

## Reading Test 7 - The Swing Park

Bethany and Scott were going to stay at their aunt and uncle's house during the summer holiday. Their Uncle John had a large house full of interesting rooms and, even better, their Aunt Sheila was a brilliant cook. Their parents were taking them down there in the car and on the way down they listened as their parents chatted about their uncle and aunt.

"What does John do now?" asked Dad.

"I'm not sure," replied Mum, "although Sheila said he has a new hobby that he is really excited about."

"Any idea what the hobby is?" asked Dad, secretly hoping it was fishing, which was his favourite hobby.

"Well, its nothing to do with fishing," said Mum, seeing straight through Dad's question. "I believe it's to do with..."

Just then a cat ran out in front of the car and Dad had to swerve and brake sharply. "Whew, that was close," he said.



When Mum and Dad resumed their conversation, they were talking about leaving Bethany and Scott. It seemed to the children that every sentence addressed to them began, 'You mustn't...' or 'You must...'

"We know, Mum," exclaimed Bethany getting a bit annoyed, "we *have* stayed there before."

"Okay, okay," said Mum, "just making sure."

Uncle John and Aunt Sheila were really pleased to see Bethany and Scott. Dinner was delicious (as usual) and as soon as it was over it was time for bed. After the long journey both children slept well.

They woke in the morning excited at being on holiday but after a couple of hours sitting in the house, because it was raining so hard, Bethany and Scott had to admit to themselves that they were totally bored.

"What *shall* we do?" said Scott.

"We'd better think of something because we're here for another three weeks," said Bethany with a sigh. "It's probably just the weather," she continued, looking at the rain running down the windowpanes.

"S'pose so," said Scott.

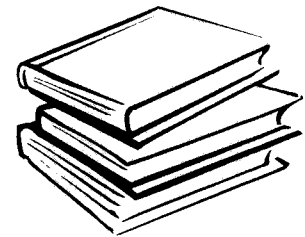
"I know, let's look in the library," said Bethany.

"Do we *have* to?" moaned Scott, in a very disappointed voice.

The house had its own library, which, according to Bethany and Scott's parents, was 'dead posh'.

"I need a library," Dad had joked, "to read the Radio and T.V. Times in."

So, on this wet summer's day, Bethany and Scott found themselves browsing through the library.



"So many books," said Bethany.

"If I wasn't bored before, I am now," replied Scott, glancing at the seemingly endless rows of books. "Just look at some of these titles," he said, with a marked lack of interest.

"You never know," said Bethany, "some of them might be interesting."

"Oh yes," said Scott, scornfully.

"Look at this book," said Bethany, picking up a book entitled *Ghost Stories for Rainy Days*. "How can we resist it?"

Bethany opened the book and started looking at the pictures, when suddenly Scott exclaimed, "Look, it's stopped raining, let's go out!"

As he spoke, he ran for the library door. Bethany flicked through the pictures one more time and, putting the book back, ran to join Scott, who was already at the front door.

"Before you go," said Aunt Sheila, "two children from the village knocked earlier to see if you wanted to go out and play, but I said I didn't think so, as it was raining. They said that if you did go out, they would meet you at the swing park."

"How did they know we were here?" asked Bethany in a puzzled voice.

"Oh, I don't know, I've never seen them before," said Aunt Sheila, not liking to admit this. She usually knew everyone in the village. "But it's no secret in the village that my favourite niece and nephew are staying with me in the school holidays. I told Mrs Evans for a start, and that's like taking out an advert in the local paper!"

Bethany and Scott smiled at Aunt Sheila, as her favourite niece and nephew should, and went out to play.

In the swing park, Bethany and Scott met the two village children. They must be really poor thought Bethany, as their clothes looked so old-fashioned. The children were called Grace and Edward, and they all had a great time playing together. Bethany and Scott realised how lucky they were with their two new village friends because they wanted to play all the same games as them and were, better still, the same age as them. Bethany really liked the way that they spoke. They sounded different from her usual friends.

At the end of an enjoyable afternoon, they said goodbye to their new friends, and they all promised to meet again tomorrow for the whole day, if it wasn't raining.

As they walked home, Bethany said to Scott, "I was going to ask you. Did we meet Grace and Edward last time we stayed?"

"No, I don't think so," said Scott. "Why?"

"Because I'm sure I remember their faces. Are you sure we didn't see them last time?"

"Definitely, categorically, absolutely not," replied Scott, with certainty.

"Well, I'm sure I've seen them before, and quite recently," continued Bethany.

"Oh, I suppose you visited Aunt Sheila last week," said Scott, mockingly.

"Okay, okay," said Bethany, "it must have been someone similar."

At dinner that night they all sat around the table.

"Uncle John," said Bethany, "I've been meaning to ask you... What's your new hobby? Dad was hoping that it was fishing."

"Well," laughed Uncle John, "it is fishing in a way, but not the sort that would interest your Dad. It's fishing for ghosts."

"Ghosts?" exclaimed both children together.

"Yes," said Uncle John. "If anyone thinks they've seen a ghost, or if a ghost story is brought to my attention, I check out the stories to see if there is any truth in what they are saying."

