



INTRODUCTION

Reading comprehension is the ability to read text and understand its meaning. It relies on being able to read the letters and words on the page and being able to understand the meaning of the words and sentences.

Many students wonder, “How can I get better at reading comprehension?” Parents often ask, “How can I help my child improve at reading comprehension?”

The purpose of this resource is to help students improve their reading comprehension by focusing on the skills that will help them be successful when reading.

This resource describes how to group reading comprehension questions into five different skill categories. This will help students to figure out which skills they are already good at, and which ones need more practice.

The five skill categories are:

- › Identify and Interpret Ideas and Details
- › Interpret Text Organization
- › Associate Meaning
- › Making Connections
- › Evaluate

There are short lessons for the skills in each of the reading skill categories, with examples and activities, as well as extra questions for practice. For each question, there are detailed explanations to help students understand why the answer is correct.

This resource also includes writing exercises to help students apply what they have learned to their own writing. Being able to better understand what you read also makes you a better writer.

There are three main sections in this resource:

- › A skills-based assessment to see which skills students need to review and practice the most
- › Lessons, examples, exercises, and practice questions for each reading comprehension skill category
- › A second assessment to see how much students have improved after learning and practicing the skills in section two

The goal is to make reading comprehension easier and to help students enjoy reading and learning.

Dear Parent or Guardian,

By focusing on these skills with your child, you are helping your child become not just a better reader, but a better learner and thinker. You are giving your child tools that will help in school and beyond, in every subject and in life. It is about making reading a fun, engaging, and empowering activity that opens doors to knowledge, understanding, and imagination.

Remember, you are your child’s first and most important teacher. Your support in their reading journey can make a huge difference in building confidence, curiosity, and love for learning. Let’s turn reading into an adventure they look forward to every day!



Dear Educator,

The five reading comprehension skill categories are:

Identify and Interpret Ideas and Details (II) – find the answer based on ideas and details of the text

Interpret Text Organization (ITO) – understand how the author organizes and presents the text; apply your knowledge of literary devices and literary techniques; look for figurative language and writing techniques; know the genres of texts

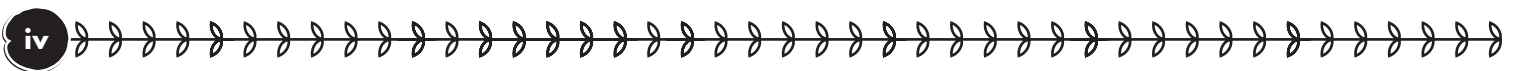
Associate Meaning (AM) - use context clues to determine the meaning of words and phrases such as dictionary definitions, associated emotional meaning, and figurative language meaning

