Preparing Students for PISA

Reading Literacy
Assessment Questions

*Programme for International Student Assessment

Based almost entirely on the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development document Sample Tasks from the PISA 2000 Assessment: Reading, Mathematics and Scientific Literacy © OECD (2002). Reproduced by permission of the OECD.”
Dear Student,

The tasks and questions in this booklet are for you to practise your reading skills. If you have been selected to participate in the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) then you should be confident that you will do well. By paying close attention in your English class and by working through the tasks and questions in this booklet you will be well prepared to complete the assessment with success.

Here are a few assessment-taking strategies:

• Always read the information for each task carefully. Think about what the information is telling you.
• Reread each task question and any accompanying text before attempting an answer.
• Give each question a try, even if you are not sure. Remember that partial value is given for partially correct answers.
• Questions that begin with Why? Why do you think? or How do you know? require more than a few words to answer. Take your time to fully explain and give reasons for your answer.
• For multiple choice questions, look at each choice and eliminate those that are incorrect or not the best possible answer. There is no penalty for guessing, if you do not know the exact answer.

Best wishes with the tasks that follow.
READING UNIT 1 Lake Chad

Figure A shows changing levels of Lake Chad, in Saharan, North Africa. Lake Chad disappeared completely in about 20000 BC, during the last Ice Age. In about 11000 BC it reappeared. Today, its level is about the same as it was in AD 1000.

Figure A

Lake Chad: Changing levels

Figure B

Saharan rock art (ancient drawings or paintings found on the walls of caves) and changing patterns of wildlife.

Use the information about Lake Chad on the opposite page to answer the questions below.

Question 1: LAKE CHAD (R040Q02)

What is the depth of Lake Chad today?
A about two metres
B about fifteen metres
C about fifty metres
D it has disappeared completely
E the information is not provided

Question 2: LAKE CHAD (R040Q03A)

In about which year does the graph in Figure A start?

Question 3: LAKE CHAD (R040Q03B)

Why has the author chosen to start the graph at this point?

Question 4: LAKE CHAD (R040Q04)

Figure B is based on the assumption that
A the animals in the rock art were present in the area at the time they were drawn.
B the artists who drew the animals were highly skilled.
C the artists who drew the animals were able to travel widely.
D there was no attempt to domesticate the animals that were depicted in the rock art.

Question 5: LAKE CHAD (R040Q06)

For this question you need to draw together information from Figure A and Figure B.

The disappearance of the rhinoceros, hippopotamus, and aurochs from Saharan rock art happened
A at the beginning of the most recent Ice Age
B in the middle of the period when Lake Chad was at its highest level
C after the level of Lake Chad had been falling for over a 1000 years
D at the beginning of an uninterrupted dry period
The tree diagram below shows the structure of a country’s labour force or “working-age population”. The total population of the country in 1995 was about 3.4 million.

The labour force structure, year ended 31 March 1995 (000s)

1. Numbers of people are given in thousands (000s).
2. The working-age population is defined as people between the ages of 15 and 65.
3. People “not in labour force” are those not actively seeking work and/or not available for work.

Source: D. Miller, *Form 6 Economics*, ESA Publications, Box 9453, Newmarker, Auckland, NZ, p. 64
Use the above information about a country’s labour force to answer the following questions.

Question 6: LABOUR (R088Q01)

*What are the two main groups into which the working-age population is divided?*

A employed and unemployed  
B of working age and not of working age  
C full-time workers and part-time workers  
D in the labour force and not in the labour force

Question 7: LABOUR (R088Q03)

*How many people of working age were not in the labour force? (Write the number of people, not the percentage.)*

Question 8: LABOUR (R088Q04)

*In which part of the tree diagram, if any, would each of the people listed in the table below be included?*

*Show your answer by placing a cross in the correct box in the table.*

*The first one has been done for you.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In labour force: employed</th>
<th>In labour force: unemployed</th>
<th>Not in labour force</th>
<th>Not included in any category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A part-time waiter, aged 35</td>
<td>☒</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A business woman, aged 43, who works a 60-hour week</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A full-time student, aged 21</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A man, aged 28, who recently sold his shop and is looking for work</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A woman, aged 55, who has never worked or wanted to work outside the home</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A grandmother, aged 80, who still works a few hours a day at the family's market stall</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Question 9: LABOUR (R088Q05)

Suppose that information about the labour force was presented in a tree diagram like this every year.

