

11+ PRACTICE PACK

Bond Comprehension Test 1

11+ English Complete Practice Pack

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Focus on Comprehension Test 1 Practice Test

Read the instructions carefully.

- Do not begin the test or open the booklet until told to do so.
- Work as quickly and as carefully as you can.
- You may write your answers in pen or pencil.
- You may make notes next to the extracts or on a separate sheet of paper.
- If you make a mistake, cross it out and write the new answer clearly.
- You will have 40 minutes to complete the test. It is advisable to spend the first few minutes reading through the extracts before answering any questions.

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Read the extract, then answer the questions that follow.

Hawk Roosting

Ted Hughes

I sit in the top of the wood, my eyes closed.
Inaction, no falsifying dream
Between my hooked head and hooked feet:
Or in sleep rehearse perfect kills and eat. 5

The convenience of the high trees!
The air's buoyancy and the sun's ray
Are of advantage to me;
And the earth's face upward for my inspection.

My feet are locked upon the rough bark. 10
It took the whole of Creation
To produce my foot, my each feather:
Now I hold Creation in my foot

Or fly up, and revolve it slowly –
I kill where I please because it is all mine. 15
There is no sophistry in my body:
My manners are tearing off heads –

The allotment of death.
For the one path of my flight is direct
Through the bones of the living. 20
No arguments assert my right:

The sun is behind me.
Nothing has changed since I began.
My eye has permitted no change.
I am going to keep things like this. 25

1 Why is the text called 'Hawk Roosting'?

2 Give a synonym for each of these words as they are used in the text.

a rehearse (line 5) _____ **b** bark (line 10) _____

3 What style of text is this? Explain your answer.

Continue to the next page

Total

7

4 Who is the narrator? Support your answer with evidence from the text.

2

5 Why do you think the writer has written the text from this viewpoint?

2

6 Explain the following phrases as used in the text:

a 'The convenience of the high trees!' (line 6)

2

b 'The air's buoyancy' (line 7)

2

c 'Now I hold Creation in my foot' (line 13)

4

d 'There is no sophistry in my body:' (line 16)

2

7 '... the earth's face upward...'. What literary technique is this phrase an example of?

1

Text continues over the page

Total

15

8 According to the text, what makes hawks successful hunters?

8

9 What is the hawk's attitude? Explain your answer with reference to the text.

8

10 'Hawks are nothing more than vicious killers and should be eradicated.'
Do you agree with this statement? Explain your answer.

12

Total

28

Paper Notes: 11+ English Question Booklet (Comprehension Test 1)

Compiled by [SATs-Papers.co.uk](https://www.SATs-Papers.co.uk) to help you get the most from this paper.

Overview

This is a **Bond** 11+ English comprehension paper focused entirely on **Ted Hughes'** poem '**Hawk Roosting**'. Published by **Oxford University Press** as part of the Focus on Comprehension series, it is designed for students preparing for **11+ entrance exams** under the **GL Assessment** format. The test is worth **50 marks** and should be completed in **40 minutes**, with advice to spend the opening minutes reading the poem carefully before attempting any questions.

The paper tests a wide spectrum of skills, from straightforward vocabulary work and identification of literary devices through to extended analytical writing and personal response. Questions range from **1-mark quick-response tasks** to a **12-mark extended answer** requiring sustained argument and textual evidence. This variety mirrors the breadth expected in GL-style 11+ comprehension papers.

Suited to Year 6 students aiming for selective grammar or independent schools, the paper demands close reading of challenging modernist poetry and the ability to articulate interpretations clearly. The choice of Hughes' work, with its dark tone and vivid imagery, provides rich material for testing inference, empathy with an unusual narrator, and critical thinking about nature and violence.

How this paper is organised

The paper contains **10 questions** of varying length and complexity, all based on the same 25-line poem. Marks are allocated from **1 to 12 per question**, totalling **50 marks**. Early questions (1 to 3) are shorter and worth fewer marks, focusing on title, vocabulary, and text type. Mid-range questions (4 to 7) explore narrator identity, writer's viewpoint, phrase explanation, and literary technique, each carrying between 1 and 4 marks.

The final three questions are more substantial. Question 8 (8 marks) asks students to synthesise information about the hawk's hunting success from across the poem. Question 9 (8 marks) requires analysis of the hawk's attitude with textual reference. Question 10 is the longest task, worth **12 marks**, and invites a reasoned personal response to a provocative statement about hawks, demanding balanced argument and evidence.