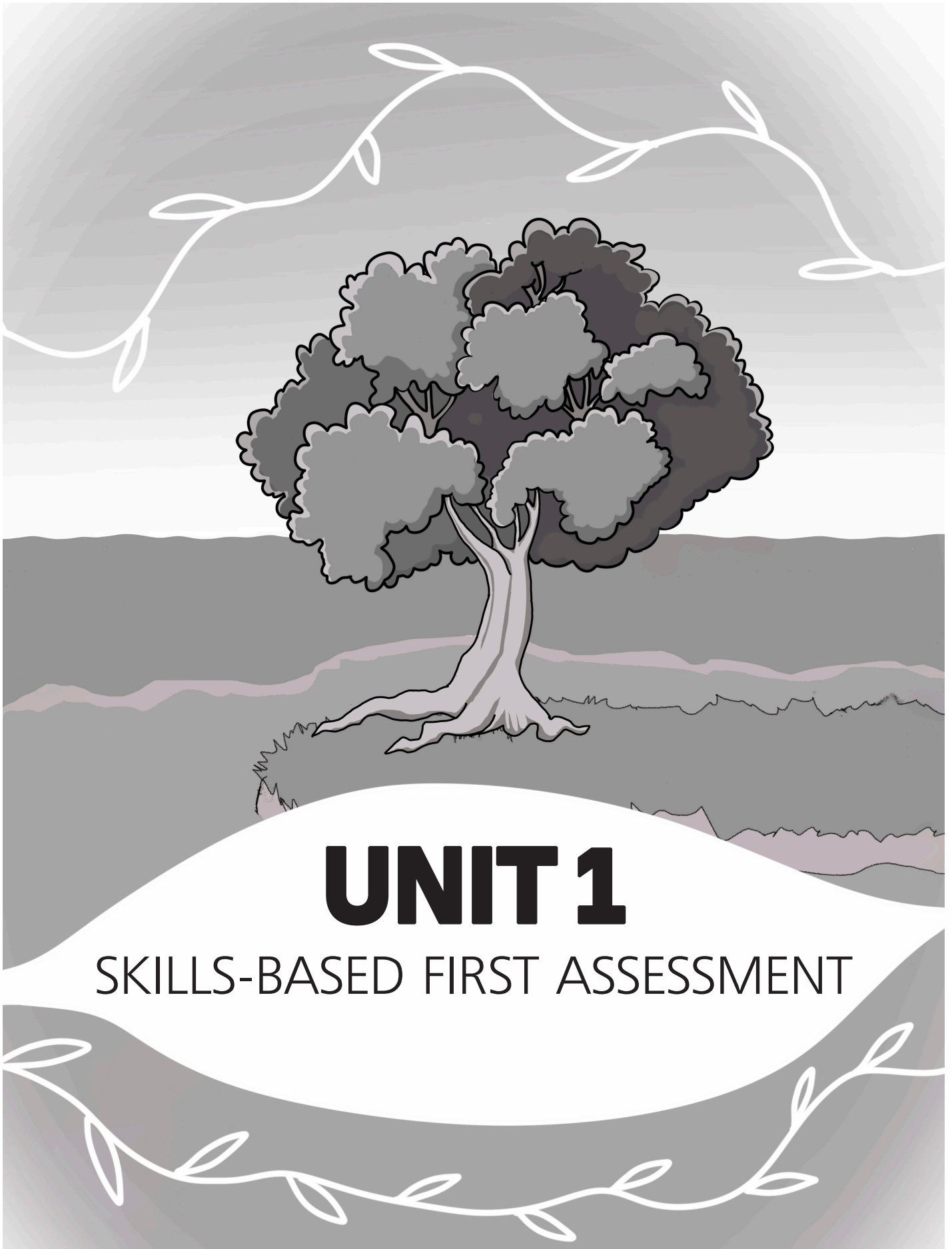
Making Connections (MC) – link a detail or quotation to the author’s purpose or the main ideas of the text; look for text linked to themes, main idea, purpose, or stated or implied meaning

Evaluate (EV) – known as the “**best answer**” question. These questions have bolded words and phrases in the question such as **best, most likely, probably, or most clearly**. Evaluate questions are always matched with one of the other skill categories.

By helping students develop these skills, you are not just teaching students to read: you are equipping them with the tools to become lifelong learners. Improving reading comprehension can make reading a more dynamic and enriching experience. It lays a solid foundation for success across all subjects.







UNIT 1

SKILLS-BASED FIRST ASSESSMENT



SKILLS-BASED FIRST ASSESSMENT

Read each passage and then try your best to answer the questions correctly.

Once you have answered all the questions, mark your answers using the answer key. Then complete the chart that is located after the assessment. For each question, check off whether you answered it correctly or incorrectly. The chart will tell you which skill category each question is testing.

Once completed, the chart will show you which skill categories need more practice. Whether you need help in one or all categories, this book will help you.



Read the following passage and answer questions 1 to 4.

COYOTE

Do you live in the country, or near a big city park or **ravine**? You may have heard the *yip yip yip* barking and *ow ow ow* howling of coyotes at night (coyotes are nocturnal). Coyotes are **canines** like all dogs, from wolves to the tiny cuties in handbags. These animals look more like a bullet than a pet dog does, though, with a flatter, pointier **profile** and longer legs.

Like several species that have always populated Turtle Island (North America), Coyote is a starring character in stories passed down for many generations among Indigenous Peoples. Especially in the stories belonging to Nations in the west and south, Coyote is a trickster: he might appear foolish or clever, greedy, and **arrogant**, or just curious and **mischievous**, but the pranks he plays and the funny mistakes he makes always teach lessons about the importance of humility, kindness, and respect. Through the problems he creates by breaking social rules, Coyote shows us why we all need to follow the rules to keep society working smoothly.

