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READING:
COMPREHENSION 1

Reading

Comprehension 1

Pre-Reading Activity

Have you ever wondered what would happen if we did not know how to read? Imagine a world without books, newspapers, journals, magazines? How would we spend our day without any of these? What would we rely on for information and knowledge? Imagine such a life for two minutes and your mind begins to get muddled. This just goes to show that we cannot imagine a world without reading.

ACTIVITY 1

READ TO LEARN MORE

Language and communication are something that children learn by talking to one another. But schools consider this an act of indiscipline. Instead we have a special grammar class to learn language! One educationist remarked, 'It is nice that children spend just a few hours at school. If they spend all 24 hours in school, they will turn out to be dumb!' In most schools, teachers talk, children listen. The same is

true for other skills also. Children learn a great deal without being taught, by tinkering and pottering on their own.

(Fluency, pg.11)

Choose the correct option from the following:

1. What do children learn by talking to each other?
 - a. Language
 - b. Communication
 - c. Both of the above
 - d. None of the above

2. in most schools
 - a. Children listen
 - b. Children talk
 - c. Teachers talk
 - d. a and c

3. Is talking to one another in class
 - a. an act of indiscipline?
 - b. an act of communication?
 - c. an act inviting punishment?

Answers: 1c, 2d, 3b

ACTIVITY 2
READING BETWEEN THE LINES

Try and distinguish between the main and the subsidiary ideas in the above passage. Choose the best option for the same:

1. The main idea of the passage is
 - a. Language is learnt by talking to one another.
 - b. Language can be learnt by being silent.
 - c. Language is taught by the teacher.

2. The subsidiary idea of the passage is
 - a. Schools consider talking an act of discipline.
 - b. Schools consider talking an act of indiscipline.
 - c. Schools punish naughty children.

3. The passage criticizes schools for
 - a. Not understanding children
 - b. Not knowing what communication is.
 - c. Teaching language in a grammar class.

Answers; 1a, 2 a, 3 b

Read the following poem carefully

IF I RETURN THIS TIME

If I return this time
I must return greater

Not with pointed moustaches
Twisted silly on the face
Not with tails of steel
Tied to my waist
I will give way to others
And not give tigerish
Devouring looks to them

If I return
I must return more human

Stepping out of home
Walking on the roads
Boarding buses
Catching trains
If I survive the fate
Of a run over puppy
I must return
More thankful this time
Not just licking my wounds
But caring for all
Completely human—
If I return at all.

Kunwar Narain

(Understanding Translation. *Fluency in English 2*, prescribed
by the University of Delhi for the B.A. programme Stream A)



<http://animalphotos.info/a/2008/01/20/sunset-tiger-walks-on-wall-by-side-of-pond/>
on 31 January 2011



<http://www.smalldogbigdogpictures.com/dog-picture-big-dog-Hello-AND12-type.jpg> on January 31, 2011

ACTIVITY 3
READ TO KNOW MORE

1. The poem has two dominant images. Can you identify those images from the following?

- a. Tiger and Puppy
- b. Puppy and Cow**
- c. Cow and Horse
- d. Horse and Tiger

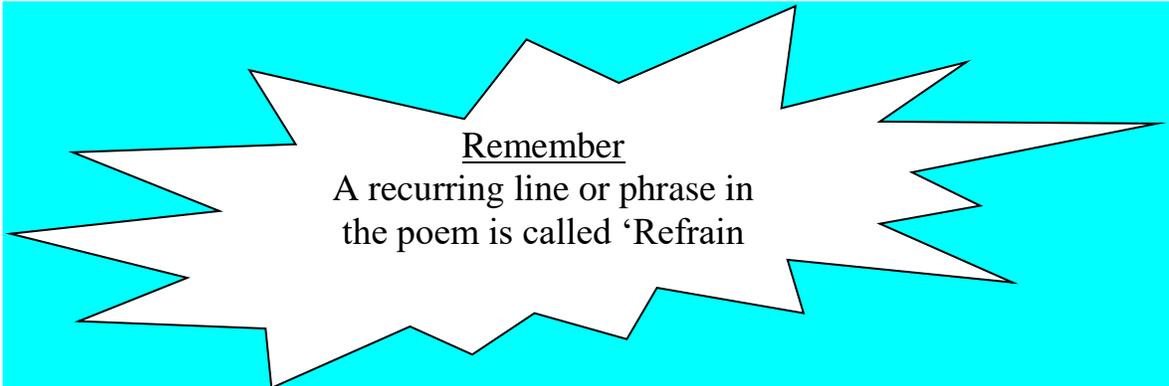
2. Which of the following words describes the first image?

