Reading comprehension for Grade 4

Visual learning guide - English · Grade 4 · Read, connect, explain

Read two original passages and learn to explain an inference. Each of the 16 practice questions comes with an answer and the evidence behind it.

Start with the key idea

Reading comprehension means understanding what a text says and how its details fit together. A direct answer is stated in the text. An inference combines a clue from the text with a sensible explanation. A guess has no clear support. Both direct answers and inferences should stay consistent with the whole passage.

Three kinds of reading question

Find it: The answer is stated in one place. For 'Where did Nila wait?', locate the place named in the passage. You may answer in your own words without adding a new location.

Connect it: Combine details from different sentences. To explain why a plan changed, you may need both the original plan and the later problem. Copying only one sentence can miss the relationship.

Infer it: Explain something the writer suggests. 'Nila folded her note twice and kept looking at the doorway' might suggest that she is waiting anxiously. It does not prove that she is angry, or tell you whom she is waiting for. Check the surrounding sentences before deciding.

Use this answer frame when it helps: I think ___ because the text says/shows ___. The frame is a support, not a rule that every answer must have exactly those words.

A worked inference: useful clue or invented detail?

Mini-passage

The music room door opened. Zoya gripped the edge of her song sheet, took a long breath and stepped inside. When her friend waved, her shoulders relaxed.

Question: How might Zoya have felt before entering?

1. Find observable clues: she grips the sheet and takes a long breath.

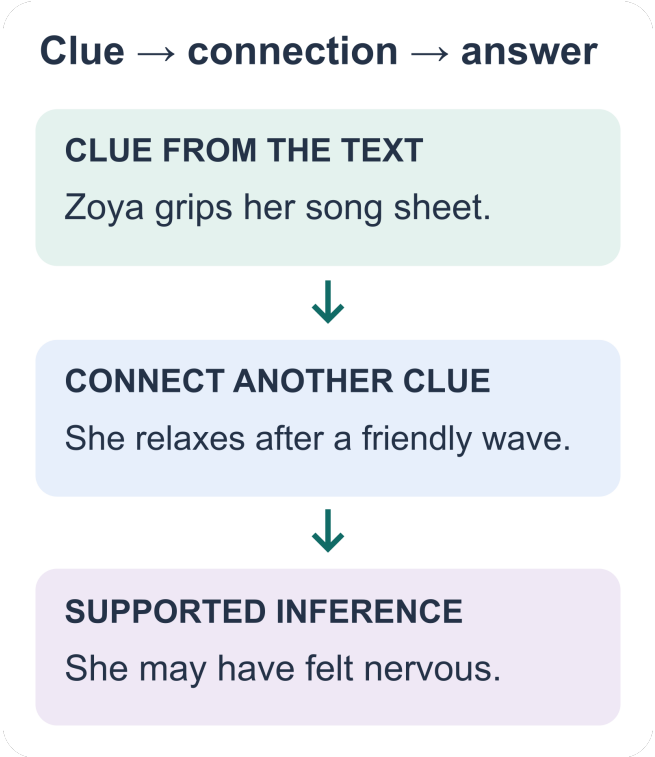
2. Connect the change: her shoulders relax after a friendly wave.

3. Make a cautious inference: she may have felt nervous before entering.

4. Write an answer: Zoya may have felt nervous because she gripped the sheet and only relaxed when her friend waved.

'She had failed yesterday's singing test' is not supported. The passage mentions no test or previous day. A detailed answer is not automatically a better answer.

A different answer, such as 'She felt unsure', can also work if its explanation fits the clues. 'She felt sleepy because she yawned' cannot work: there is no yawn in the passage.



Both clues come from the mini-passage; the feeling is inferred.

Use the sentence to work out a word

Read around an unfamiliar word before choosing a meaning. In 'The corridor was deserted; every class was in the hall', deserted means empty of people, not covered in sand. The second part gives a reason for the first.

Try the meaning in the sentence. Does it fit both the grammar and the situation? If two meanings seem possible, read the next sentence. If the text still does not settle the question, say what is uncertain rather than pretending there is only one answer.

For pronouns such as she, it or they, look back for a matching person or thing. Then check the action. The closest noun is not always the right one. In 'Ishaan handed the folder to Meera before he left', he refers to Ishaan, not Meera.