Many cultures around the world have stories about trickster characters, such as Anansi, originating long, long ago in Ghana in West Africa. Anansi is a spider who can shape-shift into a human, outsmarting his opponents with wit and creativity in every situation created through his mischief. In old European folklore, fox is a **sly** trickster who uses his intelligence to get others to do what he wants, and always gets away.



Word Power

Ravine: A steep, very narrow valley

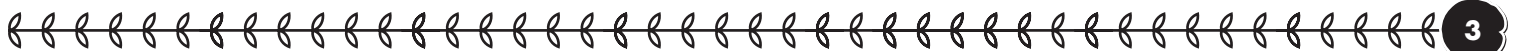
Canines: Dogs

Profile: A head or face seen or drawn from the side

Arrogant: Acting as if you are more important and smarter than other people

Mischievous: Tending to get in trouble and create mischief

Sly: Clever in a way that is dishonest or that shows you know a secret



If your school invites Indigenous Elders to come and share stories, maybe you can ask for a Coyote one. There isn't one written in this book because, to follow tradition, the only good way to respect the gift of a story is to speak it in person. Your job will just be to listen and think about how your own life relates to what you hear... and watch for spiders, foxes, and coyotes!

-by Heather Lash

QUESTIONS



1. In the phrase “You may have heard the *yip yip yip* barking and *ow ow ow* howling of coyotes at night,” the author uses which of the following?
 - A. similes
 - B. metaphors
 - C. personification
 - D. onomatopoeia

- 2.** In Indigenous stories, Coyote is usually shown to be what?
- A. a heroic and good figure
 - B. a villain who causes harm to others
 - C. a shy and fearful creature who avoids conflict
 - D. a mischievous trickster with both positive and negative qualities
- 3.** The sentence “Coyote looks more like a bullet than a pet dog does” is an example of what?
- A. a simile
 - B. hyperbole
 - C. a metaphor
 - D. personification
- 4.** What is the main lesson that trickster characters like Coyote teach in stories?
- A. the importance of being strong and fast
 - B. the value of being sneaky and tricking others
 - C. the significance of being funny, clever, and playful to share important messages
 - D. the idea that tricksters are always seen as heroes in every culture

5. Which other two trickster characters are mentioned in the text?

- A. bear and deer
- B. spider and fox
- C. owl and rabbit
- D. eagle and hawk



Read the following passage and answer questions 6 to 10.

ROBOTS

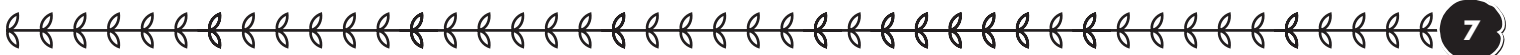
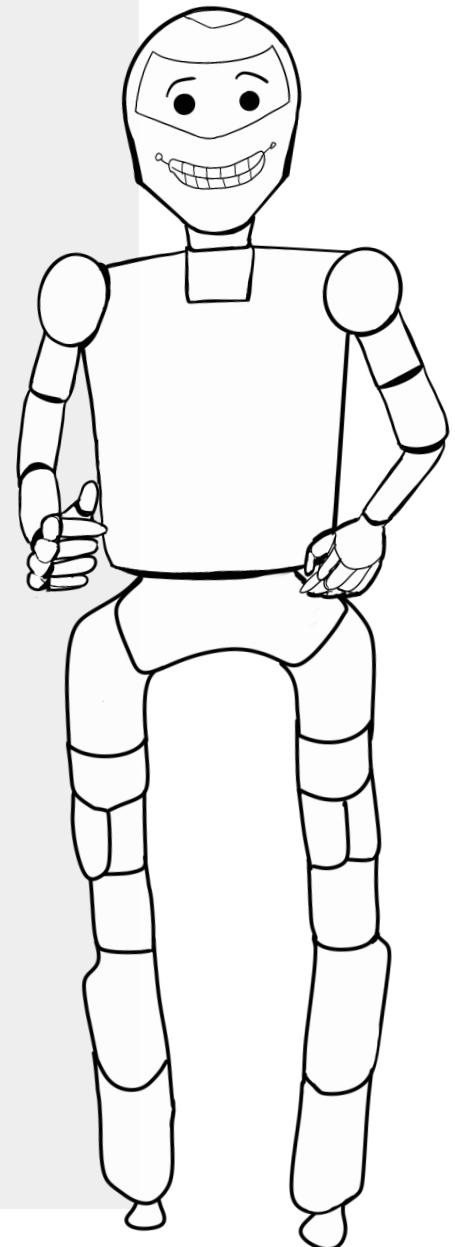
Robots are machines. They can do some things that people can do, and they can do some things that people can't. Robots don't have to eat, they don't have to drink, and they don't get lonely.

