

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

For most of the year the ground across northern Alaska is as hard as rock, because it is rock-like: permafrost, soil and gravel that has stayed below freezing for thousands of years, in places to a depth of several hundred metres. Only a thin surface layer thaws each summer. Roads, runways, pipelines and whole villages were built on the assumption that the permafrost beneath them would stay frozen, and for a long time the permafrost did.

It is holding less well. As the Arctic warms, the permafrost thaws deeper each year, and thawing permafrost does not simply soften; it loses volume, because the ice inside it was holding the soil apart. The surface then sags into hollows, which fill with water, and standing water absorbs more heat than the pale ground it replaced, so the thaw spreads outwards. Buildings tilt, airstrips crack, and a road that needed resurfacing once a decade may need it every second year. Engineers can drive piles down into still-frozen ground, or lay insulating gravel pads, but these measures buy time rather than solve anything.

There is a further problem, and it belongs to everyone rather than to Alaska. Permafrost holds the remains of ancient plants that never fully rotted, and as the permafrost thaws, microbes get to work on that buried carbon and release it as carbon dioxide and methane. That release warms the air, which thaws more permafrost. Most climate forecasts still treat the Arctic ground as a fixed background rather than a participant, which may be the most expensive simplification in the whole subject.

Tally here - one mark per permafrost

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 is permafrost, and what was built on the assumption that it would stay frozen?

Q2. Why does thawing ground sink rather than simply becoming softer?

Q3. Why does a hollow filled with water speed up thawing around it?

Q4. Why does the writer call treating Arctic ground as a fixed background an expensive simplification?

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

48	82	48	64	75	16	97	84	15	37	92	38	36	17	95	24
17	86	40	32	89	12	78	94	55	29	54	21	68	93	63	15
70	82	19	67	38	31	56	62	13	48	89	29	96	13	47	60
85	93	48	83	99	66	50	99	76	13	88	92	76	72	19	14
95	50	96	96	72	16	94	75	75	66	91	28	99	68	52	74
31	46	14	87	22	54	81	87	39	34	80	90	14	84	16	99
43	16	82	35	52	29	29	36	34	73	83	44	60	70	27	66
14	70	19	60	20	48	46	31	34	96	64	59	54	50	25	47

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

Numbers ending in 2

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

4 Bridging - answer in a sentence each

Where this shows up outside the sheet.

Q1. Which of the two jobs gave way first, and what does that tell you about how you divide attention?

Q2. What strategy did you try this time, and would you use it again in a real lesson?

Q3. When a text gets denser, do you slow down, push on, or stop taking it in?

Answer key

Task 1 · tally
permafrost

8

Task 2 · crossed out
multiples of 7

15

Task 2 · counted
ending in 2

13

Task 3 · final total
middle digits

67

Task 1 - suggested answers

Q1. Ground frozen for thousands of years; roads, runways, pipelines and villages were built on it.

Q2. The ice inside held the soil apart, so when it melts the ground loses volume and sags.

Q3. Standing water absorbs more heat than the pale ground it replaced, pushing the thaw outwards.

Q4. Thawing ground releases carbon that drives further warming, so forecasts that ignore it understate the risk.

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.