



The Heys School

English

Finding the Important Bits

To answer reading questions it will really help if you find the key words and phrases in the text. Just find the right bit and then write it down — it's not too tricky. Not too tricky at all.

An extract from a magazine article about the PB Animation Studio

The PB Animation Studio was founded in 1998 by Managing Director Paul Black, and since then it has become a hugely successful business. In the beginning, it was just Paul working alone in his attic room, but now the company employs 230 people in jobs ranging from scriptwriters to cooks!

The secret of PB's success has always been the quality of its 3D animation. Characters are carefully shaped from ordinary modelling clay, and are usually no more than 20 centimetres tall. More complex characters have wire frames (or rod-and-joint structures called armatures) inside the clay. These allow the model to be adjusted very accurately.

The really time-consuming part of the job is actually filming — in order for the characters' movements to appear realistic, 24 pictures (or 'frames') need to be taken to put together 1 second of finished film!

Q1 Copy and complete the table using information from the magazine article above.

| Description | Fact |
|--------------------------------------|------|
| Year PB Animation Studio was created | |
| Founded by... | |
| Paul Black's current position | |
| Total number of employees today | |

Q2 What is the normal maximum height of PB's characters?

Q3 What must be included in models that need very accurate adjustment?

Q4 What are armatures?

Q5 How many frames per second need to be filmed? Choose from options i)-iv).

i) 20

ii) 230

iii) 24

iv) 25

Q6 Why is this number of frames per second needed?

You don't need to write loads
 — just write out the bit of the
 text that answers the question.

Q7 According to the writer, what is the secret of PB's success?

Finding the Important Bits

Here's some more practice at digging out the juicy bits in texts. Remember — you're looking for the bits that help you to answer the question. So jot those bits down and forget the rest.

An extract from the story *Carrie's Life of Piracy*

Carrie darted round the corner into a dingy side-street full of discarded wooden crates. She was closely followed by Ben, who stopped and bent over, panting. He felt like he'd been out of breath ever since they'd left the Pirate Academy.

"Come on, Ben! We have to keep moving — otherwise they'll send us back, and you know what that means..."

Suddenly they were aware of a shadow looming over them. Carrie gasped and looked up towards the leering, cruel face of Captain Hack.

"My dear pupils," said Hack, relishing each word, "I'm only doing my duty as your tutor. You know that any student failing to hand in homework must walk the plank."

Carrie and Ben exchanged a glance. Ben dashed forward with a yell, and managed to slip between Captain Hack's legs. Before Hack could react, Ben ripped a thin plank of wood from a nearby crate.

"Catch!" he shouted, and tossed the plank over Hack's head, to be caught by Carrie.

For a moment Carrie looked at the plank, bemused. Then she remembered her sword-fighting lessons, and crouched with the plank in her hand, ready to defend herself against her pirate tutor.

Q8 Write out the part of the text where you are told about the following things.

- Where Carrie and Ben arrive at the start of the extract.
- How Ben feels at the beginning of the extract.
- Where Carrie and Ben have come from.
- What Captain Hack looks like.
- How Captain Hack wants to punish Carrie and Ben.
- What Carrie and Ben did that needs to be punished.
- How Ben escapes from Captain Hack.
- Where Ben got the thin plank of wood from.



Q9 How do Carrie and Ben know that Captain Hack has arrived? Write out the part of the text that tells you.

Q10 What is Carrie about to do with the thin plank of wood? Write out the part of the text that tells you.

Trapped in a snow poem — it was phrasing...

Finding the important bits quickly is a really useful skill and saves copying out huge chunks of text.

Summarising

If you're asked to summarise the points made in a text, it means that you need to write the important bits out in your own words. And don't waffle — summarise as briefly as possible.

An extract from the story *Felix and the Dragon's Revenge*

The elderly King looked down his nose at the men assembled before him.

"Do you mean to tell me that they *all* went free?" he thundered.

Felix remained on his knees and let out a gentle sob. The King, becoming somewhat reflective, turned and gazed vacantly out of the tall window.

"It wasn't always like this," he muttered. "During the reign of my father, captured knights had some respect and *stayed* captured. Aaah, what it was to be a child. I used to play in that very garden. Haha! The fun I had with my wooden horse... Ahem. Anyway, it just won't do, there have been too many daring escapes recently."

Felix was about to interrupt, but the King's courtier placed a hand on his shoulder to stop him.

"And you," began the King, his voiced raised and turning to face Felix, "You have done nothing to stop these knights!" He gestured to Prime Minister Katan. "Tie Felix up, take him to Vertis Ledge, and let the dragons do as they wish."

As Felix was being dragged away by two burly attendants, he found the strength to cry out, "You'll see, my lord! One of these days the dragons will come after you!"

Q1 Make a list of all the characters mentioned in the text.

Hint: some of the characters' names aren't given.

Q2 Which of the characters actually speak in the text?

Q3 a) Copy out and correct this summary of the paragraph starting "It wasn't..."

The King remembers when his father ruled, and knights were harder to control. He decides that something must be done. Then he starts to think about his childhood when he played with his toys in the garden.

Hint: there are two big errors.

b) Copy out the sentence that describes the King's mood in the paragraph starting "It wasn't..."

- i) He seems angry with Felix, and keeps shouting at him.
- ii) He seems angry with Felix, but is easily distracted by memories of his childhood.
- iii) He talks about his childhood and doesn't care about the knights at all.

Q4 Summarise the paragraph starting "And you," in your own words.

Q5 Write a summary of the whole text. Your summary should be no more than five sentences long, and you'll have to decide which of the details on this page need to be included.



Working Out What's Going On

Not all texts are easy-peasy — some can be downright confusing. But don't panic — focus on working out what happens. A summary in your own words, or a numbered list, might help.

