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KEY STAGE 2 SATS

2025 KS2 English Reading

Answers Explained

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How to beat each question type

Retrieve and record (2b)

1. Ask the child to re-read the section of text named in the question before writing anything.
 2. Encourage the child to find the exact detail in the text rather than relying on memory, then put it into their own words or quote briefly.
 3. Check the answer is specific enough: vague answers such as 'she sold things' are not accepted, so the child should include the key detail (e.g. 'maize and vegetables').
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Find and copy (2a)

1. Remind the child that only one word or short phrase is needed and it must be copied exactly from the text, letter by letter.
 2. Ask the child to read the named paragraph carefully and think about what the question word (e.g. 'enthusiastic') actually means before hunting for it.
 3. Once the child has found a candidate word, check together that it genuinely carries that meaning in context before writing it down.
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Tick one: word meaning in context (2a)

1. Ask the child to read the sentence containing the bold word carefully, then try replacing it with each of the four options in turn.
 2. Encourage the child to think about which option fits the meaning of the whole sentence, not just whether it sounds familiar.
 3. Remind the child to tick only one box and double-check that their chosen word makes sense when read back in the original sentence.
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True or false table (2d)

1. Ask the child to take each statement one at a time and find the relevant part of the named section of text before deciding.
 2. Encourage the child not to rely on what they think they remember: the answer must be checked against the actual words on the page.
 3. Remind the child that all rows must be completed and that 2 marks are available only if all four answers are correct, so it is worth going back to check every one.
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Inference: how can you tell / why (2d)

1. Help the child understand that inference means working something out from clues in the text, not just copying a sentence out.

2. Ask the child to point to the part of the text that gave them the idea, then encourage them to explain what that tells us about the character or situation.
 3. Check that the answer goes beyond the obvious: for example, for a 'why' question the child should give a reason, not just restate what happened.
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Sequencing / ordering events (2c)

1. Ask the child to skim through the relevant pages and lightly underline or note where each event appears in the text before numbering.
 2. Encourage the child to number the events in the order they appear in the story, not the order that seems most logical to them.
 3. Once all four numbers are written, ask the child to read them back in that order to check the sequence makes sense as a story.
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Tick one: diagram or picture based (2b)

1. Ask the child to re-read the named paragraphs very carefully, noting exactly where each arrow landed (which ring and which side: left or right of centre).
 2. Encourage the child to match what the text says shot by shot to each diagram option, ruling out any that show the wrong ring or wrong side.
 3. Remind the child to tick only one box once they are sure, and to double-check by re-reading the passage one more time.
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Question 1 (1 mark)

Answer: Phiona made money by selling maize and vegetables at a street market.

Ask your child to find the section called 'A challenging upbringing' and read it carefully. Then ask: "How did Phiona earn money for her family?"

The first section, 'A challenging upbringing', contains the key detail. Children should locate the sentence **'She started selling maize and vegetables in a street market to support her family.'** Either mentioning the specific goods (maize or vegetables) or the street market setting is enough. A vague answer such as 'selling things' is not enough - children need to name what she sold or where she sold it.

Watch out: A child who writes only 'by selling things' without saying what she sold or mentioning the market will not score - the answer needs to be specific.

Question 2 (1 mark)

Answer: The correct tick is 'interesting'.

Point your child to the subheading 'An intriguing game' and ask them to think about what Phiona thought when she first saw chess being played. Ask: "Which of the four options means something that makes you curious or want to find out more?"

The subheading **An intriguing game** appears in the section about Phiona first seeing chess. The question tests whether children can identify the closest synonym in context. Intriguing means something that holds your attention and makes you want to know more, which is closest to **interesting**. 'Exciting' suggests high energy or thrill, which is stronger than the word implies; 'popular' and 'challenging' refer to entirely different qualities and are not supported by the context.

Watch out: A child might tick 'exciting' because chess looks dramatic, but 'exciting' implies a stronger feeling of thrill, whereas 'interesting' is the closest match to 'intriguing' in this context.

Question 3 (1 mark)

Answer: There was no word for chess in Phiona's language, or the text says chess was very unusual in Uganda at that time.

Before your child looks back at the text, ask them to think about what they remember from the section about Phiona first discovering chess. Ask: "What do you remember from the passage that suggests people in Uganda did not know about chess?"

The 'An intriguing game' section contains the key evidence. Children need to infer that the absence of a word for something shows unfamiliarity, because the text states '**It was so unusual in Uganda at that time, there was no word for it in Phiona's language**'. A child who simply says 'Phiona had no idea what it was' will not score, as that restates unfamiliarity without citing textual evidence. The clearest route to the answer is pointing to the missing word in the language as direct proof.

Watch out: A child might write 'Phiona had no idea what chess was' or 'they hadn't heard of it', but simply restating the idea of unfamiliarity without textual evidence does not score - the answer must reference the missing word in the language, or that chess was described as unusual.

Question 4 (2 marks)

Answer: False, True, False, True - in that order for the four statements in the table.

