

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 train or trains, make one tally mark in the box at the foot of the page. Do not go back and re-read. One pass only.

Japan lies where several of the Earth's plates grind against each other, so the ground shakes often. The country also runs some of the fastest passenger trains in the world. A train travelling at three hundred kilometres an hour cannot stop quickly. Engineers therefore had to answer an awkward question. How do you keep a fast train safe on rails that could start shaking at any moment?

Part of the answer is a network of sensors buried along the coast and the track. An earthquake sends out two different kinds of wave. The first is fast but fairly gentle. The second is slower, and it does the damage. The sensors catch that first wave. A computer then cuts the power to every train in the area, before the second wave arrives. The brakes of every train come on automatically, and the driver is told afterwards.

That warning may last only a few seconds. A few seconds, however, is enough to slow a speeding train a very long way. The tracks themselves are built on strong concrete, and some bridges are designed to sway rather than crack. In more than fifty years of service, no passenger on these trains has died in a derailment caused by an earthquake. That record was built on preparation rather than luck.

Tally here - one mark per train or trains

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. Why does Japan have so many earthquakes?

Q2. How does the sensor network manage to warn a train before the damaging shaking starts?

Q3. Why is a warning of only a few seconds still worth having?

Q4. What is the writer's main point in the last sentence?

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 4.

Second: count - silently, no marks - how many numbers end in 5. Write the total in the box only when you have finished the whole grid.

18	86	51	61	81	19	83	98	58	25	67	26	75	61	95	82
34	85	54	70	44	22	62	25	51	11	13	59	87	22	49	36
11	54	62	18	27	80	91	72	75	70	88	55	92	10	29	59
99	84	39	43	27	26	29	99	53	32	74	42	68	11	89	19
33	30	38	48	27	70	55	86	14	12	61	50	95	30	42	13
67	41	85	83	69	82	53	47	34	62	58	70	10	57	78	35
72	31	27	57	73	68	65	54	11	14	55	33	43	59	10	46
78	80	93	81	92	79	38	31	61	58	31	63	67	91	27	13

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

Numbers ending in 5

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 three-digit group into the box beside it, in order.

Second: add the middle digit 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
9 9 5		
6 5 1		
5 1 8		
8 4 9		
5 2 1		
5 7 1		
8 7 2		
4 1 4		
9 6 7		
2 3 6		
2 7 3		
7 9 7		

4 Bridging - answer in a sentence each

Where this shows up outside the sheet.

Q1. Which job lost your attention first - reading or tallying - and why do you think it went first?

Q2. Where do you get a few seconds of warning in your own day, and how do you use them?

Q3. Name a task you would rather finish on its own, with nothing else running alongside it.

Answer key

Task 1 · tally
train or trains

7

Task 2 · crossed out
multiples of 4

15

Task 2 · counted
ending in 5

13

Task 3 · final total
middle digits

61

Task 1 - suggested answers

- Q1. It sits where several of the Earth's plates grind against one another, so the ground shakes often.
- Q2. It detects the fast, gentle first wave and cuts the power before the slower, damaging wave arrives.
- Q3. Even a few seconds of braking slows a fast train a great deal, which makes a derailment far less likely.
- Q4. The safety record comes from careful preparation and design, not from good fortune.

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.