An extract from the short story *Mrs Hanrahan's Holiday*

Ever since she'd woken to shrill beeps that still echoed around her head, Mrs Hanrahan's day had got worse and worse. She'd had to spend a few hours hunting for the tickets — knowing that without them she *definitely* wouldn't be going on holiday today. She'd finally located the tickets beneath the tottering pile of dirty dishes, but hadn't retrieved them safely before sacrificing two of the dishes to the floor in a flurry of ceramic and congealed Chinese takeaway.

Finally, Mrs Hanrahan was ready.

"Bags packed – check. Tickets – check. House keys – check," she murmured. She placed the front door keys carefully on top of the tickets. With a grimace, Mrs Hanrahan suddenly remembered to put the milk bottles outside. She abandoned her luggage, collected the bottles, wrote a quick note to the milkman and then ventured outside. Just as she placed the bottles by the front doormat, Mrs Hanrahan was aware of the sound of the front door latch clicking behind her...

Q1 Copy and complete this table to show the order of the events in the extract.

| Event | Order in extract |
|-----------------------------------|------------------|
| Looks for tickets | |
| Puts milk bottles outside | |
| Wakes up | 1 |
| Has an accident in the kitchen | |
| Puts front door keys with tickets | |

Q2 Write out the part of the text that gives you a clue about what kind of tickets Mrs Hanrahan is searching for.

Q3 Write out the part of the text that tells you about the accident in the first paragraph.

Q4 Copy out the answer that best describes the accident.

- Mrs Hanrahan ate some Chinese takeaway, and then dropped a plate.
- Mrs Hanrahan knocked over two dirty dishes, and they smashed on the floor.
- Mrs Hanrahan knocked over two dirty dishes, and they landed in the bin.

Q5 What happens as Mrs Hanrahan is putting the milk bottles outside?

Q6 Write a paragraph explaining what you think might happen next in the story.



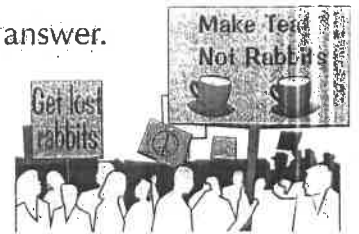
Point, Example, Explanation

P.E.E.ing is a great way to write an answer. It stands for: make a **POINT**, give an **EXAMPLE** from the text, then give an **EXPLANATION** of what it means.

Questions 1-3 are about the following short extract.

"I think we should get rid of the whole stinking lot," said Hanif, pointing at the rabbits.

- Q1** Write a sentence commenting on how Hanif feels about the rabbits.
- Q2** Which of the following sentences uses evidence from the extract to show how Hanif feels about the rabbits?
- Hanif wants to get rid of the rabbits.
 - Hanif wants to get rid of the rabbits. He shouts, which shows he doesn't like them.
 - Hanif wants to get rid of the rabbits. He calls them "stinking", which shows that he doesn't like them.
- Q3** What does this tell the reader about Hanif? Copy out the correct answer.
- Hanif has a strong opinion about the rabbits.
 - Hanif is depressed, and hates everything in the world.
 - Hanif is a bully who goes around annoying other people.



Questions 4-6 are about the extract below.

Milla glanced around the street nervously before she dumped the envelope in the bin.

- Q4** What is Milla's mood in this extract?
- Q5** Write out the part of the text that backs up your answer to Q4.
- Q6** What does this tell the reader about Milla? Copy out the correct answer.
- Milla doesn't like using bins in the street.
 - Milla seems to be worried that someone will see her dumping the envelope in the bin.
 - Milla doesn't care what anyone thinks about her dumping the envelope in the bin.

Question 7 is about the extract below.

"I'll be fine — don't worry about me," said Miles, with the hint of a tear in his eye.

- Q7** How is Miles feeling in this extract? Give evidence from the text in your answer.

Different Types of Text

As soon as you start reading a text you should be thinking about what type of text it is. Work out whether it's fiction (made up) or non-fiction (fact). Here's some handy practice.

A

Five per cent of the population will suffer from an epileptic seizure at some time in their life, writes health expert Gareth Johns. Epilepsy affects 450,000 people in the UK, usually under-20-year-olds and those over 60. Seizures involve loss of consciousness and may affect memory or mood.

B

Watching the tutting clock,
Only six more minutes until I can be
there and not *here*.
Gazing out through dusty panes,
Following the inkblot shadows of
clouds with my eyes.
Outside, sunlight plays on the ground
like an excitable child,
And a bird shouts with happiness.

C

Toby proceeded to mow the lawn like a man resigned to a long stretch in prison.

Being a very gentle soul, his only reaction when his wife bellowed that he had mown over her rose garden was to gently let the engine sputter to a forlorn halt. All that remained was a glacial silence, and a partially cut lawn.

D

In order to get the best results from your new T-300 kitchen juicer, please note the following points:
1) Always make a clear space around the T-300 in case of spray.
2) Avoid juicing soft fruits such as bananas. The residue will be difficult to clear from the workings of the T-300 after use.

Q1 Copy out each title below and write down which text each one goes with — A, B, C or D.

Epilepsy — The Facts

Using your T-300

Waiting

A Man Alone

Q2 Which texts are examples of non-fiction?

Q3 Write out each of the labels below and decide whether they apply to A, B, C or D.

Poem

Story

Manual

Magazine article

Q4 Decide whether the following bits of information are facts or opinions.

- Epilepsy affects 450,000 people in the UK.
- Birds are always really happy.
- It wasn't Toby's fault that he ruined his wife's rose garden.
- Soft fruit residue will be difficult to clear from the T-300 after use.