Before your child looks back at the text, ask them to think about what they remember from the story of Phiona's early life. Ask: "Without checking, can you say which of these four facts you think are true and which are false?"

The table has four rows and children must tick True or False for each. Row 1 ('Phiona left school once she had learnt to read') is **False**: the text says she left school 'even though she was still unable to read or write'. Row 2 ('Phiona grew up in a place called Katwe') is **True**: the text states she 'grew up in a family which lived in Katwe'. Row 3 ('Phiona discovered chess before her brother') is **False**: she followed her brother Brian to the club. Row 4 ('Phiona walked six kilometres a day to learn about chess') is **True**: 'She walked six kilometres every day to find out how.' All four must be correct for 2 marks; three correct earns 1 mark.

Watch out: A child might tick True for Row 1, assuming Phiona left school after learning to read, but the text says the opposite - she left while still unable to read or write.

Model answer: Row 1: False. Row 2: True. Row 3: False. Row 4: True.

Question 5 (1 mark)

Answer: Children need to say that when learning something new, it is important to have someone to teach you - a coach or teacher.

Ask your child to read the very first sentence of the 'Coaching a champion' section on page 5. Ask: "What does the text say is important when you are learning something new?"

The opening of the Coaching a champion section on page 5 states directly that '**you often need someone to teach you how to do it**'. Children should quote or paraphrase this idea of needing a

teacher or coach. The key distinction is that a vague answer such as 'someone to help you' is not enough; the answer needs to convey the idea of someone who can impart knowledge or skills.

Watch out: A child might write 'someone to help you' - this is too vague. The answer needs to make clear that the person teaches or explains the skill, not just assists in a general way.

Question 6 (1 mark)

Answer: The word children need to find and copy is 'passion'.

Ask your child to find the sentence in the 'Coaching a champion' section that describes how Robert felt about football before he turned to chess. Ask: "Can you find the one word in that sentence that tells us Robert really loved football?"

In the 'Coaching a champion' section, the text describes Robert's feelings about football using the phrase '**his passion lay with another game: football**'. The word passion shows strong enthusiasm and love for something - exactly what the question is asking for. Children should copy it accurately. This is a find-and-copy question, so the single word **passion** is the complete answer needed.

Watch out: A child might write 'talented' (as the text calls Robert 'a talented player'), but that describes his ability, not his enthusiasm.

Question 7 (1 mark)

Answer: Robert noticed that some children had no desire to play football, so he turned his attention to chess instead.

Before your child looks back at the text, ask them to think about what they remember from the 'Coaching a champion' section - Robert used to coach a different sport. Ask: "Why do you think Robert decided to stop focusing on that sport and start teaching chess instead?"

In the **Coaching a champion** section, the key sentence is 'when he realised that some of the children had no desire to play football, he turned his attention to chess'. Children need to paraphrase this idea - that Robert switched to chess because not all children wanted to play football. The important nuance is some children lacked interest, not all of them; answers saying no children liked football will not score.

Watch out: A child might write that no children wanted to play football, but the text says only some children had no desire for it - saying nobody liked football is too strong and does not score.

Question 8 (1 mark)

Answer: She was too eager to win as quickly as possible.

Before your child looks back at the text, ask them to think about what sort of mindset might make someone play carelessly in a game. Ask: "Why do you think someone might play a game carelessly when they are just starting out?"

In the 'Coaching a champion' section, the third paragraph contains the key detail. The text says Phiona 'played recklessly at first, too eager to win games as quickly as possible'. Children need to link the recklessness to the reason behind it: she was in too much of a hurry to win. Simply saying she was eager to win is not quite enough - children need to include the idea of speed or urgency to hit the right note.

Watch out: Saying only that she was keen or eager to win is not enough on its own - the answer needs to include the idea of wanting to win quickly or being in too much of a rush.

Question 9 (1 mark)

Answer: The word children need to copy from the text is 'success'.

Ask your child to read the paragraph beginning 'Robert spotted Phiona's potential...' carefully all the way to the end, then ask: "Which single word in this paragraph tells you that Phiona did well at chess?"

The paragraph beginning Robert spotted Phiona's potential ends with the phrase '**bringing her great success**', which is the single word from that paragraph that directly tells us Phiona did well. Children simply need to identify and copy the word **success** accurately. No other word in that paragraph carries the same positive outcome meaning.

Watch out: A child might write 'potential' because it sounds positive, but 'potential' means promise for the future - it does not confirm she actually did well.

Question 10 (1 mark)

Answer: Phiona travelled abroad to compete in international competitions against experienced chess players from around the world.

Ask your child to re-read the 'A roaring success' section carefully. Ask: "Why did Phiona's skills in chess mean she had to travel to other countries?"

The **A roaring success** section is where children need to look. The text states that Phiona 'travelled to other countries to compete against some of the most experienced chess players in the world', making clear her skill took her abroad for competition purposes. Children should give a reason that links her talent to competing internationally - simply saying she was good at chess or became Uganda's champion is not enough on its own, as the official answer requires a reason specifically connected to competing or playing the most skilled players.

