

Activity 1 – Beliefs About Reading

Read the following statements about reading and decide whether they are true or false. Be ready to explain the reasons for your decisions to your partner.

	True	False
1. The main reason for reading in the classroom should be to test learner understanding of English.		
2. Teenagers only read when they are studying.		
3. For teaching purposes, authentic English-language texts should always be simplified.		
4. Whenever possible, the English-language texts that teachers give to learners should be the same type as those the learners enjoy reading in their own time.		
5. It is necessary for learners to know every word in order to understand a text.		
6. Reading helps learners improve vocabulary.		
7. When teachers provide a written text to present new language, the learners are practicing reading.		
8. We use a variety of strategies when we read, which learners need to learn and practice.		
9. The best way to practice reading skills is to read aloud.		
10. Most young people find reading activities boring.		

Activity 2 – What and Why?

Young people may read many different text types and have different reasons for reading them.

You will now work in a group to make a list of either what young people read or why they read. Base your list on what your learners read in both English and Palauan.

What do learners read?	Reasons for reading
<p>Eg. - instructions for installing computer software</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- a novel	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- information- pleasure

Have you ever given your learners any of these text types to read in English?

Activity 3 – How We Read

You are going to find out how people read, by reading about six strategies. Before your trainer gives you the text, complete the following table. This will help you to start thinking about the subject and predict what's in the text. This will also help you to understand the text more easily.

Activity 3.1 – What Do I Know?

Write down three things you already know about how we read.

1.

2.

3.

Write down three questions you have about how we read.

1.

2.

3.

After you have read the text, you will refer back to this table to see whether the things you already know about were included and whether the questions you have were answered.

Activity 3.2 – Reflection On How We Read

1. Which reading strategies did you use when you re-ordered the text?
2. Would you prefer to do the re-ordering activity alone, with a partner, or in a group? Why?
3. Why was the text cut in those particular places?
4. If you were to use a re-ordering text activity with your own learners, what changes would you make so that the activity was more suitable for them?

Activity 4 – Classroom Activities to Practice Reading Strategies

This table has some information missing – part of the headings, which identify the reading strategy being practiced, and some of the activities. Before you look at the next page, try to guess what some of the missing information might be.

<p>Activities to practice (1) _____</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Give learners the question sheet and ask them to guess the answers before reading the text ▪ Tell learners the title and ask them to write questions they have about the topic ▪ (2) _____
<p>Activities to practice (3) _____</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Give learners a newspaper or magazine and ask them to find which pages the following are on: weather report, TV schedule, business news, readers' letters, etc ▪ Ask learners to read the first sentence of each paragraph, then say what the whole text is about. Give them a time limit to discourage intensive reading ▪ Give learners a set of different short texts and ask them where they would find them, e.g. a shopping list (in a handbag), an advert (in a magazine), a public notice (in a park), a text message, etc ▪ (4) _____
<p>Activities to practice (5) _____</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ask learners to read the questions and identify what kind of answer they should look for, e.g. a date, amount of money, someone's name, a city, etc, before reading the text ▪ A reading race, where learners have to find specific information from a text faster than other learners ▪ Give learners a timetable and ask them questions, e.g. what time does the train to London leave? ▪ (6) _____
<p>Activities to practice (7) _____</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Give learners an article and ask them to provide a title for it ▪ Give learners a text with a few sentences removed. They put the sentences back in the correct places. ▪ Give learners a news story and ask them what they would have done if they had been in that situation ▪ (8) _____
<p>Activities to practice (9) _____</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Give learners a cut-up text to put in order ▪ Give learners a text with reference words underlined (<i>this, it, he, she, those, etc</i>). Have them identify the noun that each word refers to. ▪ (10) _____
<p>Activities to practice (11) _____</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Give learners some definitions and ask them to find corresponding words in the text ▪ (12) _____

Below are the reading strategies and classroom activities that have been removed from the table on the previous page. Can you put them back in the correct place?

a. using cohesive devices
b. skimming
c. guessing meaning of unknown words from context
d. predicting
e. scanning
f. reading intensively
g. Choose difficult words from the text and ask learners to choose the correct meaning for each of them, from choices a, b, c, d.
h. Give learners some short news articles and ask them to categorize them into international, national, local and business news. Give them a short time to do this.
i. Give learners the genre/title/illustrations/key words from the text, or the cover/blurb from a book, and ask them to guess the content.
j. Give learners a set of instructions to follow (directions/making a paper aeroplane...)
k. Give learners a brochure/website advertising various products and ask them to find particular details about the product, e.g. price, size, etc.
l. Give learners a text with connectives removed (<i>however, therefore, on the other hand, although, etc.</i>). Ask them to put these words back in the right place.

