# Helping Students Succeed on Timed Life Skills Reading Tests

Presented by:

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### Agenda

Part I: Life Skills Reading

- Why is life skills reading important?
- Why is life skills reading and test taking difficult?
- **Teaching strategies:** 3 skills to teach before the test
- Test-taking strategies: 4 skills for students to practice

Part II: Narrative Reading

- Reading for fluency (speed) and accuracy
- Monitoring and consistency

### Objectives

#### Participants will be able to:

- Identify three teaching strategies to prepare students for life skills reading tests
- Identify four tips for improving learners' test taking skills
- Describe strategies for improving fluency and accuracy in narrative reading

### What is life skills reading?

- Reading for information that helps the reader perform a task in real life
- 5 Types of life skill displays (CASAS):
  - Forms
  - Tables, charts, graphs and maps
  - Text, prose
  - Signs, price tags, ads, and product labels
  - Diagrams

### Why is life skills reading difficult?

- Displays are particular to American culture
- Documents contain specialized vocabulary or abbreviations
- Reading involves looking at a question and then scanning or skimming for answers – no reading word by word

### Life Skills Reading: Skill sets students need

#### **Get information from documents**

- Prior knowledge or schema
- Recognize the format
- Know the vocabulary
- Use appropriate reading comprehension skills

#### Be a successful test-taker

- Look at the question first
- Practice different types of questions
- Eliminate answers that are clearly wrong

Bitterlin, Teaching and Testing
Document Literacy

http://www.cambridge.org/ventures/professionaldeve lopment/teaching-and-testing-document-literacy/

### 5 Task Types (display formats)

- Forms
- Tables, Charts, Graphs and Maps
- Text
- Signs, price tags, ads and product labels
- Diagrams

### Life Skills Reading: Teaching Strategies (before the test!)

- Prior knowledge or schema
- Understand the format
- Know the vocabulary
- Use appropriate reading comprehension skills (scanning, skimming, inferring)

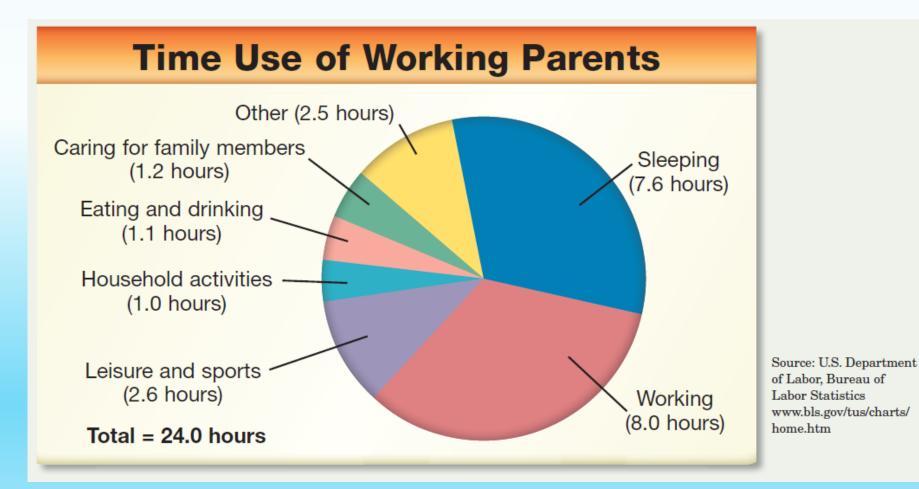
### **Forms**

APPLICATION FOR A MARRIAGE LICENSE						
Groom's Personal Data						
1A. Name of Groom (First)  Antonio	1B. M	iddle Marco	1C. Last Velez		2. Birthdate (Mo / Day / Yr	
3A. Residence (Street & Number	)	3B. City	3C. Zip Code	3D. Sta	te 4. Place of Birth	
406 E. 37th Street		Austin	78705	TX	Mexico City, Mexi	
5. Number of Previous Marriage	S	6A. Last Marriage Ended by 6B. Date (Mo / Day / Yr)				
1		Divorce			08/13/09	
Bride's Personal Data						
1A. Name of Bride (First)	1B. Mi	iddle	1C. Last		2. Birthdate (Mo / Day / Yr)	
Maria		Luisa	Camacho		11/17/1992	
3A. Residence (Street & Number	)	3B. City	3C. Zip Code 3D. State 4. Place of Birth		4. Place of Birth	
1005 Hillside Oaks Dri	ve	Austin	78710	TX	TX Lima, Peru	
5. Number of Previous Marriage	S	6A. Last Marriage Ended by			6B. Date (Mo / Day / Yr)	
None						
			Bride's Driver's License / I.D.#:			
CO581316429			CO9O1516531			
Ceremony Date:  June 22, 2013			Ceremony Location:  City Hall			

