Comprehension - The Travellers and the Bear

Once two friends were travelling together through a forest when they suddenly came upon a bear. One of them began to panic. Without a thought for his friend, he climbed a tree and concealed himself in the branches.

The other man, realising he was in danger, threw himself to the ground and pretended to be dead. He knew the bear was stronger than he was. He had also heard that bears never molest a dead body.

As he lay there, the bear came to him. It pressed its nose against his head, then his chest. The man held his breath and kept quite still. At last the beast seemed satisfied that the man was indeed dead. It lumbered away through the forest.

When the bear was out of sight, the man who had climbed the tree came down. He approached his friend and jokingly asked: 'And what did your friend the bear whisper in your ear?'

'Oh,' he replied, 'it was not a great secret. He only told me to be more careful about choosing friends. He told me to avoid people who only thought of themselves when in danger.'

Write true or false after each sentence.

1  The two travellers did not know each other well. ...........
2  One man only thought of himself on seeing the bear. ...........
3  The other man saved himself by clever thinking. ...............
4  This man also managed to let the other know what he thought of him. ..................

Write the word from the story that means the same as:

5  interfere with ............................  6  feel great fear ..................
7  keep away from ...........................  8  hid .....................................
Foreword

Excellence in English Year 3 is the third of a series aimed at primary children to help improve their English. There are many challenging exercises that will extend their vocabulary, grammar, reading and thinking skills. The systematic practice will give confidence to those who may later sit for entrance or scholarship examinations which test English and General Aptitude.

It is suggested that a child works through the book sequentially rather than jumping from one section to another. A dictionary should be consulted to avoid guesswork - especially when the meaning of a multiple-choice word is not known.

Answers are provided in the centre section for ease of removal. When using this book at home or school, it may be a temptation for a child to look at answers if they remain in the book.

Peter Howard
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### Reading and Thinking

**Comprehension - Ships of the Explorers**

Early explorers like Columbus and Magellan sailed in very small ships. These kinds of ships were often badly damaged by storms. There was not enough room to store much food and water. Quite often the crews died of starvation.

At the beginning of the eighteenth century, shipbuilders constructed larger and stronger ships. They had several decks. Down at the bottom of the ship, heavy stones were carried so the ship was balanced and could not be tipped over by winds or waves. Next came the hold where food, water, gunpowder and stores were kept. Above this was the artillery deck where the cannons were mounted.

The high front of a ship was called the forecastle or fo’c’sle. Here the crew slept. The back or stern of the ship was also built up. It contained officers’ cabins, dining room and a room where the maps were kept.

Life on board ship was not much fun for ordinary seamen. They were flogged with whips if they did not obey every command. There were no refrigerators in those days. They lived on salted meat and hard biscuits.

On Magellan’s last voyage there was no food left. The crew had to boil up some old leather which they mixed with sawdust to make a kind of porridge.

**Answer the questions or complete each statement by choosing the answer from the brackets.**

1. Magellan’s ship was (large small) ......................
2. For balance a ship was filled with (stones iron) ..............
3. The officers slept at the (front back) ....................... of the ship.
4. A ship’s gun was a (mortar cannon) ......................
5. The crew ate hard (cakes biscuits) ......................
6. Once Magellan’s crew boiled some (leather cloth) ........ to eat with sawdust.
Comprehension - Cloze Passage
Write the missing word from each line on the right.

The Cheetah
There are many members of the c ..... family. These include p ..... cats, lions,    2 ...........................................
t ....., leopards, pumas and cheetahs.    3 ...........................................

Did you know that the c ..... is the fastest    4 ...........................................
animal in the w .....?      5 ...........................................
Humans can r ..... a short way at forty    6 ...........................................kilometres an h ..... . A racehorse can run   7 ................. ........................
twice as f ..... . The cheetah, however, has   8 ...........................................
o..... one hundred and ten   9 ................... ........................
k .... an hour.       10 .........................................

Cheetahs have the longest I ..... of the cat   11 ..........................................
family. They h ..... it to speed after animals   12 ..........................................
lke antelope and d ..... which also move fast.   13 ..........................................
Cheetahs live on the plains of A ..... and Asia.   14 ..........................................
They are not as powerful as I ........ or tigers as   15 ..........................................
their b ...... are slimmer.      16 .........................................
Vocabulary

Animals

Choose words to fill the spaces.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>chicken</th>
<th>caterpillar</th>
<th>calf</th>
<th>tadpole</th>
<th>cub</th>
<th>foal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>A baby fox is a ..................................</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>A baby horse is a ...............................</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>A baby moth is a ..................................</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>A baby whale is a .................................</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>A baby hen is a ..................................</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>A baby frog is a ..................................</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>wombat</th>
<th>panther</th>
<th>stallion</th>
<th>gorilla</th>
<th>heifer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>A ............................................ is a male or father horse.</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>A .............................. is baby female cow.</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>The largest of the apes is the ................................ .</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>A member of the cat family is the ...................................... .</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>A type of bear is called a ................................ .</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>A young female horse is called a ............................... .</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>A strange Australian animal with a duck's bill is the ................................ .</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>The .................................. is a playful animal that lives in the sea.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>A ...................................... is a cat-like animal covered with spots.</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>A ...................................... is an animal with large antlers.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>The male hen is called a cockerel or a ................................ .</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reading and Thinking

Reading and Thinking 2

Read each clue and write the rhyming word.