Watch out: A child might write that she travelled because she was good at chess or became Uganda's champion - but the official answer requires a reason tied specifically to competing internationally or playing experienced players, not just her skill level.

Question 11 (1 mark)

Answer: Phiona had been playing chess for four years when she won her first international competition.

Point your child to the 'A roaring success' section and ask them to find the sentence that tells us when Phiona became an international champion. Ask: "How long had Phiona been playing chess when she won her first international competition?"

In the **A roaring success** section, the text states 'just four years after first learning to play, became an international chess champion'. Children need to locate this detail precisely: the question asks how long she had been playing, not which year it happened. The answer children need to give is simply four years.

Watch out: A child might write '2009' (the year) instead of 'four years' (the length of time). The question asks how long, not when.

Question 12 (1 mark)

Answer: The correct tick is 'a journalist noticed Phiona.'

Ask your child to read the sentence containing the phrase 'caught the attention of' in the 'Watching her next move' section and think carefully about who is noticing whom. Ask: "Who is paying attention to whom in that sentence?"

In the 'Watching her next move' section, the phrase **caught the attention of** means that someone else noticed or became aware of Phiona - the journalist spotted her, not the other way around. Children need to understand that 'catching someone's attention' means drawing their notice, so the journalist is the one doing the noticing. The tempting wrong answers flip the roles or change the meaning entirely.

Watch out: A child might tick 'a journalist interviewed Phiona' because interviewing seems a natural next step when a journalist is interested in someone, but the text only says the journalist noticed her and wrote a book - it does not mention an interview.

Question 13 (1 mark)

Answer: All three years must be correct: Phiona discovered chess in 2005, she left her home country for the first time in 2009, and the film was released in 2016.

Ask your child to flick through the whole text looking for years written as numbers, and to jot down what happened each time they spot one. Ask: "Can you find three different years mentioned in the article and tell me what happened in each one?"

The dates are scattered across the whole text, so children need to scan for each one. **2005** comes from the 'An intriguing game' section: 'One day in 2005, Phiona followed her brother Brian...'. **2009** is in 'A roaring success': 'In 2009, she took her first ever trip out of Uganda'. **2016** is in 'Watching her next move': 'A film of the same name was also made in 2016'. All three must be correct to gain the mark.

Watch out: A child might write 2007 (when Phiona became Uganda's junior girls' champion) in the 'left her home country' row, but the text clearly states her first trip out of Uganda was in 2009.

Question 14 (2 marks)

Answer: Children need to write two things that made Tom realise the object was not a rock. Any two of these count: it was a different colour from the other rocks; it had a curiously regular (unusual/boat-like) shape; it was smooth; it had writing on it. Its large size is also acceptable.

Ask your child to find the paragraph that begins 'He stopped' and read just that paragraph and the one after it. Ask: "What two things did Tom notice about this object that rocks do not normally have?"

The second and third paragraphs of 'In the Cave' contain all the evidence children need. The text states the object '**was a different colour to those around it, and had a curiously regular shape**' - those are two ready-made answers. Children can also draw on '**large, smooth**' for texture or size, or '**someone had painted a series of letters in gold**' for the writing. Each of the two points earns 1 mark, so children should give two clearly different observations. The two most accessible points are colour and shape, as the text flags them in a single sentence as the reason Tom stopped mid-sentence.

Watch out: A child might write only that it 'wasn't a rock' or that 'it was different' without specifying what was different - this is too vague and does not score.

Model answer: 1. It was a different colour from the rocks around it (it was dull red). 2. It had a curiously regular shape (shaped like a small boat) / it was smooth / it had writing on it.

Question 15 (1 mark)

Answer: Children should tick 'mystery'.

Before revealing the answer, ask the child to read the paragraph aloud and think about how it makes them feel as a reader. Ask: "What feeling does this paragraph give you - do you know exactly what is happening, or does something feel uncertain and strange?"

The paragraph beginning He stopped describes the object in deliberately vague, puzzling language: **'whatever it was, it certainly wasn't a rock'** and 'a curiously regular shape'. The author withholds a clear explanation of what the object is, building a sense that something unknown and unexplained has been found. Children need to recognise that words like 'curiously' and the repeated refusal to name the object create that atmosphere of mystery, not certainty, relief, or panic.

Watch out: A child might tick 'panic' because Tom peers nervously, but nervousness belongs to a character rather than the overall atmosphere the paragraph creates; the dominant effect is unexplained strangeness, which is mystery.

Question 16 (1 mark)

Answer: Geoff called Tom's name, interrupting him before he could read the writing.

Ask your child to think back to the moment Tom finds the writing, before they look at the text again. Ask: "What do you think stopped Tom from finding out what the writing said?"

In the first page of the story, Tom leans forward to brush dust from the object and begins to make out the gold letters, but **before he could make out what they were, Geoff called him**. Children need to identify that it was Geoff's interruption that stopped Tom reading the writing - not the dust, not the darkness. The answer must reference Geoff calling or interrupting Tom; simply writing 'Geoff' alone is not enough.