### Tables, Charts, Graphs and Maps



### Tables, Charts, Graphs and Maps



### Tables and Charts: CASAS Sample Item

FITNESS TODAY MEMBERSHIP FEES					
	DUE UPON JOINING				
MEMBERSHIP		One Time			
CATEGORY	Monthly	Joiners Fee			
Adult	\$36	\$100			
Family*	\$51	\$150			
Single Parent Family**	\$42	\$100			
Senior Adult (60+ yrs.)	\$30	\$100			
Student (18-22 yrs.)***	\$23				

- Includes 2 adults and all children under 18 within the same household
- \*\* Includes 1 adult and all children under 18 within the same household
- \*\*\* Full-time student with ID

1. What is the monthly fee for a family with one adult and two young children living in the same house?

A. \$51.00

B. \$42.00

C. \$150.00

D. \$100.00

### **Text**

#### **Announcements**

#### **Travel Movies**

Join us at 7:00 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday to see movies on India, Japan, and Brazil. Kids welcome. Downtown Public Library. Come early – seating is limited.

#### Concerts on the Green

Hear the Riverside Brass Band every Friday this month at noon. North end of City Park, near the courthouse.

#### Crafts Fair

Find gifts for your family and friends. Jewelry, pottery, paintings, and food from around the world. Sunday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at Broadway and 5th Street.

#### Fix a Flat

Bike Master Shop offers basic bicycle maintenance clinics this Saturday at 4:30 p.m. and Sunday at 9:00 a.m. in front of the Bike Master Shop.

### Signs, price tags, ads and product labels



### Diagrams



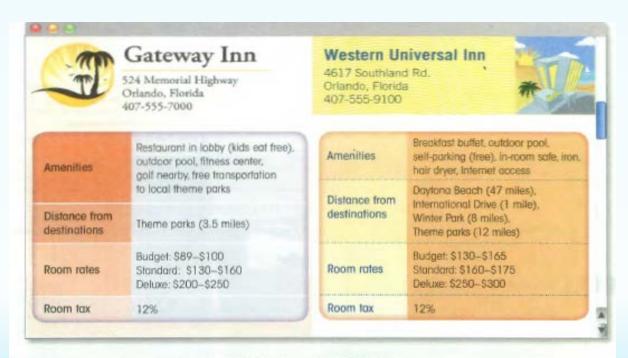
# Life Skills Reading: Test-Taking Skills

- Look at the question first
- Identify key words in question and text
- Practice different types of questions
- Eliminate answers that are clearly wrong
- Guess

### Tips for test taking

- Look first at the question to identify key words
- Look at the display to find the key word





- Read the guestions. Look at the hotel information. Fill in the answer.
  - What is the rate for a standard room at the Gateway Inn?
    - A \$89-\$100
    - (B) \$130-\$160
    - © \$160-\$175
    - © \$200-\$250
  - 2. Where can children eat for free?
    - A Daytona Beach
    - (B) Gateway Inn
    - C Western Universal Inn
    - none of the above

- 3. How far is the Western Universal Inn from the theme parks?
  - A 3.5 miles
  - B 8 miles
  - C 10 miles
  - D) 12 miles
- 4. Where is self-parking free?
  - (A) Gateway Inn
  - (B) Western Universal Inn
  - neither a nor b
  - both a and b

Ventures B3, p. 132

p. 9 in handout



- Read the questions. Look at the hotel information. Fill in the answer.
  - What is the rate for a standard room at the Gateway Inn?
    - A \$89-\$100
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    - © \$160-\$175
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  - B Western Universal Inn
  - C neither a nor b
  - both a and b

### Tips for test taking

- Eliminate answers that are wrong
- Guess the correct answer



#### Text: CASAS Sample Item, p. 10 in handout

John works in Lakeview. He rides the bus to work every day. It usually takes him about 20 minutes to get to work. Question #1: Based on the question, which choices in the answer can you eliminate?

- 5. How does John get to work?
  - A He drives.
  - B He works in Lakeview.
  - (c) It takes 20 minutes.
  - He rides the bus.

Question #2: From remaining questions, which key words do you scan for?

