

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

Mexico City sits roughly three hundred kilometres from the subduction zone off the Pacific coast where most of its large earthquakes begin. That distance is the city's one piece of luck. Seismic sensors near the coast detect the first tremors and send a radio warning inland at the speed of light, while the damaging ground motion travels on at the speed of rock, so the warning arrives first. Residents of the capital may get as much as sixty seconds of notice before the shaking begins. Loudspeakers sound, trains slow, lifts return to the ground floor and surgeons lift their hands.

A warning system of this kind predicts nothing. It detects a rupture that has already started and races the slower waves, which means the places in greatest danger receive the shortest notice: directly above the epicentre there is no useful lead time at all. A further difficulty is that the size of an earthquake is not clear in its first seconds, so a computer must decide from a fragment of signal whether to issue a warning that will halt a capital city. Too cautious and the warning comes late; too eager and people learn to ignore the warnings altogether.

Mexico City also shows why such a warning does less than it appears to. The old lake bed beneath the centre amplifies and prolongs shaking, so buildings there fail in motion that would barely trouble the same structure founded on rock. A minute of notice lets a person leave a lift, not a weak building, and no warning strengthens a column. These systems are best understood as the cheapest part of an expensive programme, valuable chiefly where retrofitting and building codes have already done the slow work behind them.

#### Tally here - one mark per warning or warnings

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 Mexico City get useful notice before shaking from a coastal earthquake arrives?

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Q2. Why do communities closest to the epicentre benefit least from such a system?

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Q3. Why does the computer risk issuing an alert that later proves unnecessary?

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Q4. How persuasive is the writer's view that an alert is the cheapest part of the work?

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## 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 8.

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.

|    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 98 | 44 | 56 | 47 | 16 | 85 | 56 | 64 | 93 | 70 | 55 | 17 | 31 | 61 | 83 | 86 |
| 14 | 60 | 78 | 98 | 75 | 98 | 27 | 59 | 53 | 82 | 20 | 57 | 55 | 20 | 67 | 29 |
| 18 | 34 | 59 | 28 | 65 | 86 | 64 | 43 | 60 | 37 | 11 | 84 | 37 | 13 | 25 | 13 |
| 72 | 79 | 97 | 14 | 61 | 84 | 69 | 98 | 77 | 42 | 16 | 81 | 78 | 27 | 86 | 95 |
| 89 | 24 | 96 | 71 | 13 | 59 | 55 | 84 | 22 | 25 | 16 | 62 | 42 | 31 | 38 | 96 |
| 50 | 95 | 99 | 79 | 95 | 25 | 30 | 60 | 19 | 78 | 87 | 44 | 54 | 70 | 39 | 23 |
| 68 | 37 | 44 | 50 | 86 | 96 | 99 | 91 | 66 | 11 | 89 | 49 | 96 | 77 | 56 | 20 |
| 99 | 61 | 96 | 89 | 44 | 11 | 97 | 68 | 90 | 87 | 35 | 77 | 26 | 58 | 41 | 57 |

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

Second: add the second 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 9 4 7 |           |               |
| 6 2 3 5 |           |               |
| 6 6 8 1 |           |               |
| 6 4 6 8 |           |               |
| 8 6 9 6 |           |               |
| 3 9 1 4 |           |               |
| 9 4 6 8 |           |               |
| 3 8 9 8 |           |               |
| 4 6 1 6 |           |               |
| 6 1 4 3 |           |               |
| 5 5 8 5 |           |               |
| 3 7 3 4 |           |               |

## 4 Bridging - answer in a sentence each

Where this shows up outside the sheet.

Q1. Which task lost your grip first in this exercise, and what do you think explains the order?

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Q2. Where in an exam do you most often lose track of one thing while handling another?

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Q3. If you had sixty seconds of warning before your attention drifted, how would you use them?

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## Answer key

Task 1 · tally  
warning or warnings

**8**

Task 2 · crossed out  
multiples of 8

**15**

Task 2 · counted  
ending in 8

**13**

Task 3 · final total  
second digits

**67**

### Task 1 - suggested answers

Q1. The alert travels by radio at the speed of light while the ground motion travels much more slowly through rock.

Q2. They are so near that the waves arrive almost at once, leaving little or no lead time to act on.

Q3. An earthquake's size is unclear in its first seconds, so waiting for certainty would make the warning too late.

Q4. Quite persuasive: notice helps people move, but only stronger buildings and codes prevent the damage itself.

### 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.