Can you think of any more activities to practice each strategy?

Activity 5 – Producing Questions

You will now experience some reading tasks and questions. After you have completed Activity 5.1, you will identify which reading strategy each question gave practice in. You will then write some questions yourself.

5.1 – A Text About Teaching Reading

Before-reading Task

1. You are going to read a text with the following phrases in it. What do you think the text will be about?

expose yourself to the target language range of vocabulary read independently

tasks, questions and answers self-defeating reading cycle self-motivating reading cycle

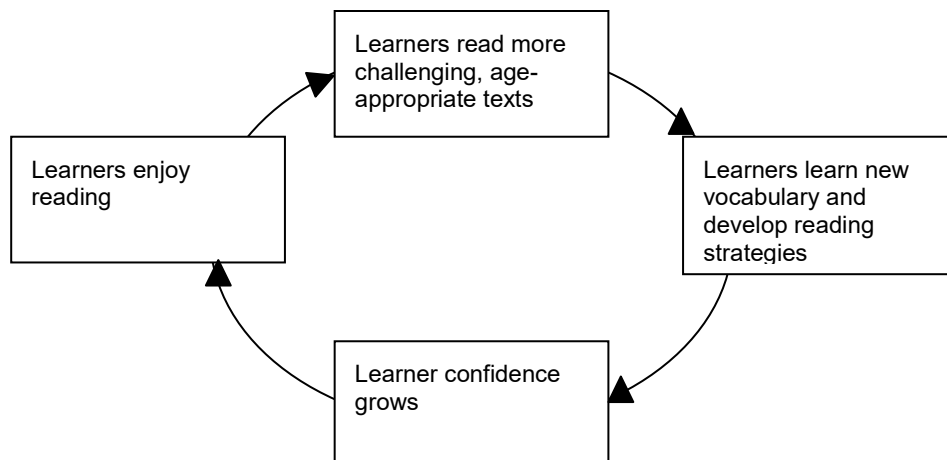
During-reading Tasks

2. Which paragraph is about:
- i. the vocabulary learners need in order to read by themselves?
 - ii. how to write questions for a reading text?
 - iii. why some learners don't enjoy reading in a foreign language?
 - iv. the reasons for implementing certain tasks?

3. How many words are needed for independent reading?

4. Find a phrase in paragraph B which describes a situation where learners become discouraged to read in English.

5. According to the article, what situation does this diagram represent?



6. Which of the following is the best title for this text?
- a. Setting up an Independent Reading Scheme
 - b. The Importance of Teaching Vocabulary
 - c. The Value of Teaching Reading
 - d. How to Design Reading Tasks

Title: _____

A

The best way to support language learning is to expose yourself to the target language – ideally by living in an environment where the target language is the main means of communication. Unfortunately, this option is not available to every language learner. There is another, more accessible way to gain exposure to a language though - reading. By reading texts in the target language, the learner is exposed to how language is used to express meaning. In fact, we learn a lot about the usage of our mother tongue by reading extensively. Therefore, it is very important for a language teacher to encourage and guide learners to read.

B

Unfortunately, learners can find reading in a foreign language frustrating. They may attempt to read something without using appropriate reading strategies and perhaps with too many unknown words in it. They therefore find it difficult or impossible to get meaning without a dictionary (even with a dictionary sometimes!), which slows the whole process, resulting in a disappointing experience. Consequently, the learner avoids reading and therefore doesn't develop the skills needed to enjoy it. A teacher should aim to help learners break out of this self-defeating reading cycle.

