

Primary 3 · English · English General Ability

Comprehension: reading between the lines

Time **35 min** Marks **10** Questions **10**

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

10 marks

Questions 1 to 10 carry 1 mark each.

Why your eyes need a rest

Adapted from a magazine article

- ① In 2007, a pupil in Johor named Amir Firdaus set himself a challenge for his school project. He wanted to find out how many hours he could look at a screen before his eyes gave up. He stopped only when he had been staring for 19 hours. That is nearly a full day.
- ② Amir did learn how long he could last. Along the way, though, he was not himself. His head throbbed, he rubbed his eyes until they were red, and he snapped at his sister. At one point the words on the page seemed to float off it.
- ③ You are unlikely to stare at a screen for 19 hours, but if you are like most children you sometimes keep your tablet going long after bedtime. Often the reason is not homework. It is one more episode, or one more game. Children of your age need their eyes to rest for a large part of the evening. Yet a recent check by the School Health Service found that on school nights, as many as 14 per cent of pupils get enough of a break from screens. The same service says that one in three adults look at a screen for most of the evening, night after night.
- ④ You already know how a long session feels. Your eyes burn, your head aches, and you miss things that are right in front of you. A whole day of it leaves you as unsteady as someone who has missed a night of sleep. Worse, the glare can damage the surface of the eye.
- ⑤ The years between nine and twelve are a bad time for that kind of strain. In those years your eyes are still changing, and the habits you build tend to stay. A shortage of rest has been shown to cause lasting harm. It also puts pupils at risk of headaches, blurred sight, poor posture, falling grades, and low confidence. In adults it affects concentration, work and mood.
- ⑥ Here is something worth knowing. Before a big match, the other team's staff sometimes keep players from resting, hoping the tired players will give their plans away. After hours without rest, the players often give in and tell them exactly what they want to hear.

- ⑦ Getting more rest is harder than it sounds, because your body and the day around you seem to be working against you. Two things decide when you stop. The first is simply how long you have been going: the longer you look at a screen, the more your eyes beg you to stop. The second is your evening routine, the pattern that tells you the day is over. As you grow older, that pattern shifts. You want to stay up later, but school still starts at the same time, so the break gets squeezed. Going to bed at a different hour every night makes it worse.
- ⑧ Gadgets are another reason your eyes complain. In one study, 100 pupils did an average of four screen activities after 8 p.m. They watched shows, played games and messaged friends. The more they did, the longer they took to feel sleepy. Part of the trouble is that a bright screen keeps your mind racing. The other part is the glow itself. Blue light, the kind many screens give off, tells your body that it is still daytime. That blocks melatonin, a hormone released in the dark that makes you drowsy.
- ⑨ One late night will not harm you for good. Even so, remember this. Plants kept under lamps all night grow weakly, and they weaken faster than plants kept without water.

Glossary. **School Health Service:** the team that checks on the health of pupils. **Headache:** a pain in the head. **Blurred sight:** when things look fuzzy. **Posture:** the way you hold your body. **Confidence:** belief in yourself. **Coach:** the person who trains a team. **Hormone:** a substance the body makes and sends through the blood.

1 What made Amir Firdaus keep looking at a screen for 19 hours? [1]

- (A) He wanted to set a record for the longest time anyone had stared at a screen.
- (B) He wanted the most unusual school project in his class.
- (C) ✓ He wanted to find out the longest time his eyes could manage.**
- (D) He wanted to study the harm of long screen time for his school project.

Paragraph 1 says he wanted to find out how many hours he could look before his eyes gave up. The harm is described later, not as his aim.

2 Which of these did Amir not go through? [1]

- (A) Seeing things that were not really there
- (B) A bad temper
- (C) ✓ Tripping over things**
- (D) Sore eyes and a sore head

Paragraph 2 gives the headache, the red eyes and the snapping. The floating words are the trick his eyes played. Nothing is said about tripping.

3 What is the most common reason children stay on their screens late? [1]

- (A) They have not finished their homework.
- (B) They do not feel sleepy.
- (C) Their eyes will not close.

(D) ✓ They want to watch one more show.

Paragraph 3 says the reason is often "one more episode, or one more game", not homework.

4 Which of these statements is false, according to the passage? [1]

- (A) Children need a long rest from screens in the evening.
- (B) 86 per cent of pupils do not get enough of a break.

(C) ✓ 14 per cent of pupils get enough of a break at the weekend.

- (D) Most children have stayed up with a screen.

The 14 per cent is about school nights, not weekends. 100 minus 14 gives the 86 per cent, so option B is true.

5 Which word suggests that looking at screens for most of the evening has become a habit for adults? [1]

(A) ✓ night after night

- (B) most
- (C) one in three
- (D) too

"Night after night" is the clue that it happens again and again.

6 According to paragraph 5, which of these is not something that both pupils and adults suffer? [1]

- (A) Some of the harm cannot be undone.
- (B) Health gets worse.
- (C) Mood changes.

(D) ✓ Confidence can fall.

Low confidence is listed only for pupils. Lasting harm, health and mood are shared.

- 7 Why do the tired players end up telling the other team's staff what they want to hear? [1]
- (A) They are afraid of being dropped from the team.
- (B) They become upset and want to talk about their feelings.
- (C) ✓ They are too worn out to keep their plans to themselves.**
- (D) They are so tired that they forget the plans were supposed to be a secret.

Paragraph 6 says that after hours without rest they give in. Forgetting is not stated.

- 8 Why does the writer say that your body and the day around you seem to be working against you? [1]
- (A) ✓ The pattern that tells you the day is over moves later as you grow up.**
- (B) Your mind cannot switch itself off.
- (C) You never feel sleepy.
- (D) The two things that decide when you stop are fighting each other.

Paragraph 7: the pattern shifts later, but school still starts at the same time.

- 9 In the sentence about blue light, what does "that" refer to? [1]
- (A) Daytime
- (B) Your body
- (C) ✓ The glow**
- (D) The screens

"That blocks melatonin" points back to the glow of blue light, the thing just named.

- 10 According to paragraph 8, why are gadgets to blame for tired eyes? [1]
- (A) ✓ Using them stirs up your mind.**
- (B) Screens make their own daylight.
- (C) Screens make the body release melatonin.
- (D) You have to put the lights on, and that keeps you awake.

The paragraph's direct reason is that a bright screen keeps the mind racing. The blue light blocks melatonin; it does not release it.

ANSWERS AT A GLANCE

1 C	2 C	3 D	4 C	5 A	6 D
7 C	8 A	9 C	10 A		

Marking notes

- Question 4 rewards careful reading of "school nights". A pupil who writes B has read the 14 per cent backwards.

END OF PAPER