

Reading Comprehension Test

Are you ready?

The Day I Rescued Albert Einstein’s Compass.

If you are lucky, something special will happen to you in your life that you will never forget. Something so special, you know it could have happened only to you. For me, it was the day I rescued Albert Einstein’s compass.

It was Sunday morning. As I came downstairs I heard someone playing the violin. The living room doors were slightly ajar. My mother and father were waiting for me. My father said to me, “Do you remember, Theo, about five years ago, when you were seven years old and you met our dear friend, Herr Professor Einstein ? I told you then that he was the most famous man alive.

“Yes, I do, Papa,” I said. “And I asked you why he was the most famous man alive, and you said because he is a great physicist who has made important discoveries.” I looked at my father. “Is he here, Papa ?”

My father nodded. “Yes, he is here. He is playing the violin.”

Suddenly the door to the living room flew open, and a deep voice said with a chuckle, “The last time I was here, your father assured you that I did not bite. And as your father and I have been close friends for many years, he knows that I still do not bite.” And he chuckled even louder.

I looked up. There was the thick, black moustache and the large head with grey-black hair bushing out all around. There were the eyes, dark and merry. He hadn’t changed, although he seemed much less formidable than he had five years ago. Perhaps because I am older now.

Herr Einstein laid his violin at the side of the piano. “Now, young man, let us get immediately to business. Your parents tell me that you have a sailboat. I, too, have loved sailing all my life. Will you take me out in your boat ? It is a most wonderful day.”

I looked at my parents. Take the most famous man alive sailing in my sailboat! My neck and cheeks felt hot. My mother looked very pleased. “Our guest is an experienced sailor, and so are you. It would be lovely for the two of you to go out on the lake. It will be something you will always remember.” she said.

And the most famous man alive put his hand on my shoulder. “Then let us be off.”

ajar – a door that is slightly open
chuckle – to laugh quietly
formidable – causing you to have fear or respect for someone or something

HOW WELL DID YOU UNDERSTAND?

- 1. Why was the day lucky for the writer ?
- 2. Why was Einstein famous at that time ?
- 3. ‘He had not changed’. List two physical features of Einstein that remained unchanged.
- 4. ‘Now, young man, let us get immediately to business’. What was the business about ?

KEY :
1. The writer rescued Einstein’s compass.
2. He made important discoveries.
3. He had the same thick, black moustache, and his grey-black hair bushing out.
4. To go out sailing.

Do you remember the rules for writing a summary?



Now try this!

Here is the story of the famous explorer Captain Scott who was the second man to get to the South Pole (Amunsden was the first). Put the paragraphs in the correct order and then write a summary of it.

a.	The following year, in 1911, he set out on his long journey to the Pole with the other members of the team. Scott had decided to pull the sledges themselves instead of using dogs.
b.	Robert Scott was born in Devonport in 1868.
c.	On the return journey, conditions got very bad and the men suffered terribly from the cold and exhaustion.
d.	To begin with, snowstorms made progress very slow, but eventually conditions improved and they were able to make more rapid progress.
e.	In 1910, he sailed from New Zealand on the “Terra Nova”.
f.	Eventually all five members of the team died from the cold and starvation. Scott had written his diary up to the day of his death. The last entry was ‘ I do not think I can write more. For God’s sake look after our people.’
g.	They finally reached the Pole but were dismayed to discover that Amunsden had reached it five weeks before them. Amunsden had used dogs.

KEY : The correct order is : b . e . a . d . g . c . f

SIMPLE THINGS MAY NOT ALWAYS BE SIMPLE !

Combine each set of simple sentences into one sentence :

- 1. I saw an old man. This was on my way to school. He was poor. He was also bent down with age. He was standing at the door of a house.. It was near your friend’s house. The man asked for alms.
- 2. A fire broke out in the bazaar. It broke out on Sunday. It broke out at about midnight. It destroyed some seventy sheds. All the belongings of the sheds were destroyed.
- 3. A meeting was held in the Town Hall. It discussed matters about school discipline. You were absent from it. I am sorry at this.
- 4. The sun set. I then went out. My friend accompanied me. We walked on the bank of the river. It flows below the town.
- 5. He was a short-built lad. He was apparently fifteen or sixteen years of age. He was dark in complexion. He was very handsome in features. He had beautiful white teeth and large dark eyes.