"What if there is?" asked Bethany.

"Well, then we have a new, authenticated ghost to add to our collection and, of course, the people who met the ghost become famous. Let me get a book to show you what I mean."

Uncle John was gone for a few minutes. When he returned he was holding the book *Ghost Stories for Rainy Days*.

"I've been trying to authenticate the story in this book for the last two years, but no-one appears to have seen these ghosts."

"What story?" asked Scott and Bethany, both very interested.

"Well," said Uncle John, "it concerns two local children who died of famine in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century. The names of the children were Grace and Edward, and here is their picture."

Uncle John showed the picture to the children.

Bethany suddenly knew where she had seen their friends in the swing park before...



## Reading Test Extra - Weather Forecasting

Predicting what the weather will be like is very important to us. The scientists who study the weather are called meteorologists. These are the people who prepare the weather forecasts we see on the television and in newspaper reports.

Many occupations need an up-to-date weather report to provide them with accurate information about the day or week ahead.

Fishermen for example, listen to the weather reports to check for storms at sea. Farmers need to know the best time to harvest crops and pilots rely on accurate weather reports to allow them to avoid bad weather during a flight.

So how do we learn about the weather before it happens?

Before modern technology, people would read the signs nature gave them. They would study cloud formations, wind direction and changes in the natural world around them. Learning about and understanding the changes in each season provided them with more information.

Have you ever heard the saying 'Red sky at night, shepherd's delight, red sky at morning, shepherd's warning'? This is an ancient rhyme about predicting weather. It actually works.

The science behind it is this... if the wind blows from the West, a red sky at sunset shows that the air to the west is dry. This means the next day should be fine. If the sky is red in the morning, it shows that the clouds are on the way and it might possibly rain.

Seaweed was also used to predict the weather and this is something that you can try yourself. Keep a small piece of dried seaweed by your window. In dry weather it will remain brittle and crisp, but if damp air approaches, you will know it first! Your seaweed will absorb the moisture in the air and become softer to touch.

Of course, scientists today use far more modern technology to predict the weather.

Specially equipped weather ships are towed into positions out at sea where they are anchored safely away from shipping lanes. They monitor the weather in the area, sending reports back to the mainland as much as eight times a day. Weather conditions can change dramatically at sea in a very short time.

Weather planes have weather monitoring equipment fixed to their nose cones. They fly in the upper atmosphere collecting information about forming weather conditions. Special weather balloons are used too. Filled with helium to make them float, the balloons are released high into the upper atmosphere. The instruments carried by

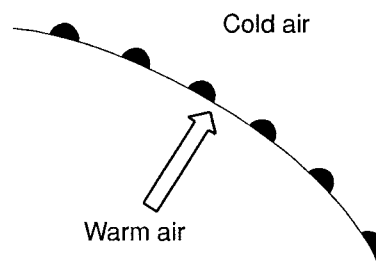
them record the temperature, pressure, humidity and wind speed. Then the information is relayed to ground control by radio.

There are even weather forecasts in space! Some satellites orbit the Earth just to tell us the weather. They transmit photographs of the cloud formations allowing scientists to see where the trouble spots are. A huge swirl of cloud indicates the presence of a hurricane or typhoon. Using the photographs helps the scientists to predict which direction the hurricane is likely to travel in.

### What is a weather front?

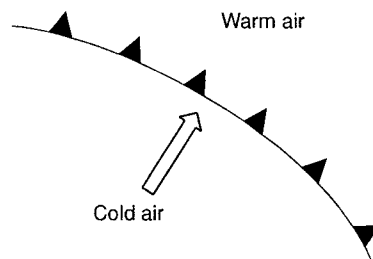
Weather forecasts are often telling us about a weather front. This is the term they give to the area where hot and cold air meet.

A warm front is shown on a weather map like this:



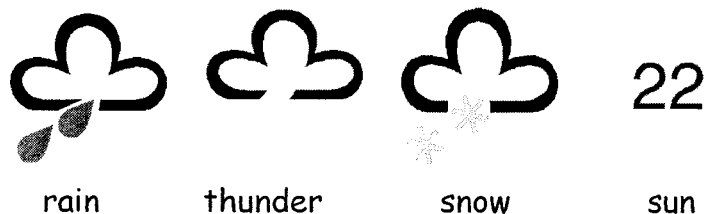
This means the warm air is following behind cold air.

A cold front is shown like this:



It looks like a string of bunting. This shows cold air following behind warm air.

Look out for these signs too:



## Reading Test Questions 7 - The Swing Park

1. Bethany and Scott went to visit their aunt and uncle's house. On their first day they...

Were really looking forward to the next three weeks	Made lots of new friends	Were totally bored	Were pleased with the weather
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1 mark

2. They looked around their aunt and uncle's house and settled in the library. Bethany found a book of...

Pictures	Recipes	Ghost stories	Fishing
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1 mark

3. However, just then the rain stopped so they decided to go out. Their aunt gave them a message that two children from the village had knocked for them and would meet them...