Listed below are four features of the tree diagram. Show whether or not you would expect these features to change from year to year, by circling either “Change” or “No change”. The first one has been done for you.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Features of Tree Diagram</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The labels in each box (i.e. “In labour force”)</td>
<td>Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The percentages (i.e. “64.2%”)</td>
<td>No change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The numbers (i.e. “2656.5”)</td>
<td>No change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The footnotes under the tree diagram</td>
<td>No change</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question 10: LABOUR (R088Q07)

The information about the labour force structure is presented as a tree diagram, but it could have been presented in a number of other ways, such as a written description, a pie chart, a graph, or a table.

The tree diagram was probably chosen because it is especially useful for showing

A changes over time
B the size of the country’s total population
C categories within each group
D the size of each group
## PLAN International Program Results Financial Year 1996

### Region of Eastern and Southern Africa (RESA)

### Growing up healthy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Egypt</th>
<th>Ethiopia</th>
<th>Kenya</th>
<th>Malawi</th>
<th>Sudan</th>
<th>Tanzania</th>
<th>Uganda</th>
<th>Zambia</th>
<th>Zimbabwe</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Health posts built with 4 rooms or less</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health workers trained for 1 day</td>
<td>1,053</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>719</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>425</td>
<td>1,003</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>1085</td>
<td>4,385</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children given nutrition supplements &gt; 1 week</td>
<td>10,195</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2,240</td>
<td>2,400</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>251,402</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children given financial help with health/ dental treatment</td>
<td>984</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>396</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>305</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>581</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2,283</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Egypt</th>
<th>Ethiopia</th>
<th>Kenya</th>
<th>Malawi</th>
<th>Sudan</th>
<th>Tanzania</th>
<th>Uganda</th>
<th>Zambia</th>
<th>Zimbabwe</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers trained for 1 week</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>367</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>970</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>565</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>303</td>
<td>2,320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School exercise books bought/donated</td>
<td>667</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>41,200</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>69,106</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>111,123</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School textbooks bought/made/donated</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>45,650</td>
<td>9,600</td>
<td>1,182</td>
<td>8,769</td>
<td>7,285</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>58,387</td>
<td>131,023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uniforms bought/made/donated</td>
<td>8,897</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5,761</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>6,040</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>434</td>
<td>23,132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children helped with school fees/a scholarship</td>
<td>12,321</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1,598</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2,014</td>
<td>16,087</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School desks built/bought/donated</td>
<td>3,200</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3,689</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>1,564</td>
<td>1,725</td>
<td>1,794</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4,109</td>
<td>16,331</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permanent classrooms built</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>353</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classrooms repaired</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adults receiving training in literacy this financial year</td>
<td>1,160</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3,000</td>
<td>568</td>
<td>3,617</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>8,695</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Habitat

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Egypt</th>
<th>Ethiopia</th>
<th>Kenya</th>
<th>Malawi</th>
<th>Sudan</th>
<th>Tanzania</th>
<th>Uganda</th>
<th>Zambia</th>
<th>Zimbabwe</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Latrines or toilets dug/built</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2,403</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>4,311</td>
<td>7,102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Houses connected to a new sewage system</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wells dug/improved (or springs capped)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New positive boreholes drilled</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>362</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gravity feed drinking water systems built</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drinking water systems repaired/improved</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>392</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>425</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Houses improved with PLAN project</td>
<td>265</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>520</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>788</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New houses built for beneficiaries</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>596</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>313</td>
<td>1,142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community halls built or improved</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community leaders trained for 1 day or more</td>
<td>2,214</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>3,522</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>3,575</td>
<td>814</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2,693</td>
<td>13,365</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kilometres of roadway improved</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5.34</td>
<td>80.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bridges built</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Families benefited directly from erosion control</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1,092</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>18,405</td>
<td>20,997</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Houses newly served by electrification project</td>
<td>448</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>494</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Adapted from “PLAN International Program Output Chart Financial Year 1996”, appendix to Quarterly Report to the International Board first quarter 1997.
The table above is part of a report published by PLAN International, an international aid organization. It gives some information about PLAN’s work in one of its regions of operation (Eastern and Southern Africa). Refer to the table to answer the following questions.