Robots can do the same things over and over exactly the same way. They don't get bored. They don't get tired. Best of all, robots can do things that are too dangerous for us to do.

That is why NASA uses robots. They send robots on long trips. They send them to places where there is no air to breathe. They send them where people can't go, or can't go yet.

The list below will tell you about a few NASA robots.

- Robonaut looks a lot like a human. It has a head, arms, and upper body. Robonaut will go outside the International Space Station. It may work with astronauts on spacewalks. It may even go where it is not safe for humans.
- The space station has a robot arm. It helps move things into and out of the station. It can also hold an astronaut who is working in space.
- Mars rovers are robots. They drive around on the land. Three NASA rovers are on Mars. Two of them are still working!
- Stardust was the first robot sent to a comet. It brought bits of the comet back to Earth in January 2006.



In the past, robots have helped NASA explore. Today, they are still important to NASA. In the future, we will use robots to help return humans to the Moon and to travel to Mars and beyond.

QUESTIONS



6. This passage says that robots can work without what?

- A. NASA
- B. guidance
- C. food or water
- D. light or electricity

7. Based on the information in this article, a robot would probably be better than a human being at what?

- A. petting a kitten
- B. singing a song
- C. working in a daycare
- D. working in a dark cave

8. In the phrase “It brought bits of the comet back,” what is the meaning of the word “bits”?

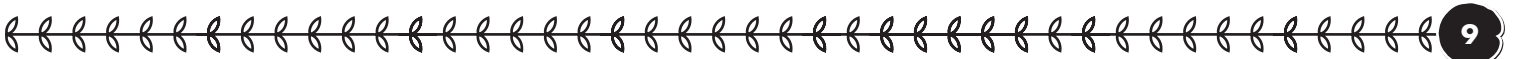
- A. large chunks
- B. information
- C. tiny pieces
- D. examples

9. Which of the following words can be used to describe robots?

- A. musical
- B. magical
- C. mammals
- D. mechanical

10. Where would you look if you needed to check what NASA stands for?

- A. in a thesaurus
- B. in a table of contents
- C. online by doing a web search
- D. at the back of a book in the index





