ADVANCED COMPREHENSION SKILLS:

Cloze Passages

Book 2

30 units of work to challenge and stimulate students

SAMPLE

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A FIVE SENSES PUBLICATION

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Introduction

Book 2 provides thirty new units organised around three new themes: technology; human society and culture; and earth, wind, fire and water. This book extends on the work covered in Book 1 by exposing students to variations in question type and difficulty. For example, some units ask students to match deleted subheadings to the gaps and others include more gaps to complete or additional distractor sentences. Students therefore do not merely get additional practice but also have an opportunity to adapt their skills to new contexts.

To complete the units successfully, students still need to apply the following comprehension skills:

- using context clues
- reading ahead and behind
- summarising the main idea of each paragraph
- identifying how information is organised within a paragraph
- understanding vocabulary
- attending to grammatical features.

A guide to approaching the questions

1. Skim

Skim the text to understand the overall topic of the text and how it is structured.

2. Main idea

Summarise the main idea of each paragraph. Annotating the main idea in the margin can be a useful way to sort through information and connect to the sentences that are closely related.

3. Context clues

Once students have narrowed a gap down to the sentences connected to the main idea, they should carefully use context clues to select the best fit. Students should not just focus on the paragraph itself, but also read backwards and forwards carefully—there are clues in the passage both before and after the gap.

4. Elimination

It is a good idea to cross out the sentence option, once students have chosen which best fits the gap.

The skills covered in this chapter will help students implement these steps.

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What's in the gap? Making an educated guess

In the cloze passage activity, the key to making an educated guess about the correct sentence that goes into a gap is to use all the information available. The information ranges from identifying the text structure and knowing its features, to knowing the main idea of each paragraph in order to understand the flow of ideas, to using the context clues such as vocabulary and pronouns.

The introduction section in Book 1 provides the first steps to tackling the cloze passage activity: identifying the text structure and then summarising the main idea of each paragraph. The activities in the introduction in Book 2 will focus on the final step before the process of elimination: guessing the kind of information you would expect to find in a gap.

The first piece of information available is the text structure. Remember that there are six main patterns of organisation:

1. Chronological
2. Spatial
3. Procedural
4. Cause and effect
5. Compare and contrast
6. Problem and solution.

Each text structure has its specific features, especially in the connectives that are used.

The second piece of information available to you is the main idea of each paragraph. The organisation of the main ideas provides the flow of content (ideas). Imagine that in a cause-and-effect text about, for example, the effects of poor home insulation, the order of main ideas is as follows:

- Poor insulation exacerbates temperatures in homes
- Poor insulation exacerbates the effects of noise pollution
- Poor insulation increases the risk of damp and mould.

Given this flow of ideas, what kind of information would you expect to find in the conclusion? It is likely that the summary in the conclusion will focus on the health impact of poor home insulation rather than on the consequences for the environment.

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Knowing the main idea of a paragraph also provides the basis for making the best guess of what might go in a gap within that paragraph. Using the same example, if the main idea is about the exacerbation of temperatures in poorly insulated homes, the paragraph will likely contain some of the following ideas:

- How much hotter temperatures are in summer
- How much colder temperatures are in winter
- What health consequences overly cold or warm temperatures have on residents.

If there is a gap in the paragraph, it is possible to guess what the content would be.

Once you have a sense of the kind of information that is likely to appear in a gap, you can have a look at the sentences or options provided for selection. Identify the sentence that has information similar to what you have already predicted. Confirm using context clues such as vocabulary choices, connectives and pronouns. If, however, there is more than one possible choice, then vocabulary and other context clues are even more important.

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EARTH WIND FIRE WATER **UNIT 1**

■ Six sentences have been removed from the following text. Choose which of the sentences, marked **A–G**, fits correctly into each gap, **1–6.** There will be one extra sentence left over which you do not need to use.



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An island is born

On November 14 1963, a cook aboard a fishing trawler sailing south of Iceland saw smoke rising from the surface of the sea and alerted the captain. The captain turned the ship around, thinking that a boat was on fire. In fact, the smoke originated from a volcanic eruption that was taking place on the ocean floor at a depth of 130 metres. 1. ____ Amazingly, the island was formed by one continuous eruption, one that lasted for several more years. 2. ____

The eruption did not come to an end till June 1967. At the end of January 1964, the island's elevation was 147 metres, almost 300 metres high when measured from the ocean floor. As the lava cooled, it formed a hard cap on the lower slopes of the island, protecting it from erosion. Between 1964 and 1967, the eruption continued to create smaller islands but these were quickly eroded and disappeared into the ocean.

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Islands born of volcanic eruptions or effusions make up a large proportion of all the islands in the world. 3. ____ But how can sections of Earth separate from each other without the planet breaking into pieces? Earth is made up of three main layers: the core, the mantle and the crust. Right at the centre of Earth is the core: it is made of a solid inner core and a liquid outer core which is mainly molten metal. Around the core is the rigid mantle on which the crust moves. Earth's crust is made up of plates that move on top of the mantle. There are seven major and eight minor plates and each moves in its own way. When plates move towards each other, the result is a new mountain; when plates slide against each other, the result is an earthquake; and when plates move apart, the result is either effusive or explosive lava.

Lava is the name given to magma that is extruded from the earth. Magma is produced when parts of the mantle or crust melt under extreme heat. When plate boundaries move apart, magma is able to reach the surface. When the flow is fluid and runny, the lava eruption is described as being effusive. An explosive eruption occurs when the lava is more viscous, trapping dissolved gases which eventually explode from the build-up of pressure. 4. ____ As long as the process of erosion is slower than the process of accumulation, new land is created.

