

Fast Finishers English
Non-fiction
Ages 6-7

 SCHOLASTIC

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Fast Finishers English
Non-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

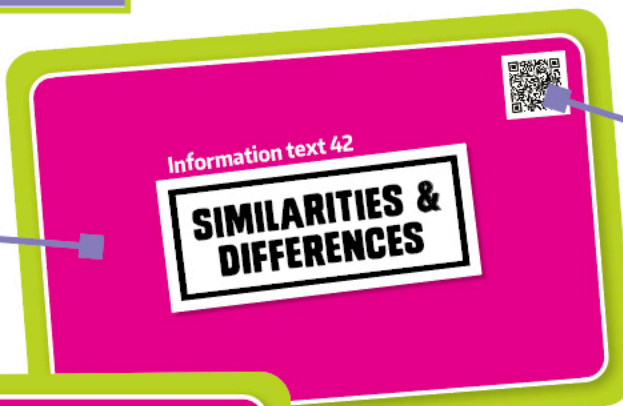
Master key comprehension skills in just 10 minutes a day!

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Focus topic




QR code for online version of the card

Mini-passage

Penguins

Most penguins live in the Antarctic. They are flightless birds. Other birds have wings for flying. Penguin's wings are called flippers. They have adapted to help them swim in the water. Penguins eat fish and other sea life that they catch underwater. They spend around half their time in water and the other half on land. The tallest penguin is the Emperor Penguin. They can be 120cm tall. Penguins huddle together to keep warm in the freezing temperatures.



KEY QUESTIONS

- SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES:** Name one similarity and one difference between penguins and other birds.
- DETAILS:** What height can the tallest penguin grow to?
- UNDERSTANDING:** How do penguins keep warm?
- STRETCH:** The text says that penguins' wings have 'adapted to help them swim'. What do you think 'adapted' might mean?

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Focus topic questions

Bonus question

Understanding question

Creative-thinking question

100 motivating mini-passages with questions covering:

- Main idea
- Sequence of events
- Summarise

...and many more key comprehension skills

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Vocabulary

The words used in the information text.

TIP Not all vocabulary will be familiar. Sometimes, you can work out the meaning of unknown words by using clues in the words nearby.



Example

- Snakes **shed** their skin when it's old and worn out

The meaning of **shed** here is not a small building in your garden. What else could it mean? It sounds like the snake gets rid of its skin because it is 'old and worn out' – so the closest meaning for **shed** here is their skin 'falls off'.

shed = falls off

Paper chase

In the past, people wrote on soft clay with a stick or scratched words on slate. Others carved wood or used leaves (which rotted). The ancient Egyptians created paper. They used a plant called papyrus. This was about 5000 years ago. They put sticky strips of the plant in layers to make a sheet. Then, they polished the sheet with a stone. Finally, they joined the sheets together. Today most paper is made from wood in big factories.



KEY QUESTIONS

- 1. MAIN IDEA:** What is the main point of the text?
- 2. DETAILS:** When did the ancient Egyptians start using papyrus to make paper?
- 3. UNDERSTANDING:** What is 'papyrus'?
- 4. S-T-R-E-T-C-H:** What would have been difficult about using clay, wood or slate to write on rather than paper?

Honey bees

Honey bees live in hives. There is a queen bee. The female bees are called worker bees. The male bees are called drones. The queen bee lays eggs. The worker bees collect pollen and nectar from flowers. They turn these into honey which they feed to the baby bees when they hatch from their eggs. As honey bees make more honey than they need, we can have some too. The honey is collected from the hives by beekeepers. They wear special suits to protect them.



KEY QUESTIONS

- 1. DETAILS:** What jobs do the worker bees do?
- 2. CAUSE AND EFFECT:** Why is it good that honey bees make more honey than they need?
- 3. UNDERSTANDING:** Why do beekeepers need to wear special suits?
- 4. S-T-R-E-T-C-H:** Draw and label the different things you can find in a hive.

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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 have yet to master core reading comprehension skills. The National Curriculum in Year 2 requires children to understand what they read by learning essential skills such as:

- developing pleasure in reading, motivation to read, vocabulary and understanding by being introduced to non-fiction texts that are structured in different ways
- identifying the sequence of events in texts
- clarifying the meanings of words
- answering and asking questions about a text
- explaining their understanding of non-fiction texts.

Fast Finishers Non-fiction will 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:

- Main idea
- Details
- Sequence of events
- Summarising
- Similarities and differences
- Problem and solution
- Cause and effect
- Questions you would ask the author
- Description
- Vocabulary

How to use Fast Finishers

The 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 access more complex texts in national tests and

SAMPLE ANSWERS

1: Weather

1. The text is about the weather.
2. Snow, sleet, fog, cloud, rain, hot and cold.
3. The United Kingdom has a *temperate* climate.
4. I think a polar climate is at the North Pole and the South Pole. I think it will be snowy and very cold.

2: Up, up and away!

1. The text is about hot-air balloons built by two brothers.
2. Hot air makes the balloon rise above the cold air and float.
3. The brothers used paper and cloth to make the balloon.
4. Answers will vary.

3: Paper chase

1. To tell us about how the Egyptians made paper.
2. They started using papyrus to make paper about 5000 years ago.
3. Papyrus is a plant.
4. You would have to press hard to write in clay, wood and slate. Also, they would be heavy to carry around. (Other answers are possible.)

4: How to make pretend papyrus paper

1. The text is instructions. It is telling you how to make pretend papyrus paper.
2. The strips should be 2cm wide.
3. You should layer the strips at a right angle to the first layer.
4. You should let the strips dry overnight so you can write on them.

5: Proverbs

1. The text is about proverbs.
2. *Traditional* tells you proverbs have been around a long time.
3. A proverb is a short, well-known saying.
4. Answers will vary.

6: How to look after a gerbil

1. The text is about how to look after a gerbil.
2. They make good pets because they are small and easy to care for.
3. They like to be part of a group.
4. Answers will vary.