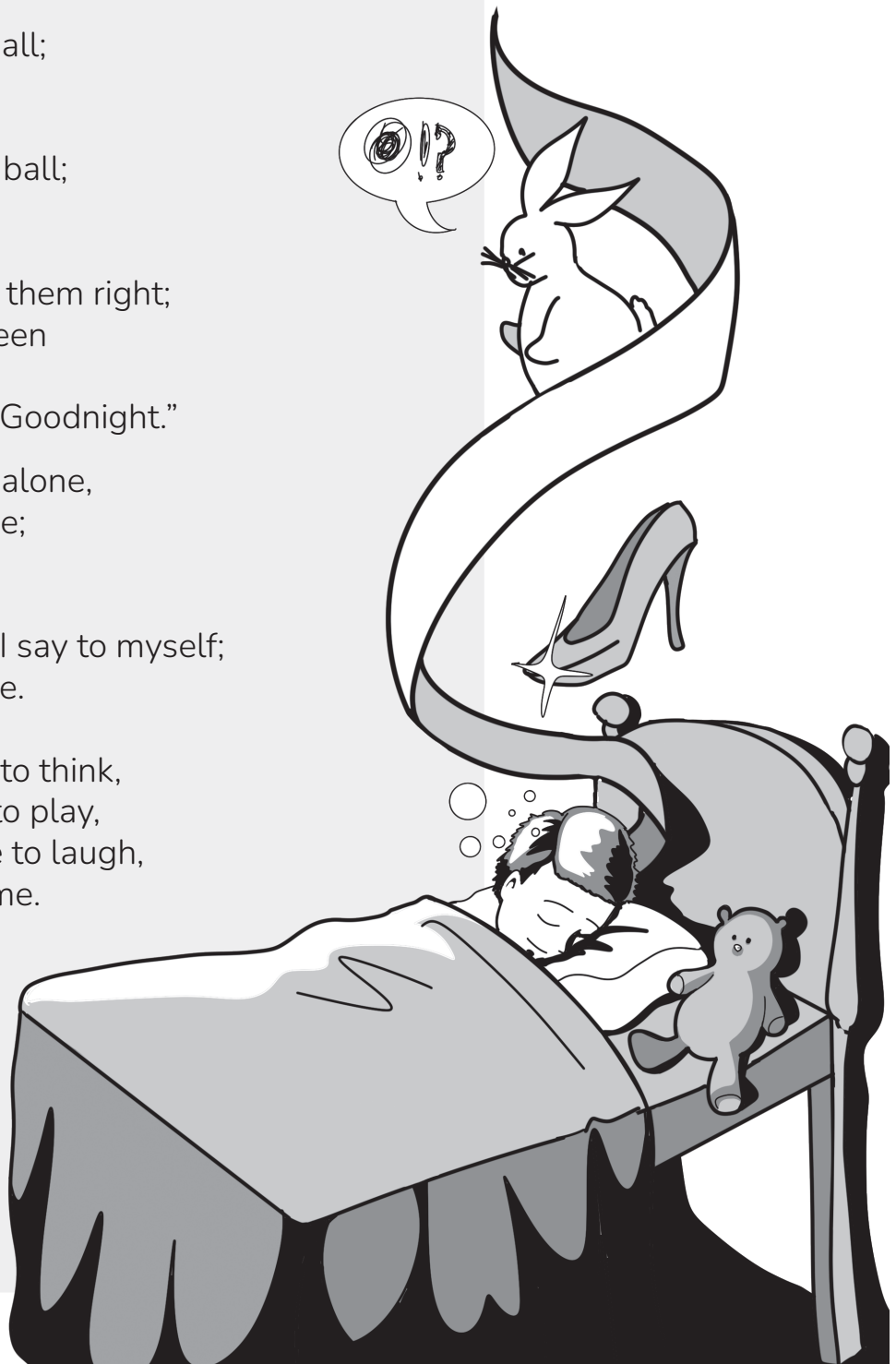
Read the following passage and answer questions 11 to 15.

IN THE DARK

I've had my supper,
 And had my supper,
 And HAD my supper and all;
 I've heard the story
 Of Cinderella,
 And how she went to the ball;
 I've cleaned my teeth,
 And I've said my prayers,
 And I've cleaned and said them right;
 And they've all of them been
 And kissed me lots,
 They've all of them said, "Goodnight."

So—here I am in the dark alone,
 There's nobody here to see;
 I think to myself,
 I play to myself,
 And nobody knows what I say to myself;
 Here I am in the dark alone.
 What is it going to be?
 I can think whatever I like to think,
 I can play whatever I like to play,
 I can laugh whatever I like to laugh,
 There's nobody here but me.

I'm talking to a rabbit...
 I'm talking to the sun...
 I think I am a hundred—
 I'm one.
 I'm lying in a forest...
 I'm lying in a cave...
 I'm talking to a Dragon...
 I'm BRAVE.



I'm lying on my left side...
I'm lying on my right ...
I'll play a lot tomorrow...
I'll think a lot tomorrow...
I'll laugh...
a lot...
tomorrow...
(Heigh-ho!)
Goodnight.

- by A.A. Milne

QUESTIONS



11. The speaker of this poem has heard a story about who?

- A. Cinderella
- B. Thumbelina
- C. Tom Thumb
- D. Snow White

12. What did the child have before going to bed?

- A. breakfast
- B. lunch
- C. a snack
- D. supper

13. In the line “And I’ve cleaned and said them right,” the phrase “said them right” refers to what?

- A. saying prayers
- B. saying goodnight
- C. talking to the sun
- D. repeating the fairy tale

14. How does the child **most likely** feel when they are alone in the room?

- A. sad
- B. happy
- C. afraid
- D. nervous

15. In the first verse of the poem, where are the words that rhyme?

- A. on the end of every line
- B. on the end of every second line
- C. on the end of every third line
- D. on the end of every fourth line



Read the following passage and answer questions 16 to 20.

