

READING FOR UNDERSTANDING (RFU) LEVEL “K”



Reading for understanding (RFU) exercises are for students to practice understanding what they read in short readings. A student must read a selection and analyze the material in the reading using prior knowledge to arrive at the correct answer. If the student does not have prior knowledge of the subject in the reading, the student can utilize dictionaries or other references to arrive at the correct answer. It is an excellent exercise for the reader to utilize various levels of Bloom’s Taxonomy.

Reading for Understanding (RFU) Box # 2, Card # 71 ▲

1. A caravan is composed of a group of people who have banded together to travel through wild, barren, or unknown territory. In the early days of the United States, caravans provided considerable protection against the hazards of travel. Most pioneer travelers were convinced that

- A. "there is safety in numbers."
 - B. "many hands make light work."
 - C. "one travels fastest who travels alone."
 - D. "there is no rest for the weary."
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2. In early times, it was difficult to move heavy or large goods from one place to another by land. The development of transport by ships that could carry merchandise of great size led to the early commercial development of those countries that were located

- A. in Europe
 - B. in North America
 - C. far north
 - D. on water
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3. A famous battle of ancient history took place in 490 B.C. at Marathon in Greece. After the Greek general had defeated the Persian army, a Greek soldier named Pheidippides ran from Marathon to Athens with the news. He dropped dead just as he reached the marketplace. In 1896, at the Olympic games in Athens, the Greeks had a race of about 40,000 meters, which was the distance Pheidippides is said to have run. This race was called a *marathon*. The name marathon is now used for

- A. a race in Greece
 - B. the Olympic games
 - C. a victorious race
 - D. a very long race
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4. As the tadpole grows older, the cells composing its tail are attacked and absorbed by other body cells until the tail shrinks and finally

- A. resumes its original shape
 - B. changes into a leg
 - C. becomes very long
 - D. disappears completely
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5. The larvae of the sphex wasp require fresh food. The adult wasp stings in such a manner that its prey is merely paralyzed. In that condition, the victim will remain alive for a period longer than is required for the hatching of the wasp's eggs and the growth of the larvae. The food the young wasp needs is thus

- A. not suitable
- B. readily available
- C. killed instantly
- D. eaten slowly

Continuation of Reading for Understanding (RFU) Box #2, Card #71 ▲

6. When she played card, she loved having an accomplished partner and a determined enemy. She took, and gave, no concessions. She hated

- A. opposition B. cards C. generosity D. games
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7. Although Europe is considered a continent, it is really a peninsula extending westward from Asia. For this reason, it is sometimes considered a part of the great continent of

- A. Europe B. Eurasia C. China D. the West
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8. Even though early farmers knew nothing about the laws of heredity, they did improve their crops by selecting seeds from their finest plants and sowing them. Although results varied, continued selection of such seeds causes the crops to become differentiated from their wild ancestors. Selection of seeds by observation is still used as a method of

- A. improving crops B. plant study C. agriculture D. fertilization
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9. According to Greek mythology, the baby Achilles was plunged into the river Styx by his mother, Thetis. This made him invulnerable except for the heel by which she held him. He became a great warrior but was finally killed when an arrow shot by Paris

- A. struck his heart C. fell into the river Styx
B. struck Thetis' hand D. pierced his heel
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10. One means of preserving food is by drying it, because without moisture the bacteria that brings fermentation

- A. multiply B. die C. reproduce D. cause disease

Reading for Understanding (RFU) Box # 2, Card # 72 ■

1. Wherever borax is found today, there once was a lake of water of particular composition. Because of the climatic changes, these lakes dried up and left a layer of crystals, which was sometimes overlaid later with mud or dust. Borax today is found primarily in the

A. water B. tropics C. arctic D. desert

2. Some readers are so skilled that, when they read aloud, we are unaware of the reader. The words that we hear seem to be coming directly from the mind of the person who wrote them. But most of us are not so skilled. When we change from conversation to reading, our tones and inflections change also. It is apparent that the words coming from our mouth belong to someone else and that we are only the

A. audience B. critic C. mouthpiece D. originator

3. Constant work of one uniform kind destroys the intensity and flow of a person's spirit, which finds recreation and delight in mere change of

A. dress B. activity C. clothes D. residence

4. People are interested in the elaborate gowns worn by the wives of the U.S. presidents at inaugural balls. These gowns are preserved in the Smithsonian museum in the nation's capital, where they receive very careful treatment. Clothing experts estimate the life of clothing to be perhaps as high as 400 years. Thus, the time will come when one can see only a copy of Martha Washington's