Students have **40 minutes** to complete the paper, with explicit advice to spend initial time reading and annotating the text. The layout provides ruled lines scaled to the expected answer length, guiding students on how much detail is required for each mark allocation.

Topics covered

- Reading comprehension of modernist poetry with challenging vocabulary and abstract concepts
- Synonym identification in context, requiring precise understanding of word meaning within a literary text
- Genre and text-type recognition, with explanation of how structural and linguistic features support classification
- First-person narrative voice and perspective, analysing how the poet uses the hawk as narrator to convey theme
- Literary techniques including personification, metaphor, and symbolism in poetry
- Interpretation of figurative language and extended metaphor, particularly Hughes' use of 'Creation' and natural imagery
- Inference and deduction about character attitude and motivation from textual evidence
- Synthesis of information across multiple stanzas to answer a single analytical question
- Extended personal response to a controversial statement, requiring balanced argument, textual support, and critical thinking
- Close textual analysis linking specific phrases and words to broader thematic interpretation

How to use this paper for revision

- Read the poem at least twice before attempting any questions. The first read gives you the overall sense; the second allows you to notice details like repeated words ('Creation', 'kill') and shifts in tone.
- Underline or highlight key phrases as you read, particularly lines that reveal the hawk's attitude or describe its physical advantages. These will be useful evidence when answering questions 8, 9, and 10.
- For vocabulary questions, always check the word in context. 'Rehearse' in line 5 relates to the hawk's dreaming, not theatre practice; 'bark' in line 10 refers to tree bark, not a dog's sound.
- When asked to explain a phrase, break it down word by word and then link it to the poem's broader meaning. For example, 'the earth's face upward' combines personification with the hawk's literal view from above.
- In extended answers (questions 8, 9, and 10), plan briefly before writing. Jot down three or four points with line references, then write in clear paragraphs, using one paragraph per main point.
- For question 10, structure your answer as a mini-essay: introduction stating your position, two or three paragraphs with different points and evidence, and a brief conclusion. Even if you disagree strongly, acknowledge the opposing view to show balanced thinking.
- Check your spelling and punctuation in longer answers. Marks may be deducted for unclear expression, and careful writing helps the examiner follow your argument.

Common mistakes to avoid

- Misreading 'rehearse' as simply 'practise' without recognising it refers to dreaming or mental repetition. Context is key: the hawk is asleep, so synonyms like 'imagine' or 'envisage' are more accurate.
- Identifying the narrator as 'Ted Hughes' or 'the poet' rather than the hawk itself. The poem uses dramatic monologue, with the hawk as speaker; this must be stated and supported with first-person pronouns ('I', 'my').
- Explaining phrases too literally. 'Now I hold Creation in my foot' is not about the hawk physically gripping the world; it expresses arrogance and a sense of dominion, linking to the poem's theme of power.
- Writing about what hawks do in real life rather than what the text says. Question 8 asks what the text identifies as advantages, so focus on lines 6–9 and 10–15, not general wildlife knowledge.
- In question 10, simply agreeing or disagreeing without evidence. A 12-mark answer must present a reasoned argument with quotations, consider alternative views, and engage critically with the statement's assumptions.
- Running out of time on the final question. Plan to spend roughly 15 minutes on question 10, leaving 25 minutes for questions 1–9. Use the mark allocation to guide time: a 1-mark question needs one sentence, not a paragraph.

Exam technique

Start by reading the poem carefully, ideally twice, and making brief notes or underlining key lines. This initial investment pays off across all ten questions. The rubric suggests spending the first few minutes on reading, so use that time actively: ask yourself who is speaking, what the tone is, and which lines feel important or puzzling.

Tackle questions in order, as they generally increase in difficulty and mark value. Questions 1 to 7 are quicker tasks that build familiarity with the text and warm up your analytical thinking. Keep early answers concise; a 1-mark question needs a short, precise response (e.g. 'personification' for question 7), not a lengthy explanation. For phrase-explanation questions (6a–d), aim for two or three sentences that unpack meaning and link to context.

Allocate time according to marks: roughly **one minute per mark** as a guide. This means 8 minutes each for questions 8 and 9, and up to 12–15 minutes for question 10, leaving a couple of minutes to check your work. For the extended answer (question 10), plan before writing: note two or three arguments for or against the statement, identify supporting quotations, and decide your overall position. Write in paragraphs, use formal

language, and ensure every claim is backed by evidence from the poem. Finally, leave time to proofread all answers for clarity and spelling, particularly longer responses where expression matters.