KEY :
1. On my way to school, I saw a poor old man, bent down with age, standing at the door of a house near your friend’s , asking for alms.
2. A fire broke out in the bazaar on Sunday last at about mid-night destroying some seventy sheds with all their belongings.
3. I am sorry at your absence from the meeting held in the Town Hall to discuss matters about school discipline.
4. The sun having set, I accompanied by my friend, went out for a walk on the bank of the river flowing below the town.
5. He was a short-built lad of apparently fifteen or sixteen years old of age, dark in complexion, but very handsome in features, with beautiful white teeth and large dark eyes.



Check - in

ARE YOU WORD SMART ?

Complete the following expressions with the idioms from the box :

long-haul flight. departure gate. peak. cabin crew. scheduled flights. food and drink. frustration. irrespective. check-in. charter flight. board. take off. passport control. departure lounge

Every year, it seems, more and more people are going on holiday abroad. This also means, although unpleasant, more and more people are experiencing discomfort and (1) _____ of foreign travel. This often starts at the airport, (2) _____ of which airline you are traveling with.

At least at (3) _____ holiday times, there are bound to be queues at the (4) _____ and then more queues at (5) _____ as you go into (6) _____. Then there is often the misery of delayed flights. These tend to be more common if you are traveling by (7) _____, but they are by no means unknown on (8) _____.

Eventually you get to the (9) _____, (10) _____ the plane, find your seat and fasten your seat belt ready to (11) _____. Members of the (12) _____ will very likely serve you with (13) _____ and, unless you are on a (14) _____, it will seem a relatively short time before you land.

KEY: (1) frustration (2) irrespective (3) peak (4) check-in (5) passport control (6) departure lounge (7) charter flight (8) scheduled flights (9) departure gate (10) board (11) take off (12) cabin crew (13) food and drink (14) long-haul flight

CHANGE THE VOICE

Rewrite the following passage in the passive voice :

People generally think that Anjana is extremely good at organization and decision-making. She acquired these skills during her six years as a junior executive at the firm. Her bosses noted her sound decisions and her efficiency. They promoted her to office manager in her seventh year at the firm. She runs the office with clockwork precision. She solves problems quickly and firmly. The rest of the staff respect her because of her fairness, warmth and honesty.

KEY : It is generally thought that Anjana is extremely good at organization and decision making. These skills were acquired during her six years as a junior executive at the firm. Her sound decisions and efficiency were noted by her bosses. She was promoted to office manager in her seventh year at the firm. The office is run with clockwork precision. Problems are solved quickly and firmly. She is respected by the rest of the staff because of her fairness, warmth and honesty.

Read the brochure on London and match the information given in column A & B.

LONDON ‘When a man is tired of London, he is tired of life.’ - Dr Samuel Johnson

LONDON TIMELINE

• **43 AD** When the Roman arrived in Britain, London was already a small town. Under the Romans ‘Londinium’ became the capital of Roman province of Britannia.

• **886** King Alfred the Great united England. He captured London from the Danes and made it capital of his kingdom.

• **1666** The Fire of London destroyed much of the city. The reconstruction was organized by the architect Christopher Wren who designed St. Paul’s Cathedral.

• **1850** By the middle of the nineteenth century, London was the largest city in the world and the most important port. In this period it was famous for its terrible pollution.

• **1939-45** In World War II, London was seriously damaged by German bombing.

• **1980-2000** In the last twenty years, the old port area has been rebuilt. There are now big skyscrapers, and the Millennium Dome, the largest dome in the world, which was finished in 1999. In 2000 it held the millennium exhibition

Over two hundred years later, Dr Johnson is still right ! London is the place to be, with so many different things to do and places to visit. Here are a **FEW** !

