



# Practice FCAT Reading Section

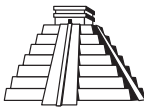


This is the Practice FCAT Reading Section.

Here is a list with pictures to help you locate the story and article in the Reading Section and Answer Section.



**It's All Clear Now** ..... Page 5-2



**The Mystery of the Maya** ..... Page 5-4

**Directions:** It should take about 30–45 minutes to read the passages in this book and answer the 16 questions in the Answer Section. Read each passage, then refer back to it as needed when answering the questions in the Answer Section.

**Go On →**



Read the story “It’s All Clear Now” and then answer Numbers 1 through 8 in the Answer Section.



# It’s All Clear Now

by Jean Lawler

**I**t all started at the beginning of fifth grade. At first, Carmen wasn’t really sure what was happening. In class, she had to squint to see the blackboard clearly. She had to do the same thing when she read street signs, or when she watched a movie. As the fuzziness got worse, she became more and more worried. It was important for her to see the notes and homework assignments the teacher put on the board.

It wasn’t long before Carmen found herself squinting all the time, but she didn’t want anyone to know that she was having a problem seeing. In class, she asked for a desk that was closer to the blackboard. One day, her teacher said, “Carmen, are you all right? I’ve noticed you squinting a lot. Are you having trouble seeing the board?”

Carmen shook her head. “I’m fine, Mrs. Cruz,” she said, but she knew she couldn’t pretend much longer.

At home, she had to sit closer and closer to the television in order to see the picture. Her mother noticed her squinting as she watched her favorite shows, and she began to get suspicious.

“Tomorrow I’m calling the eye doctor to set up an appointment for you,” she said firmly. Carmen protested, but her mother’s mind was made up.

Three days later, Carmen had new glasses and instructions from her doctor to wear them all the time. Carmen frowned in the car the whole way home.

“All of the kids at school will think I’m a nerd,” she said. Her mother smiled and shook her head.





“You look just as beautiful with those glasses on as you do without them,” she said. But Carmen didn’t believe her.

The next day, Carmen kept the glasses in her pocket as she walked into the schoolyard. She avoided her friends and stood alone, feeling miserable.

Suddenly, she heard her friend Theresa shout.

Carmen ran over to the other girls. “What’s wrong?” she asked.

“My silver ring is gone!” Theresa cried. “My sister sent it to me from California. It’s very special and I can’t lose it!”

Carmen could tell that Theresa was very upset. They all looked for the ring in the grassy area of the playground.

Carmen realized that she could search better if she could see better. She took the glasses out of her pocket and put them on. The objects and people around her came into sharp focus. She caught her breath. Everything looked so different! So clear! She looked down at the ground and a glimmer of silver caught her eye. It was the ring.

“Here it is,” she shouted. “I’ve found it!” She handed it to Theresa, and Theresa slipped the ring back on her finger.

“Thanks Carmen,” she said. “I never thought we’d find it.” She paused. “Hey, I didn’t know you wore glasses. They look great!”

Carmen had forgotten that she was wearing the new glasses. “Thanks,” she replied shyly.

As they walked back toward the school building, two more girls from her class complimented her glasses. Carmen smiled. “Maybe wearing glasses won’t be so bad after all,” she thought.

• • •

Now turn to page 5-6 in the Answer Section.



Read the article "The Mystery of the Maya" and then answer Numbers 9 through 16 in the Answer Section.



---

---

## THE MYSTERY OF THE MAYA

---

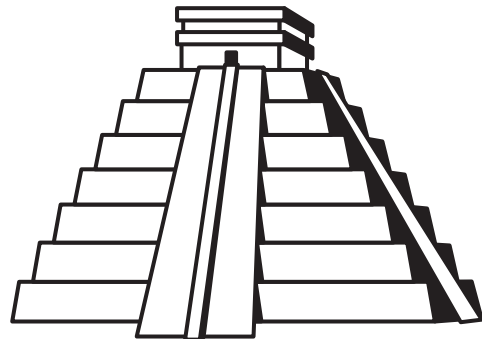
---

The Mayan Indians lived in Mexico for thousands of years before the Spanish arrived in the 1500s. The Maya were an intelligent, culturally rich people whose achievements were many. They had farms, beautiful palaces, and cities with many buildings. The Mayan people knew a lot about nature and the world around them. This knowledge helped them to live a better life than most people of that time, because they could use it to make their lives more comfortable and rewarding. Knowledge about tools and farming, for instance, made their work easier and more productive.

In ancient Mexico there were many small clearings in the forest. In each clearing was a village with fields of corn, beans, and other crops around it. To clear the land

for farms, the Maya cut down trees with stone axes. They planted seeds by digging holes in the ground with pointed sticks. A farmer was able to grow crops that produced food for several people. But not every Maya had to be a farmer. Some were cloth makers, builders, or priests.

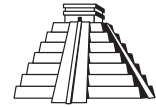
The Maya believed in many gods, including rain gods, sun gods, and corn gods. The people built large temples to honor the Mayan gods. Skillful workers built cities around these temples. It was difficult for them to construct these cities, because they had no horses to carry the heavy stone they used to build with. Workers had to carry all of the building materials themselves. Today, many of these ancient Mayan cities and temples are still standing.





