

Name _____ Date _____ Time taken _____

What this sheet trains

Divided attention - holding a second rule in mind while your main attention is busy elsewhere. This is the skill behind listening to a teacher while taking notes, or checking your working while solving the next step.

Strategy: anchor and sweep. Give the main task your focus and let the second task run as a quick, automatic check - do not swap your full attention back and forth.

1 Read and tally

Main task: read the passage once. Second task: the counting rule below.

Counting rule

Every time you read the word ship or ships, make one tally mark in the box at the foot of the page. Do not go back and re-read. One pass only.

The Strait of Malacca narrows to about two and a half kilometres of navigable water near One Fathom Bank, off the Selangor coast, and about a quarter of the world's traded goods pass through it. Since 1981 the ships using the strait have been separated by an agreed traffic scheme: a northbound lane, a southbound lane, a dividing zone between them, and reporting points at which each ship announces itself to shore stations in Malaysia, Indonesia and Singapore. The arrangement works like a motorway, and depends less on enforcement than on every ship expecting the same behaviour from everyone else.

Agreeing the scheme was harder than operating it. Most of the strait lies inside the territorial seas of the three coastal states, which have the right to regulate passage but also an obligation under the law of the sea to let ships of every flag through. The states that own the water bear the cost of surveying it, marking the channel, chasing pirates and cleaning up spills, while the benefit falls to distant owners and to the countries buying what the ships carry. A fund financed by contributions from ship owners exists, but it is voluntary, and it covers a fraction of what safe passage costs.

The strait is usually described as a chokepoint, as though its importance lay in the danger of closure, and that framing flatters the strategists while misleading the policy. A deliberate blockade is unlikely and would be an act of war; the realistic threats are mundane - a grounded tanker, a dragging anchor, a collision in haze - and they are handled by pilots, charts and radar aboard the ships rather than by navies. If the users of the strait treated the safety of ships as a shared utility to be paid for rather than a strategic asset to be guarded, they would buy more security for considerably less money.

Tally here - one mark per ship or ships

Make the marks as you read, then write your total before turning the page.

Total

1 Questions - cover the passage first

Answer from memory. Do not look back at the passage.

My tally total

From page 1

Q1. What does the traffic separation scheme in the Strait of Malacca require vessels to do?

Q2. Why do the three coastal states carry costs that mainly benefit people elsewhere?

Q3. Why might a voluntary users' fund fail to raise what safe passage costs?

Q4. What does the writer think is wrong with calling the strait a chokepoint?

2 Grid sweep with a running count

Main task: cross out targets. Second task: keep a count in your head.

Rules - read both before you start, then start the timer

Main: cross out every number that is a multiple of 6.

Second: count - silently, no marks - how many numbers end in 0. Write the total in the box only when you have finished the whole grid.

804	473	385	253	327	100	970	883	978	487	274	297
424	111	365	719	246	223	670	143	345	784	634	486
574	603	611	919	303	582	867	787	529	505	890	251
316	904	527	536	145	914	623	968	560	499	589	727
752	556	541	865	140	198	561	763	317	985	629	643
452	831	785	670	980	904	253	478	225	486	704	938
372	276	820	537	931	111	907	402	547	352	463	821
243	834	927	717	835	116	280	693	708	257	453	411

Stop the timer when the grid is finished, not when you write the total.

Numbers ending in 0

Write it once the grid is done

3 Copy and total

Main task: copy each row of digits. Second task: keep a running total.

Rules

Main: copy each four-digit group into the box beside it, in order.

Second: add the two middle digits of every row to a running total as you go.

Write the running total in the box at the end of each row - from memory, not by going back and adding up at the end.

	Copy here	Running total
4 5 9 3		
9 7 4 8		
8 1 8 3		
7 6 8 3		
7 6 6 5		
4 6 9 9		
1 5 6 2		
1 2 5 7		
4 3 2 7		
2 7 9 2		
2 9 6 9		
3 1 2 6		

4 Bridging - answer in a sentence each

Where this shows up outside the sheet.

Q1. Which of your two tasks slipped first here, and what was happening in the passage at that moment?

Q2. In a three-hour exam paper, where in the paper does your attention usually thin out?

Q3. When you read a dense page, do you prefer silence or background noise, and have you ever tested that?

Answer key

Task 1 · tally
ship or ships

8

Task 2 · crossed out
multiples of 6

12

Task 2 · counted
ending in 0

10

Task 3 · final total
two middle digits

132

Task 1 - suggested answers

Q1. Keep to a northbound or southbound lane either side of a dividing zone, and report in to shore stations as they pass set points.

Q2. The strait lies in their territorial seas, so they must survey, mark and police it, while the cargo and the profits belong to distant owners and buyers.

Q3. Nobody who declines to pay can be excluded from the benefit, so each user has reason to leave the bill to others.

Q4. It makes closure by an enemy the main worry, when the likely dangers are ordinary accidents better handled by pilots and charts than by navies.

Notes for the parent or teacher

- Mark the two tasks separately. A student who scores well on the main task and loses the count has not failed - that is the normal pattern, and it is the thing worth discussing.
- Do not prompt or remind during a task. The reminder is the skill.
- An untimed run is a valid run. Record the time only if the student wants to beat it next week.
- Repeat the sheet after a week rather than straight away. Spacing is what makes the gain stick.
- This is attention practice, not an assessment. It does not diagnose anything, and no sheet of this kind should be read as a measure of ability.