# Text: CASAS Text Sample Answers

**Question #1:** Based on the question, which choices in the answer can you eliminate?

**Answer:** Choices B and C

**Question #2:** From remaining questions, which key words do you scan for?

Answer: Drive, ride, bus

### Tips for test taking

Provide practice with different types of multiple choice questions:

- Compare several pieces of information in a display to find answer
- Scan for one piece of information
- Skim for the main idea
- Infer answer from evidence in display
- Choose an answer that could be "all of the above" or "none of the above" – requires summarizing

#### Compare several pieces of information in a display to find answer

#### Announcements

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#### Fix a Flat

Bike Master Shop offers basic bicycle maintenance clinics this Saturday at 4:30 p.m. and Sunday at 9:00 a.m. in front of the Bike Master Shop.

Read the questions. Look at the announcements. Fill in the answer.

- 1. At which event can you buy food?
  - A Concerts on the Green
  - (B) Crafts Fair
  - C Travel Movies
  - all of the above
- 2. Which event does not happen during the day?
  - (A) Concerts on the Green
  - (B) Crafts Fair
  - C Fix a Flat
  - (D) Travel Movies

- 3. Which event would be good for bike riders?
  - (A) Crafts Fair
  - (B) Fix a Flat
  - C Travel Movies
  - none of the above
- 4. Which event is at noon on Saturday?
  - A Concerts on the Green
  - B Fix a Flat
  - C Travel Movies
  - none of the above

### Scanning: CASAS Item, p. 11 in handout

#### KEEP YOUR WORK AREA CLEAN

At the end of each day:

- . Put extra materials back on the shelves in the supply room.
- . Store your tools in the drawers under your worktable.
- . Sweep the floor around your work area.
- . Empty your waste container into the trash bin.

- According to the instructions, where should workers put their tools at the end of the day?
  - A. on the shelves in the supply room
  - B. in the tool room for their work area
  - C. on the back of their worktable
  - D. in the drawers under their worktable

www.casas.org/product-overviews/curriculummanagement-instruction/sample-test-items/lifeand-work-reading

### Skimming: CASAS Item, p. 11 in handout

Handy Hardware store is a small, family-owned business that has managed to survive despite the fact that there are several large chain hardware stores throughout East City. Handy's has a loyal customer base and they do a good business. Many people go to Handy's because of the friendly service and fair prices. It is located not far from a residential area, so many people can walk there. The owner, Ed Handy, knows many of his customers and they like and trust him.

Ed has heard that a large chain store, Home Helper, is opening a new store not far from Handy's, and he is very concerned that he won't be able to compete. His prices are reasonable, but because his store is small, he doesn't have the huge volume of merchandise and the many selections that Home Helper has. His store cannot carry large items such as lumber and appliances, and it doesn't have nursery or gardening supplies either. Ed realizes it is convenient for shoppers to be able to buy many things in one store.

www.casas.org/product-overviews/curriculummanagement-instruction/sample-testitems/life-and-work-reading

- 4. According to the situation described, what is Mr. Handy's concern?
  - He may not be able to maintain his prices.
  - B. He will lose customers to the larger store.
  - C. His store may not be able to carry many large items.
  - The larger store will buy up all the merchandise.

### Inferring: CASAS Item

Handy Hardware store is a small, family-owned business that has managed to survive despite the fact that there are several large chain hardware stores throughout East City. Handy's has a loyal customer base and they do a good business. Many people go to Handy's because of the friendly service and fair prices. It is located not far from a residential area, so many people can walk there. The owner, Ed Handy, knows many of his customers and they like and trust him.

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www.casas.org/product-overviews/curriculummanagement-instruction/sample-testitems/life-and-work-reading

- 5. What is one reason people shop at Handy Hardware?
  - A. The store has a very large volume of sales.
  - B. The store sells many products besides hardware.
  - C. The store has many locations in East City.
  - D. The store is owned by someone they know.

#### Types of Answers

#### Announcements

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  - (A) Concerts on the Green
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  - all of the above
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  - C Fix a Flat
  - (D) Travel Movies

- 3. Which event would be good for bike riders?
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  - (B) Fix a Flat
  - C Travel Movies
  - none of the above
- 4. Which event is at noon on Saturday?
  - A Concerts on the Green
  - B Fix a Flat
  - C Travel Movies
  - none of the above

### Practice B2, p. 28, p. 12 in handout

#### COURSE CATALOG

#### General Equivalency Diploma (GED)

Do you want to get your GED? Then you need to practice your reading, writing, and math skills. Classes are in English or Spanish. No fee.