Find the main idea, not just an interesting detail

A main-idea answer describes what most of a passage is about. A detail gives one example, event or fact. If a story follows a child adapting a plan to include a friend, its main idea is probably broader than the colour of a bag mentioned once.

Try a one-sentence summary with a beginning, an important change and a result. Leave out details that do not help explain that change. For an information text, identify the purpose and the main advice instead of forcing it into a story sequence.

Keep sequence and cause separate. 'After the bell rang, the class left' states an order. To say that the bell caused the class to leave, look for the wider context that supports that connection. Not every later event happens because of the earlier one.

Review the reasoning, not just the score

Choose one answer you changed after reading the explanation. Write the clue you missed and explain how it changes your answer. Then try a new question from the other passage without looking at the key.

A useful answer checklist

- Have I answered the exact question?
- Can I point to the supporting words or events?
- Have I explained the link when making an inference?
- Have I avoided adding facts the passage never gives?
- Does my answer still fit the rest of the passage?

A child who finds direct facts easily but struggles with inference may benefit from comparing two possible answers and testing each against the text. A child who cannot read the passage comfortably may need reading support before the questions are useful. Choose the difficulty by the child's needs, not only the grade label.

Common questions about unseen passages

Must I copy the passage exactly?

Use your own words when the question allows it. If it asks you to quote a word or phrase, quote accurately. A short piece of evidence plus an explanation is often clearer than copying a whole paragraph.

Can two different inference answers be correct?

Yes, if both are supported and do not contradict the passage. Name the clue and explain the connection. A possible idea with no textual support is not equally strong.

Should I look at the questions before reading?

A quick look can show what to notice, but read the whole passage too. Searching for a single matching word can make you miss a contrast, a pronoun reference or a change in the character's plan.

How can a parent help without giving the answer?

Ask the child to point to the supporting sentence. If the answer is an inference, ask how that clue supports the idea. Separate difficulty reading the words from difficulty connecting their meaning; this worksheet is not a diagnostic assessment.

Keep building reading and writing skills

- When a child reads words but cannot explain the story
- Questions to discuss after reading
- Turn an idea into a clear sentence
- An extension: check subjects and verbs in your writing

If reading practice regularly ends in frustration, ask about guided English learning . A short example of the difficulty helps make the conversation specific.

About these materials

Both passages, the mini-passage, questions, explanations and evidence diagram are original BananaLearn materials. The exhibition is a fictional scenario for reading practice. Grade 4 indicates the intended level, not certification against a particular textbook or exam. No marks or improvement promises are made.

Reading comprehension for Grade 4

Practice worksheet - English · Grade 4 · Read, connect, explain

Name: _____ Date: _____

Show your working. Answers and explanations follow on a separate page.

Read each passage once for its overall meaning, then return for details. Answer on paper before opening the explanations. Some questions accept more than one sensible wording. The question labels tell you which skill to practise.

Passage 1: The silent announcement

Original fiction · 206 words

(1) On Monday, Arun brought a small handbell to the classroom. His group was running the lunchtime book swap, and he wanted everyone to hear when it opened. He rang the bell once. Three children looked up, but Tara covered her ears and moved away from the table.

(2) Arun stopped. 'Too loud?' he asked. Tara nodded. 'I still want to help,' she said. She pointed to the pile of coloured cards beside the books. 'Could we use those?'

(3) The group made a green card that said OPEN and an orange card that said PLEASE WAIT. Arun wrote the words in large letters so that the message did not depend only on colour. Tara drew a small book beneath each message. They practised holding the cards above the table.

(4) At lunchtime, a crowd formed near the door. Arun reached towards the handbell, then paused. Tara lifted the green card. A few children at the back could not see it, so the group moved the sign to a taller stand and asked the class helpers to point it out.

(5) By the end of lunch, twelve books had new readers. The handbell stayed in Arun's bag. Tara was already planning a sign for next week: BRING A BOOK TO SHARE.

Passage 2: Plan a useful class notice

Original instructional text; fictional school example · 240 words

(1) A class notice helps a reader do something: bring a material, arrive at a place or remember a deadline. Before decorating a notice, decide which action matters most. A clear message is more useful than a large heading that says only IMPORTANT.

