

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

Almost everything you do online travels through the sea. Satellites carry a tiny fraction of the world's data; the rest moves along fibre-optic cables on the ocean floor, hundreds of them, some stretching twenty thousand kilometres between continents. A deep-sea cable is surprisingly thin, about the width of a garden hose, and inside it the glass fibres that carry the light are no thicker than a human hair.

Laying one is slow work. A ship pays the cable out over its stern at walking pace while a survey crew steers it around trenches, volcanic ridges and known fishing grounds. Near the shore, where anchors and trawl nets do most of the damage, the cable is armoured in steel wire and ploughed into the seabed; in deep water it rests on the mud, because nothing there is likely to disturb it. Repeaters every sixty kilometres or so lift the fading signal, powered by a current sent along the cable itself from land. When a break happens, and many do each year, a repair ship must find the fault, grapple the cable up from the dark and splice it at the surface.

This system is both tougher and more fragile than it looks. No single cut matters much, because traffic reroutes within seconds along other routes. The weakness lies at the chokepoints, the narrow seas where dozens of cables are forced to crowd together, and in the small number of specialised ships able to repair them. A country that has built its hospitals, banks and schools around a connection it does not control should probably know how few vessels in the world can mend it.

Tally here - one mark per cable or cables

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 carries most of the world's internet traffic between continents?

Q2. Why is a cable armoured and buried near the coast but left bare in deep water?

Q3. Why does a single cable break rarely cause a noticeable outage?

Q4. What worry about national dependence does the writer raise in the final paragraph?

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 7.

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.

94	23	63	61	73	28	89	89	66	73	58	65	14	16	87	44
60	18	39	17	39	32	84	31	84	65	87	52	10	38	37	70
84	86	31	23	16	45	48	52	70	60	88	66	19	20	38	88
30	64	22	55	77	20	71	72	74	14	55	30	31	51	53	25
20	16	37	10	20	27	83	70	51	51	55	17	98	46	38	83
38	41	39	87	68	68	51	13	21	82	10	54	17	15	51	99
92	90	27	63	92	80	27	94	57	10	25	80	69	53	17	48
25	80	18	44	83	70	83	55	33	15	51	46	67	33	55	72

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

4 Bridging - answer in a sentence each

Where this shows up outside the sheet.

Q1. Which of the two tasks began to slip first, and what tipped it over?

Q2. What does your brain do when a lesson speeds up and you are already writing?

Q3. Which is harder for you: holding a number in your head, or holding the thread of an argument?

Answer key

Task 1 · tally
cable or cables

7

Task 2 · crossed out
multiples of 7

15

Task 2 · counted
ending in 5

13

Task 3 · final total
middle digits

63

Task 1 - suggested answers

- Q1. Fibre-optic cables lying on the ocean floor, not satellites, which carry only a small fraction.
- Q2. Anchors and trawl nets threaten it in shallow water, while the deep seabed is undisturbed.
- Q3. Traffic is rerouted almost immediately along other cables serving the same regions.
- Q4. Essential services depend on cables a country does not own, and very few ships exist to repair them.

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.