HEIDI

Heidi, for her part, was never unhappy. There was always something that interested and **amused** her. Best of all she liked to go with the herd and the herd-boy to the **pasture**, to be sure; for there were the flowers and the eagle, and always something new and exciting happening to the different goats. Still, in her grandfather's room there was always hammering and sawing that delighted her also. Once when he was making a new **trough** for the goats, she watched him working with his bare arms in the round tub, and he was so skillful that she was **enchanted**.

But Heidi's greatest joy came on the windy days, when the **soughing** and sighing in the big pines behind the hut began. Then she was always running to listen to the wind and left anything she might be about to hear the deep, mysterious tones in the high branches. She would stand looking up, and never get tired of wondering at the **swaying** and rushing and moaning of the trees.

The sun was now no longer hot as in the summer, and the child was glad to get out her shoes and stockings, and her **frock**, for it was every day colder, and when she stood out under the trees she was blown about as if she were a little thin **leaflet**. But she always was **scampering** out and could never stay in the hut when once she heard the call of the wind.



Word Power

Amused: Made to laugh or smile

Pasture: Grazing land for animals

Trough: A long, narrow container from which animals can eat or drink

Enchanted: Delighted or charmed

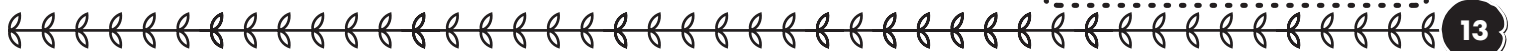
Soughing: Making a rushing, rustling, or murmuring sound

Swaying: Moving or swinging slowly backward and forward or from side-to-side

Frock: A dress

Leaflet: A small or young leaf

Scampering: Running lightly and quickly



At last it was very cold. Peter blew upon his fingers as he came up early, but he did not come much longer, for one night there was a deep snowfall, and in the morning the whole **Alm** was white and not a green leaf to be seen anywhere. Now the goatherd came no more with his flock; and Heidi sat looking through the tiny window, for it was snowing again, and the thick flakes filled the air, and the snow was piled up at last on a line with the window, then higher still, so that they could not open it, and were quite boxed up in the hut.

Heidi found this very pleasant indeed. She was constantly running from one window to another to see the view from each, and wondering if they were to be quite buried, for then they would have to light a lamp in the daytime.

It did not get to be quite so bad as that, however. On the following day the old man went out, as it had **ceased** to snow, and he shovelled a path round the house, throwing up the snow in great shovelfuls till it was piled into big **heaps**, and formed a mountain here, and another there, all about.

- by Johanna Spyri

Word Power

Alm: Mountain

Ceased: Stopped

Heaps: Large, messy piles

QUESTIONS

- 16.** The story is told from who's point of view?
- A. Heidi's
 - B. Peter's
 - C. the narrator's
 - D. the grandfather's
- 17.** Based on the passage, which of the following words best describe Heidi?
- A. curious and happy
 - B. excitable and active
 - C. friendly and obedient
 - D. amusing and energetic
- 18.** In the phrase "Once when he was making a new trough for the goats," the word "trough" refers to what?
- A. a winter shed
 - B. an animal pen
 - C. a pasture fence
 - D. a feeding container

19. Which of the following statements about Heidi is true based on the information in the passage?

- A. Heidi finds joy in everyday things.
- B. Heidi takes great care of the goats.
- C. Heidi likes spring better than winter.
- D. Heidi helps her grandfather build troughs.

20. Select all the quotes that support your answer in question 19.

- A. "Still, in her grandfather's room there was always hammering and sawing that delighted her also."
- B. "But Heidi's greatest joy came on the windy days, when the souging and sighing in the big pines behind the hut began."
- C. "The sun was now no longer hot as in the summer, and the child was glad to get out her shoes and stockings, and her frock."
- D. "Now the goatherd came no more with his flock; and Heidi sat looking through the tiny window."
- E. "On the following day the old man went out, as it had ceased to snow, and he shovelled a path round the house."