A. dress B. picture C. jewels D. chair

5. Manufacturers found a method for producing plastic chairs; but, before the chair would sell and thus bring profits, it had to be not only more durable but also less expensive than other, comparable chairs on the market. Production was profitable because the finished product

A. combined quality and economy
B. was low-priced
C. maintained consistent quality
D. performed a unique function

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Continuation of Reading for Understanding (RFU) Box # 2, Card # 72 ■

6. To speak the king's English is to use the English language correctly. People are said to murder the king's English when they speak

- A. ungrammatically
B. too loudly
C. untactfully
D. too often
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7. Windmills are pieces of equipment that, as their name implies, are run by wind. The windmills, in turn, furnish power for other pieces of equipment, perhaps pumps to draw water for farm animals. Nowadays, motorized pumps are used for such purposes and are better because

- A. the water drawn this way is purer
B. they take up less room
C. the wind is not always blowing
D. windmills are old-fashioned
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8. The ancient city-state was small enough that its population could be informed by heralds and by posted notices of what was going on in the community. Not until the Romans conquered the entire Mediterranean region did there arise a need to convey news simultaneously to many places. Caesar, the ruler of the Roman Empire, had to contrive a way to send news from the capital to Roman officials throughout the conquered areas. In order to solve this problem, he founded something similar to a

- A. monarchy B. republic C. herald D. newspaper
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9. On crossing a high mountain range from east to west, one comes into a region where, as a result of abundant rainfall, vegetation is

- A. luxuriant B. absent C. parched D. sparse
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10. Most of us today take the electric bulb for granted. We can hardly imagine life without it. Yet just a century ago most people scoffed at the notion of an electric light bulb, and its inventor was publicly ridiculed and termed a

- A. realist B. madman C. genius D. scientist

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Reading for Understanding (RFU) Box # 2, Card # 73 ▲

1. The Vikings were a race of rough, cruel warriors who lived long ago in Scandinavia. They braved the wildest seas to raid and pillage the coasts of other countries. Their chief deity reflected the character of their society; their most powerful god was the god of

- A. thunder and war. C. the sun and the moon.
B. life and death. D. rain and snow.**
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2. It is our problem to find and exploit the rich deposits of ore that nature has stored in the ground. Forests, like the mines, are nature's

- A. children B. storehouses C. delight D. discoveries**
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3. Older children often feel that their younger brothers and sisters are given more attention and are treated more leniently by their parents. On the other hand, the younger children may feel that they are at a disadvantage because the older children seem to be

- A. happier B. popular C. younger D. preferred**
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4. As a general rule, attractive clothes make people feel better. A new coat or a new pair of shoes usually leads to

- A. a happy frame of mind. C. self-consciousness.
B. a big party. D. extravagance.**
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5. Solitary bees do not live in colonies in hives. The bee of one species of the solitary bees bores a tunnel in wood, in which it forms compartments. There it builds its nest and stores its food. Because of the way in which it builds its home, this bee is called the

- A. solitary bee. C. carpenter bee.
B. nesting bee. D. colony bee.**

6. She found the transition from small-town life to life in New York City a slow and rough process. She wrote about it, not because she thought her experience was unique, but on the contrary, because she believed that millions of New Yorkers who were not born there

- A. were born in the country. C. had had the same experience.
B. were unhappy. D. were perfectly satisfied.**
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Continuation of Reading for Understanding (RFU) Box #2, Card #73 ▲

7. It was once claimed that a result of vaccination for smallpox could be the loss of the arm in which it is given or even loss of life. These are rare occurrences indeed, as is shown by the fact that vaccinations were given to over ten million persons in one short period and not one of these persons lost an arm, nor were there any

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|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| A. cases of smallpox. | C. reactions to the vaccine. |
| B. consequent deaths. | D. successful vaccinations. |
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8. Calypso is a type of highly rhythmic folk music that is very popular in the Caribbean. Calypso singers crowd the words in to fit the rhythm of the music and make up the words as they go along. They do not like to use verses

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|--|---------------------------------------|
| A. for the first time. | C. that do not rhyme. |
| B. with only drums for accompaniment. | D. that have been used before. |
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9. One upsetting experience in the morning can ruin the rest of the day. Everything that one encounters seems tinged with unpleasant emotion. It is like wearing a pair of “trick” spectacles that

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|--|---------------------------------------|
| A. magnify things to greater clarity. | C. distort everything in view. |
| B. impart to everything a rosy hue. | D. make the wearer ugly. |
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10. The prey of this hunting wasp is a long-horned green grasshopper. This insect is so heavy that its captor cannot carry it any distance. Therefore, the wasp makes its home close to the place where the grasshopper has been captured. The site of the wasp’s burrow is determined by the