Question 11: PLAN INTERNATIONAL (R099Q04A)

What does the table indicate about the level of PLAN International’s activity in Ethiopia in 1996, compared with other countries in the region?

A The level of activity was comparatively high in Ethiopia.
B The level of activity was comparatively low in Ethiopia.
C It was about the same as in other countries in the region.
D It was comparatively high in the Habitat category and low in the other categories.

Question 12: PLAN INTERNATIONAL (R099Q04B)

In 1996 Ethiopia was one of the poorest countries in the world.

Taking this fact and the information in the table into account, what do you think might explain the level of PLAN International’s activities in Ethiopia compared with its activities in other countries?
FOR 14 YEARS the Sports Medicine Centre of Lyon (France) has been studying the injuries of young sports players and sports professionals. The study has established that the best course is prevention ... and good shoes.

Knocks, falls, wear and tear ...

Eighteen percent of sports players aged 8 to 12 already have heel injuries. The cartilage of a footballer’s ankle does not respond well to shocks, and 25 percent of professionals have discovered for themselves that it is an especially weak point. The cartilage of the delicate knee joint can also be irreparably damaged, and if care is not taken right from childhood (10–12 years of age), this can cause premature osteoarthritis. The hip does not escape damage either and, particularly when tired, players run the risk of fractures as a result of falls or collisions.

According to the study, footballers who have been playing for more than 10 years have bony outgrowths either on the tibia or on the heel. This is what is known as “footballer’s foot,” a deformity caused by shoes with soles and ankle parts that are too flexible.

Protect, support, stabilize, absorb

If a shoe is too rigid, it restricts movement. If it is too flexible, it increases the risk of injuries and sprains. A good sports shoe should meet four criteria.

Firstly, it must provide exterior protection: resisting knocks from the ball or another player, coping with unevenness in the ground, and keeping the foot warm and dry even when it is freezing cold and raining.

It must support the foot, and in particular the ankle joint, to avoid sprains, swelling, and other problems, which may even affect the knee.

It must also provide players with good stability so that they do not slip on a wet ground or skid on a surface that is too dry.

Finally, it must absorb shocks, especially those suffered by volleyball and basketball players who are constantly jumping.

Dry feet

To avoid minor but painful conditions such as blisters or even splits or athlete’s foot (fungal infections), the shoe must allow evaporation of perspiration and must prevent outside dampness from getting in. The ideal material for this is leather, which can be water-proofed to prevent the shoe from getting soaked the first time it rains.
Use the article on the preceding page to answer the questions below.

Question 13: RUNNERS (R110Q01)

What does the author intend to show in this text?

A that the quality of many sports shoes has greatly improved  
B that it is best not to play football if you are under 12 years of age  
C that young people are suffering more and more injuries owing to their poor physical condition  
D that it is very important for young sports players to wear good sports shoes

Question 14: RUNNERS (R110Q04)

According to the article, why should sports shoes not be too rigid?

Question 15: RUNNERS (R110Q05)

One part of the article says “A good sports shoe should meet four criteria.”

What are these criteria?

Question 16: RUNNERS (R110Q06)

Look at this sentence from near the end of the article. It is presented here in two parts:

“To avoid minor but painful conditions such as blisters or even splits or athlete’s foot (fungal infections) ...” (first part)

“... the shoe must allow evaporation of perspiration and must prevent outside dampness from getting in.” (second part)

What is the relationship between the first and second parts of the sentence?

