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HAST Year 8 Entry Reading Comprehension Practice Paper 1

Reading Comprehension

36 questions · 4 options each (A–D) · 45 minutes · No dictionary

How to use this booklet

- Read each text carefully, then answer the questions that follow it. Every question has four options, A, B, C and D: choose the one best answer.
- You have 45 minutes for the 36 questions. You will not lose marks for wrong answers, so attempt every question.

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TEXT 1 — NARRATIVE

Questions 1–6

The Last Word

This text is adapted from an original short story.

Priya had practised the word for a week: “necessary”, one collar, two sleeves. It was a trick her grandfather had taught her. Now she stood on the school stage under hot lights, and the only word she could think of was “escape”.

She was the last child left in the spelling bee. Across the stage stood Marcus, from the other Year 7 class, who had not looked at the floor once all afternoon. The judge, a thin man with a bell, cleared his throat. “The word,” he said, “is ‘rhythm’.”

Priya’s stomach dropped. She had seen this word in a list somewhere, but all she could remember was that it looked wrong, a word that had forgotten to bring its vowels. She asked for a definition, then the language of origin, then a sentence, each request buying her a few more seconds.

“R,” she began, and heard her own voice shake. “H. Y.” She stopped. In the third row, her grandfather was sitting with his hands pressed together as if in prayer, not mouthing the letters, which she knew he could have done. He was simply waiting.

She took a breath. “T. H. M.” The bell stayed silent. The judge nodded once, slowly, and said, “That is correct.”

Priya did not win that day, because Marcus spelled his next word without a flicker. But as she walked off the stage, her knees felt oddly steady, and when her grandfather hugged her, she realised that she had not been thinking about winning for at least a minute.

1. Why does Priya ask for a definition, a language of origin and a sentence?

- A to show the judge she is clever
- B to find out if Marcus knows the word
- C to gain more time to think
- D to make the contest last longer

2. The description of “rhythm” as “a word that had forgotten to bring its vowels” suggests that the word

- A is easy to spell by ear
- B looks odd without vowels
- C belongs to a different language
- D has more letters than most words

3. What does the grandfather's behaviour in the third row show?

- A He trusts and supports her.
- B He is bored by the contest
- C He wants to help her cheat
- D He is angry that she is slow

4. What trick had Priya's grandfather taught her for the word "necessary"?

- A two collars and one sleeve
- B one collar and two sleeves
- C one hat and two gloves
- D two vowels and one consonant

5. Why does the writer say that Priya's knees felt "oddly steady"?

- A She was ill from the heat
- B She had won the contest
- C Her fear had faded.
- D She had practised standing still

6. What is the main message of the story?

- A Rhythm is the hardest word to learn
- B Courage matters more than winning.
- C Grandfathers give the best advice
- D Practice always leads to victory

READING COMPREHENSION — 36 QUESTIONS

Answers & worked solutions

Answer Key

1 C	2 B	3 A	4 B	5 C	6 B
7 D	8 D	9 A	10 A	11 C	12 C
13 A	14 C	15 A	16 D	17 C	18 D
19 B	20 D	21 B	22 A	23 C	24 B
25 C	26 C	27 A	28 B	29 C	30 B
31 D	32 D	33 B	34 B	35 A	36 D

1. Why does Priya ask for a definition, a language of origin and a sentence? [Inference]

Correct answer: C — to gain more time to think

- What is the question asking? It asks why she makes the requests.
- Go back to the text and find the evidence: “each request buying her a few more seconds”
- Each request gives her a few more seconds to remember the spelling.
- So the correct answer is C (to gain more time to think).
- Why the other options are wrong:
- A (to show the judge she is clever): Her request is driven by panic.
- B (to find out if Marcus knows the word): Marcus is not mentioned here.
- D (to make the contest last longer): The delay is for her own benefit.

LOS: Reading: inferring meaning that is not stated directly

KEY TAKEAWAY

An inference is a conclusion the clues force you to make: find the clue in the text, then ask what it must mean.

2. The description of “rhythm” as “a word that had forgotten to bring its vowels” suggests that the word [Figurative]

Correct answer: B — looks odd without vowels

- What is the question asking? It asks what the image shows.
- Go back to the text and find the evidence: “a word that had forgotten to bring its vowels”
- The word has no a, e, i, o or u, which makes it look strange.
- So the correct answer is B (looks odd without vowels).
- Why the other options are wrong:
- A (is easy to spell by ear): The word is hard to spell.
- C (belongs to a different language): The comment concerns its look.