

# English

## Comprehension - Meaning of Words in Context

### What do I do?



In a comprehension assessment, you will be given a text to read, followed by questions. This text could be from a wide range of styles. It could be a story, poem or a non-fiction passage, such as an information text. Depending on the style of exam paper, you may be asked to write a full answer or choose from a number of multiple options.

### Top Tips!



- Read the passage first to get a feel of the text.
- Try to imagine the text in your head and picture what it might look like.
- If you have read the text before (it might be a famous story), try not to rely on what you have read previously. Just answer the questions given and rely only on the text in front of you.

### What skills do I need to improve?



**Doing lots of practice questions will help with becoming familiar with question types but what else can you do to improve in this area?**

- READ, READ, READ! Reading a variety of different materials will help to prepare you for the exam.
- Try to include newspaper articles, poetry and pre-19th century texts in your list of materials to read.
- When you've read a chapter, ask someone to ask you questions about it - discussion about what you've read will help you to understand it better and will enable you to understand other opinions and ideas.
- Why not see if you can continue the story by writing your own ending?

## Who Stole the Tarts?

An extract from *Alice in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll

5 The King and Queen of Hearts were seated on their throne when they arrived, with a great crowd assembled about them--all sorts of little birds and beasts, as well as the whole pack of cards: the Knave was standing before them, in chains, with a soldier on each side to guard him; and near the King was the White Rabbit, with a trumpet in one hand, and a scroll of parchment in the other. In the very middle of the court was a table, with a large dish of tarts upon it: they looked so good, that it made Alice quite hungry to look at them--'I wish they'd get the trial done,' she thought, 'and hand round the refreshments!' But there seemed to be no chance of this; so she began looking at everything about her to pass away the time.

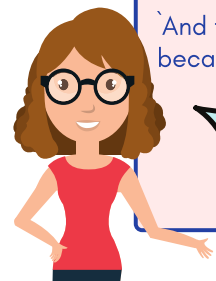
10 Alice had never been in a court of justice before, but she had read about them in books, and she was quite pleased to find that she knew the name of nearly everything there. 'That's the judge,' she said to herself, 'because of his great wig.'

The judge, by the way, was the King; and, as he wore his crown over the wig (look at the frontispiece if you want to see how he did it), he did not look at all comfortable, and it was certainly not becoming.

'And that's the jury-box,' thought Alice; 'and those twelve creatures,' (she was obliged to say 'creatures', you see, because some of them were animals, and some were birds,) 'I suppose they are the jurors.' She said this last word two or three times over to herself, being rather proud of it: for she thought, and rightly too, that very few little girls of her age knew the meaning of it at all. However, 'jurymen' would have done just as well.

Fancy a challenge? See if you can write the court scene from the perspective of the Knave.

15



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The following questions are all about the meanings of the words within a text. They will test your vocabulary knowledge and whether you understand the definitions of selected words.

### Questions

- 1 The text mentions that Alice was '*obliged* to say creatures' (line 13). What does this mean?
  - A. She was frightened to call them creatures
  - B. She felt that she must call them creatures
  - C. She was tricked into calling them creatures
  - D. She enjoyed calling them creatures
  - E. She repeated the judge by calling them creatures
  
- 2 The crowd was '*assembled about them*' (lines 1-2) Which of these is closest in meaning to '*assemble*'?
  - A. disperse
  - B. around
  - C. agitate
  - D. group
  - E. congregate
  
- 3 Lewis Carroll describes the King's crown, being worn over his wig, as '*certainly not becoming*' (line 12) What is meant by this description?
  - A. It looked inappropriate for the occasion
  - B. It looked uncomfortable to wear
  - C. He was inconsiderate to wear it
  - D. It looked unstable, like it was about to fall off
  - E. He came to the court dressed like that
  
- 4 Which description tells the reader that the Knave was a captive?
  - A. He was in the crowd
  - B. The title of the chapter is 'Who Stole the Tarts?'
  - C. He was next to the King and the White Rabbit
  - D. He was being guarded and was wearing chains
  - E. There was a pile of tarts on the table



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- 5 The text mentions that Alice was trying to '*pass away the time.*' (line 7). What does this mean?
- A. Alice was looking for a way to escape
  - B. Alice tried to keep herself calm
  - C. Alice was hungry
  - D. Alice passed out
  - E. Alice tried to occupy herself
- 6 Alice found the tarts made her '*quite hungry to look at them*' (lines 5) Which of these is closest in meaning to '*hungry*'?
- A. replete
  - B. famished
  - C. satisfied
  - D. gorged
  - E. surfeited
- 7 Which word tells the reader that Alice wasn't completely certain that the '*creatures*' were the '*jurors*'? (line 14)
- A. say
  - B. might
  - C. suppose
  - D. some
  - E. because



Did you try the challenge?  
Share it with us!

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### Answers

- 1 The text mentions that Alice was '*obliged to say creatures*' (line 13).  
What does this mean?  
**B. She felt that she must call them creatures**
- 2 The crowd was '*assembled about them*' (lines 1-2)  
Which of these is closest in meaning to '*assemble*'?  
**E. congregate**
- 3 Lewis Carroll describes the King's crown, being worn over his wig, as '*certainly not becoming*' (line 12)  
What is meant by this description?  
**A. It looked inappropriate for the occasion**
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**D. He was being guarded and was wearing chains**
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What does this mean?  
**E. Alice tried to occupy herself**
- 6 Alice found the tarts made her '*quite hungry to look at them*' (lines 5)  
Which of these is closest in meaning to '*hungry*'?  
**B. famished**
- 7 Which word tells the reader that Alice wasn't completely certain that the '*creatures*' were the '*jurors*'? (line 14)  
**C. suppose**

