

Primary 3 · English · Advanced English Practice

# Vocabulary in context

Time **25 min**    Marks **15**    Questions **15**

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

## Vocabulary in context

15 marks

Questions 1 to 15 carry 1 mark each.

- 1 Mei Ling and her cousin had not spoken since their quarrel at Chinese New Year. [1]  
After their grandmother talked to them, they decided to stop blaming each other and . . . .

- (1) cry over spilt milk
- (2) ✓ let sleeping dogs lie
- (3) bite off more than they could chew
- (4) count their chickens before they hatched

*"Let sleeping dogs lie" means to leave an old quarrel alone. "Cry over spilt milk" is about regretting what is already done.*

- 2 Ravi tried to hide a sigh as Uncle Ben started yet another of his . . . . accounts of the [1]  
same fishing trip, which never seemed to end.

- (1) occasional
- (2) cheerful
- (3) ✓ endless
- (4) amusing

*The clue is "never seemed to end". "Occasional" would mean the stories happened only now and then.*

- 3 The old well sits at the top of a cliff with no path up to it. It is completely . . . , so the village children have never seen it up close. [1]

(1) uninteresting

(2) ✓ **unreachable**

(3) uncomfortable

(4) unbelievable

*No path means nobody can get there. "Unbelievable" would mean hard to believe, not hard to reach.*

- 4 The class picnic is planned for Saturday. If the field is flooded, we will have to fall back on our . . . arrangement and stay in the hall. [1]

(1) ✓ **backup**

(2) urgent

(3) reliance

(4) advantage

*A backup arrangement is the plan kept ready in case the first one fails.*

- 5 Any pair that failed to finish the first round of the quiz was . . . and did not go on to the final. [1]

(1) ✓ **knocked out**

(2) left out

(3) thrown out

(4) sent out

*"Knocked out" is the usual phrase for a team removed from a competition. "Thrown out" suggests being forced to leave for bad behaviour.*

- 6 It is simply . . . that Siti would copy her friend's homework. She is the most honest pupil in our class. [1]

(1) careless

(2) ✓ **unthinkable**

(3) unforgivable

(4) unfriendly

*The second sentence shows the idea cannot even be imagined. "Unforgivable" would mean it should not be forgiven, which does not fit someone who would never do it.*

- 7 Hafiz's mother told him to revise for his test instead of spending the evening on . . . . [1]  
games that would not help him at all.

- (1) small
- (2) lacking
- (3) important

**(4) ✓ pointless**

*"Pointless" matches activities that bring no benefit. "Lacking" does not describe an activity.*

- 8 "You can practise all week and you still will not beat me," the boastful boy said . . . . to [1]  
his teammate.

**(1) ✓ scornfully**

- (2) thoughtfully
- (3) kindly
- (4) guiltily

*A boastful remark that looks down on someone is said scornfully. "Guiltily" would mean he felt sorry.*

- 9 After a long quarrel over the shared corridor, the two neighbours agreed to . . . . and [1]  
greet each other again.

- (1) call it a day
- (2) spill the beans

**(3) ✓ mend fences**

- (4) hit the books

*"Mend fences" means to repair a broken friendship. "Call it a day" only means to stop work.*

- 10 Round by round, the list of pupils still in the spelling bee was . . . . until only two [1]  
remained.

- (1) cut down

**(2) ✓ pared down**

- (3) worn down
- (4) run down

*"Pared down" means reduced bit by bit. "Worn down" describes something made weaker by use.*

- 11 After leaving the bakery, Mr Tan opened a small bicycle shop. He earns less, but he comes home in time for dinner with his family every evening. As people say, "· · · !" [1]

(1) The early bird catches the worm

(2) ✓ **Every cloud has a silver lining**

(3) Too many cooks spoil the broth

(4) A stitch in time saves nine

*The smaller pay is the cloud; being home for dinner is the silver lining.*

- 12 Auntie Lim never has much money left at the end of the month, so she has to · · · carefully before she buys anything. [1]

(1) add

(2) ✓ **plan**

(3) control

(4) compare

*Planning how to spend a small amount of money is the skill the sentence describes.*

- 13 Wei Jie was · · · when he learnt that his football team would play in the final at the new stadium. [1]

(1) on thin ice

(2) in deep water

(3) out of the woods

(4) ✓ **on cloud nine**

*"On cloud nine" means delighted. "Out of the woods" means past a danger, which the sentence does not suggest.*

- 14 The · · · actions of the two lifeguards saved the swimmers caught in the current. Both will receive awards at the assembly tomorrow. [1]

(1) boastful

(2) careless

(3) ✓ **brave**

(4) quiet

*Saving someone at risk is brave. "Quiet" describes how little someone speaks, not a rescue.*

**15** The swimming gala had to be . . . . until the following week because of the thunderstorm. [1]

(1) put away

(2) put down

**(3) ✓ put back**

(4) put across

*"Put back" means postponed to a later time. "Put away" means stored.*

#### ANSWERS AT A GLANCE

|             |             |             |             |             |             |
|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| 1 <b>2</b>  | 2 <b>3</b>  | 3 <b>2</b>  | 4 <b>1</b>  | 5 <b>1</b>  | 6 <b>2</b>  |
| 7 <b>4</b>  | 8 <b>1</b>  | 9 <b>3</b>  | 10 <b>2</b> | 11 <b>2</b> | 12 <b>2</b> |
| 13 <b>4</b> | 14 <b>3</b> | 15 <b>3</b> |             |             |             |

#### Marking notes

- Accept only the option given. A pupil who can explain the meaning of a wrong option should still not be awarded the mark.

END OF PAPER