What to revise alongside this paper

To prepare fully for this style of comprehension, revise other **20th-century poetry**, particularly animal poems by Hughes (such as 'The Thought-Fox' or 'Pike') and other modernist or contemporary poets like Seamus Heaney or Carol Ann Duffy. Practise identifying and explaining a range of **literary devices** including alliteration, assonance, enjambment, caesura, and imagery, as these frequently appear in 11+ comprehension questions.

Work on **extended writing skills** for personal-response questions: structuring an argument, using quotations effectively, and writing clear topic sentences. Many GL-style papers include a final discursive or evaluative task worth 10–12 marks, so practise writing under timed conditions. Build confidence with **vocabulary in context** by reading widely and keeping a vocabulary journal; record unfamiliar words with their meanings and example sentences.

Beyond poetry, broaden comprehension skills with **prose fiction and non-fiction extracts** from similar Bond or GL practice papers. Exposure to different genres (narrative, persuasive, descriptive) sharpens adaptability. Finally, revise **grammar and punctuation terminology** (clause types, sentence functions, punctuation for effect), as some 11+ papers integrate language questions alongside comprehension.

Key terms

Dramatic monologue, First-person narrator, Personification, Metaphor, Symbolism, Inference, Textual evidence, Tone and attitude, Figurative language, Synthesis of information, Critical response, Synonym, Literary technique, Extended writing, Balanced argument

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Focus on Comprehension

Test 1 Answers

This booklet contains:

- Answers for comprehension practice test 1.

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Answers

- 1** Line 2 states 'I sit in the top of the wood, my eyes closed.' This implies that the hawk is resting or roosting rather than flying. Explanation needed with reference to the text for mark to be awarded.
- 2** a *practise* [1] b *branch, bough* [1]
- 3** This is a poem because:
- it is written in six verses (stanzas) [1]
 - the lines are shorter than prose [1]
 - each line starts with a capital letter [1]
 - it uses punctuation to create rhythmic effects. [1]
- 4** The hawk is the narrator. [1] The text is written in the first person narrative, shown by pronouns that are used throughout, such as 'I sit'; 'my eye'. [1]
- 5** Writing from the hawk's point of view allows the bird to be personified; giving it a voice so it can explain how it thinks and feels about its life. [1] This enables the reader to understand the bird's motivations and creates a more vivid reaction from the reader. [1]
- 6** a Tall trees are convenient for hawks and other birds, as the higher up a bird is, the more of the ground they can see. [1] This makes it easier to spot prey. [1]
- b Air currents make it possible for birds to 'float'. [1] A bird can move up and down with the changes in air pressure. [1]
- c The hawk is sitting on a branch with its feet 'locked upon the rough bark'. [1] As trees are part of the natural world, the hawk is holding Creation in its foot. [1]
- And:
Hawks swoop down on their prey and grasp it in their talons. [1] As the hawk talks of death in the next verse, this phrase could refer to the creatures that it kills and carries with its feet. [1]
- d 'Sophistry' means using false statements to deceive. [1] The hawk does not attempt to hide its motives or reason for being, as it is stating clearly that it is a bird of prey, designed to 'tear off heads' and to bring death. [1]
- 7** personification
- 8**
- Sitting in tree tops enables a clear view of the ground below [1]; 'I sit in the top of the wood...' / 'The convenience of the high trees!' [1]
 - Hawks can use air currents and the sunlight to help fly high above the ground and look for prey [1]; 'The air's buoyancy and the sun's ray/Are of advantage to me'. [1]
 - The physical body of a hawk, with its beak and talons, is built for hunting and tearing flesh [1]; '... my hooked head and hooked feet'. [1]
 - Hawks can judge their attacks well, flying straight for their prey [1]; 'For the one path of my flight is direct'. [1]
- 9**
- regal [1]: feels like a king sitting 'in the top of the wood' [1]
 - a perfectionist [1]: 'Or in sleep rehearse perfect kills and eat' [1]
 - self-important, arrogant, feels in charge [1]: 'Now I hold Creation in my foot'; 'I kill where I please because it is all mine' [1]
 - unemotional, matter-of-fact [1]: 'There is no sophistry in my body: /My manners are tearing off heads - '. [1]
- 10**
- Up to [2] marks for a clear, structured argument and conclusion.
 - Up to [2] marks for accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar.
 - [1] mark for each individual, logical argument, which may cover points such as:

