

Primary 3 · English · Advanced English Practice

Comprehension cloze: a news report

Time **30 min** Marks **18** Questions **18**

Answers are printed in red after each question, with the working where it matters. Marks in brackets show how a marker would split them.

Comprehension cloze

18 marks

Blanks 1 to 18 carry 1 mark each. Write one word in each blank.

Gardening lessons return to the school timetable

Adapted from a news report

Pupils as young as seven will soon be ¹ taught how to grow their own vegetables and how to plan a healthy meal. From the start of next year, every primary school will set aside one afternoon a week for lessons in the school garden.

Older pupils will go on to raise a wider range of crops and learn ² such skills as composting, watering and harvesting. The plan, which appears in the newly published school guidelines, has been welcomed by doctors and dietitians. They point out that many ³ children today cannot name common vegetables, and that a growing number eat almost no fresh food at all.

They warn that busy family life has left many pupils eating packaged meals, ⁴ because their parents rarely have time to cook. Gardening is already part of some science lessons, but it is taught only in a few schools. Even there, teachers tend to explain how a plant ⁵ grows rather than let pupils grow one themselves.

The plan is part of the ministry's effort to reduce childhood obesity, which now affects one child in five by the age of ten. Health clinics spend a large sum every year treating illnesses linked to poor diet, which is thought to be partly the result of children knowing so little about where food comes from.

The change follows years of campaigning by a ⁶ group of farmers, chefs and health charities. In an open letter last week, several well-known chefs, together with a national football coach and the founder of a children's food company, ⁷ asked the ministry to act before a whole generation grew up unable to feed itself properly. A survey ⁸ conducted by the campaign found that the number of pupils who ate no fruit or vegetables on a school day had risen by a quarter ⁹ between 2019 and 2022.

Eight in ten primary teachers, and nine in ten parents surveyed, agreed that gardening should be ¹⁰ **part** of the curriculum. The ministry commissioned a review of school meals last year, led by a farmer and a restaurant owner. Their ¹¹ **aim** was to get every pupil eating well at school and to strengthen the teaching of food and farming in primary and secondary classes.

The founder of the children's food company said: "Bringing gardening back into the curriculum is a huge step forward in the effort to ¹² **improve** the way children think about food. I welcome this change, which shows that good ideas can take ¹³ **root** when enough people speak up for them."

The director of a national charity that works ¹⁴ **with** schools on healthy eating said: "This is very good news. Reaching children early is the best way to solve the ¹⁵ **problem** , before they grow up eating badly without knowing why."

"In schools that already have gardens, we have seen pupils go home and teach their parents what they have learnt. Nearly half the parents we spoke to said the family now ate more vegetables as a result."

A spokesperson for the ministry said: "For the first time, gardening will be a required part of the timetable in every primary school. The new guidelines are about ¹⁶ **giving** pupils the knowledge they need for their daily lives. With obesity rising, it is vital that they ¹⁷ **understand** what makes a balanced diet."

"It is also important that they enjoy it. By bringing gardening into the classroom, we want to ¹⁸ **encourage** children to develop an interest in good food that will stay with them as they grow up."

1-18 Write your answers in the blanks in the passage above.

[18]

Accept close synonyms that keep the grammar correct: 1 shown, 6 coalition, 7 urged, 8 carried out (two words, not accepted), 11 goal or mission, 12 change, 13 hold, 15 issue, 17 learn or know, 18 help. Do not accept 4 and, 9 from, 13 place.

Marking notes

- One mark per blank. Spelling must be correct; a wrong tense or number (for example 'grow' for blank 5) scores zero.
- Blank 4 tests cause and effect (because), blank 9 tests a pair with 'and' (between), blank 13 tests a fixed expression (take root).

END OF PAPER