1. It is part of your face and it rhymes with pie. ..............................................
2. It is part of a tree and it rhymes with fruit. ....................................................
3. It is red in your body and it rhymes with bud. ..................................................
4. It is part of your head and it rhymes with pear. ..............................................
5. You walk in them and they rhyme with news. ....................................................

Animals

Write the animal we use when we speak.

6. When there is a crowd in a bus we say we are packed like s ................................
7. If you are very hungry you say you can eat a h ......................... .
8. A frightened or cowardly person is c ................................ - hearted.
9. A hopeless task is a wild g ............................................. chase.
10. Stubborn people are called p .............. - headed.

Order in a Dictionary

Write the words in the order they would be found in a dictionary.

11. lemon brick sugar ......................................................
12. x-ray zebra yacht ....................................................
13. much match mint ......................................................
14. clink clump clap ......................................................
15. splendid splurge split ................................................
Reading and Thinking

Comprehension - The Deadly Stone-fish

The coral reefs off the Queensland coast are made by tiny creatures called polyps. The reefs form a string of rocky growth lying in sand that stretches along most of the state’s coastline right up to Cape York in the far north. Captain Cook was nearly wrecked there over two hundred years ago. It has been named the Great Barrier Reef - home to thousands of sea creatures. A visitor can gaze down from a glass-bottomed boat at a world of fish. None anywhere else in the world are more colourful, but not all are beautiful.

The ugly stonefish, covered with warty lumps, burrows in the sand. It is easily mistaken for a piece of coral. Growing to a length of about 30 centimetres, the stone-fish squats and waits for its prey. Along its back are thirteen sharp spines which spring up at the slightest touch. Each spine has two venom glands. Any small fish pricked by a spine is poisoned and makes a meal for the hungry stonefish.

This unpopular fish has been responsible for the deaths of humans. People have trodden on it with bare feet or have even handled it. They simply did not know that the spines were deadly.

Tick the sentences that are true.

1  Coral is partly made up of dead stonefish.
2  The Barrier Reef is made of coral.
3  The Barrier Reef is home to many kinds of fish.
4  The stonefish looks like a piece of coral.
5  Only humans are affected by the stonefish.
6  The poison carried by a stonefish is carried in its mouth.
7  A stonefish could be 3 metres in length.
8  It would be wise to wear shoes when swimming at the Barrier Reef.

Vocabulary

Words that Go Together

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Filling</th>
<th>magazine</th>
<th>spade</th>
<th>train</th>
<th>bricks</th>
<th>doctor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1  builder</td>
<td>2  illness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3  dentist</td>
<td>4  pictures</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5  carriage</td>
<td>6  gardener</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Centimeters</th>
<th>prong</th>
<th>camera</th>
<th>paw</th>
<th>ankle</th>
<th>east</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7  dog</td>
<td>8  photographer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9  foot</td>
<td>10  ruler</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11  compass</td>
<td>12  fork</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barrel</th>
<th>gears</th>
<th>oven</th>
<th>hose</th>
<th>tentacles</th>
<th>stripes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13  octopus</td>
<td>14  truck</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15  zebra</td>
<td>16  firefighter</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17  rifle</td>
<td>18  baker</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>mane</th>
<th>dial</th>
<th>battery</th>
<th>sails</th>
<th>cushion</th>
<th>carpet</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19  lounge</td>
<td>20  floor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21  torch</td>
<td>22  yacht</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23  lion</td>
<td>24  watch</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Vocabulary

Word Meanings 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ledge</td>
<td>mother or father</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>parent</td>
<td>narrow shelf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>slink</td>
<td>a mistake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>naked</td>
<td>having no clothes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>error</td>
<td>move secretly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>frolic</td>
<td>play merrily</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cardigan</td>
<td>rain lightly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>locker</td>
<td>to buy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gawk</td>
<td>star at rudely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>grain</td>
<td>a knitted jacket</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>purchase</td>
<td>to buy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>drizzle</td>
<td>any cereal plant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>trample</td>
<td>swallow quickly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gulp</td>
<td>tread on</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>plumage</td>
<td>animal's dead body</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>whopper</td>
<td>something large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dusk</td>
<td>bird's feathers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>carcass</td>
<td>sagging cheeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>odour</td>
<td>tough or uneven</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rugged</td>
<td>food we eat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>diet</td>
<td>be sick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hunk</td>
<td>a big piece</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jowls</td>
<td>a smell</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reading and Thinking

Comprehension - Cloze Passage

Write the missing word from each line on the right.