Continue to the next page

Agree with statement	Disagree with statement
They have large hooked beaks and talons, which they use to tear flesh as stated in the text.	They are beautiful, intelligent birds whose natural instinct is to kill in order to survive.
If there are many birds of prey in an area they could cause the decline of small mammal or bird populations.	Often wrongly accused of causing decline in bird and small mammal populations. Humans do far more damage by eroding habitats to build new roads, homes and so on.
They can be a danger to humans because they can cause serious damage with their talons.	If we didn't have hawks and other birds of prey, we could become overrun with rodents and other species of bird in urban areas as well as the countryside.
Prey has little chance to escape, as most hawks use the element of 'surprise' as their main attacking weapon.	They are victims and have been in danger of decline because of pesticide poisoning.
	All creatures have the right to life.

Answer-Key Notes: 11+ English Answers (Comprehension Test 1)

Compiled by [SATs-Papers.co.uk](https://www.SATs-Papers.co.uk) to help you mark this paper and learn from each answer.

How to use this answer key

This answer key provides both correct answers and mark allocations for every question in the comprehension test. When marking, award marks only where the marking guidance explicitly allows: many questions require explanation or evidence from the text, not just a correct label. If a child writes 'The hawk is the narrator' without the supporting pronouns ('I sit', 'my eye'), award only one of the two available marks.

Distinguish between two types of error. A child who writes 'practice' instead of 'practise' has made a careless slip; a child who cannot explain what 'sophistry' means has a vocabulary gap. The first needs proofreading reminders; the second needs direct teaching.

Use the worked examples below when an answer is partially correct or when you are unsure how much detail the mark scheme requires. The examples show the level of explanation and textual evidence expected at each mark band.

Score interpretation

This paper is marked out of 50. Questions are weighted by difficulty: straightforward retrieval and vocabulary (Q1, Q2) carry one or two marks each, while interpretation (Q5, Q9) and extended argument (Q10) carry up to twelve. A score above 40 suggests strong literal and inferential comprehension, with secure use of evidence. Between 30 and 40 indicates solid understanding but some missed nuance, particularly in the higher-tariff questions about viewpoint, literary technique, or the hawk's attitude.

Scores between 20 and 30 often reflect incomplete answers to the multi-mark questions (Q6, Q8, Q9, Q10) rather than wholesale misunderstanding. Check whether the child is reading the question stems carefully: 'Explain... with reference to the text' and 'Support your answer with evidence' both demand quotation or close paraphrase, not generalisation.

Below 20 usually signals difficulty with inference or with sustaining an argument across several sentences. Poetry comprehension requires close attention to metaphor and word choice; if the child has answered Q1–3 correctly but struggled thereafter, the issue is likely interpretive rather than mechanical.

Worked examples

Poem features and narrative voice, Q1–5

Questions 1–4 test whether the child can identify basic poem conventions and narrative perspective. Marks are lost when answers lack supporting detail: stating 'it is a poem' without listing structural features (stanzas, line breaks, capitalisation) earns no credit. Question 5 requires two marks because it asks both **what** the first-person viewpoint achieves (personification, giving the hawk a voice) and **why** that matters to the reader (understanding motivation, vivid reaction).

Q1 : The hawk is resting or roosting rather than flying.

Line 2 states 'my eyes closed', which implies stillness. The word 'roosting' captures the idea of a bird settled on a branch. The mark scheme insists on **explanation with reference to the text**, so writing only 'It is resting' without quoting or paraphrasing 'eyes closed' will not earn the mark.

Q4 : The hawk is the narrator. The text is written in first person, shown by pronouns such as 'I sit' and 'my eye'.

Two marks are available: one for identifying the hawk, one for citing evidence. The pronouns 'I' and 'my' prove first-person narration. Without that textual support, only one mark is awarded. This question rewards close reading of the opening lines.

Q5 : Writing from the hawk's point of view allows the bird to be personified, giving it a voice to explain its thoughts and feelings. This enables the reader to understand the bird's motivations and creates a more vivid reaction.

The question asks *why* the writer chose this viewpoint, so the answer must cover both technique (personification, giving a voice) and effect (understanding motivation, vivid reader response). One mark for each element. Stating only 'It makes it more interesting' is too vague.