Watch out: Simply writing 'Geoff' without explaining what Geoff did does not score - the answer needs to make clear that Geoff called or interrupted Tom.

Question 17 (1 mark)

Answer: The child should tick 'signalling'.

Ask your child to find the sentence on page 6 that contains the word 'beckoning' and read it aloud. Then ask: "What do you think Geoff was doing with his hand when he wanted Tom to come over?"

On page 6, the text describes Geoff sitting in the object and beckoning to Tom to come over. Children need to understand that **beckoning** means gesturing or signalling to someone to come closer. The word 'signalling' captures that meaning precisely. 'Reacting' and 'replying' suggest a response to something else, and 'walking' is simply the wrong action entirely.

Watch out: A child might be tempted to tick 'reacting' because Geoff has just noticed the green light, but 'reacting' describes responding to something, not gesturing to another person.

Question 18 (1 mark)

Answer: Geoff was staring at a green light on the surface in front of the seats.

Ask your child to find the sentence on page 6 that comes just after Geoff beckons to Tom. Ask: "What does Tom see when he looks in the direction Geoff is staring?"

On page 6, directly after the sentence quoted in the question, the text states: 'On the surface in front of the seats, a green light glowed in the dark.' Children need to connect Geoff's fixed gaze with what has just appeared. The question is a straightforward retrieval task – children should identify the green light as the object of Geoff's attention. Simply writing 'the seat' without mentioning the light would not be sufficient.

Watch out: A child who writes only 'the seat' would not score, as it is the green light on the surface in front of the seats that Geoff is actually staring at.

Question 19 (1 mark)

Answer: Geoff was trying to refuse to take the blame - he was saying the light came on by itself, not because of anything he did.

Before your child looks back at the text, ask them to think about what Geoff is trying to achieve when he says those words. Ask: "What do you think Geoff is trying to make Tom believe when he says that?"

The key is in the short exchange on page 6, where Tom asks '**What did you do?**' - implying Geoff is responsible for the light activating. Geoff's reply, 'I just sat down and it came on,' is a deliberate

attempt to deflect blame by insisting he did nothing to cause it. Children need to recognise this as self-defence rather than boasting, teasing, or pretending nothing has happened - the light clearly has come on, so he is not denying that.

Watch out: A child might be tempted to tick 'pretend nothing is happening' because Geoff seems calm, but the light is clearly visible and Geoff is pointing to it - he is not pretending it does not exist, only that he did not cause it.

Question 20 (2 marks)

Answer: Any two of these count: lights flickering on across the board; a faint humming or vibration; a pinging noise (like a microwave); two horizontal handles; a panel stretching to the floor; a control board in front of the seats.

Point your child to the two paragraphs on page 7 starting with 'Silently, Tom climbed in' and ending with 'I wonder what it is?' Ask them to read those paragraphs carefully and think about what clues the author gives. Ask: "What details in those paragraphs make you think this object could be a machine?"

The question spans two paragraphs (page 7), from Tom climbing in to Geoff saying 'I wonder what it is?' Children must pull together **two separate pieces of textual evidence** that suggest the object has mechanical or electrical properties. Each piece earns one mark. Strong choices include: 'the lights continued to flick on until they extended to cover the whole board' (lights suggest a powered device); 'a faint humming, an almost inaudible vibration' (mechanical sound/movement); 'finishing in a ping that reminded Tom of a microwave oven' (comparison to a machine); or the mention of 'two horizontal handles' and a 'panel that stretched between them to the floor'. Any two distinct points from this list each earn a mark.

Watch out: A child might give two points that are really the same thing (for example, mentioning both 'the lights came on' and 'orange lights appeared') - these would only count as one point, not two.

Model answer: 1. It made a faint humming or vibration when the boys sat in it. 2. Lights flickered on across the board in front of them, like a control panel.

Question 21 (1 mark)

Answer: The correct tick is: 'The object had gone silent.' The short sentence 'And that was that' suggests the sequence of noises and lights has simply come to an end.

Before your child looks back at the text, ask them to think about what the story was describing just before that sentence. Ask: "What do you think 'And that was that' is telling us about what happened next?"

The sentence And that was that sits immediately after the description of the ping sound, so children need to infer that the machine's start-up sequence has finished and gone quiet. The phrase is deliberately abrupt, mirroring the sudden stopping of the activity. **The object had gone silent** is the correct choice. The other options fail: there is no evidence the boys are trapped or disappointed, and while the microwave comparison is used, it is only a simile - nothing in the text suggests the machine can actually cook food.

Watch out: A child might tick 'The object could cook food' because the microwave oven is mentioned just before, but that is only a comparison to explain the ping sound, not a statement that the object cooks anything.

Question 22 (1 mark)

Answer: Tom shrugged because he was uncertain about what the object really was, or because the answer seemed obvious to him - it was clearly some kind of machine, even if he didn't know exactly what type.

