



Preparing for your English Assessment

Reading Comprehension Review - Part 1

This material is intended as a review to help you refresh your reading skills prior to the assessment. It is not meant to teach you new material. If you run into difficulties, it's time to stop and make an appointment for your assessment.

You will be provided two options for your English assessment on the [Assessment Centre](#) website; select the option that you feel is the best fit for you. If you are unsure which assessment option to choose, contact an assessor by emailing accessassessment@camosun.ca or calling (250) 370-3945.

You may also contact a Student Navigator at (250) 370-3466 or (250) 370-3847 to get help with selecting the best starting point for assessment.

Reading Comprehension Review – Part 1

1. Tips to get started:

- Look over the whole piece of writing. Notice its title and length.
- Read the first sentence of each paragraph to get an idea of how the writer has organized the piece.
- Read the first sentence of the last paragraph to get an idea of how it may finish.

2. Read with concentration.

Concentrate on the meaning of the words and phrases (groups of words). If you don't know what the word or phrase means, read the whole sentence and see if you can guess at the overall meaning.

3. When concentrating is challenging, try these strategies:

- Read the questions **before** you read the piece. It may help to know what you are looking for!
- If possible, read **out loud**. Your own voice can sometimes focus your mind **AND** eliminate outside distractions.
- Discuss the meaning **as if** you were telling someone else what you think it means. Sometimes having to express your thoughts can clarify them.

4. Practice specific reading skills:

- Understanding main ideas
- Recalling details/facts/information

Reading Skill: Understanding Main Ideas

The main idea

- is the most important idea in the passage.
- can be found at the beginning, in the middle or at the end of the passage.
- may be stated clearly or it may be implied.
- is supported by all the sentences in the passage.

The information in the above section has been adapted from: COMPREHENSION SKILLS: Main Ideas. Jamestown Publishers, 1974. pp.9-18

Sample Questions:

If you, like most people, have trouble recalling the names of those people you have just met, try this. The next time you are introduced, plan to remember the names. Say to yourself, "I'll listen carefully, I'll repeat each person's name to be sure I've got it, and I will remember." You'll discover how effective the technique is and probably recall those names for the rest of your life.

The main idea of this passage maintains that memory

- A. always operates at peak efficiency
- B. breaks down early in the day
- C. improves if new information is used immediately
- D. becomes unreliable when a person is tired

Answers: 1. C Supports are "discover how effective"; "probably recall those names for the rest ..."

Read the following and answer the questions:

It seems that everyone you meet these days knows something about astrology. Go to a party nowadays and chances are that the first stranger you meet will ask you, "What's your sign?" This question comes even before, "What is your name?" The stranger means, of course, "What sign of the zodiac are you born under?" You would answer "Virgo" or "Pisces" or whatever your sign is. But astrology is nothing new. It has been around for thousands of years. In the Orient, it has long been a part of religion and daily life.

1. Which sentence expresses the main idea of the paragraph?
 - A. Go to a party nowadays and chances are that the first stranger you meet will ask you, "What's your sign?"
 - B. It has been around for thousands of years.
 - C. It seems that everyone you meet these days knows something about astrology.
 - D. In the Orient, it has long been a part of religion and daily life.

2. The author is most interested in
 - A. the newness of astrology
 - B. the widespread interest in astrology
 - C. the ancient forms of astrology
 - D. the magic of astrology

3. This paragraph could be titled
 - A. What's in a Star?
 - B. Magic in its Many Forms
 - C. Parties
 - D. Religion of the Orient

Answers: 1. C 2. B 3. A

The information in the above section has been adapted from: TIMES READINGS PLUS: Book Six. Jamestown Publishers, 1998. pp. 17, 18.

Reading Skill: Recalling Details, Facts, and Information

Tips:

- Decide what is **most important** and what is probably not worth remembering (you can't remember everything)
- Try to **get interested** in the details (readers recall what they are interested in)
- **Reread** if you need to
- Go back and reread **after** you have read the question

Sample Questions: (answers at the end of each exercise)

1. An adult drinks from one and one half to five, or more, quarts of water a day. Total daily intake depends on climate, workload, body size, and many other factors.

One of the factors that determines the amount of water an adult drinks per day is

- A. state of health
- B. body size
- C. age
- D. gender

2. Most of us think that the water we drink is safe. It usually is, but some of us are using poorly treated drinking water which has been spoiled by bacteria, toxic chemicals, metal, and a possible wide range of other pollutants.

Most of the time our drinking water is

- A. contaminated by bacteria
- B. contaminated by metals
- C. undrinkable
- D. safe to drink

3. At least 4,000 cases of water-borne illnesses occur each year in the U.S.A. The actual total may be ten times greater. Further, medical science has not yet determined the effects on people of long-term exposure to contaminated drinking water.

Medical science does not know

- A. how to protect people from contaminated drinking water
- B. why some drinking water is improperly treated
- C. the long-term effects of unsafe drinking water on people
- D. how much water is required for the average person

Answers: 1. B 2. D 3. C

Read the following and answer the questions:

There are several things that every defensive driver should learn. To begin with, the defensive driver should learn to drive courteously. That is, he should always let the other person have the right-of-way if there is any doubt. Also, the defensive driver should learn to anticipate, or guess, what the other driver is going to do next. This gives him time to get his car into a safer position, if necessary. Furthermore, every defensive driver should learn to give the proper signal before changing directions, allowing enough time for other drivers to react to it. Lastly, every defensive driver should learn to keep a safe distance between his car and the car ahead.

2. A defensive driver is

- A. courteous
- B. an aggressive driver
- C. a slow driver
- D. a night driver

3. The motto of the defensive driver should be:

- A. If you drink, don't drive.
- B. A safe driver is a relaxed driver.
- C. Safe driving does not just happen; you have to work at it.
- D. When in doubt, give the other person the right-of-way.

4. A defensive driver

- A. should learn to anticipate the actions of others
- B. should maintain a steady speed at all times
- C. never stops to pick up hitchhikers
- D. always checks the tires for air pressure

Answers: 1. A 2. D 3. A

The information in the above section has been adapted from: COMPREHENSION SKILLS: Isolating Details. Jamestown Publishers, 1974. pp. 13-21, 48, 56

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Taken from: <https://services.viu.ca/sites/default/files/reading-and-language-review.pdf>, June 19, 2018.