

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

Aluminium begins as bauxite, a red clay dug out of the ground in Guinea, Australia and Brazil. Turning that clay into metal takes a fierce amount of electricity, which is why aluminium smelters are built next to cheap power in Iceland, Canada and the Gulf, often thousands of kilometres from the mine. For its weight, a drinks can is one of the most energy-expensive objects on a supermarket shelf.

Aluminium has one unusual quality: melting it down does no harm to it. Scrap aluminium can be remade into new aluminium using roughly five per cent of the electricity the first smelting needed, and the metal that comes out is no weaker than before. In Brazil, where collectors are paid by weight for what they gather, almost every drinks can is returned, and the same aluminium is often back on a shelf within two months.

That record makes aluminium look like a solved problem, and it is not. Recycling only works when the scrap can be sorted, and the thin aluminium bonded to plastic inside a food pouch is close to impossible to separate again. At the same time global demand keeps climbing, so new bauxite mines go on opening even while recycling rates improve. A material that can be used over and over is still a problem if we go on needing more of it than has ever been dug up.

Tally here - one mark per aluminium

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 are aluminium smelters often built a long way from the mines that supply them?

Q2. What makes recycling aluminium so much cheaper than making it from bauxite?

Q3. Why do you think Brazil returns almost all of its drinks cans?

Q4. What limit does the writer place on the idea that aluminium is endlessly recyclable?

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

10	32	57	55	58	81	51	57	98	94	85	23	54	97	22	96
14	38	27	31	31	14	20	69	11	82	11	77	39	95	97	13
13	41	54	70	25	60	60	56	88	68	64	49	87	12	40	52
30	98	52	13	37	52	87	35	57	99	57	34	60	83	82	64
75	36	15	50	23	50	50	11	77	62	37	28	64	23	91	12
88	59	52	50	76	34	39	83	68	94	15	27	35	15	58	68
43	94	53	43	72	63	14	37	24	26	41	39	67	20	94	89
47	45	63	30	28	34	25	25	92	33	96	44	31	72	98	31

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

Numbers ending in 8

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

4 Bridging - answer in a sentence each

Where this shows up outside the sheet.

Q1. Which of the two tasks gave way first for you, and can you name the reason?

Q2. Do you lose more by rereading a paragraph or by losing your place in the count?

Q3. Which subject at school demands the most from you in two directions at once?

Answer key

Task 1 · tally
aluminium

8

Task 2 · crossed out
multiples of 6

15

Task 2 · counted
ending in 8

13

Task 3 · final total
middle digits

68

Task 1 - suggested answers

Q1. Smelting needs enormous amounts of electricity, so plants are placed where power is cheap rather than near ore.

Q2. Melting scrap does not damage the metal and uses only a small fraction of the electricity smelting requires.

Q3. Collectors are paid by weight, so gathering cans is worth real money to people.

Q4. Recycling fails when the metal cannot be separated, and rising demand means new mining continues anyway.

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.