The second part

A contradicts the first part  
B repeats the first part  
C illustrates the problem described in the first part  
D gives the solution to the problem described in the first part
HOW MANY DAYS, she wondered, had she sat like this, watching the cold brown water inch up the dissolving bluff. She could just faintly remember the beginning of the rain, driving in across the swamp from the south and beating against the shell of her house. Then the river itself started rising, slowly at first until at last it paused to turn back. From hour to hour it slithered up creeks and ditches and poured over low places. In the night, while she slept, it claimed the road and surrounded her so that she sat alone, her boat gone, the house like a piece of drift lodged on its bluff. Now even against the tarred planks of the supports the waters touched. And still they rose.

As far as she could see, to the treetops where the opposite banks had been, the swamp was an empty sea, awash with sheets of rain, the river lost somewhere in its vastness. Her house with its boat bottom had been built to ride just such a flood, if one ever came, but now it was old. Maybe the boards underneath were partly rotted away. Maybe the cable mooring the house to the great live oak would snap loose and let her go turning downstream, the way her boat had gone.

No one could come now. She could cry out but it would be no use, no one would hear. Down the length and breadth of the swamp others were fighting to save what little they could, maybe even their lives. She had seen a whole house go floating by, so quiet she was reminded of sitting at a funeral. She thought when she saw it she knew whose house it was. It had been bad seeing it drift by, but the owners must have escaped to higher ground. Later, with the rain and darkness pressing in, she had heard a panther scream upriver.

Now the house seemed to shudder around her like something alive. She reached out to catch a lamp as it tilted off the table by her bed and put it between her feet to hold it steady. Then, creaking and groaning with effort, the house struggled up from the clay, floated free, bobbing like a cork, and swung out slowly with the pull of the river. She gripped the edge of the bed. Swaying from side to side, the house moved to the length of its mooring. There was a jolt and a complaining of old timbers and then a pause. Slowly the current released it and let it swing back, rasping across its resting place. She caught her breath and sat for a long time feeling, the slow pendulous sweeps. The dark sifted down through the incessant rain, and, head on arm, she slept holding on to the bed.

Sometime in the night the cry awoke her, a sound so anguished she was on her feet before she was awake. In the dark she stumbled against the bed. It came from out there, from the river. She could hear something moving, something large that made a dredging, sweeping sound. It could be another house. Then it hit, not head on but glancing and sliding down the length of her house. It was a tree. She listened as the branches and leaves cleared themselves and went on downstream, leaving only the rain and the lappings of the flood, sounds so constant now that they seemed a part of the silence. Huddled on the bed, she was almost asleep again when another cry sounded, this time so close it could have been in the room. Staring into the dark, she eased back on the bed until her hand caught the cold shape of the rifle. Then, crouched on the pillow, she cradled the gun across her knees. “Who’s there?” she called.

The answer was a repeated cry, but less shrill, tired sounding, then the empty silence closing in. She drew back against the bed. Whatever was there she could hear it moving about on the porch. Planks creaked, and she could distinguish the sounds of objects being knocked over. There was a scratching on the wall as if it would tear its way in. She knew now what it was, a big cat, deposited by the uprooted tree that had passed her. It had come with the flood, a gift.

Unconsciously she pressed her hand against her face and along her tightened throat. The rifle rocked across her knees. She had never seen a panther in her life. She had heard about them from others and heard their cries, like suffering, in the distance. The cat was scratching
on the wall again, rattling the window by the door. As long as she guarded the window and kept the cat hemmed in by the wall and water, caged, she would be all right. Outside, the animal paused to rake his claws across the rusted outer screen. Now and then, it whimpered and growled.