(2) Imagine that Grade Four will hold a paper-model exhibition on Friday. Visitors can arrive between 1:00 and 1:30 in Room 6. Each child may bring one model. A useful notice gives the event, day, visiting time and room. It also tells children about the one-model limit. A drawing of a model can attract attention, but it cannot replace those details.

(3) Write the important information in short lines. Choose letters large enough to read from a few steps away. Keep the background simple so the words stand out. If a symbol or colour carries a message, add words explaining it. Not every visitor will interpret the same symbol in the same way.

(4) Before putting up the notice, ask someone who has not helped make it to read it. Ask, 'Where should you go? When can you visit? What can you bring?' If the reader cannot answer, revise the notice. Do not explain the missing detail aloud and then decide the notice is clear: another reader may arrive when you are not there.

(5) Finally, check the notice against the actual plan. A beautiful notice with the wrong room number can send everyone to the wrong place.

1. What event was Arun's group running?

2. What two messages did the first cards show?

3. Why did Arun put words on the cards as well as colours?

4. What suggests that Tara wanted to take part despite disliking the bell?

5. Put these in order: the sign moves to a taller stand; Arun rings the bell; Tara suggests cards.

6. In 'a crowd formed near the door', what does formed mean?

7. Choose a title and explain: A Missing Bell / A Plan Everyone Could Join / The Most Expensive Book.

8. Can we conclude that the group will never use a bell anywhere again? Explain.

9. Where will the imagined exhibition take place?

10. How many models may each child bring?

11. Why is a heading that says only IMPORTANT not enough?

12. A draft says 'Paper models, Friday, Room 6'. Name two details from the plan that should be added.

13. What does revise mean in this text?

14. Why choose a reader who did not help make the notice?

15. Summarise the advice in one sentence.

16. Write a two-line notice for the fictional exhibition using only the supplied facts.

Answers and explanations

Answer key - English · Grade 4 · Read, connect, explain

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1. A lunchtime book swap.

The opening paragraph states the event. A book sale would change the meaning: the passage does not mention buying books.

2. OPEN and PLEASE WAIT.

These are stated in paragraph three. Giving only the colours would not answer a question about messages.

3. So people could understand the message without relying only on colour.

The passage gives this reason directly. The words also distinguish the two signs, but do not claim the text says a particular child cannot see colour.

4. She says she still wants to help and suggests using the cards.

Either clue is relevant; using both makes the inference stronger. Moving away from the noise does not mean she rejects the whole activity.

5. Arun rings the bell → Tara suggests cards → the sign moves to a taller stand.

Follow the events from the opening paragraph to lunchtime. The taller stand is a second adjustment, after the group has made the cards.

6. Gathered or came together.

The subject is a crowd of people. A meaning such as shaped out of clay would not fit this context.

7. A Plan Everyone Could Join.

The story follows the group adapting its announcement so Tara can help and the crowd can see. The bell is not missing and no prices are given.

8. No. We know that the bell stayed in Arun's bag during this event, but the story does not describe every future event.

Avoid turning one observed choice into an unlimited claim. A good inference respects what the passage leaves unknown.

9. Room 6.

The second paragraph states the room. The example is a fictional practice plan, not an announcement for a real school.

10. One model.

May bring sets a limit, not a requirement that every child must bring one.

11. It does not tell the reader what action to take or the details they need.

Connect the opening purpose of a notice with the specific event details in paragraph two. Being eye-catching is different from being informative.

12. The visiting time, 1:00-1:30, and the limit of one model per child.

Both details appear in the plan but are missing from the draft. Do not invent a fee, uniform rule or different time.

13. Change or improve the notice after checking it.

The surrounding sentences describe finding missing information and making the notice clearer. Here it does not mean memorise notes for an exam.

14. They are less likely to know the missing details already, so their answers help test whether the notice explains itself.

This is an inference from the suggested test and the warning against filling gaps aloud. The text does not say that the helpers are poor readers.

15. Make a notice that gives accurate, readable information, then test whether someone can use it without extra explanation.

Other wording is acceptable if it includes the central purpose. A summary about using colourful drawings alone misses the main advice.

16. Example: Paper-model exhibition - Friday, Room 6. Visit 1:00-1:30; each child may bring one model.

Accept another layout that preserves the event, day, room, visiting time and model limit. Do not add a date or claim the example is a real event.