THE READING COMPREHENSION SKILL CATEGORIES

Every question that is testing reading comprehension is also testing one of four skill categories.

1. Identify and Interpret Ideas and Details (II)

For questions in this category, you find the answer based on ideas and details in the text.

2. Interpret Text Organization (ITO)

For questions in this category, you will have to look at how the author organizes and presents the text. You will need to look at the words the author chose to use and how they used them. You will also need to know what type of text it is.

3. Associate Meaning (AM)

For questions in this category, you will use the words and sentences in the text to understand the meaning of a word or phrase.

4. Making Connections (MC)

For questions in this category, you will link a detail or quotation to the purpose or main idea of the text. To do this, look for text linked to themes, main idea, purpose, or meaning.

There is one more skill category.

5. Evaluate (EV)

An evaluate question is known as a **best answer** question. These questions have bolded words and phrases, such as **best**, **most likely**, **probably**, or **most clearly**.

To evaluate something means to make a judgement about it or come to a conclusion about it. In the case of reading comprehension, the reader makes an evaluation based on what they read in the passage. With these questions, you need to evaluate what the best answer is.

Evaluate questions also always test one of the other four skill categories. For example, a question may test Associate Meaning and Evaluate. A question will never only be testing the Evaluate skill category.

HOW DID YOU DO?

Complete the chart. The correct answers are on page 192.

Question #	Skill Category	Correct	Incorrect	Overall Understanding: Low/Average/ Great
1.	ITO			
2.	III			
3.	ITO			
4.	MC			
5.	III			
6.	III			
7.	MC			
8.	AM			
9.	III			
10.	ITO			
11.	III			
12.	III			
13.	III			
14.	III/EV			
15.	ITO			
16.	ITO			
17.	III/EV			
18.	AM			
19.	MC			
20.	III			

Fill in your total number of correct answers out of 20 questions.

Total Correct _____ /20

Fill in how many of each skill category you scored correctly on:

III	Questions 2, 5, 6, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 17, 20
Number correct:	
ITO	Questions 1, 3, 10, 15, 16
Number correct:	
AM	Questions 8, 18
Number correct:	
MC	Questions 4, 7, 19
Number correct:	
EV	Questions 14, 17
Number correct:	

STUDENT REFLECTION

Circle your answer. You can circle more than one.