When the light filtered down through the rain at last, coming like another kind of dark, she was still sitting on the bed, stiff and cold. Her arms, used to rowing on the river, ached from the stillness of holding the rifle. She had hardly allowed herself to move for fear any sound might give strength to the cat. Rigid, she swayed with the movement of the house. The rain still fell as if it would never stop. Through the grey light, finally, she could see the rain-pitted flood and far away the cloudy shape of drowned treetops. The cat was not moving now. Maybe he had gone away. Laying the gun aside, she slipped off the bed and moved without a sound to the window. It was still there, crouched at the edge of the porch, staring up at the live oak, the mooring of the house, as if gauging its chances of leaping to an overhanging branch. It did not seem so frightening now that she could see it, its coarse fur napped into twigs, its sides pinched and ribs showing. It would be easy to shoot it where it sat, its long tail whipping back and forth. She was moving back to get the gun when it turned around. With no warning, no crouch or tensing of muscles, it sprang at the window, shattering a pane of glass. She fell back, stifling a scream, and took up the rifle, she fired through the window. She could not see the panther now, but she had missed. It began to pace again. She could glimpse its head and the arch of its back as it passed the window.

Shivering, she pulled back on the bed and lay down. The lulling constant sound of the river and the rain, the penetrating chill, drained away her purpose. She watched the window and kept the gun ready. After waiting a long while, she moved again to look. The panther had fallen asleep, its head on its paws, like a house cat. For the first time since the rains began she wanted to cry, for herself, for all the people, for everything in the flood. Sliding down on the bed, she pulled the quilt around her shoulders. She should have got out when she could, while the roads were still open or before her boat was washed away. As she rocked back and forth with the sway of the house, a deep ache in her stomach reminded her she hadn’t eaten. She couldn’t remember for how long. Like the cat, she was starving. Easing into the kitchen, she made a fire with the few remaining sticks of wood. If the flood lasted she would have to burn the chair, maybe even the table itself. Taking down the remains of a smoked ham from the ceiling, she cut thick slices of the brownish red meat and placed them in a skillet. The smell of the frying meat made her dizzy. There were stale biscuits from the last time she had cooked, and she could make some coffee. There was plenty of water.

While she was cooking her food, she almost forgot about the cat until it whimpered. It was hungry too. “Let me eat,” she called to it, “and then I’ll see to you.” And she laughed under her breath. As she hung the rest of the ham back on its nail, the cat growled a deep throaty rumble that made her hand shake.

After she had eaten, she went to the bed again and took up the rifle. The house had risen so high now it no longer scraped across the bluff when it swung back from the river. The food had warmed her. She could get rid of the cat while light still hung in the rain. She crept slowly to the window. It was still there, mewling, beginning to move about the porch. She stared at it a long time, unafraid. Then without thinking what she was doing, she laid the gun aside and started around the edge of the bed to the kitchen. Behind her the cat was moving, fretting. She took down what was left of the ham and, making her way back across the swaying floor to the window, she shoved it through the broken pane. On the other side there was a hungry snarl and something like a shock passed from the animal to her. Stunned by what she had done, she drew back to the bed. She could hear the sounds of the panther tearing at the meat. The house rocked around her.

The next time she awoke she knew at once that everything had changed. The rain had stopped. She felt for the movement of the house but it no longer swayed on the flood. Drawing her door open, she saw through the torn screen a different world. The house was resting on the bluff where it always had. A few feet down, the river still raced on in a torrent, but it no longer covered the few feet between the house and the live oak. And the cat was gone. Leading from the porch to the live oak and doubtless on into the swamp were tracks, indistinct and already disappearing into the soft mud. And there on the porch, gnawed to whiteness, was what was left of the ham.

Use the story “The Gift” on the previous pages to answer the questions that follow. (Note that line numbers are given in the margin of the story to help you find parts that are referred to in the questions.)

Question 17: THE GIFT (RI19Q09)

Here is part of a conversation between two people who read “The Gift”:

Give evidence from the story to show how these speakers could justify their points of view.