C

Clearly, learners will need a range of vocabulary in order to read even the simplest texts. It has been said that most people recognize about 50,000 words in their mother tongue. Some estimate that at least 5,000 words are required for independent reading. This is a large number for learners, but learners don't have to be able to use all these words actively in order to understand them in a text. Also, it is often possible to get sufficient meaning from a text without understanding every single word, which we do naturally in our mother tongue. Teachers can help learners to recognize when they can just ignore a difficult word, and when they can use the context to guess the meaning of a word. But, helping learners to learn vocabulary remains a fundamental aspect of the language teacher's job.

D

While learners gradually build their vocabulary, the teacher should help them to develop their reading skills by practicing reading in the classroom. Choose texts which are appropriate to the learners' age and interests, and from which the learners will be able to get some meaning. There may be a few words outside the learners' knowledge, but not so many that the text is impossible for them to understand. Design motivating tasks which give learners practice in using various reading strategies. In this way, learners will gain the confidence to tackle more challenging texts, which will provide exposure to more language and improve their reading skills, which will encourage them to read more. This is a self-motivating reading cycle which teachers should aim to get their learners into.

E

So, the questions and tasks the teacher sets for the learners should be motivating. Their aim should be to develop reading skills, rather than just to test understanding. Such tasks may focus on top-down processing, i.e. using our own knowledge and experience of the world (schemata) to understand the text as a whole, to interpret the writer's purpose and overall message. Learners may practice strategies such as predicting and skimming to do this. Other tasks may focus on bottom-up processing, i.e. looking at the words in the text to understand the meaning. Scanning, reading intensively, using cohesive devices and guessing meaning of unknown words from context, are strategies which can be practiced here. Both top-down and bottom-up processing are used by L1 readers to fully understand a text. When reading in their mother tongue, people usually do something with the information they've gained, so teachers should provide post-reading activities which replicate such authentic tasks. These often integrate some or all of the other skills: listening, speaking and writing.

F

Having decided which reading strategies to practice, the teacher should make sure that the tasks, questions and answers, do not use language which is above the learners' level. Answers can be given by ticking boxes, putting things in order, matching, etc., to avoid the learners having to formulate long answers. Also, make sure that the learners actually have to read the text in order to find the answers. Allow time for learners to compare and discuss their responses. This gives them an opportunity to explain and defend their particular answer – if they get it wrong, they may figure out the correction by themselves. The teacher should listen to these discussions, as they reveal how the learners' reading is developing. An incorrect answer often discloses more information about a learner's understanding than a correct one, which may have been just a lucky guess!

G

Once learners can read confidently in English, the teacher should encourage them to read independently. Recommend texts suitable for their age, interest and English level and perhaps ask them to review books they've read so that their classmates will be better equipped to choose suitable books. According to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD PISA Survey, 2000), "Reading skills ... make a demonstrable difference to one's chances in later life." So, your efforts to teach reading will be worthwhile. And don't forget to set a good example by reading yourself – you will also benefit in many ways.

5.2 – After-reading Tasks

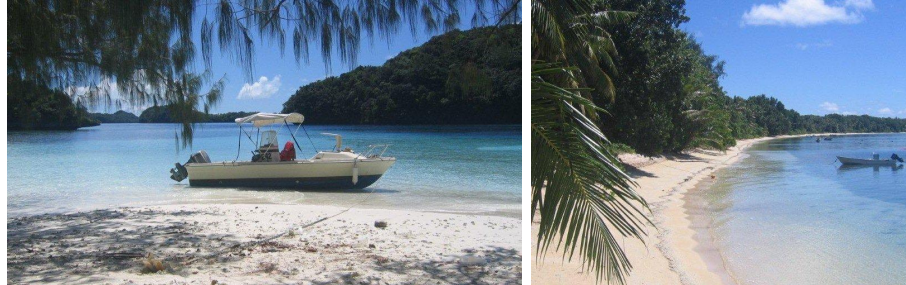
Now identify which of the following reading strategies each question in Activity 5.1 gave practice in:

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| a. predicting | d. reading intensively |
| b. skimming | e. using cohesive devices |
| c. scanning | f. guessing meaning of unknown words from context |

5.3 – Writing Questions

Now it's your turn! Write some *before-reading*, *during-reading* and *after-reading* questions for the text below. Indicate which reading strategy/strategies each task/question practices (eg. skimming, scanning, predicting, reading intensively etc.).

