

Practice text: New School

Cracking the questions

Question	Answer	CD/Mark	Useful strategies
1. Who is "I" in this poem?	Someone starting a new school. A child. A little, shy or new girl/boy.	2d 1 mark	<i>Question focus: make inferences from the text.</i> Strategies: • Carefully read the question, marking key words. • Skim the text to gain an overall understanding while considering the question.
2. List three things you know are in the playground in the poem (apart from the children and the teacher).	Any three of the following: • skipping ropes • footballs • cup of coffee • whistle • sweets	2b 3 marks	<i>Question focus: retrieve information from the poem.</i> Strategies: Carefully read the question, marking key words. • Scan the text, looking for nouns that name things that might be in the playground. • Check again with the question to make sure that the things you have found are allowed. • Remember to write three things.
3. How do you know what time of day it is?	Accept an explanation based on the child's own school day. E.g. Playtime finishes at 11 o'clock. The teacher is looking at his watch so it must be nearly the end of playtime.	2b 1 mark	<i>Question focus: explain inferences and justify them with evidence from the text.</i> Strategies: • Carefully read the question, marking key words. • Skim the text to gain an overall understanding while considering the question.
4. "One <u>skits</u> our headmaster." Suggest another way the poet could have said the same thing with the same meaning.	Accept suggestions that reflect the poet's intention e.g.: • makes fun of • sends up • mimics • copies in a silly way	2a 1 mark	<i>Question focus: give meanings of words in context.</i> Strategies: • Carefully read the question, marking key words. • Scan the poem for the line in the question and read the line in context. • Consider the possible meaning of the word and try to think of other ways of saying the same thing.
5. "And everyone knows everyone else." Why do you think the narrator included this information?	The narrator is feeling lonely. He or she doesn't know anyone and it emphasises his or her feeling of being alone.	2f 1 mark	<i>Question focus: narrative content relates to meaning as a whole.</i> Strategies: • Carefully read the question, marking key words. • Scan the poem for relevant words. • Use ideas in the poem and not your own experience.
6. Read the title of the poem. Is this a good title for the poem? ☐ Yes ☐ No Give one reason from the poem to help explain your answer.	Yes The title tells us what the problem is and why the narrator is feeling so lonely and unhappy. No The title is about being at school but the poem is just about being in the playground.	2c 1 mark	<i>Question focus: summarise main ideas from more than one paragraph.</i> Strategies: • Carefully read the question, marking key words. • Reread the title and consider the question while you reread the poem.

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7. What is the effect of starting most of the verses with the same two lines?	It introduces new ideas in each new verse. The repetition makes it seem as if playtime is going on for a long time. It says what the child is doing. So you know it's a new verse. It's a bit boring.	2f 1 mark	<i>Question focus: explain how information contributes to meaning as a whole.</i> Strategies: - Carefully read the question, marking key words. - Reread the poem while considering the question.
8. Do you think the playground seems like a happy place for most of the children? ☐ Yes ☐ No Explain your answer.	Yes They've got footballs and skipping ropes. They're all playing games and shouting. They're sharing sweets and jokes. No They're all arguing and shouting. Some of the girls might want to play football but they've all got skipping ropes.	2d 1 mark	<i>Question focus: make inferences from the text.</i> Strategies: - Carefully read the question, marking key words. - Scan the poem looking for evidence of happy or unhappy children. - Identify ideas to use in your explanation.
9. How does the poet want you to feel about the narrator? Explain your answer.	Accept answers such as: Sorry for him/her because we understand why s/he's just standing in the corner of the playground and not trying to join in. Fed up with him/her because there's lots going on but s/he's so busy feeling sorry for him/herself and wishing s/he could go home.	2c 2 marks	<i>Question focus: summarise main ideas.</i> Strategies: - Carefully read the question, marking key words. - Skim the poem considering your answer. - Scan the poem for ideas to use in the answer. Award 1 mark for a plausible response and a second mark for a brief explanation which includes ideas from the poem.