Speaker 1

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Speaker 2

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Question 18: THE GIFT (RI19Q01)

What is the woman’s situation at the beginning of the story?

A She is too weak to leave the house after days without food.
B She is defending herself against a wild animal.
C Her house has been surrounded by flood waters.
D A flooded river has swept her house away.
Question 19: THE GIFT (R119Q07)

Here are some of the early references to the panther in the story.

“the cry awoke her, a sound so anguished ...” (line 27)

“The answer was a repeated cry, but less shrill, tired sounding ...” (line 36)

“She had ... heard their cries, like suffering, in the distance.” (lines 42-43)

Considering what happens in the rest of the story, why do you think the writer chooses to introduce the panther with these descriptions?

Question 20: THE GIFT (R119Q06)

“Then creaking and groaning with effort the house struggled up ...” (lines 20–21)

What happened to the house in this part of the story?

A It fell apart.
B It began to float.
C It crashed into the oak tree.
D It sank to the bottom of the river.
Question 21: THE GIFT (R119Q08)

What does the story suggest was the woman’s reason for feeding the panther?


Question 22: THE GIFT (R119Q04)

When the woman says “and then I’ll see to you” (line 75) she means that she is

A sure that the cat won’t hurt her.
B trying to frighten the cat.
C intending to shoot the cat.
D planning to feed the cat.


Question 23: THE GIFT (R119Q05)

Do you think that the last sentence of “The Gift” is an appropriate ending?

Explain your answer, demonstrating your understanding of how the last sentence relates to the story’s meaning.


AMANDA AND THE DUCHESS

Summary: Since Léocadia’s death, the Prince, who was in love with her, has been inconsolable. At a shop called Réséda Soeurs, the Duchess, who is the Prince’s aunt, has met a young shop assistant, Amanda, who looks amazingly like Léocadia. The Duchess wants Amanda to help her set the Prince free from the memories that haunt him.

A crossroads in the castle grounds, a circular bench around a small obelisk ... evening is falling ...

AMANDA

I still don’t understand. What can I do for him, ma’am?
I can’t believe you could possibly have thought ... And why me? I’m not particularly pretty. And even if someone were very pretty — who could suddenly come between him and his memories like that?

THE DUCHESS

No one but you.

AMANDA, sincerely surprised

Me?

THE DUCHESS

The world is so foolish, my child. It sees only parades, gestures, badges of office... that must be why you have never been told. But my heart hasn’t deceived me – I almost cried out at Réséda Soeurs the first time I saw you. To someone who knew more of her than just her public image, you are the living likeness of Léocadia.

A silence. The evening birds have now taken over from the afternoon birds. The grounds are filled with shadows and twittering.

AMANDA, very gently

I really don’t think I can, ma’am. I have nothing, I am nothing, and those lovers... that was my fancy, don’t you see?
She has got up. As if about to leave, she has picked up her small suitcase.

THE DUCHESS, gently also, and very wearily

Of course, my dear. I apologize.
She in turn gets up, with difficulty, like an old woman. A bicycle bell is heard in the evening air; she gives a start.
Listen...it’s him! Just show yourself to him, leaning against this little obelisk where he first met her. Let him see you, even if it’s just this once, let him call out, take a sudden interest in this likeness, in this stratagem which I shall confess to him tomorrow and for which he will hate me — in anything but this dead girl who’ll take him away from me one of these days, I’m sure... (She has taken her by the arm.) You will do that, won’t you? I beg you most humbly, young lady. (She looks at her, beseechingly, and quickly adds:) And then, that way, you’ll see him too. And ... I can feel that I’m blushing again from saying this to you — life is just too mad! That’s the third time I’ve blushed in sixty years, and the second time in ten minutes — you’ll see him; and if he could ever (why not him, since he’s handsome and charming and he wouldn’t be the first?) if he could ever have the good fortune, for himself and for me, to take your fancy for one moment ... The bell again in the shadows, but very close now.

AMANDA, in a whisper

What should I say to him?