My Paradise



I was in Paradise when I lived in Palau. Look at the map and you'll see a group of tiny islands in the north Pacific Ocean with a population of around twenty thousand lucky people. Look at my thoughts and you'll see memories of Palau – of the wind, the palm trees, the blue sea and sky, the white sandy beaches and lush, green hills. I remember picnics on the beach and the orange sun going down over the sea in the evening. I remember people too – kind, helpful people who always smiled. I remember visiting schools, going on foot to waterfalls or by boat to the picturesque Rock Islands.

I lived in the commercial capital, Koror. Life there was warm, friendly and slow. We played sport slowly, travelled slowly to other islands, ate delicious locally-grown papaya slowly and barbecued freshly caught red snapper very slowly.

But there were problems too. Once my boat broke down and it took two months for the replacement parts to arrive from the United States. Another time it rained for a week and most of my clothes grew mouldy. Even the wood on my cupboards had to be wiped clean.

But now I'm back in England. It's winter and it's cold and grey. I don't remember the bad things. I can taste the sweetness of the fruit. I can hear the wind in the trees. I can smell the sea. And when I remember the color and the sunlight, I'm in Paradise again.

Adapted from Thornbury and Watkins, *The CELTA Course: Trainee Book*, Cambridge University Press, 2010

Before-reading:

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During-reading:

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After-reading:

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Activity 6 – Planning a Reading Lesson

Activity 6.1

Using the text(s) your trainer gives you, plan a reading lesson using this lesson plan template.

Time	Teacher Activity	Learner Activity	Interaction	Stage Aim (Reading Strategy)
	Before-reading Task(s)			
	During-reading Task(s)			
	After-reading Task(s)			

Activity 6.2: Revision - Stages of a Reading Lesson

Work with a partner to put the following stages of a reading lesson in logical order. Compare your answers with another partner.

- a) Check detailed understanding by asking multiple choice questions
- b) Focus on vocabulary in the text by asking learners to find words that mean X, Y, Z.
- c) Use a picture to generate interest in the topic
- d) Ask learners to read the text quickly in order to answer gist questions, such as '*What's it about?; Who wrote it?*' etc.
- e) Ask learners to talk about their personal response to the text and it's topic.
- f) Teach essential vocabulary that learners may be unfamiliar with.
- g) Focus on grammar structure in the text by, for example, asking learners to underline each example of it.
- h) Use the title of the text to encourage learners to predict the content of the text.

Activity 7 – Advice on Developing Reading Skills

Below are some concerns mentioned by teachers in the staff room. What advice would you give these teachers?

Concerns About Developing Reading Skills

1. "Where I work, it's very difficult to find authentic language texts for my learners to read."
2. "Whenever I have used real English language texts for my learners, they have found them too difficult to read."
3. "My classes are too big to do pair and group work activities!"
4. "There is not enough time in my curriculum to spend on silent reading."
5. "My learners always say that reading is boring!"
6. "My learners panic and stop reading as soon as they meet a word they don't understand."
7. "My learners read aloud quite well, but don't seem to understand the meaning."

There is some advice on the next page, but it is all jumbled up. Can you match the correct advice to each concern?

After matching the following advice to the concerns on the previous page, decide whether the advice given is good advice. Would you add anything?