Interpreting phrases and poetic technique, Q6–7

Question 6 carries eight marks across four sub-questions, each requiring explanation of a metaphorical or technical phrase. Full marks depend on **two-part answers**: what the phrase means literally or scientifically, and what it reveals about the hawk's power or perspective. Question 7 is a single-mark terminology question (personification), but children often write 'metaphor' because the earth does not literally have a face; remind them that personification is the specific term for giving human features to non-human subjects.

Q6c : The hawk is sitting on a branch, feet locked on the bark. Trees are part of the natural world, so the hawk holds Creation in its foot. AND: hawks grasp prey in their talons; the phrase also refers to creatures the hawk kills and carries.

The mark scheme awards up to four marks because two valid interpretations exist. The first (holding the tree branch) earns two marks if clearly explained; the second (grasping prey) earns two more if linked to 'death' in the next verse. A complete answer acknowledges both the **literal** (the branch) and the **symbolic** (dominion over life and death).

Q6d : 'Sophistry' means using false statements to deceive. The hawk does not hide its motives; it states clearly that it is a bird of prey designed to tear off heads and bring death.

Two marks: one for defining 'sophistry', one for explaining why the hawk claims to have none. The hawk's bluntness ('My manners are tearing off heads') contrasts with sophistry's deception. Children who write only the definition without linking it to the hawk's attitude earn one mark.

Evidence-based questions, Q8-9

Questions 8 and 9 each carry eight marks and require multiple points drawn from across the poem. For Q8 (what makes hawks successful hunters), the mark scheme awards one mark per feature and one mark per supporting quotation, so each complete point earns two marks. For Q9 (the hawk's attitude), one mark is given for each character trait and one for the matching quotation. Answers that list traits without textual evidence, or that quote without interpretation, will score only half marks.

Q8 : Sitting in tree tops enables a clear view of the ground below: 'I sit in the top of the wood...' / 'The convenience of the high trees!' Hawks can use air currents and sunlight to fly high and look for prey: 'The air's buoyancy and the sun's ray / Are of advantage to me.'

Each hunting advantage requires **both explanation and quotation**. The mark scheme lists four possible points (height, air currents, physical features, direct flight path), each worth two marks. A child who writes 'They sit in trees and have sharp talons' without quoting earns at most two marks out of eight.

Q9 : Regal: feels like a king sitting 'in the top of the wood'. Self-important, arrogant: 'Now I hold Creation in my foot'; 'I kill where I please because it is all mine.'

The mark scheme offers four possible traits (regal, perfectionist, self-important, unemotional), each paired with a quotation. Two marks per trait-and-quote pair. Children often identify the attitude correctly but fail to support it with a precise line from the poem, which halves their score.

Extended argument, Q10

Question 10 is worth twelve marks: up to two for structure and conclusion, up to two for spelling, punctuation and grammar, and one mark for each logical point. The mark scheme provides a table of arguments for and against the statement 'Hawks are vicious killers and should be eradicated.' Children may agree or disagree, but they must develop several distinct points and reach a reasoned conclusion. Marks are lost when answers drift into unsupported opinion ('I think hawks are cool') or when the conclusion contradicts the argument.

Q10 : I disagree. Hawks kill to survive, not out of cruelty. They are part of the natural food chain and help control rodent populations. Humans cause far more habitat damage by building roads and houses. All creatures have the right to life, and hawks have suffered from pesticide poisoning, not the other way round.

This answer earns high marks because it makes **four distinct logical points** (survival instinct, ecological role, human impact, conservation status), supports them with reasoning, and reaches a clear conclusion. The spelling, punctuation and grammar are accurate, and the argument is well structured. A weaker answer might repeat the same point ('they are just surviving') without developing new angles.

Next steps

After marking, sit with the child and review any question where fewer than half the available marks were scored. For multi-mark questions (Q6, Q8, Q9, Q10), identify whether the issue was missing evidence, incomplete explanation, or misunderstanding the question stem. If the child wrote 'The hawk is powerful' without quoting, the fix is straightforward: practise embedding short quotations. If the child could not explain 'sophistry' or 'buoyancy', build vocabulary through wider reading and a word journal.

If the score is above 40, extend the challenge by comparing Ted Hughes's hawk with another animal poem (for example, 'The Tyger' by William Blake) and discussing how

poets use first-person or dramatic voices to explore power and instinct. If the score is below 25, revisit the poem together, reading it aloud and pausing after each stanza to summarise what the hawk is saying. Comprehension of poetry grows with familiarity, and a second attempt at similar material often yields a much higher score.

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