Honey

Honey is a sweet sticky liquid we can b...... 1.ck at the supermarket. It is made by b ...... 2. from nectar they collect from f ...... 3. at the supermarket. It is made by b ...... 2. from nectar they collect from f ...... 3. at the supermarket. It is made by b ...... 2. from nectar they collect from f ...... 3.

Honeycomb. Each c ...... 4. when full is sealed by the bees and left t ...... 5. ripen. This serves as f ...... 6. for the bees, especially in winter months when n ...... 7. is not available.

Bees are kept by farmers and the h ...... 8. is c ...... 9. and put in jars. Bees can be made to produce more honey than they n ...... 10. .

Honey consists mainly of a k ...... 11. of sugar. It takes on the flavour of the f ...... 12. where the bees have f ...... 13. the nectar.

In Australia bees u ...... 14. the nectar from many different g ...... 15. trees.

SAMPLE
Answers

EXCELLENCE IN ENGLISH BOOK 3

Page

6  Animals
1 cud 2 foal 3 caterpillar 4 calf 5 chicken 6 tadpole 7 stallion 8 heifer 9 wombat 10 gorilla 11 panther 12 grizzly 13 filly 14 platypus
15 dolphin 16 leopard 17 moose 18 rooster

7  Words that Go Together
1 bricks 2 doctor 3 magazine 5 train 6 spade 7 paw 8 camera 9 ankle 10 centimetres 11 east 12 prong
13 tentacles 14 gears 15 stripes 16 hose 17 barrel 18 oven 19 cushion 20 carpet 21 battery 22 sails 23 mane 24 dial

8  Word Meanings 1
1 parent 2 hedge 3 error 4 naked 5 slink 6 sly 7 grizzle 8 gawk 9 cardigan
10 purchase 11 locker 12 grain 13 gulp 14 trample 15 carcass 16 dusk 17 whopper 18 plumage 19 jowls 20 rugged
21 diet 22 vomit 23 hunk 24 odour

9  At the Zoo
1 gardens 2 fee 3 notices 4 attendants 5 enclosure 6 alligators 7 giraffes
8 hippopotamus 9 seal 10 lizards 11 emu 12 dingo 13 turtle 14 chimpanzees 15 python

10  Homes
1 mansion 2 penthouse 3 bungalow 4 igloo 5 palace 6 workshop 7 attic 8 annexe 9 drains 10 palings 11 balcony
12 terrace 13 corridor 14 porch 15 plumbing

11  Word Meanings 2
1 obstruct 2 mild 3 stifle 4 robot 5 girder 6 kiosk 7 fester 8 chink 9 regatta
10 haggle 11 sneeze 12 bleach 13 rigging 14 mussel 15 lobby 16 sprig 17 flaw 18 ideal 19 lilac 20 clutter 21 patty
22 hazard 23 squat 24 vast

12  Sounds
1 boom 2 slam 3 beat 4 tick 5 tool 6 rattle 7 ring 8 fizzle 9 buzz 10 pealed
11 rumbled 12 crackled 13 rustled 14 pattered 15 sizzled 16 gurgled 17 tramp 18 bang 19 whine 20 drips 21 jingle
22 rolls 23 crinkles 24 crunches 25 puffs

13 Shopping
1 bakery 2 butchery 3 newsagent 4 supermarket 5 arcade 6 cafeteria 7 boutique 8 customer 9 tobacconist 10 plaza
11 restaurant 12 checkout 13 greengrocer 14 milliner 15 pizzeria 16 pharmacy 17 appliances 18 mall 19 delicatessen

14 Same Spelling Different Meaning 1
1 ball 2 train 3 rock 4 box 5 box 6 rock 7 sink 8 sink 9 train 10 ball 11 set 12 set 13 mine 14 bark 15 mine 16 ruler 17 light
18 slip 19 light 20 strike 21 slip 22 strike 23 land 24 blind 25 trip 26 club 27 land 28 club 29 trip 30 blind 31 bear
32 jam 33 bear 34 jam

15  Animal Sounds
1 bleat 2 hiss 3 bellow 4 neigh 5 chimp 6 roar 7 hoot 8 croak 9 buzz 10 whinny 11 screech 12 cackle 13 crow 14 chatter
15 howl 16 laugh 17 snarl 18 laugh 19 trumpet 20 gibber 21 bray 22 drone 23 gobble 24 sheep 25 mew 26 coo 27 grunt
28 warble

16  Creatures in the Sea
1 shark 2 bream 3 flathead 4 crab 5 jellyfish 6 prawn 7 squid 8 urchin 9 eel 10 dolphin 11 pippu 12 coral 13 starfish
14 whale 15 snapper 16 sole 17 stingray 18 marlin 19 plankton 20 sardine 21 lobster 22 octopus 23 clam 24 bluebottle