

The Market on the Water

PASSAGE · FICTION

SKILLS TRAINED

Working memory

Delayed recall

Inference

HOW TO USE THIS SHEET

About 15 minutes

- 1 Read the passage twice, slowly. Take about four minutes.
- 2 Turn to the next page and cover this one. No looking back.
- 3 Write what you remember, then mark it on the last page.

Every morning before the sun was properly up, Grandmother loaded her boat. Mangoes at the front, coconuts in the middle, and the heavy pot of soup wedged at the back so it would not tip.

The market was not on land. It was on the canal. Dozens of narrow boats met there and tied themselves loosely together, so that the whole market swayed as one thing.

Ploy was eight, and this was her first morning helping.

Her job was the money. Customers leaned down from the bridge or across from other boats, and Ploy had to take the coins and pass back the fruit without dropping anything into the water.

She dropped three mangoes before nine o'clock.

Grandmother did not scold her. She simply moved the mango basket closer to the middle of the boat, where it rocked less.

By ten, Ploy had stopped dropping things. She had learned to feel the water move underneath her and wait half a second before reaching out.

On the way home she noticed she was no longer holding on to the side of the boat.

Cover the passage before you start.

Looking back turns this into a copying exercise. Getting it slightly wrong from memory is what makes it work.

PART A Tell it back

Write down everything you can remember about Ploy's first morning working on the boat.

PART B 4 questions

1 What three things did Grandmother load onto the boat?

2 What was Ploy's job?

3 How did Ploy learn to stop dropping things?

4 Why do you think Grandmother moved the basket instead of telling Ploy off?

PART C Mark your own work

Now go back to the passage. Tick every answer you got right. You do not need the same words as the answer below — if you wrote the same idea in your own words, it counts.

- ☐ 1 • Mangoes, coconuts and a heavy pot of soup.
- ☐ 2 • Taking the money from customers and passing back the fruit.
- ☐ 3 • She learned to feel the water move underneath her and wait half a second before reaching out.
- ☐ 4 • She understood the problem was the rocking boat, not Ploy being careless. Changing where the basket sat helped more than scolding would have.

FACTS RECALLED IN PART A

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QUESTIONS CORRECT

— / 4

DATE

THE STRATEGY Ask as you go

Every few lines, stop and ask yourself a question about what just happened, as though you were setting the test. Then answer it from memory. Searching for an answer builds the memory far more than reading the line again.

WHERE YOU ALREADY DO THIS

Think of something you were clumsy at on the first day and good at by the end. What changed?

FOR THE PARENT OR TEACHER · This sheet trains recall, not reading speed. Do not prompt during Part A, and do not let them look back. Question 4 asks your child to work something out rather than remember it, so a thoughtful wrong answer there is worth more than a lucky right one — talk it through together afterwards.