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|--|
| a. "By dividing your class into groups, you actually have fewer units to deal with, i.e. 40 learners into 8 groups results in 8 units instead of 40. If the groups work well together, some of the teacher's tasks, such as re-explaining activities and helping weaker learners, can be done by the learners." |
| b. "This is common when reading in a foreign language. You should help your learners to develop their guessing meaning of unknown words from context strategy and to use other reading strategies to get meaning and gain confidence, even if they don't understand some of the words. Make sure you give them texts which are at the right level of challenge to help them develop confidence, i.e. not so many unknown words that they become de-motivated." |
| c. "Reading is so beneficial for both language learning and education as a whole, that time should be made for it in any curriculum. Although it may seem that learners aren't doing much when reading in silence, if they have been set a motivating and challenging task, they will actually be very active in interpreting the text for meaning." |
| d. "Perhaps you can look on the Internet for texts. Remember, texts don't have to be articles, but any genre that your learners enjoy in their mother tongue, e.g. advertisements for electronic equipment. Though not 100% authentic, you could make up something short, like text messages, yourself. You can use material in course books too. Be careful with copyright." |
| e. "Choose reading texts of the same genre as those the learners enjoy outside the classroom, e.g. fashion magazines, emails to friends, articles about music, etc. Design motivating tasks to exploit the texts. Also, include authentic post-reading tasks which require the learners to do something with the information they've read – this will make reading more meaningful for them." |
| f. "When reading aloud in a foreign language, learners often concentrate on pronunciation at the expense of understanding. Therefore, it is not usually a valuable task when teaching reading. Silent reading is more effective and more authentic – it's also faster than reading aloud." |
| g. "Choose authentic texts with your particular learners' level in mind. For lower level learners, choose shorter texts. It is not necessary for learners to understand every word in the text to get meaning. You should devise tasks which are achievable, using a variety of reading strategies – focus on the parts of the text the learners will understand." |

Assignment (optional – for existing teachers and/or student teachers on practicum)

Your assignment is to try out a new idea/activity from this module with one of your classes. You should then reflect on your lesson. Use the following guidelines for your assignment.

1. Where appropriate, make up materials for the new idea/activity you will be trying out, focusing on the particular language points and learning outcomes you are aiming for.
2. Write your whole lesson plan, including your new idea/activity on the lesson plan document, then teach the lesson. After the lesson, write a reflection including: i. What went well? Why?; ii. What didn't go well? Why?; and iii. What changes will I make next time?
3. Attach your lesson plan (including list of materials used) and your reflection.
4. Submit your assignment by handing/emailing it to your trainer. The deadline for completion of this assignment is

Glossary

Concept	Definition
authentic	Something produced for native speakers rather than language learners
genre	Type of text, e.g. formal report, newspaper article, letter, etc.
passive	Not actively participating in something
after-reading task	A task which encourages learners to use information they gained from reading a text
before-reading task	A task which helps learners tune into a text before reading it, which aids their understanding
during-reading task	A task which motivates learners to read a text

Recommended Reading

- **How to Teach English**, Jeremy Harmer, Pearson Longman, 2007
- **Teaching ESL/EFL Reading & Writing**, I. S. P. Nation, Routledge, 2009
- **True Stories series**, Sandra Heyer, Pearson Longman, 1994 - 2009
- **Reading Games: A Collection of Reading Games and Activities for Intermediate to Advanced Students of English**, Jill & Charles Hadfield, Longman, 1996
- **Simple Reading Activities**, Jill & Charles Hadfield, Oxford, 2000
- **Basic Reading Power 1**, Linda Jefferies & Beatrice Mikulecky, Pearson Longman, 2009

<http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/think/articles/reading-information-motivating-learners-read-efficiently> – a series of four articles by Dave Willis, 2008, explaining four stages of a lesson which he uses successfully to motivate learners to read more efficiently and improve their language skills

www.pisa.oecd.org – The OECD conducted a survey in 2000, which examined the reading literacy levels of teenagers in 32 countries. Read the *Executive Summary of Reading for Change* to find out how important it is for teachers to focus on reading in the classroom