Before your child looks back at the text, ask them to think about what a shrug usually means when someone is speaking. Ask: "What do you think Tom is feeling or thinking when he shrugs before answering?"

The dialogue exchange is the key: Geoff asks 'What do you think it is?' and Tom shrugs before saying 'Well, it's a machine.' The shrug signals that Tom cannot be more specific - he has no idea what kind of machine it is - so he settles for the vague but accurate label. Children need to infer that the shrug shows uncertainty about how to describe it, or alternatively that the answer feels obvious to Tom and Geoff should already know. Either reading is acceptable.

Watch out: A child might write that Tom didn't care or wasn't bothered - but the official answer does not accept this; the shrug is about uncertainty or flippancy about an obvious fact, not indifference.

Question 23 (1 mark)

Answer: Children should number the events in this order: Geoff noticed a green light on the surface (1), Orange lights began to switch on across the panel (2), The object started making noises (3), Geoff realised the lights were buttons (4).

Ask your child to re-read both pages of 'In the Cave' and find the moment the very first light appears, then trace what happens next, in order. Ask: "Can you put your finger on the exact order in which things happen with the lights?"

Following the narrative sequence across pages 6 and 7 is the key skill here. First, Geoff sits down and **a green light glowed in the dark** appears; then **a small orange light had appeared beside the green one... joined by another. And another** - that is event 2. Next, **a faint humming... finishing in a ping** marks the noises as event 3. Only afterwards does Geoff run his finger over the surface and declare **'They're buttons, you see?'** - event 4. All four must be correct to score the mark.

Watch out: A child might place 'The object started making noises' as event 2 because noise feels like an early dramatic moment, but the orange lights switching on across the panel happens before the humming and ping are described.

Question 24 (1 mark)

Answer: Geoff ran his finger over the surface of one of the lights, or he stared at them very closely.

Ask your child to find the part of page 7 where Geoff examines the lights up close, then ask: "What does Geoff do with the lights that helps him work out what they are?"

On page 7, the relevant evidence is Geoff's hands-on investigation: 'Geoff ran a finger cautiously over the surface of one of the lights' and then 'Leaning forward, Geoff stared intently at the surface under his hand'. Either of these actions counts as the method by which Geoff worked out the lights were buttons. Children should not say he pushed or pressed one - the official answer specifically excludes that, as pressing a button has not yet happened at this point in the story.

Watch out: The official answer does not accept saying Geoff pushed or pressed a button - at this point in the text he is still deciding whether to press one, so pressing is not how he worked it out.

Question 25 (1 mark)

Answer: Children should tick: 'where they are placed' - Yes; 'what colour they are' - Yes; 'how many did not work' - No; 'what they are used for' - No. All four rows must be correct to score the mark.

Point the child at the whole 'In the Cave' text and ask them to read through looking only at what it says about the lights - where they appear, what colours they are, and anything else. Ask: "What does the text actually tell you about the lights - what do we know, and what are we never told?"

Scanning the whole 'In the Cave' text, children need to check which details about the lights are actually given. The text describes lights on **the board in front of the seats** and along **the panel that stretched between them to the floor** (placement: Yes) and names the colours - green, orange, and blue (colour: Yes). The text never states how many lights failed to work (No), and while Geoff suspects they are buttons, their actual purpose is never confirmed (No). All four rows must be ticked correctly to earn the single mark.

Watch out: A child might tick 'what they are used for' as Yes because Geoff thinks the lights are buttons, but the text never confirms what they are actually used for - it is only Geoff's guess.

Question 26 (3 marks)

Answer: Children need to give one impression of Tom (such as cautious, anxious, or sensible) supported by evidence from the text, and one impression of Geoff (such as adventurous, curious, or reckless) also supported by evidence. Two impressions without evidence earns 2 marks; two impressions with at least one piece of evidence earns 3 marks.

Cover the text and ask your child to think about what they remember of how each boy behaves in the cave. Ask: "What kind of person do you think Tom is, and what kind of person is Geoff - and what made you think that?"

Throughout pages 6 and 7, the two boys are shown in contrast. For **Tom**, children should identify a personality trait and back it up: for example, that he is cautious or anxious, evidenced by 'he peered nervously into the darkness', 'You can't do that!', or 'At least let's think about it first'. For **Geoff**, a trait such as curious, adventurous, or reckless can be shown by 'he climbed into the machine first', his 'Wow' exclamation, running a finger over the lights, or the closing line 'there was only one way to really know'. Three marks requires two valid impression-evidence pairings with at least one piece of textual evidence included; two marks is awarded for two valid impressions alone, or one impression properly backed by evidence.

Watch out: A child might write only personality labels without any evidence, which limits the response to a maximum of 2 marks. Evidence does not have to be a direct quotation - a clear reference to something in the text is enough.

Model answer: Tom: Tom is cautious. When Geoff wants to press the button, Tom says 'You can't do that! You don't know what'll happen!' and pleads 'At least let's think about it first.'