- a. pointed
- b. tails**
- c. devouring
- d. all of the above

3. Which of the following words describes the second image?
- a. run-over
 - b. licking**
 - c. survive
 - d. all of the above
4. What according to the poet is being human?
- a. being thankful
 - b. caring for all**
 - c. surviving
 - d. 1 and 2 above
5. What does the word 'return' mean in the poem
- a. to come back to a place
 - b. to come back to life**
 - c. to come back to a person
 - d. to come back to one's original self
6. What is the central theme of the poem?
- a. Regretting the actions of one's past life
 - b. Hoping to be more human in the next life**
 - c. Coming back as tiger or puppy
 - d. Wishing to change

Answers: 1a, 2d, 3d, 4d, 5d, 6b

ACTIVITY 4
LEARNING ABOUT 'REFRAIN'



What is the difference in using the refrain three times and does it enhance the meaning of the poem?

If I return this time
I must return greater

If I return
I must return more human

I must return
More thankful this time

ANSWER

Yes. It does in fact enhance the meaning of the poem and shows the poet's urgency and need to return. Each time he wants to return but differently, expressing different aspects of the same need. Greater in spirit, humane and showing gratefulness-all these are the ways in which he wishes to return.

ACTIVITY 5 Benefits of Re-reading

As you read through this poem, you must have found a number of words whose meaning you did not know. Good readers do not go running to the dictionary for every word they do not understand. They constantly, though unconsciously, adopt strategies to deal with unfamiliar words. Some of these are:

1. In a ten-minute reading session, underline as many words as you do not understand.
2. Try and go through the list and put them in context to understand what they mean.
3. Make a new list of the words you still do not understand.
4. Look up these in the dictionary.

[Now check to see if you know the meanings of all these words.](#)

Twisted, tigerish, devouring, boarding, survive

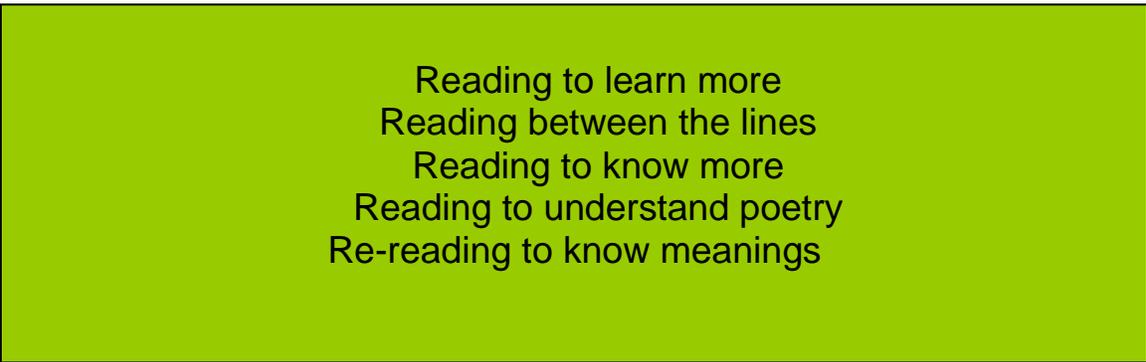
ANSWERS

Bent, resembling a tiger, eating, getting into, to remain alive



What have you learnt?

You can learn how to read well by



Reading to learn more
Reading between the lines
Reading to know more
Reading to understand poetry
Re-reading to know meanings