THE DUCHESS, gripping her arm

Simply say “Excuse me, Sir, can you tell me the way to the sea?”
She has hurried into the deeper shadows of the trees. Just in time. There is a pale blur. It is the Prince on his bicycle. He passes very close to the pale blur of Amanda by the obelisk. She murmurs.

AMANDA

Excuse me, Sir ...
He stops, dismounts from the bicycle, takes off his hat and looks at her.

THE PRINCE

Yes?

AMANDA

Can you tell me the way to the sea?

THE PRINCE

Take the second turning on your left.
He bows, sadly and courteously, gets back on the bicycle and rides away. The bell is heard again in the distance. The Duchess comes out of the shadows, very much an old woman.

AMANDA, gently, after a while

He didn’t recognize me...

THE DUCHESS

It was dark ... And then, who knows what face he gives her now, in his dreams? (She asks timidly) The last train has gone, young lady. In any case, wouldn’t you like to stay at the castle tonight?

AMANDA, in a strange voice

Yes, ma’am.
It is completely dark. The two of them can no longer be seen in the shadows, and only the wind can be heard in the huge trees of the grounds.

THE CURTAIN FALLS

Source: Jean ANOUILH, Léocadia (end of Scene II). Published by LA TABLE RONDE, 1984.
TEXT 2

DEFINITIONS OF SOME THEATRICAL OCCUPATIONS

Actor: plays a character on stage.

Director: controls and oversees all aspects of a play. He not only positions the actors, arranges their entrances and exits, and directs their acting, but also suggests how the script is to be interpreted.

Wardrobe staff: produce the costumes from a model.

Set designer: designs models of the sets and costumes. These models are then transformed into their full size in the workshop.

Props manager: in charge of finding the required props. The word “props” is used to mean everything that can be moved: armchairs, letters, lamps, bunches of flowers, etc. The sets and costumes are not props.

Sound technician: in charge of all sound effects required for the production. He is at the controls during the show.

Lighting assistant or lighting technician: in charge of lighting. He is also at the controls during the show. Lighting is so sophisticated that a well-equipped theatre can employ up to 10 lighting technicians.

On the previous two pages there are two texts. Text 1 is an extract from the play Léocadia by Jean Anouilh, and Text 2 gives definitions of theatrical occupations. Refer to the texts to answer the questions that follow.

Question 24: AMANDA AND THE DUCHESS (R216Q01)

What is this extract from the play about?

The Duchess thinks of a trick

A to get the Prince to come and see her more often
B to get the Prince to make up his mind finally to get married
C to get Amanda to make the Prince forget his grief
D to get Amanda to come and live at the castle with her

Question 25: AMANDA AND THE DUCHESS (R216Q02)

In the script of the play, in addition to the words to be spoken by the actors, there are directions for the actors and theatre technicians to follow.

How can these directions be recognized in the script?
Question 26: AMANDA AND THE DUCHESS (R216Q03)

The table below lists theatre technicians involved in staging this extract from Léocadia. Complete the table by indicating one stage direction from TEXT 1 that would require the involvement of each technician.

The first one has been done for you.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theatre technicians</th>
<th>Stage direction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Set designer</td>
<td>A circular bench around a small obelisk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Props manager</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sound technician</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lighting technician</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question 27: AMANDA AND THE DUCHESS (R216Q04)

The director positions the actors on the stage. On a diagram, the director represents Amanda with the letter A and the Duchess with the letter D.

Put an A and a D on the following diagram of the set to show approximately where Amanda and the Duchess are when the Prince arrives.

![Diagram of the set]

Question 28: AMANDA AND THE DUCHESS (R216Q06)

Towards the end of the extract from the play, Amanda says “He didn’t recognize me ... .”

What does she mean by that?

A that the Prince didn’t look at Amanda
B that the Prince didn’t realize that Amanda was a shop assistant
C that the Prince didn’t realize that he’d already met Amanda
D that the Prince didn’t notice that Amanda looked like Léocadia