

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

After water, sand is the material people use most. Every tonne of concrete is mostly sand, and so is window glass, and so is the silicon inside a phone. Desert sand is almost useless for building, because the wind has rubbed its grains too round and smooth to lock together. What builders want is the sharp, angular sand that lies in riverbeds and on shallow seabeds, where moving water has not yet had time to smooth it.

That demand has hollowed out rivers across South and Southeast Asia. In the Mekong delta, dredgers pull up sand far faster than the river can carry new sand down from the mountains. The riverbed drops, the banks lose the support beneath them and slide inwards, and salt water pushes further upstream into the rice fields. Villages in Vietnam have lost farmland, and sometimes whole houses, to collapses that began at a licensed sand pit a kilometre away.

Sand is cheap, heavy and dull, which is exactly why it is so rarely argued about. Crushed rock can stand in for some of it, and old concrete can be ground down and used again, but both cost more than sending a barge out at night. Until the price of a load of sand includes the farmland and houses it quietly takes with it, the cheapest material on Earth will go on being one of the most expensive.

Tally here - one mark per sand

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 is desert sand not suitable for making concrete?

Q2. How does dredging a riverbed end up damaging farmland along the banks?

Q3. Why might a government find sand dredging difficult to control?

Q4. What does the writer mean by calling the cheapest material one of the most expensive?

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 4. Write the total in the box only when you have finished the whole grid.

42	45	14	10	47	59	73	63	65	71	89	77	75	68	88	94
26	64	96	78	95	67	13	17	31	62	20	21	79	57	63	43
68	23	37	77	59	19	63	44	34	77	53	74	99	23	29	68
97	21	95	20	16	18	10	50	55	57	11	57	77	53	19	32
39	80	15	22	96	16	16	59	10	14	50	34	40	29	76	81
11	45	12	56	74	52	88	51	60	66	74	34	63	56	61	79
52	68	40	83	61	26	93	82	68	95	96	51	11	90	53	76
72	72	43	46	18	48	27	74	30	57	73	95	58	50	65	44

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

Numbers ending in 4

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
7 3 6		
4 7 9		
3 7 2		
1 9 6		
1 8 9		
6 3 2		
8 8 5		
1 1 7		
7 3 9		
8 4 9		
2 4 9		
9 1 6		

4 Bridging - answer in a sentence each

Where this shows up outside the sheet.

Q1. Of the two jobs you were given, which one weakened first, and what happened just before it did?

Q2. How do you decide which part of a double task to protect when you fall behind?

Q3. Where in your school day are you most often asked to listen and write at the same time?

Answer key

Task 1 · tally
sand

9

Task 2 · crossed out
multiples of 6

15

Task 2 · counted
ending in 4

13

Task 3 · final total
middle digits

58

Task 1 - suggested answers

- Q1. Wind has worn its grains too round and smooth, so they will not lock together in concrete.
- Q2. The bed sinks, the banks lose support and collapse, and salt water reaches further inland into the fields.
- Q3. It is low in value and easy to lift at night from a long river, so illegal dredging is hard to police.
- Q4. Its low price hides the damage it causes, so the real cost falls on people who never sold the sand.

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.