

Fast Finishers English
Fiction
Ages 8-9

SCHOLASTIC

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Fiction

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

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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:

- Inference
- Settings
- Characters

...and many more key comprehension skills

Focus topic



QR code for online version of the card

Mini-passage

At night

"The monsters come out at night!" Harry said. "Monsters aren't real. Go back to sleep," said his dad. Harry hovered at his bedroom door. His parents were watching telly downstairs. "They are real," Harry muttered, and he turned to go back to his room. He did not want to get into bed, so sat on it instead. He sat there for a long time, staring out of the room, waiting for his parents to come to bed. He felt his eyes grow heavy and he yawned for the twentieth time. "No, I mustn't sleep," he said to himself. Soon, he gently fell on to his side on the bed and went to sleep. Suddenly, a loud noise woke him up.

KEY QUESTIONS

1. **PREDICTION:** What do you think will happen next in the story?
2. **PREDICTION:** How do you think this experience will change how Harry goes to bed the next night?
3. **INFERENCE:** Why does he not want to get into bed?
4. **DETAILS:** What does Harry's dad say to him?
5. **S-T-R-E-T-C-H:** Is there anything that you are frightened of?

Focus topic questions

Bonus question

Details question

Creative-thinking question

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Vocabulary

Vocabulary is the words written in text or spoken in speech. Our own vocabulary is all the words we know.

TIP

Authors use many words you may not know. But nearby words, phrases and sentences can offer important clues about the meaning of an unfamiliar word. As you read, play detective and search for clues to the mystery word's meaning.

This will help improve your understanding and vocabulary without using 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 monsters will get me!

“Tom!” shouted Mum. Tom looked up and then back down.

“Tom!” shouted Mum again, this time it was more urgent, but Tom continued to look at the screen.

“Tom!” The shout came again. “Tom!” But Tom still didn’t move. He couldn’t. If he did, the monsters would get him. He crouched low and waited. The woods in the distance were dark. They could be lurking in there. The door burst open.

“If you don’t get a move on, we’ll be late!” Mum stood there with her hands on her hips, lips **pursed** together and a frown on her face. “Get off that computer or I’ll switch it off at the socket.”

“The monsters will get me!” Tom cried.



KEY QUESTIONS

- 1. INFERENCE:** Why do you think Tom looks up and then back down?
- 2. INFERENCE:** Why do you think that Mum has ‘her hands on her hips, lips pursed together and a frown on her face’?
- 3. VOCABULARY:** What does *pursed* mean?
- 4. DETAILS:** What does Mum say she will do if Tom does not get off the computer?
- 5. S-T-R-E-T-C-H:** Do you think Tom should have responded to his mum before she burst open the door?

Sand

The sand between my toes felt scratchy. I picked some up and squeezed it through my fingers. I wiped my hands together to get rid of it, but the grains stuck to my hot, sticky fingers. “Lucy, stop that! You’ll get sand all over the food,” my mum said. She had laid out the sandwiches and crisps and carrot sticks on the blanket. There was a gust of wind and some sand blew on to the food. I shuddered. I hate sand. I hate feeling it on my skin and, worst of all, I hate eating it if it gets on the food. “Have a sandwich,” Mum passed me the plate. I nibbled one, crunching the sand between my teeth.



KEY QUESTIONS

1. **SETTING:** Where does the story take place?
2. **SETTING:** What do you think the weather is like in the story? Why?
3. **CHARACTER:** What doesn't the narrator like?
4. **DETAILS:** What is laid out on the blanket?
5. **S-T-R-E-T-C-H:** Write about what you would do on a beach.

Fast Finishers English: Fiction (Ages 8–9)

INTRODUCTION

As children move through primary school and learn to read independently, they will move from reading words accurately and fluently to understanding the meaning of texts. The power of reading stories is integral to building this 'reading comprehension' – both to entertain and explain their world. That said, many learners are not achieving 'deep comprehension' because they fail to master basic comprehension skills. The National Curriculum in Years 3 and 4 requires children to understand what they read by learning essential skills such as:

- identifying themes and conventions in a wide range of books
- identifying how language, structure, and presentation contribute to meaning
- checking that the text makes sense to them, discussing their understanding and explaining the meaning of words in context
- drawing inferences such as inferring characters' feelings, thoughts and motives from their actions, and justifying inferences with evidence
- predicting what might happen from details stated and implied
- identifying main ideas.

Fast Finishers Fiction is here to help learners improve these key comprehension skills in just minutes a day! The 100 comprehension cards in this box offer motivating mini-passages with key questions related to:

- Prediction
- Inference
- Character
- Setting
- Theme
- Conflict and resolution
- Cause and effect
- Vocabulary
- Text evidence
- Figurative language

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. They will help learners to 'read between the lines'

SAMPLE ANSWERS

1: The park

1. The player will be hit by the car, or the ball will be squashed by the car. (Other answers are possible.)
2. The ball is kicked out of the park and on to the road; the player rushes out of the gate and on to the road. (Other answers are possible.)
3. *Overtake* means to go around someone or something to get past them or it.
4. There are swings, slides, a climbing frame and a roundabout.
5. Answers will vary.

2: The mistake

1. Megan will tell the teacher and Billy will get into trouble again. (Other answers are possible.)
2. The teacher will tell Billy off again or she will ask him to move to a different place. (Other answers are possible.)
3. As the title is 'The mistake', perhaps Billy is just cross he has been told off, so he is not thinking about what he was doing. (Other answers are possible.)
4. Billy chats to his friends.
5. Answers will vary.

3: The spaceship

1. A tiny little alien will jump out. (Other answers are possible.)
2. The spaceship will be broken and will need fixing before the alien can leave. (Other answers are possible.)
3. It is at night-time because there is a 'dark, cloudless sky' and then dawn because the sun 'started peeking out from under the horizon'.
4. The spaceship lands on the ground with a little bump and then a dog barks for a bit.
5. Answers will vary.

4: An intruder

1. She will lie on the third bed and fall asleep. (Other answers are possible.)
2. It says that she is feeling tired. (Other answers are possible.)
3. It reminds me of *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*.
4. She sees some stairs, a table and three bowls.
5. Answers will vary.