



Preparing for your English Assessment

Reading Comprehension Review - Part 2

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 2

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 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:

- Making inferences

Reading Skill: Making Inferences

Sometimes when you are reading you must go beyond the printed word on the page, to what is hinted at or likely to be true, given the set of facts. Inferences can only be made when there are facts to back them.

Example: The old man staggered along the sidewalk, his torn, grey coat flapping in the wind.

You might **infer** that the man is drunk, but really the facts don't substantiate that inference. That would be a guess. It could be that the man has been mugged, that he is sick, or that he has had a medical crisis such as a heart attack. All of these could be the case, or some other explanation may be possible. Unless the facts support the inference, it could be incorrect.

You can make accurate inferences when you:

- think about all the ideas that are presented.
- think about the suggested or implied meaning of the words used.
- ensure they are supported by facts.

The following words in a reading may suggest you need to make an inference:

"implies that ..."

"indicates that ..."

"suggests ..."

"infers that ..."

"seems to be ..."

"probably ..."

"might be described as..."

"can assume that ..."

"can conclude that ..."

Sample Reading and Questions:

Read the following passage and answer the questions that follow it.

Of all the farm animals a person might own, the goat is the best personal pet. For one thing, you can keep it for a longer time than other farm animals. Even after a doe is fully-grown and you are milking her, she will remain your pet. She will not lose her love of adventure or her "sense of humour". Goats nose over everything they see and they eat so many different things that people long ago thought that goats ate tin cans. A doe, often called a nanny goat, usually has a single birth. Sometimes, however, twins or even triplets are born. By the time a young kid is five months old, it may be taken from its mother and kept as a pet.

1. The writer implies that most farm animals
 - A. are hard to train
 - B. enjoy being with people
 - C. become independent as they grow older
 - D. like to live with other animals

2. The above paragraph suggests that goats are
 - A. stubborn
 - B. patient
 - C. curious
 - D. intelligent

3. According to the paragraph, the idea that goats can eat tin cans
 - A. is based on a fact
 - B. was argued many years ago
 - C. is untrue
 - D. is certainly possible

Answers:

1. C 2. C 3. C

Sample Reading and Questions:

Read the following passage and answer the questions that follow it.

A Daily Record

A diary is a daily personal record. In it the writer is free to record anything at all. This may include events, comments, ideas, reading notes, or any subject on one's mind. Diaries may be kept for various purposes – to record the experiences of one's life so as not to forget them, to record ideas that might prove useful, or simply to express oneself through the medium of the printed word.

In past centuries people in public life often kept diaries. These have become valuable sources of fact and interpretation for later historians. The private candid observations set down in these personal journals often provide truer pictures of an age than do records or other books, which may have been censored during that time. For the most part, these diaries were never intended to be read by others. The entries were made simply as aids to memory or as a form of relaxation.

In modern times, however, politicians and other people realize that their diaries will likely be read by historians or, in published form, by the public. Thus they may make entries with these readers in mind. As a result, their diaries may lose the confidential, intimate nature of the older ones. On the other hand, their entries may tend to be more complete and self-explanatory.

The most famous diary ever written in English was that kept by Samuel Pepys. A civilian official of the British army, Pepys made regular entries between 1660 and 1669. His diary starts at the beginning of the Restoration period in English history and describes many of the court intrigues and scandals of his day. The diary reveals Pepys as a man with many human weaknesses but one who was honest with himself. He wrote his entries in a combined code and shorthand that was not solved until more than 100 years after his death. The most famous diary of the 20th century was published with the simple title Diary of a Young Girl. It was more commonly known as The Diary of Anne Frank. Anne was a young Jewish girl whose diary records the two years her family spent in hiding, mostly in the Netherlands, trying to escape the Nazi persecutors of the Jews. She and her family were finally caught in August 1944. She was imprisoned and died at a concentration camp in Germany in March 1945.

1. A diary is
 - A. a report on world events
 - B. a daily personal record
 - C. a documentary

2. The most famous diary ever written in English was kept by
 - A. Samuel Johnson
 - B. Samuel Pepys
 - C. Anne Frank

3. Diary of a Young Girl was written
 - A. during the civil war
 - B. in the 1940s
 - C. during the 19th century

4. Anne Frank's diary describes
 - A. the years her family spent hiding from the Nazis
 - B. a German concentration camp
 - C. the life of an average young girl

5. Diaries of the past may give a truer picture of an age than published books because
 - A. diaries are uncensored
 - B. published books give only one point of view
 - C. amateur writers were more thorough than professional writers

6. Today's diarists may not be as confidential as those in the past because
 - A. they expect that their diaries will be read by others
 - B. they have more secrets to hide
 - C. people today are harsher critics

7. You may conclude from the article that Samuel Pepys wrote his diary in code and shorthand because
 - A. he was fond of mysteries
 - B. he did not want his diary to be read by the wrong people
 - C. he could not write in proper English

8. It is probable that most people keep diaries in order to
 - A. become famous
 - B. keep personal records
 - C. practice their writing skills

Answers: 1. B 2. B 3. B 4. A
 5. A 6. A 7. B 8. B

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

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