Royal London

You can visit Buckingham palace, the Queen’s London home and see the changing of the guards at 11a.m. every day. In the Tower of London, you can see the Crown Jewels and visit the place where many famous prisoners lived and died. You can take a boat trip on the Thames to Hampton Court, where Henry VIII lived with five of his six wives. In the gardens of the palace is a famous maze, which is easy to get into but not so easy to get out of !

Rainy Days

London is one of the best places to be on a rainy day (which is quite often!), because of all its museums and galleries. If you like machines, you must go to the Science Museum. Next door you will find the Natural History Museum with its excellent dinosaur exhibition. The British Museum is one of the world’s great museums with its excellent collections from ancient Egypt, Greece and Rome. Art-lovers can visit National Gallery, Tate Modern, Tate Britain or the National Portrait Gallery.

Shopping

London attracts shoppers from all over the world for the latest fashions. The main shopping area is in the West End, around Oxford Street. There are also famous street markets at Portobello Road, Camden Lock and Petticoat Lane where you can buy anything from bargain jewellery to expensive antiques.

Going Out

There is always a wide choice of plays to see at London’s many theatres in the West End around Covent Garden. There are many clubs with modern music like house or jungle or more traditional music like salsa and samba. Music lovers can also finds many places for top quality classical, jazz and pop music.

A			B	
1	damaged by bombing	a	London was the	
2	Romans arrived in Britain	b	became the capital of Roman province of Britannia.	
3	Much of the city was destroyed	c	was designed by Christopher Wren.	
4	biggest city in the world (1850)	d	united England.	
5	The millennium exhibition was held in	e	in 43 AD	
6	Londinium	f	2000	
7	terrible pollution	g	during (1980 – 2000)	
8	St. Paul’s Cathedral	h	During (1939 – 45) WW II, London was	
9	King Alfred the Great	i	by 1666 Fire of London	
10	Skyscrapers dominated London’s skyline	j	England was famous for its	

KEY: (1) h (2) e (3) i (4) a (5) f (6) b (7) j (8) c (9) d (10) g

Trisha is going to visit London for the first time. Use the brochure to answer as many of her questions as you can.

- 1) shopping – interesting street markets ? names of good clubs ? places to visit ?
- 2) names of important art galleries ? good / cheap places to stay – where ?
- 3) a boat trip to the Thames ? a museum for ancient civilizations ?

How is your email skill?

First, some general Tips :
1) Always use a ‘subject line’ that summarises briefly and clearly the content of your message.
2) Use short, simple sentence.
3) For each email, choose one subject.
4) Be very careful about making jokes, personal comments etc.
5) Take a moment to review and edit the content of your message.
6) Whatever you write, grammar, punctuation, spelling, paragraphs are very, very important.
7) And be positive !

SL	Informal Expressions	SL	Formal / Neutral Expressions
1	What do you need ?	a	With regard to (or With reference to)
2	Thanks for the email of 12	b	I can assure you that
3	Sorry, I can’t make it.	c	We note from our records that you have not
4	I’m sorry to tell you that ..	d	Please let us know your requirements.
5	I promise	e	I was wondering if you could
6	Could you ?	f	We would like to remind you that
7	You haven’t	g	I look forward to meeting you next week.
8	Don’t forget	h	Thank you for your email received 12 February
9	I need to	i	I am afraid I will not be able to attend.
10	Shall I ?	j	Would you like me to ?
11	But ... / Also ... / So /	k	I would be grateful if you could
12	Please could you	l	Please accept our apologies for
13	I’m sorry for	m	It is necessary for me to
14	Re	n	We regret to advice you that
15	See you next week	o	However / In addition / Therefore

KEY: (1) d (2) h (3) i (4) n (5) b (6) e (7) c (8) f (9) m (10) j (11) o (12) k (13) l (14) a (15) g

