

Grade 8 English First Additional Language Worksheet

Reading comprehension on a text

Read the following extract and then answer the questions:

“Honestly, I am so tired of Technology cycle tests. They are set by two useless men who really don’t know what they are doing. I mean: ‘Draw and label a typewriter. Draw and label a computer’. How much do they want? Must I label absolutely everything? Can’t they set something more manageable?”

“Well, darling. Who is the HOD? Can’t you speak to someone about this?”

“Oh, great. The HOD is another man. You can’t expect anything of him, either. I mean, they all stand together. And they’re all so macho about it.”

“Robert, Elizabeth is having trouble with Technology. She’s angry about the cycle test today. What should we do about it?”

“Nothing. Elizabeth is never going to be great at Technology, whatever they set her in the cycle test. She’s a girl, for heaven’s sake. Let her worry about Consumer Studies, rather. That’s much more useful than making a house in a game reserve or that bridge she did last term. Actually, her last load of muffins were pretty good.”

Questions

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| 1.1 | Name the three people speaking in this text. | (3) |
| 1.2 | How did you know which speaker is talking? | (3) |
| 2.1 | What is Elizabeth’s feeling about the Technology cycle test? | (1) |
| 2.2 | What reason does she give for why the cycle test was not good? | (1) |
| 2.3 | Is her criticism of her teachers fair? Explain. | (2) |
| 2.4.1 | What does Elizabeth mean by “macho”? | (1) |
| 2.4.2 | Is she using this word as praise or criticism? Explain. | (2) |
| 3.1 | What does Robert think should be done? What reason does he give? | (2) |
| 3.2 | Is his reason a good one? Explain. | (2) |
| 5.1 | Is anyone trying to be reasonable in this situation? Discuss. | (3) |

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Suggested Solutions

- 1.1 Accept a reasonable answer, e.g.: Elizabeth, the girl/daughter; the mother/grandmother; Robert, the father. (3)
- 1.2 Accept a reasonable scenario: The child appears to be complaining to her mother; the mother calls her “darling” and then speaks to “Robert” and discusses what they could do: this suggests that they are parents. Robert is a man, and he appears to be Elizabeth’s father.
- Note: The learner could argue that the child speaks to her guardian; that Robert is the woman’s partner, not the father, but they appear in loco parents. The ‘mother’ could equally be a man. Be flexible. (3)
- 2.1 She is annoyed. (1)
- 2.2 She feels that the questions were impossible/too vague/not specific enough. (1)
- 2.3 Her criticism of the test seems valid, but her criticism of the teachers is simply because they are “useless men”. This is not fair because it implies that all men are useless. (2)
- 2.4.1 She means male/manly. (1)
- 2.4.2 She is using this word as criticism, implying that the men always stand together because they are men. They are not reasonable or fair. (2)
- 3.1 Robert thinks nothing should be done ✓ because Elizabeth is a girl and technology isn’t important for her. ✓ (2)
- 3.2 This reason is not good✓; he is assuming that girls are not good at technology and that she has no aptitude for it simply because she is a girl. ✓Macho? (2)
- 5.1 The third speaker: mother/guardian/partner. ✓ He/she asks firstly if there is not someone else who could be appealed to like an HOD, ✓ and then tries calmly to discuss the matter with Robert. ✓ (3)

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