## THE MYSTERY OF THE MAYA

---



---

---

Although the cities that the Maya built were beautiful, and the people worked hard to build them, very few of the people lived in them. Usually, only the priests lived in the cities.

The other people lived in small villages in the forests. Their houses were much simpler than the elaborate structures in the cities. They lived in small huts with no windows. The walls were made of poles covered with dried mud, and the roof was made of grass or leaves. Most Maya lived a simple life close to nature.

Measuring time was important to the Maya, so they developed a system for measuring it accurately. Farmers needed to know when to plant and harvest their crops. Maya priests made a system to

keep track of time. They wrote numbers as dots (...) and bars (-). A dot was one and a bar was five.

The Mayan priests studied the Sun, Moon, stars, and planets. They made a calendar from what they learned. The year was divided into 18 months of 20 days each with five days left over. The Mayan calendar was far more accurate than the European calendars of the time.

Around the year 800, the Maya left their villages and beautiful cities, never to return. No one knows why this happened. They may have died from an infectious disease. They may have left because the soil could no longer grow crops. Archaeologists are still trying to find the lost secrets of the Maya. They are still one of our greatest mysteries.

---

---

Now turn to page 5-9 in the Answer Section.



# Practice FCAT Reading Answer Section



This is the Practice FCAT Reading Answer Section.

The questions in this section are based on the stories in your Practice FCAT Reading Section. You may go back to the Reading Section to help you answer the questions.



## **It's All Clear Now**

---

Now answer Numbers 1 through 8. Base your answers on the story "It's All Clear Now."

- 1** BEFORE Carmen got glasses she
  - A** thought having glasses wouldn't be so bad.
  - B** wasn't able to see the blackboard clearly.
  - C** found Theresa's missing ring.
  - D** sat far away from the television.
  
- 2** Based on the end of the story, what do you think Carmen will do next?
  - F** She won't tell her friends that she needs to wear glasses.
  - G** She will keep her glasses in her pocket where no one can see them.
  - H** She will wear her glasses all the time.
  - I** She will wear her glasses only when she is with her family.

Go On →



- 3** What are some of the things that Carmen had to do in the beginning of the story in order to try to see better? Use examples from the story to support your answer.

Read  
Think  
Explain

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

- 4** Read this sentence from the story.

**Her mother noticed her squinting as she watched her favorite shows, and she began to get suspicious.**

What is an antonym for the word *suspicious*?

- (A) doubtful  
(B) guilty  
(C) innocent  
(D) trusting
- 5** Which statement BEST describes Carmen?
- (F) She is willing to overcome her fears in order to help her friends.  
(G) She doesn't care how well she does in school.  
(H) She cares more about herself than her friends.  
(I) She doesn't worry about what other people think of her.

Go On →



## It's All Clear Now



- 6 Read this sentence from the story.

**In class, she had to squint to see the blackboard clearly.**

What does *squint* mean?

- (A) to look with eyes partly closed
- (B) to move closer
- (C) to try hard
- (D) to concentrate

- 7 Describe how Carmen changes her mind about wearing glasses. Use details from the story to support your answer.

**Read**  
**Think**  
**Explain**

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

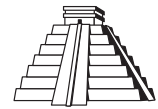
---

---

---

- 8 The author's purpose in writing this story is to
- (F) explain how important it is to take care of your eyes at school.
  - (G) show that sometimes we imagine things will be worse than they are.
  - (H) describe what it feels like to have to squint.
  - (I) warn people not to wear valuable jewelry to school.

Now turn to page 5-4 in the Reading Section.



Now answer Numbers 9 through 16. Base your answers on the article “The Mystery of the Maya.”

- 9** Read this sentence from the article.

**The Maya were an intelligent, culturally rich people whose achievements were many.**

What is a synonym for the word *achievements*?

- (A) mistakes
  - (B) successes
  - (C) skills
  - (D) roads
- 10** The Maya lived in Mexico
- (F) only after the Spanish arrived.
  - (G) at the same time as the Spanish.
  - (H) only for a few years.
  - (I) thousands of years before the Spanish.
- 11** Many Mayan cities and temples are still standing today because
- (A) they were so well built.
  - (B) they are not very old.
  - (C) they have been rebuilt.
  - (D) there is never any bad weather in Mexico.



**Read**  
**Think**  
**Explain**

**12** How is the Mayan calendar the same as or different from our current calendar? Use details from the article to support your answer.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**13** What is the main idea of this article?

- Ⓕ The Mayan calendar was more accurate than the European calendar.
- Ⓖ The Maya were excellent farmers.
- Ⓗ The Maya were a culturally rich, advanced society.
- Ⓘ The Mayan cities were difficult to build.

**14** MOST Maya lived

- Ⓐ in beautiful cities.
- Ⓑ in huts made of poles, mud, and leaves.
- Ⓒ in caves.
- Ⓓ in stone temples.





- 16** Read this sentence from the story.

**Their houses were much simpler than the elaborate structures in the city.**

What does *elaborate* mean?

- F small
- G plain
- H fancy
- I old

**This is the end of the Practice Test.**

Go back and check your work until time is called. Turn your answers over when you are finished.