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|---------------------------------|---|
| A. location of its prey. | C. distance that it can fly. |
| B. homes of other wasps | D. available building materials. |

Answer key to RFU Box # 2, Card # 71 ▲

- (1) Correct answer is “A.” The key word in the reading is *protection*. When a person wants protection, he or she wants safety. This is mentioned in answer “A.”
- (2) Correct answer is “D.” Since the reading mentions that ships were used to carry the bigger loads, you must realize that ships need water to travel, thus countries located near water developed commercially.
- (3) Correct answer is “D.” Although the reading mentions Greece and Olympics, the answer should be based on the distance that was run by Pheidippides, which was very long.
- (4) Correct answer is “D.” When something is shrinking, it will eventually disappear. If you are familiar with frogs and know that they are tadpoles before growing up, this should be easy to answer.
- (5) Correct answer is “B.” The reading states that the sting only paralyzes the prey, so “C” is not the answer; the wasp would not provide unsuitable food for its young, thus “A” is not the answer. The answer then should be either “B” or “D,” “B” is the logical answer.
- (6) Correct answer is “C.” When you give concessions, you are being generous, since she didn’t give these, then she hated generosity.
- (7) Correct answer is “B.” When you combine Europe and Asia, you come up with the blend or portmanteau word, *Eurasia*.
- (8) Correct answer is “A.” When you use the finest seeds from the finest plants you are improving crops.
- (9) Correct answer is “D.” The reading states that Achilles was only vulnerable on his heel by which his mother held him while plunging him into the river, thus his heel is the only place where he could be killed.
- (10) Correct answer is “B.” To eliminate bacteria, the bacteria must die. All living things need water/moisture.

Answer key to RFU Box # 2, Card # 72 ■

- (1) Correct answer is “D.” When water is eliminated from an area, you will have a desert; this causes lakes to dry up.
- (2) Correct answer is “C.” When words are coming from our mouths, we are not the audience, critic, or originator. Mouthpiece is the logical answer.
- (3) Correct answer is “B.” In this reading they are stating that the work being done is the same over and over, uniform. Changing the activity, what is being done, will be sort of a recreation for the person.
- (4) Correct answer is “A.” Another word for gown is dress, thus “A” is the logical answer.
- (5) Correct answer is “A.” This reading offers a challenge in that the reader must use logic to come up with the answer. “D” cannot be the answer because all chairs perform the same function; the function is not unique. “C” cannot be the answer because most companies maintain consistent quality, thus it would not affect the outcome. “B” cannot be the answer because low-price alone will not produce profits.
- (6) Correct answer is “A.” Answers “B” and “D” are not correct because volume and frequency of speaking do not affect correct language usage. Untactfully, also does not affect correct language usage. A dictionary would help in this question.
- (7) Correct answer is “C.” The average person knows that the wind does not always blow, so it would be logical that a motorized pump could be used better when this happens.
- (8) Correct answer is “D.” Monarchy and republic do not deal with spreading information, thus “A” and “B” are not correct. Herald means speaking out which would not be heard in all places. A newspaper can be sent to many places, thus the correct answer.
- (9) Correct answer is “A.” The word abundant means plentiful or a lot. Vegetation, plants, need water. Thus vegetation would not be absent or sparse, or parched. It would be luxuriant, profuse, abundant, etc.
- (10) Correct answer is “B.” Realist, genius, and scientist are words use to note something good about a person. Madman is used to describe a person put in a bad light, or made fun of.

Answer key for (RFU) Box # 2, Card # 73 ▲

- (1) Correct answer is “A.” When a society pillages and raids other villages, it is making war against them thus the god of thunder and war would be their chief deity.
- (2) Correct answer is “B.” The key word here is stored, which is where ore is found. So forests store wood, for building and paper products.
- (3) Correct answer is “D.” In this reading the idea that is being brought out is that each group thinks the other group is being preferred.
- (4) Correct answer is “A.” The place where people feel better is in their minds, not in any other area.
- (5) Correct answer is “C.” If a bee works with wood to build its home, it is safe to say that it is a carpenter bee since carpenters work with wood.
- (6) Correct answer is “C.” The key to this question is “experience”; she was writing about what happened to her and she figures that many people have the similar experiences that she encountered.
- (7) Correct answer is “B.” Something worse than losing an arm would be what? Death.
- (8) Correct answer is “D.” If you make up the words as you go along singing, then you should not use something that has been used before.
- (9) Correct answer is “C.” Key word is “trick.” A trick would be to distort things not make them clear, a different color, or make someone ugly.
- (10) Correct answer is “A.” Since the wasp cannot carry the grasshopper away, it has to live close to where it is captured.