Geoff: Geoff is curious and reckless. He climbs into the machine straightaway and runs his finger over the lights to investigate them, and even after Tom warns him he keeps his finger hovering over the buttons because 'there was only one way to really know.'

Question 27 (1 mark)

Answer: The child should tick 'He didn't agree with Tom.'

Before your child looks back at the text, ask them to think about what the word 'reluctantly' tells us about how Geoff felt. Ask: "What does it mean when someone does something reluctantly - does it suggest they agreed or disagreed with what they were asked to do?"

The word **reluctantly** is the key to this question. Children need to recognise that 'reluctantly' means unwillingly - Geoff only sat back because Tom asked him to, not because he wanted to. He disagreed with Tom's suggestion to pause and think, which is why he did it with reluctance rather than willingly. The text confirms this immediately after: 'the more it struck him that you could think forever and still not know anything' - Geoff was never persuaded by Tom's reasoning.

Watch out: A child might be tempted to tick 'He had decided to press the button' because Geoff clearly wants to - but the text says he sat back and thought about it first, so he had not yet acted on that decision.

Question 28 (1 mark)

Answer: Any one of these counts: she positioned herself behind the line; she rolled her shoulders; she took a few deep breaths.

Ask your child to read the very first paragraph of the Longbow Girl story carefully. Ask: "What does Merry actually do to get herself ready before she shoots?"

The first paragraph of the Longbow Girl extract describes Merry's preparation before she shoots. Children need to locate the sentence '**She positioned herself behind the line, rolled her shoulders and took a few deep breaths**' - any one of those three physical actions is the answer children need to give. Only one is needed for the mark, so children should not feel they must list all three.

Watch out: A child might write that Merry ignored the crowd, which is an acceptable alternative - the text says 'nothing intruded above the roaring of blood in her ears', suggesting she blocked it out. However, the most direct textual evidence is the three physical actions listed explicitly in the text.

Question 29 (1 mark)

Answer: The crowd was silent because they were watching carefully to see where Merry's arrow would land, or because they were absorbed in watching her shoot.

Before your child looks back at the passage, ask them to think about what a crowd usually does when something really important or impressive is about to happen. Ask: "Why do you think the crowd went completely quiet at that moment?"

The paragraph beginning Merry took her stance describes Merry going through the full sequence of shooting, then states '**The crowd had fallen silent.**' Children need to infer why this happened. The key is that silence signals intense attention: the crowd was watching to see the result of her shot, as the text says '**It seemed to take long seconds to fly home to its target**', conveying the tension of waiting. Acceptable answers include the crowd concentrating on Merry, watching her arrow, or wanting to see how she performed. Also accepted is the idea that the crowd went quiet to let Merry focus. Vague answers such as 'they were tense' or 'they were scared' without elaboration do not score.

Watch out: A child might write 'they were tense' or 'they were intrigued' without explaining further - the official answer requires a reason that goes beyond a bare feeling word, such as what they were waiting to see.

Question 30 (1 mark)

Answer: Tick 'She really wanted to know the result.'

Before your child looks at the answer options, ask them to think about what Merry is feeling as she watches the arrow travel. Ask: "Why might time feel like it is slowing down when you are waiting for something really important to happen?"

The sentence 'It seemed to take long seconds to fly home to its target' is not describing the arrow's actual speed but Merry's **perception** of time. Children need to infer that when someone desperately wants to know an outcome, seconds feel stretched. The text has already shown how intensely focused Merry is, making anticipation the logical reason time feels slow. The other options are not supported: nothing suggests the bow is too old or that she lacks strength.

Watch out: A child might tick 'The bow was too old to shoot well' because the next page mentions Merry worrying about her bow breaking, but that concern comes later and is unrelated to this sentence.

Question 31 (1 mark)

Answer: Children should tick the second target in the top row (top right) - the one labelled 'Left Right' with two arrows in the black ring and one arrow in the inner white circle.

Ask your child to re-read the first round paragraphs carefully and note where each arrow lands before looking at the diagrams. Ask: "Can you tell me, in order, exactly where each of Merry's three arrows hit the target?"

Children need to track where each of Merry's three arrows lands in the first round. The text states the first arrow '**lodged in the black ring, just left of the white centre**', the second '**lodged in the black ring again, just to the right of the white centre**', and the third hit '**Inner white!**'. So the correct diagram shows two arrows in the grey (black) ring - one left of centre, one right - and one arrow in the inner white. That is the top-right diagram.

Watch out: A child might tick the top-left diagram because it also shows arrows in the black ring, but those arrows are both on the left side, whereas the text places them left and right respectively, with one in the inner white.

Question 32 (1 mark)

Answer: The crowd was stunned because Merry shot so well - her skill was unexpected and impressive.

Before your child looks back at the passage, ask them to think about who Merry is competing against and what the crowd would have expected from her. Ask: "Why do you think the crowd were so shocked by what Merry had just done?"