1. I am already doing well in these skill categories:

III ITO AM MC EV

2. I need extra help and practice in these skill categories:

III ITO AM MC EV



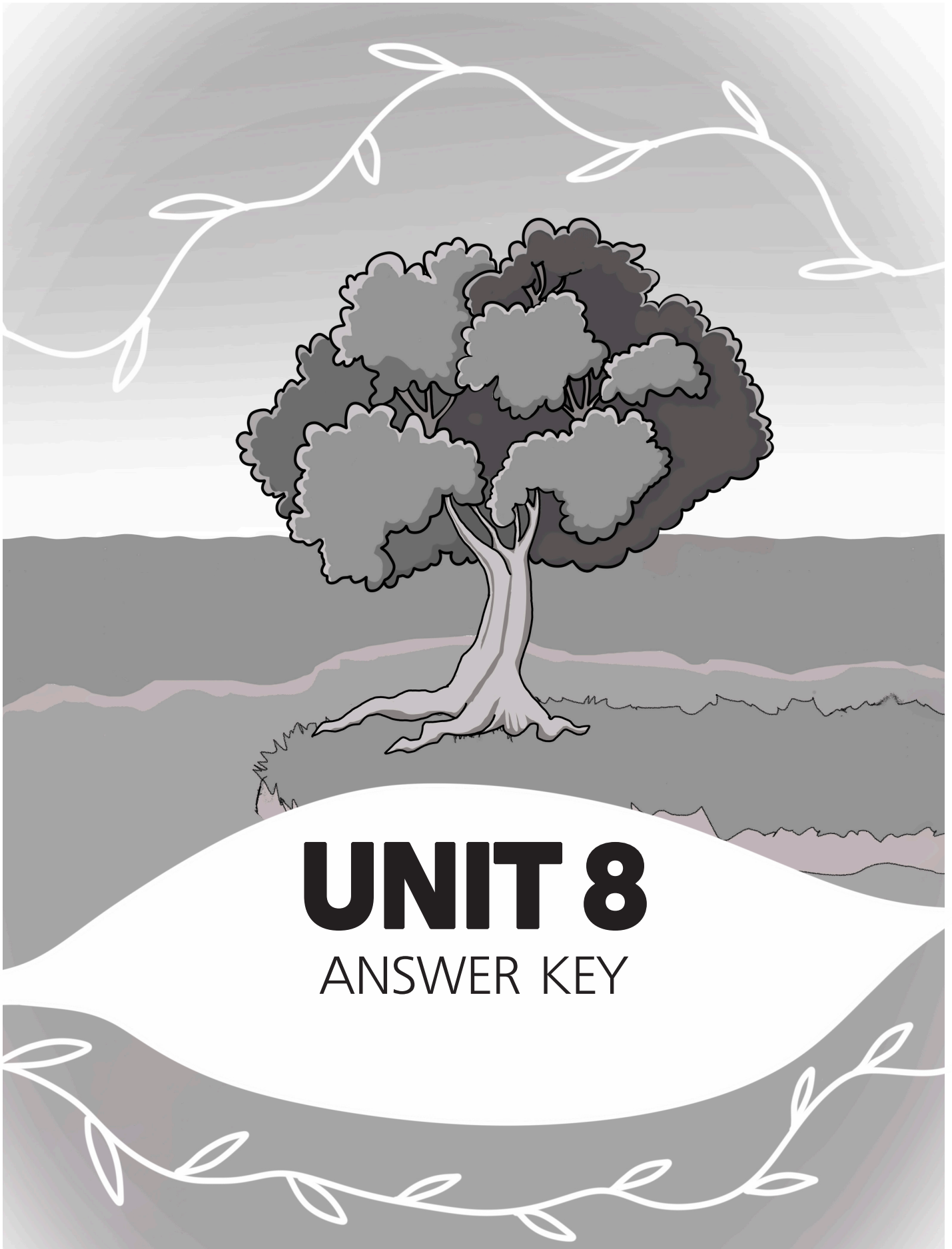
NEXT STEPS

The next five units will focus on each of the reading comprehension skill categories.

If you only need help in one or two of the skill categories, you can flip to those units and work through the lessons. Once you have completed the lessons in a unit, answer the practice questions.

You can also learn about each of the skill categories. Working through the lessons and practice questions will help to strengthen the skills you already have.

In Unit 7, there is a second assessment. After working through the lessons, you can use this assessment to see how much you have improved.



UNIT 8

ANSWER KEY

ANSWER KEY

UNIT 1 - SKILLS-BASED FIRST ASSESSMENT

1. D

In the sentence “You may have heard the *yip yip yip* barking and *ow ow ow* howling of coyotes at night,” the author uses onomatopoeia. Onomatopoeia is when words sound like the noises they represent. For example, “yip yip yip” and “ow ow ow” copy the sounds coyotes make, helping the reader imagine the noises better. This makes the description more interesting and helps paint a clear picture of the spooky sounds coyotes make when it is dark outside.

2. D

In Indigenous stories, Coyote is often shown as a mischievous trickster who has good and bad qualities, sometimes being foolish and other times being clever.

3. A

The sentence says a coyote looks like a bullet, highlighting how smooth and fast the coyote appears.

4. C

Trickster characters use humour, cleverness, and playfulness to communicate important messages

and lessons in stories.

5. B

The text mentions Anansi, a spider, and the fox as examples of trickster characters.

6. C

The passage says that the robots do not have to eat or drink. This means that they do not need food or water.

7. D

Working in a dark cave is not safe or easy for a human to do. A robot does not need any light or air to work.

8. C

A “bit” is a small piece or fragment of something. A robot collected very small pieces of a comet for scientists to study.

9. D

A robot is a machine, so we call it “mechanical,” which means that it is motorized or automatic.

10. C

If you wanted to quickly check what NASA stands for, you would be best to look online by doing a web search.