Additional Material

Activity 3.1 – How We Read: What Do I Know? – Answer Sheet

G	<p>When we read in our mother tongue, we may not always read every line carefully. On the other hand, sometimes we scrutinize every single word, and even try to imagine what the writer was thinking as well as writing, in order to fully understand the message. We use these different reading strategies because we have different reasons for reading.</p>
A	<p>To illustrate this, let's imagine that you need to find out when a certain film starts at the cinema – you might look in a newspaper. First you skim the pages, looking at headlines and perhaps pictures and familiar type settings that help you to locate the cinema advertisements. You read in this way to get the gist of what you are seeing, i.e. the overall picture, rather than specific details.</p>
E	<p>When you find the right page, you scan the advertisements looking for the title of the film you want to see. When you find the relevant advertisement, you scan it for numbers that represent the time. You don't read other information in that advert, but only the specific information you are looking for.</p>
B	<p>However, sometimes you read more intensively. Let's take a film review as an example. As cinema tickets are expensive and you can only go to the movies once in a blue moon, you read the review very thoroughly. You take more time and read it from start to finish. You try to understand the reviewer's opinion completely, even reading between the lines in order to judge whether you can trust her/his opinion about the film.</p>
F	<p>These three different ways of getting meaning from a text, called skimming, scanning and reading intensively, serve different purposes. Following are three more strategies which we use to help us interpret the writer's meaning when we read.</p>
D	<p>Let's stay with the example of a film review. Before you started reading it, you probably predicted a few things to yourself, either consciously or automatically. You read the title, which may have given you a clue about the reviewer's opinion. You looked at the still from the movie and the accompanying caption, which confirmed your belief that the film was a thriller. You already knew who the main actors were, so you expected to read something about them. You've read reviews before, so you knew that the reviewer would probably say what s/he enjoyed about the film, and what s/he didn't like. This strategy of predicting - using your general knowledge and experience of the world helped you to tune in to the review more quickly and understand the writer more easily.</p>
H	<p>Another strategy you employed was knowledge of cohesive devices, or, how ideas are linked together in a written text. For example, having read about what the reviewer enjoyed in the film, you came across the phrase "<i>On the other hand...</i>" This signalled to you that next you would read about the things s/he didn't like. Such devices help the reader to follow the relationship between the writer's ideas. They are the glue, which holds the whole text together.</p>
C	<p>Finally, as you were reading the review, you came across the word "<i>indicted</i>". Although you may have not known what this word meant, you didn't stop and ponder it. You didn't reach for a dictionary to help you. You continued reading. The next couple of sentences gave you clues about the meaning of <i>indicted</i>. Apparently, this thing happened in a court of law and resulted in the main character going to prison. So you guessed it meant something like: <i>being found guilty</i>. That's all you needed to understand the message, so you continued reading. This strategy of guessing meaning of unknown words from context is how we learn a lot of the vocabulary in our mother tongue.</p>
	<p>While most people use the above six reading strategies in their mother tongue automatically in adulthood, it seems that not many transfer the same skills to another language they are learning. Therefore, teachers should provide tasks which encourage their learners to practice these strategies when reading in English.</p>

Activity 5.3 – Writing Questions – Some Examples

1. Look at the photographs of Palau. What can you see?
2. Look at the picture again. Imagine you are a tourist visiting Palau for the first time. What can you hear? What can you smell? What can you taste? How do you feel?
3. The words below are from the text. Use a dictionary to check the meaning:
paradise (n), tiny (adj), commercial (adj), memories (n), lush (adj), picturesque (adj)
4. Do you think the writer was happy in Palau? Read the article and check.
5. Answer the questions:
 - a. What can you say about Palau?
 - Where is it?
 - How many people live there?
 - Where is the business centre?
 - What's the weather like?
 - b. What did the writer like to BBQ?
 - c. The writer remembers a few problems. What were they?
 - d. In England, what two things take the writer back to Paradise?
6. What color does the writer use for:
 - a. the sea
 - b. the sand
 - c. the sun
 - d. the hills
 - e. the sky
 - f. England
7. Who or what
 - a. is sandy
 - b. are kind and helpful
 - c. is slow
 - d. is delicious
 - e. is cold
 - f. is sweet
 - g. fresh

8. Imagine you are a tourist in Palau. Write a postcard/email to a friend. Begin:

Dear,

Here I am in Palau. It's beautiful. The sea and the sky are very blue and

Notes on Questions 1-8 above:

Before-reading Tasks:

- Questions 1 & 2 use the pictures to trigger background knowledge of the topic, and any related vocabulary that learners already know
- Question 3 pre-teaches key vocabulary in order to make the text easier to understand.

During-reading Tasks:

- Question 4 is a general reading for gist task. It gives students a purpose for reading, without encouraging to read and remember every detail.
- Question 5 contains more detailed questions. It provides a purpose for a more detailed re-reading of the text (even though there is no explicit instruction for students to re-read the text).

After-reading Tasks:

- Questions 6 & 7 focus attention on specific language features of the text, such as vocabulary (adjectives and nouns)
- Question 8 requires learners to respond to the text in some way – in this case through writing.

Adapted from Thornbury and Watkins, *The CELTA Course: Trainee Book*, Cambridge University Press, 2010