The paragraph directly before this question describes Merry completing her first round, with her third arrow hitting the **inner white**. Children need to infer why the crowd reacted with such surprise: the phrase '**stunned into silence**' signals shock, and the context makes clear it is Merry's skill - not just her result - that caused it. The official answer requires reference to her unexpected performance or impressive talent, for example noting that the crowd did not expect her to shoot so well. Answers that simply say she made it through to round two, without noting her surprising skill, do not score.

Watch out: A child might write that the crowd was stunned because she made it through to round two, but the official answer requires reference to her skill or unexpected performance, not simply the outcome.

Question 33 (1 mark)

Answer: Merry did not smile yet because she had not won the competition - there was still another round to go, or she was waiting to hear the official result, or she wanted to stay focused and calm.

Cover the page and ask your child to think back to what happens after Merry finishes round one. Ask: "Why do you think Merry didn't smile straight away, even though she'd done well?"

The paragraph beginning She turned is the key location. Merry has just completed round one, but the text makes clear she is still waiting - **'She just stood and waited'** - and is trying to keep her composure by looking at the mountains and blocking out the crowd. Children need to infer that smiling too soon would mean celebrating before the competition is over. Any one of these counts: she had not won yet and there was another round to face; she was uncertain whether her result had been confirmed; or she wanted to remain focused and not lose concentration.

Watch out: A child might write that she was upset or disappointed - but the text gives no evidence of that. The correct idea is that she was deliberately holding back, not that something had gone wrong.

Question 34 (2 marks)

Answer: Any two of these: his mouth was hanging open; his voice came out high-pitched and he had to clear his throat and start again; he looked at Merry with sheer surprise; he stared at her.

Before your child looks back at the text, ask them to think about how the marshal reacted when Merry finished her round - can they picture what he looked like or sounded like? Ask: "What do you remember about how the marshal behaved after Merry finished shooting?"

Page 9 contains four clear signals that the marshal was shocked. Children need to find **two** pieces of evidence, earning one mark each. The most accessible are his physical reactions: the text says his **'mouth hanging open, revealing stumps of discoloured teeth'** and that **'his voice came out high-pitched'**, forcing him to clear his throat and restart his sentence. Children can also reference him looking at Merry **'with sheer surprise'** as she passed him, or the fact that he stared at her. The official answer does not accept simply quoting 'Well!' on its own as that is too vague to demonstrate shock.

Watch out: A child might write only 'Well!' as their evidence. This does not score on its own because it is too vague - it does not clearly demonstrate shock without the physical or vocal details that accompany it.

Model answer: 1. His mouth was hanging open. 2. His voice came out high-pitched and he had to clear his throat and start again.

Question 35a (1 mark)

Answer: In round two, the competitors moved ten yards further back from the target. Alternatively, a child could say that competitors took turns individually rather than all shooting at once.

Ask your child to find the paragraph where the marshal explains the rules for round two, then read it carefully. Ask: "What is different about how round two is going to work?"

The paragraph beginning 'In round two,' contains the retrieval evidence. The marshal states '**we move ten yards back**', meaning the archers shoot from a greater distance. He also says '**each competitor will take turns**', indicating individual turns rather than simultaneous shooting. Either detail earns the mark. Children should re-read the marshal's exact words rather than paraphrasing vaguely - the two changes are clearly stated in consecutive clauses.

Watch out: A child might simply write 'it was harder' or 'the rules changed' - but the answer needs to name a specific difference, not just state that things changed.

Question 35b (1 mark)

Answer: Any of these count: so the audience could better appreciate the archers' skills; to make it more challenging for the archers; to increase the crowd's enjoyment or interest.

Point your child to the marshal's speech about round two and ask them to read it carefully. Ask: "Why does the marshal say the rules are being changed - what does he want the audience and competitors to get out of it?"

The marshal's speech in the paragraph beginning 'In round two,' contains the key reasoning. The text states the changes are made '**so that we might better enjoy the spectacle**' and '**so we might better appreciate their skills**' - both phrases point to the benefit for the watching crowd and the increased challenge for competitors. Children need to go beyond simply stating the rule change itself; the answer requires them to explain the purpose behind it. A response such as 'to show their skills' without explaining the increased benefit is not enough.

Watch out: A child might write 'to show their skills' or 'to make it hard' without explaining the increased benefit for the audience or the greater challenge for the archers - this is too vague to score.

Question 36 (1 mark)

Answer: Merry worried her bow might break because she could feel the almost unbearable tension in the wood as she drew it back to its fullest extension.

Ask your child to find the paragraph beginning 'She waited till it fell quiet' and read it carefully. Ask: "What does Merry notice about her bow that makes her worry it might snap?"

The relevant paragraph begins 'She waited till it fell quiet...' on page 10. Children need to identify what made Merry fear the bow would break, not what she did with it. The key evidence is the phrase '**the almost unbearable tension in the wood**' - she could physically feel the bow straining as she

pulled it to its **'fullest extension'**. Either the tension felt in the wood, or the act of drawing the bow to its absolute limit (which risks overstretching it), earns the mark.

