

Fast Finishers English
Non-fiction
Ages 7-8

SCHOLASTIC

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Non-fiction

Extension activities for home and school.
Great for Fast Finishers!

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Non-fiction
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Mini-passages with
comprehension questions
Perfect for:
Early finishers in class
Extension work
Independent practice
Homework
Preparation for
national tests

Master key comprehension skills in just 10 minutes a day!

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100 motivating mini-passages with questions covering:

- Main idea
- Sequence of events
- Fact and opinion

...and many more key comprehension skills

Focus topic




QR code for online version of the card

Mini-passage

Floor art

In India and Sri Lanka, you might see rangoli art. These are large, colourful designs on the ground. They might show flowers, birds or stars. They can be very elaborate and beautiful. They are made for special occasions. People start by drawing the pattern on the ground in chalk. Then they fill in each section of the design with different colourful materials. They use coloured rice, petals, sand, powder and spices. Sometimes, people stand and watch while the artists make the designs. Rangoli art isn't permanent. The wind soon blows the materials away. If the design is on a busy pavement, people might walk over it. But it's stunning while it lasts.



KEY QUESTIONS

- DESCRIPTION:** What is rangoli art like?
- TEXT EVIDENCE:** When do people make rangoli art? Find the sentence in the text that gives you the answer.
- VOCABULARY:** What do you think *permanent* means?
 - lasting forever
 - colourful
 - lasting for a short time
- DETAILS:** What materials are used to colour in a rangoli design?
- S-T-R-E-T-C-H:** What other colourful materials could you use to make a rangoli design?

Focus topic questions

Bonus question

Details question

Creative-thinking question

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ISBN 978-0702-30856-7



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Vocabulary

Vocabulary is the words written on the page. Sometimes you need to work out what unknown words mean.

TIP

As you read, play detective and search for clues to the meaning of the mystery word. Nearby words and sentences can offer important clues about the meaning of the unfamiliar word. Playing detective in this way will help you improve your understanding and vocabulary without reaching for a dictionary.



Examples

- **Definition clues:** *The unknown word is defined in the text.*
- **Example clues:** *An example of the unknown word is provided in the text.*
- **Similar word clues:** *A word with a similar meaning is near the unknown word.*
- **Opposite word clues:** *A word with the opposite meaning is near the unknown word.*

The wild ponies of Wales

Most horses and ponies in the UK are cared for by people. They live on farms. They graze in fields and shelter in stables.



But some ponies live in the wild. About 300 wild ponies live on the Snowdonia mountains in North Wales. Seven nearby farms check the health of the ponies once a year. Apart from that, the ponies look after themselves. They graze on the mountains. They stay up there all through the winter. It is a harsh, cold place. There is wind, rain and snow. The ponies have thick hair to protect them from the weather. Herds of these wild ponies have lived on Snowdonia for thousands of years.

KEY QUESTIONS

- 1. MAIN IDEA:** What is the main idea?
- 2. DETAILS:** What is an important detail?
- 3. TEXT EVIDENCE:** How do the wild ponies keep warm? How do you know? Write down the text that tells you this.
- 4. DETAILS:** How often are the ponies checked to make sure they are healthy?
- 5. S-T-R-E-T-C-H:** Describe how another animal protects itself from cold, wet weather.

Surviving in the desert

Cactus plants live in hot deserts. There isn't much water in the desert. The plants need to find as much water as they can. Their roots spread out a long way just below the surface. These shallow roots quickly absorb any rainwater that falls. Cacti also need to avoid losing the water they get. They have thick stems where they store the water. They don't have leaves because water can escape from the surface of leaves. Instead, they have sharp spikes. The spikes protect the cactus in several ways. They shade the stem from the heat of the sun. They hold a little water vapour around the stem so it doesn't dry out. The spikes also **deter** some animals from eating the cactus.



KEY QUESTIONS

- SUMMARISE:** Summarise this text in one or two sentences.
- INFERENCE:** Why do you think cactus roots spread out a long way?
- VOCABULARY:** What do you think *deter* means?
 - encourage
 - put off
 - help
- DETAILS:** Which word in the text means more than one cactus?
- S-T-R-E-T-C-H:** Describe what you think it would be like in a desert.

Fast Finishers English: Non-fiction (Ages 7-8)

INTRODUCTION

The vast majority of what we read is non-fiction: newspaper articles, biographies, sports stories, science books, business memos, blogs, history titles, editorials, health-care information, instruction manuals, textbooks, advertisements, websites, memoirs, persuasive essays, magazine features and more.

But navigating this diverse array of informational texts can be a daunting task. The truth is some children are not achieving 'deep comprehension' because they've yet to master core reading comprehension skills. The National Curriculum in Year 3 requires children to understand what they read by learning essential skills such as:

- explaining the meaning of words in context
- asking questions to improve their understanding
- drawing inferences and justifying inferences with evidence
- identifying and summarising the main ideas
- identifying how language, structure and presentation contribute to meaning
- retrieving and recording information from non-fiction.

Fast Finishers Non-fiction will help learners to improve these key comprehension skills in just minutes a day. The 100 Non-fiction cards in this box offer motivating mini-passages with key questions related to:

- Main idea and details
- Sequence of events
- Summarise
- Compare and contrast
- Problem and solution
- Cause and effect
- Fact and opinion
- Debate
- Description
- Author's purpose

How to use Fast Finishers

These compact cards are designed for instant and flexible use. They are great for independent practice work - slot them in at the end of an English lesson as meaningful extension work or as homework. They could also be used with partners, small groups or even the whole class. The questions on the cards could be responded to in writing or orally.

SAMPLE ANSWERS

1: The Golden Bridge

1. In Vietnam, there is a golden bridge you can walk on.
2. The bridge looks like it is held up by hands. (Other answers are possible.)
3. No. The text says that it 'curves around a mountain top'.
4. The hands are made of metal and wire.
5. Answers will vary.

2: Amazing glass

1. Glass is made out of sand.
2. Glass is transparent. (Other answers are possible.)
3. *Transparent* means 'see-through'.
4. Glass is recycled by melting it and using it again.
5. Answers will vary.

3: The wild ponies of Wales

1. Some ponies live in the wild in Wales.
2. There are about 300 wild ponies. (Other answers are possible.)
3. The ponies have thick hair to keep warm. The text says that: 'The ponies have thick hair to protect them from the weather'.
4. The ponies are checked once a year.
5. Answers will vary.

4: Riding on air

1. Maglev trains don't run on wheels./Maglev trains use magnets.
2. Maglev trains float 1cm above the track. (Other answers are possible.)
3. *Repel* means 'push apart'.
4. You could ride a maglev train in Japan, China or South Korea.
5. Children should refer to the words 'magnetic levitation' in their answers.

5: A light in the dark

1. Candles are important in different festivals and celebrations.
2. We don't need candles for lighting now. (Other answers are possible.)
3. The celebration is Christingle. The text says that: 'Candles are used in Christian celebrations, too. Christingle is a celebration leading up to Christmas. Children light or carry a candle to light up the church'.
4. People put Diwali lights in a window.
5. Answers will vary.