Around the globe, a series of volcanic islands tends to be formed in the shape of an arc, decreasing in size from one end of the arc to the other. Examples of these island chains include Hawai'i in the Pacific Ocean, the Aleutian Islands in the Bering Sea and the Krakatoa Archipelago in the Java Sea. What causes the arc shape of these island chains?

Because Earth is a sphere, the tectonic plates that float on the surface are curved. 5. ____ The first island that is formed moves as the plates move and the spot from which lava flows forms the next island. Over time, water and wind erode the islands. The first — and oldest — of the islands is therefore usually the smallest and the least volcanically active; conversely, the youngest island is the usually the largest. Naturally, while this is the general pattern, this isn't always the case. Tectonic plates don't move at a steady speed, so the plates could move when an island is still small. 6.____

When you consider that researchers are constantly learning about how old some landforms are, it is amazing to learn that a new land can be formed in a matter of years. Sadly, such an event is rarely witnessed as new islands are usually formed in the middle of oceans. Still, with the availability of modern technology such as satellites and drones, researchers will be able to study more of these events more closely.

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EXERCISE EARTH WIND FIRE WATER **UNIT 1**

- Choose the sentences **A–G** to match the gaps marked **1–6** in *An island is born* and fill in your answers in the table below. There will be one sentence left over.

A. As the plates move, the new land consequently forms an arc shape.

B. Lava is the building block of new land, of an island, specifically of a volcanic island.

C. It is considered to be one of the longest eruptions ever recorded in Iceland.

D. Volcanic islands and submerged volcanoes can be found in areas of high volcanic activity (like Hawaii) and also areas of extinct volcanism (like Easter Island).

E. What they were witnessing was the birth of an island.

F. Furthermore, just as with Surtsey, a hard rock layer could form that caps an island and protects it from erosion.

G. Such islands are located at tectonic plate boundaries that are moving apart.

Fill in your answers:

1	2	3	4	5	6

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EARTH WIND FIRE WATER **UNIT 1**

An island is born

1	2	3	4	5	6
E	C	G	B	A	F

On November 14 1963, a cook aboard a fishing trawler sailing south of Iceland saw smoke rising from the surface of the sea and alerted the captain. The captain turned the ship around, thinking that a boat was on fire. In fact, the smoke originated from a volcanic eruption that was taking place on the ocean floor at a depth of 130 metres. **[1. E] What they were witnessing was the birth of an island.** Amazingly, the island was formed by one continuous eruption, one that lasted for several more years. **[2. C] It is considered to be one of the longest eruptions ever recorded in Iceland.**

The eruption did not come to an end till June 1967. At the end of January 1964, the island's elevation was 147 metres, almost 300 metres high when measured from the ocean floor. As the lava cooled, it formed a hard cap on the lower slopes of the island, protecting it from erosion. Between 1964 and 1967, the eruption continued to create smaller islands but these were quickly eroded and disappeared into the ocean.

Islands born of volcanic eruptions or effusions make up a large proportion of all the islands in the world. **[3. G] Such islands are located at tectonic plate boundaries that are moving apart.** But how can sections of Earth separate from each other without the planet breaking into pieces? Earth is made up of three main layers: the core, the mantle and the crust. Right at the centre of Earth is the core: it is made of a solid inner core and a liquid outer core which is mainly molten metal. Around the core is the rigid mantle on which the crust moves. Earth's crust is made up of plates that move on top of the mantle. There are seven major and eight minor plates and each moves in its own way. When plates move towards each other, the result is a new mountain; when plates slide against each other, the result is an earthquake; and when plates move apart, the result is either effusive or explosive lava.

Lava is the name given to magma that is extruded from the earth. Magma is produced when parts of the mantle or crust melt under extreme heat. When plate boundaries move apart, magma is able to reach the surface. When the flow is fluid and runny, the lava eruption is described as being effusive. An explosive eruption occurs when the lava is more viscous, trapping dissolved gases which eventually explode from the build-up of pressure.

[4. B] Lava is the building block of new land, of an island, specifically of a volcanic island. As long as the process of erosion is slower than the process of accumulation, new land is created.

Around the globe, a series of volcanic islands tends to be formed in the shape of an arc, decreasing in size from one end of the arc to the other. Examples of these island chains include Hawai'i in the Pacific Ocean, the Aleutian Islands in the Bering Sea and the Krakatoa Archipelago in the Java Sea. What causes the arc shape of these island chains?

Because Earth is a sphere, the tectonic plates that float on the surface are curved. **[5. A] As the plates move, the new land consequently forms an arc shape.** The first island that is formed moves as the plates move and the spot from which lava flows forms the next island. Over time, water and wind erode the islands. The first — and oldest — of the islands is therefore usually the smallest and the least volcanically active; conversely, the youngest island is the usually the largest. Naturally, while this is the general pattern, this isn't always the case. Tectonic plates don't move at a steady speed, so the plates could move when an island is still small. **[6. F] Furthermore, just as with Surtsey, a hard rock layer could form that caps an island and protects it from erosion.**

When you consider that researchers are constantly learning about how old some landforms are, it is amazing to learn that a new land can be formed in a matter of years. Sadly, such an event is rarely witnessed as new islands are usually formed in the middle of oceans. Still, with the availability of modern technology such as satellites and drones, researchers will be able to study more of these events more closely.

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