxide in the atmosphere, preventing the rays of the sun from reaching the Earth's surface. Spectacular sunsets with vivid streaks of green caused by lingering ash in the stratosphere were observed for many years afterwards.

On the 28 February 2006, scientists found what they believe to be traces of the lost Indonesian civilisation of Tambora, which had been completely devastated by the eruption. Researchers from the University of North Carolina, together with the Indonesian Directorate of Volcanology, used ground-penetrating radar to help locate and dig a gully where locals had found ceramics and bones. The researchers managed to unearth what was left of a thatched house, pottery, bronze and the carbonised bones of two people.

SAMPLE - NOT FOR SALE

# Understanding words

## Test 1



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

- Find and underline the word or phrase in the text.
- Read that sentence and some of the ones around it to help you to work out the meaning.
- Say the word in the sentence to see if it sounds correct.
- Always check all possible answers before making a decision.

1. What does the word **intensity** mean? (Paragraph 1)

- (a) the amount of noise made
- (b) the measure of strength or greatness
- (c) to experience strong feelings and emotions
- (d) being crowded together

The best answer is .

2. Explain the meaning of the phrase **researchers managed to unearth**. (Paragraph 6)

---

---

3. Does the word **casualties** in paragraph 3 mean:

- (a) people who are accidentally killed or injured?
- (b) to be careless?
- (c) to be informal?
- (d) something happening by chance?

The best answer is .

4. Choose the best meaning for the word **eradicated** in paragraph 4.

- (a) made even
- (b) heated
- (c) became radioactive
- (d) destroyed

The best answer is .

5. What word could best replace **distinct** in paragraph 4?

- (a) similar
- (b) plain
- (c) separate
- (d) display

The best answer is .

6. Write another word or words which could be used instead of each of these. Paragraph numbers are given to help you locate the words.

- (a) mega-colossal (1)

\_\_\_\_\_

- (b) hurled (4)

\_\_\_\_\_

- (c) lingering (5)

\_\_\_\_\_

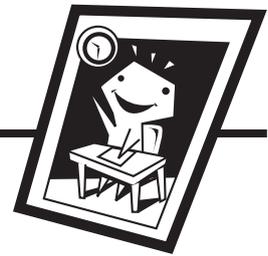
- (d) were denied (5)

\_\_\_\_\_

SAMPLE - NOT FOR SALE

# Finding information

## Test 2



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

- Underline keywords in the question to make sure that you know what information you need.
- Find the keywords in the text and read the information around them carefully.
- Always check all possible answers before making a decision.

1. *What impact did the volcanic cloud have on the summer of 1816?*

- (a) It reduced global temperatures by 3 °C, which caused crops to fail and created widespread famine.
- (b) Canada and Australia missed out on their summer temperatures.
- (c) Farmers took a holiday, which caused widespread famine.
- (d) It killed off the last remaining dinosaurs.

The best answer is .

2. *Explain the VEI scale and its rating system.*

---

---

---

3. *Which type of volcano is capable of causing the most casualties?*

- (a) shield
- (b) monogenetic field
- (c) mid-ocean ridge
- (d) strato

The best answer is .

4. *Mount Tambora is famous for ...*

- (a) being an island in Indonesia.
- (b) being a strato volcano.
- (c) causing a tsunami.
- (d) being responsible for the most powerful volcanic eruption in recorded history.

The best answer is .

5. *Explain the importance of the find which occurred on 28 February 2006.*

---

---

---

SAMPLE - NOT FOR SALE

# Identifying the main idea

## Test 3



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

- The main idea links all the other ideas together and tells what the text is mainly about.
- The title is an excellent clue to the main idea of the text.
- Always check all possible answers before making a decision.

1. *What is the main idea of the third paragraph?*

- (a) Outlining the different types of volcanoes.
- (b) Explaining what happens during a volcanic eruption.
- (c) Where the name 'volcano' originated.
- (d) The explanation of what a volcano is and the different types of volcanoes.

The best answer is .

2. *What is the main idea of the fourth paragraph?*

- (a) Outlining the events of the Mount Tambora explosion and the devastating impact.
- (b) To explain what pyroclastic flows are.
- (c) To discuss the impact of a large volcano on the surrounding areas.
- (d) To show how destructive volcanoes can be.

The best answer is .

3. *Explain the main idea of paragraph 1.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. *Use the text and your ideas to answer these.*

- (a) What is the title of the text? \_\_\_\_\_
- (b) A good title often tells the main idea.

Do you think this is a good title?  yes  no

- (c) Explain why you think this. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- (d) Suggest another title which would be suitable. \_\_\_\_\_

5. *State the main idea of paragraph 6.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

SAMPLE - NOT FOR SALE