



## **HAST Year 9 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 Glassblower's Breath

*This text is adapted from an original short story.*

In the back of the workshop, the furnace roared like a trapped animal, and Hana could feel its heat pressing against her face even from the far wall. For two weeks, she had been allowed to do nothing but sweep the floor and watch. Master Ilic, who was sixty and had burn scars along both forearms like faded stripes, had not yet let her touch the blowpipe.

Today, without a word of warning, he held it out to her. At its end hung a glowing gob of molten glass, orange and slow as honey. "Blow," he said. "Gently. Like you are trying not to wake a baby."

Hana put her lips to the pipe and breathed. Nothing happened. She breathed harder, and the glass shuddered, swelled unevenly and sagged on one side like a tired cheek. She felt her face go hot with something that was not the furnace.

"Again," said Ilic. He did not sound disappointed. He took the pipe, rolled it on the iron rails, and the sagging bubble rounded itself as if by obedience. "You are afraid of it," he said, handing it back. "Glass knows. It is a very honest material."

She tried again, and again, and every time it came out lopsided or burst in a shower of sparks. After the ninth attempt, she was sweating, and furious with herself. It was then that Ilic said something that she turned over in her mind for years afterwards. "You are trying to make the glass obey. Nobody makes glass do anything. You breathe, and it answers."

On the tenth attempt, she stopped trying. She simply breathed, slowly, and watched the orange bubble open like a flower. It was small and crooked and she loved it more than anything she had ever made.

**1. The furnace is said to roar "like a trapped animal". This simile suggests that the furnace is**

- A quiet and calm
- B small and weak
- C fierce and powerful
- D cold and distant

**2. What does Master Ilic's response to Hana's failures show about him?**

- A He is quick to lose his temper
- B He is indifferent to her progress
- C He wants her to give up
- D He is patient and encouraging.

**3. Ilic calls glass “a very honest material”. This suggests that glass**

- A always breaks when it is dropped
- B cannot be melted twice
- C is cheap to buy and use
- D reveals the maker’s fear or calm

**4. What does Ilic mean by “Nobody makes glass do anything”?**

- A Glass is impossible to shape at all
- B Glassblowers should not use force
- C Skill lies in cooperating.
- D Only masters may touch glass

**5. What is the effect of the tenth attempt being described so differently from the others?**

- A It shows the bubble has failed again
- B It shows Hana has learned to let go.
- C It shows Ilic took over the work
- D It shows that Hana is angry

**6. What is the main message of the story?**

- A Fear is the best teacher
- B Fire is unsafe for beginners
- C Calm beats force in craft.
- D Masters never share secrets

# READING COMPREHENSION — 36 QUESTIONS

Answers & worked solutions

## Answer Key

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

1. The furnace is said to roar “like a trapped animal”. This simile suggests that the furnace is [Figurative]

**Correct answer: C — fierce and powerful**

- What is the question asking? It asks what the simile suggests.
- Go back to the text and find the evidence: “the furnace roared like a trapped animal”
- A trapped animal is fierce and dangerous.
- So the correct answer is C (fierce and powerful).
- Why the other options are wrong:
- A (quiet and calm): A trapped animal is wild.
- B (small and weak): The roar is loud.
- D (cold and distant): The heat presses on her face.

LOS: Reading: figurative language

### KEY TAKEAWAY

Figurative language means something other than the literal words: ask what two things are being compared and what they share.

2. What does Master Illic’s response to Hana’s failures show about him? [Character]

**Correct answer: D — He is patient and encouraging.**

- What is the question asking? It asks what his response shows.
- Go back to the text and find the evidence: ““Again,” said Illic. He did not sound disappointed.”
- He calmly asks her to try again, so he is patient.
- So the correct answer is D (He is patient and encouraging).
- Why the other options are wrong:
- A (He is quick to lose his temper): He does not sound disappointed.
- B (He is indifferent to her progress): He guides her each time.