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Introduction

Jet was a border collie. Jet worked at an airport. He worked for ninety minutes every morning. He worked for ninety minutes every evening. His work helped save the airport a lot of money. It helped save lives.

* * * * *

How can the investigator know if the fire was set on purpose? How can he tell if the fire was an act of arson? The fire investigator calls me! My name is Toby. I am a dog.

If a student read either one of these statements out of context, the student might have difficulty in knowing which statement was fiction and which one was nonfiction. In addition, the student would have no idea how the two statements could be tied together or used to support an argument or idea.

If, on the other hand, the student read these statements in context and understood how they fit into an entire passage, the student would be able to answer with confidence that as strange as it may seem, Jet was trained to clear runways of large and/or migrating birds that most often wander onto the runway in the early morning or evening. The student would then be able to compare, contrast or tie this fact to the passage about Toby, a fictional dog who describes the work of real dogs that have been trained to detect chemicals most often used in cases of arson. (Both passages deal with unusual occupations of working dogs.)

Many tests now contain assessment sections that contain paired passages. After reading two passages, students are expected to differentiate between fiction and nonfiction passages. They are expected to see how the two are connected and understand the underlying connection, as well as how they are dissimilar. They are asked to demonstrate their understanding of the passages by answering multiple-choice questions as well as providing written responses.

This is a multi-levelled task that draws on many different aspects of the reading and writing process. *Paired Passages: Linking Fact to Fiction, Year 4* was written to provide practice with this type of exercise and assessment, including:

- ❖ exercises that build reading comprehension
- ❖ exercises that develop the skills needed to break down and analyse story elements
- ❖ exercises that provide practice in keeping sequence and details from two sources separate
- ❖ exercises that provide practice in proper letter formation, spacing and spelling
- ❖ practice with multiple-choice questions
- ❖ practice with written-response questions on individual passage themes
- ❖ practice with written-response questions that utilise information from two contrasting passages

Introduction (cont.)

In short, this book was written so that students will develop and practise the skills it takes to compare and contrast fiction and nonfiction passages. If asked, “Is it true that some dogs work at airports only in the morning and evening?” students will know how to find and use information from two given passages to answer the question. They will also be able to record their reasoned response in the written form.

Using this Book

The Passages

There are 25 units in *Paired Passages: Linking Fact to Fiction*. Each individual unit contains two high-interest passages. The first passage is nonfiction. The second is fiction. Each passage is written at year level with appropriate vocabulary and sentence structure. The passages are tied together with a common theme. Unit subjects run the gamut from lipless animals to the most famous riddle in history.

The units may be done sequentially, but they do not have to be. A teacher may choose to go out of order or pick specific units at different times because of class interest or individual students’ needs.

Units may be done as a class or assigned as individual work.

The Multiple-choice Questions

A page of multiple-choice questions follows the two passages. The first question focuses on the nonfiction passage. The second question focuses on the fiction passage. Answer choices for these questions come only from the passage the question stem is referring to.

The third multiple-choice question asks what both passages have in common.

The fourth and fifth questions require the student to differentiate between the passages and understand what topic is covered in each one, as the answer choices are drawn from both passages. A few of these questions will require a student to combine the information from both passages to infer or extrapolate the answer.

Students can answer multiple-choice questions on the page by filling in the circle of the correct answer. Students can also answer multiple-choice questions by filling in the answer sheet located on page 7. Using this page provides practice responding in a standardised-test format.

Introduction (cont.)

The Written Responses

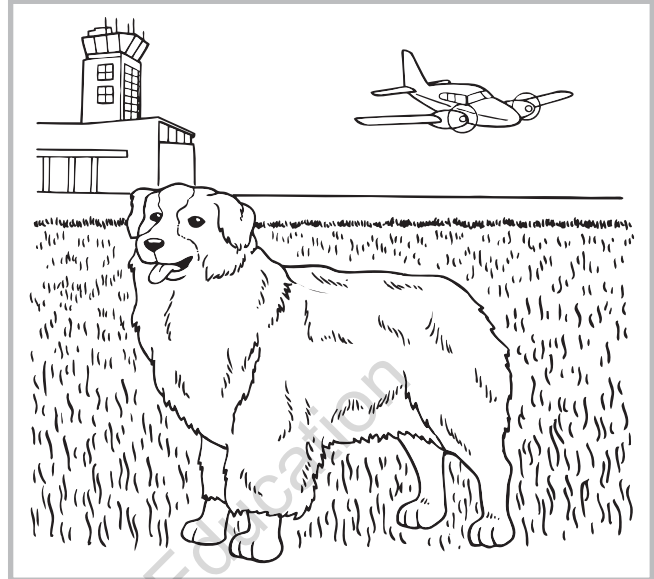
A page requiring written responses makes up the final page of each unit. The first two exercises vary depending on the Unit. They may require sequencing of events by filling in boxes, making lists, or drawing and labelling a picture. Each response deals with only one of the passages. These exercises are written to provide students with a foundation of sorting and organising information. They provide an exercise in referring back to and keeping two different pieces of literary prose separate in the reader's mind.

