GRADE 5 · PRACTICE PAPER 3

Reading Magazine

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HOW TO USE THIS MAGAZINE

Use this magazine with the question paper “Reading Grade 5 — Practice Paper 3”. Each part of the question paper tells you which text to read and the page it is on. Read the text first, then answer its questions. You may look back at the magazine as often as you like.

PrepNest

The new kid

On the first day of Term 2, a new boy stood at the front of Class 5P, holding his bag in front of him like a shield.

“This is Yusuf,” said Mr Peters. “He has just moved here, and he is still learning English. I know you will all make him welcome.”

Yusuf sat at the desk next to Priya. He did not say a word all morning. At lunch he ate by himself on the bench near the canteen, and Priya felt a small, uncomfortable ache in her chest every time she looked over.

The next day, Priya noticed that Yusuf was drawing in the back of his maths book. She leaned over to look. It was a comic: a cat in a spacesuit, floating past the moon, chasing a fish-shaped rocket. The drawings were so good that Priya forgot she was supposed to be doing long division.

“Wow,” she whispered. Yusuf looked up, worried, and closed the book.

That night Priya dug out her own comic from under her bed. It was about a superhero chicken called Captain Cluck. The drawings were not nearly as good, but the jokes were funny.

In the morning she slid it onto Yusuf’s desk. He turned the pages slowly. When he reached the part where Captain Cluck sneezed and blew a bank robber into a pond, his shoulders began to shake. He was laughing.

He pointed at the chicken, then at his cat. Then he drew a small box on a fresh page and, inside it, a cat in a spacesuit shaking hands with a chicken in a cape.

For the rest of the term, Priya wrote the stories and Yusuf drew the pictures. Their comic, The Space Cat and Captain Cluck, grew to thirty pages. At the school fete they sold fifty copies and gave the money to the library.

On the last day of term, Yusuf handed Priya a folded piece of paper. Inside was a drawing of the two of them, and underneath, in careful English letters, he had written one word: Friends.

PrepNest

The platypus

The platypus is one of the strangest animals in the world. It has a bill like a duck, a flat tail like a beaver and webbed feet like an otter. When the first platypus skin was sent from Australia to England in 1798, some scientists thought it was a joke — a duck's bill sewn onto a furry body.

A mammal that lays eggs

The platypus is a mammal. It has fur and feeds its babies milk. But unlike almost every other mammal, the platypus lays eggs. The only other mammals that lay eggs are echidnas. The mother lays one or two soft, leathery eggs in a burrow and curls around them to keep them warm.

Hunting with its bill

A platypus hunts in creeks and rivers, mostly at night. When it dives, it closes its eyes, ears and nose. It finds food with its bill, which can sense the tiny electric signals made by shrimps, worms and insect larvae as they move.

Watch out!

The male platypus has a sharp spur on each back ankle. The spur can deliver venom strong enough to kill a dog, and it causes terrible pain to people.

Platypus facts

- Lives only in eastern Australia, including Tasmania
- Length: about 50 centimetres, including the tail
- Stores fat in its tail for times when food is hard to find

PrepNest

Our playground needs fixing

To the Mayor, Riverside Council

We are writing to ask the council to fix the playground in Hollis Park. The slide has a crack down the middle, two swings are missing their seats, and the soft rubber under the climbing frame has worn away, so the ground underneath is hard concrete.

Last month, a boy in Year 2 fell off the climbing frame and broke his wrist. We think that if the soft rubber had been there, he might not have been hurt so badly.

Lots of families use Hollis Park every day. It is the only playground in our suburb. Please fix it before someone else gets hurt.

Year 5 students, Hollis Primary School

The council’s reply

Dear students, thank you for your letter. You are right that the playground needs work, and we are sorry to hear about the student who was injured.

Our workers inspected the playground the day after your letter arrived. The slide and the climbing frame have been fenced off so that no one uses them until they are safe. New swing seats will be fitted next week, and the whole playground will be rebuilt in March, with new soft rubber under every piece of equipment.

We would like to invite your class to help choose the new equipment. Your teacher will receive an invitation soon.

Councillor Anna Lee, Riverside Council

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