At the slides	At the swing park	On the village green	Near the church
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1 mark

4. The two children Grace and Edward were good to play with but Bethany thought...

She didn't recognise them	She had seen them somewhere before	That they were unfamiliar	That they must have just moved to the village
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1 mark

5. The two children are in fact ghosts and Bethany has seen them before. She had seen them...

Last time she was down	In a photograph on the mantelpiece	In the village	In the book of <i>Ghost Stories for Rainy Days</i>
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1 mark

6. Why was Uncle John's hobby not revealed on the journey?

2 marks

7. How long were Bethany and Scott going to spend at their aunt and uncle's house?

1 mark

8. Why did Aunt Sheila say that telling Mrs Evans about her niece and nephew was 'like taking out an advert in the local paper'? (Page 3)

1 mark

9. John used three synonyms for the word 'certainly' in one sentence. What are these words? (Page 3)

1 mark

10. Why did only Bethany recognise the children?

2 marks



11. Events from the story 'The Swing Park' are listed below. Number each event to show the order in which they happen. The first one has been done for you.

1	A cat runs out in front of the car
	Uncle John reveals his new hobby
	Aunt Sheila explains about Mrs Evans
	Bethany and Scott meet Grace and Edward
	Bethany and Scott browse the books in the library

2 marks

12. During the story, Bethany and Scott experienced different feelings. Match each of the events listed below to the word which best describes their feelings at the time. One has been done for you. Draw only one line to each box.

Mum and Dad instruct the children how to behave		annoyed
Bethany and Scott play in the park		bored
Uncle John talks about authenticating a ghost story		puzzled
Bethany asks her aunt how the children who had called for them knew that they were there		happy
The weather prevents the children from going out		interested

4 marks

13. How would Bethany and Scott have been able to authenticate one of the stories in *Ghost Stories for Rainy Days*?

1 mark

14. Why do you think the writer did not finish the story by telling the reader where Bethany had seen Grace and Edward before?

2 marks

15. Why does Uncle John describe his new hobby as 'it is fishing in a way... it's fishing for ghosts'?

1 mark

16. What clues in the text show that the children who called were not from the village?

1 mark

17. What clues in the text might show that these children were from a different period of time?

2 marks



Maximum  
25 marks

## Reading Test Extra - Questions - Weather Forecasting

1. What are scientists who study the weather called?

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1 mark

2. Name three occupations that need up-to-date weather reports and explain why they need them.

	→	
	→	
	→	

2 marks

3. How did people predict the weather in the past?

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1 mark

4. What does the rhyme 'red sky at night' mean?

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1 mark

5. Find a word in the text that means;

• shows, points to (Page 6)	
• foretell, tell in advance (Page 5)	
• old, from long ago (Page 5)	

2 marks

6. Describe how a piece of seaweed can help you predict the weather.

1 mark

7. How often can a weather ship send a report?

1 mark

8. Why do you think we need so many reports in one day?

1 mark

9. Where is it safest to put a weather ship?

1 mark

10. Where is the weather monitoring equipment on a weather plane?

1 mark

11. Write down a similar word to these words. One has been done for you.

• Accurate (Page 5)	correct, exact
• Occupation (Page 5)	
• Transmit (Page 6)	

2 marks

12. What does the term 'weather front' mean?

1 mark

13. What types of information do weather balloons collect?

1 mark

14. How does the information from weather balloons get conveyed to Earth?

1 mark

15. Why do you think that there are so many symbols for different types of weather?

2 marks

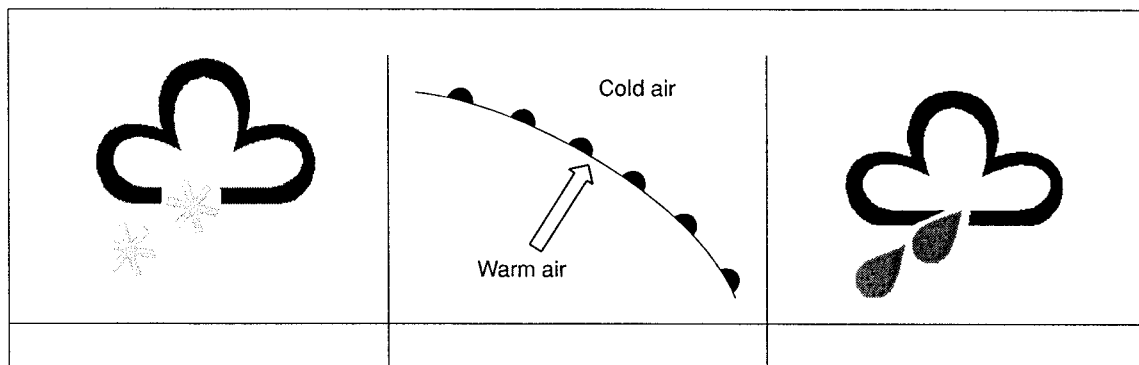
16. How might an approaching hurricane be first picked up by meteorologists?

1 mark

17. Can the direction of a hurricane be predicted?

1 mark

18. What do these symbols mean?



2 marks