The final two written responses require higher-level responses. First, one is asked to write out the main theme of each passage with two complete sentences. Lastly, one is asked to write a paragraph in response to a question that requires thinking about or using information from both passages to answer.

A teacher's expectations of what is a satisfactory response on these last questions may change over the year, or it may vary depending on the level of the student. For example, at the beginning of the year or with some students, a teacher may accept phonetic spelling and lack of some kinds of punctuation. As specific topics are covered in class and students become more mature, a teacher may begin to check spelling, punctuation, grammar and sentence construction more rigorously, or require longer and more detailed responses. Enough variation allows that all students, even those deficit in year-level writing skills or those with advanced writing skills, can participate.

Jet's Job

Jet was a border collie. Border collies are a breed of working dogs. The breed was developed to help herd sheep. Jet worked, but he did not herd sheep. Jet worked at an airport. He worked for ninety minutes every morning. He worked for ninety minutes every evening. Jet's work was very important. His work helped save the airport a lot of money. It helped stop planes from becoming damaged. It helped save lives. What was Jet's job?



Jet worked at an airport. The airport was close to swamps, marshes and parks. The swamps, marshes and parks were home to many large birds. In addition, thousands of migrating birds stopped at these places to rest. Often, the birds would wander or land on airport land. Their numbers were greatest in the cooler mornings and evenings when they were hunting for food.

The birds were at risk when they were on the runways. Planes were not safe either. Birds could be sucked into engines. They could damage plane parts. Jet was hired to clear the birds from the runways.

Jet was trained with a shepherd's whistle. Different whistles meant different commands. Some whistles commanded Jet to clear certain runways. One whistle commanded Jet to drop to the ground. This whistle was given when an aeroplane skimmed low overhead.

Who the Fire Investigator Called

The fire is out. There is nothing left but a mess of soaked ashes, pieces of blackened walls and scraps of charred floor. The fire investigator comes. The investigator thinks the fire was set on purpose. He thinks it was arson. Arson is a crime. How can the investigator know if the fire was set on purpose? How can he tell if the fire was an act of arson?

The fire investigator calls me! My name is Toby. I am a dog. I have been trained to detect certain smells. The smells belong to certain chemicals and substances. The chemicals and substances are used to start fires. Arsonists think these chemicals will burn up in the fire. What they don't know is that tiny traces remain. I can smell even the tiniest trace.

When I smell something, I bark. I alert the investigator. The investigator takes a small piece of what I am barking at to the lab. He tests it. If he finds the chemicals, he can tell the police, "I think the fire was arson."

One time, an old building caught on fire. I was called in. I got right to work. I detected petrol. Where was the petrol? It was on the building owner's feet! The owner had used petrol to set his old building on fire.



Show What You Know

Answer the questions on “Jet’s Job” and “Who the Fire Investigator Called”. You may look back at what you have read if you need to.

1. Jet worked

- (A) at the airport for ninety minutes every week.
- (B) in the swamps, marshes and parks.
- (C) close to the ground when the birds were migrating.
- (D) at the times when the number of birds was the greatest.

2. A trace is

- (A) a lot.
- (B) a smell.
- (C) a tiny bit.
- (D) a chemical.

3. What do both stories have in common?

- (A) dogs and birds
- (B) dogs with jobs
- (C) how dogs smell
- (D) how dogs are trained

4. By knowing different whistles, Jet

- (A) could detect even tiny birds.
- (B) could protect the airport from arson.
- (C) could clear birds from a soon-to-be used runway.
- (D) could herd the birds into a marsh off airport land.

5. A fiction story is made up. It is not true. You can tell the story about

- (A) Toby is fiction because dogs cannot tell stories.
- (B) Jet is fiction because dogs have not been bred to herd sheep.
- (C) Toby is fiction because dogs are not used to investigate fires.
- (D) Jet is fiction because migrating birds do not land on airport runways.

Show What You Know [cont.]

6. There was a problem in the story “Jet’s Job”. Use information from the story to answer the questions about the problem.

What was the problem? _____

Where was the problem? _____

When was the problem greatest? _____

Why was there a problem? _____

How was the problem fixed? _____

7. List in order how an arsonist might be found. Use the numbers 1 to 5. Put 1 by what happened first. Put 5 by what happened last.

_____ burnt piece tested in lab

_____ fire investigator comes with dog

_____ firefighters put out fire

_____ police told crime took place

_____ dog detects chemical traces

Write two or more sentences that tell what each story is about.

8. “Jet’s Job” _____

9. “Who the Fire Investigator Called” _____

10. Do you think dogs that are bred to herd sheep would make the best arson detecting dogs? Do you think another breed would be better? Write one paragraph telling why or why not.