Watch out: A child might say she pulled the bow back hard or with all her power - but the official answer requires reference to the tension in the wood or the fullest extension of the bow itself, not just Merry's own strength.

Question 37 (2 marks)

Answer: Any two of these count: she had clearly won the competition; she hit the dead centre of the inner white (her best shot); the crowd roared for her; she had proved herself and defied everyone's expectations.

Before your child looks back at the text, ask them to think about everything that happens in Merry's final round. Ask: "Why do you think Merry only smiles at the very end - what two things had she achieved at that moment?"

Page 10 asks children to infer two reasons why Merry finally smiles. The key is the word only then - she has held back until this moment because everything had to be confirmed. The text says **'dead centre of the inner white'**, showing she achieved her best possible shot, earning one reason. The crowd roaring shows she won them over, earning another. Children may also note she had proved herself against adult male competitors who had shown 'ridicule, amusement or pity' towards her. Each distinct reason earns one mark; two different reasons are needed for full marks. Importantly, the official answer does not accept saying simply that she won the gold coins - the focus must be on the achievement, the accuracy, the crowd, or proving herself.

Watch out: A child should not say she was happy because she won the ten gold coins or the purse of gold - the official answer does not accept references to the prize money; the focus must be on her skill, her victory, the crowd's reaction, or proving herself.

Model answer: 1. She had won the competition - her final arrow hit the dead centre of the inner white, so she knew she had beaten everyone else. 2. She had proved herself to the crowd and the marshal, who had shown ridicule and pity towards her at the start.

Question 38 (3 marks)

Answer: Children need to give two reasons with supporting evidence. Good reasons include: her skill and accuracy (hitting the black ring and inner white consistently); her composure and focus (blocking out the crowd, breathing, waiting); her confidence and high expectations of herself (entering a competition against adults, being 'sure of it!'); her knowledge of techniques and strategies; or her knowledge of her bow.

Before your child looks back at the passage, ask them to think about what they remember of how Merry behaved during the competition - her actions, her thoughts, and the way she handled the bow. Ask: "What two things told you that Merry was a very experienced archer, and what in the story made you think that?"

Across the whole extract, Merry demonstrates the qualities of an experienced archer through her actions and thoughts. This 3-mark question rewards two clearly identified reasons, each supported by evidence. For **3 marks**, children need two acceptable points with at least one linked to textual evidence. For **2 marks**, either two bare points or one point with evidence. For **1 mark**, one acceptable point alone. Strong responses might observe that her composure under pressure is shown by 'she felt a cool focus flood her veins' and 'no thinking, no worrying, just instinct and skill', or that her technical knowledge is evident as she 'nocked her arrow, bent from her waist, marked the target, drew back her bow and loosed' with practised precision. The key is pairing the reason to a specific quote.

Watch out: Children should not simply say she won the competition or was strong - the question asks for evidence of experience specifically. Referring only to 'she pulled the bow back hard' (about Merry's own power) rather than the tension in the wood and fullest extension does not score.

Model answer: Reason 1: Her skill and accuracy. Evidence: She consistently hit the target, including 'dead centre of the inner white' in round two, showing precise, reliable technique built through experience. **Reason 2:** Her composure and focus under pressure. Evidence: She blocked out the noise of the crowd - 'nothing intruded above the roaring of blood in her ears' - and relied on 'instinct and skill', the hallmark of long practice.

Question 39 (1 mark)

Answer: Children should note that the marshal smiled back at Merry, showing his opinion had changed. Any reference to him now being impressed, happy for her, or accepting her skill also counts.

Ask your child to look at the very last paragraph of the story and then think back to how the marshal behaved at the start. Ask: "How does the marshal act at the very end of the story, and is that different from how he acted before?"

At the very end of the story, the contrast between the marshal's earlier shock and his final reaction is the key. Earlier he had his mouth hanging open and his voice came out high-pitched; now **'The marshal hurried up to the target, eyed the arrows and smiled back'** - that smile directed at Merry signals a clear change. Children need to compare his beginning attitude (surprise, disbelief) with this final warm response to show the shift in his opinion.

Watch out: A child who quotes only 'We have an outright winner' will not score, as the official answer states this alone is not acceptable - it must be the smile or a clear reference to his changed attitude.

Question 40 (1 mark)

Answer: The child should tick 'clear'.

Point your child to the marshal's final speech at the very end of the story. Ask: "Which of the four options means something like 'definite' or 'without any doubt'?"

The word **outright** appears in the marshal's final declaration at the end of the story. Children need to choose the closest synonym from the four options. 'Lucky' suggests chance, 'predictable' suggests it was expected, and 'disappointing' is clearly wrong in context. Outright means complete or absolute - an outright winner has won decisively, with no doubt. 'Clear' captures that meaning best, as Merry's victory was definite and undisputed.

Watch out: A child might tick 'predictable' because Merry has been performing well throughout, but 'predictable' describes whether something was expected beforehand, not the nature of the victory itself.

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