Instructor: Mr. Chen (English)

Ms. Lopez (Spanish)

Days/Times: Mon, Wed 6:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m.

#### Media Repair

This class will teach you how to repair various types of media such as MP3 players, DVD players, and TVs. You will also learn about opening your own repair shop. Fee: \$85

Instructor: Mr. Stern

Days/Times: Mon, Tues 6:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m.

#### Introduction to Computers

This class is for adults who want to learn about computers and the Internet. You will learn about keyboarding, e-mail, and computer jobs. Fee: \$75

Instructor: Mrs. Gates

Days/Times: Mon, Wed 7:00 p.m.-9:00 p.m.

#### Citizenship

Do you want to be an American citizen? First, you need to learn about American history and civics. This class will prepare you for the U.S. citizenship test. Requirements: Legal resident. No fee.

Instructor: Ms. Cuevas

Days/Times: Thurs 7:00 p.m.-9:00 p.m.

#### Read the questions. Look at the course catalog. Fill in the answer.

- How much will the GED class cost?
  - A \$35
  - (B) \$75
  - (C) \$85
  - (D) free
- 2. When is the computer class?
  - Monday and Tuesday
  - (B) Monday and Wednesday
  - C Tuesday and Thursday
  - Wednesday and Friday

- 3. Who will teach Media Repair?
  - A Mr. Stern
  - (B) Ms. Cuevas
  - C Mrs. Gates
  - (D) Mr. Chen
- 4. Which class is in English or Spanish?
  - A Citizenship
  - (B) GED
  - C Introduction to Computers
  - Media Repair

#### Practice: Book 2, p. 28 (p. 12 in handout)

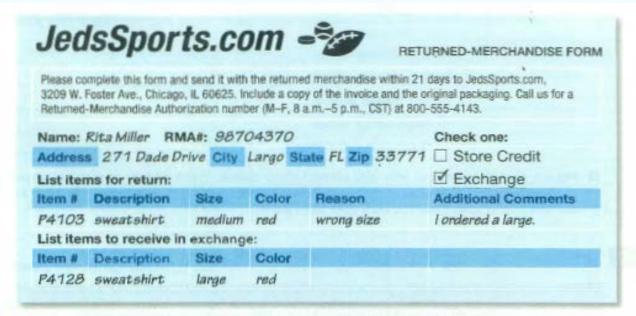
- What is the task type?
- What are the key words in the question?
- Are the key words in the question also in the display?
- What skill is required to answer each question?

#### Practice: Answers Book 2, p. 28

- What is the task type? Text
- What are the key words in the question?
- 1) How much, GED 2) When, computer class
- 3) Who, Media Repair 4) English Spanish
- Are the key words in the question also in the display? Yes.
- What skill is required to answer each question?

#### scanning

### Practice B4, p. 94, p. 13 in handout



#### A Read the questions. Look at the returned-merchandise form. Fill in the answer.

- 1. Why is the buyer using this form?
  - A She wants her money back.
  - B She wants a store credit.
  - C She wants to exchange the merchandise.
  - none of the above
- 2. What does the buyer need to include with this form?
  - A the invoice
  - (B) the item that she is returning
  - C the original packaging
  - (D) all of the above

- 4. Which statement is not true?
  - A The buyer is returning one item.
  - B The buyer needs a different size.
  - C The merchandise was defective.
  - The buyer wants the same color.
- 5. What does "RMA#" mean?
  - A returned-merchandise invoice number
  - returned-merchandise authorization number
  - C credit card number
  - none of the above

#### Practice: Answers Book 4, p. 94

- What is the task type? form
- What are the key words in the question?
- 1) why...using 2) what...include 3) not true
- 4) RMA
- Are the key words in the question also in the display?
- 1) Why...yes2) not exactly—send it with in display3) no4) yes
- What skill is required to answer each question?

Scanning and inferring

# Part II: Narrative Reading Reading for Fluency and Accuracy

Reading is one of the biggest obstacles for our students to transition to:

- CTE (Career Technical Education) programs
- GED (General Educational Development/ General Education Diploma) programs
- College





### Tests to Transition to CTE, GED, College

TABE: Test for Adult Basic Education

Accuplacer: Test to enter college

#### **Barriers for students:**

- Tests are timed
- Comprehension problems due to:
- 1) higher level order questions (prediction, inference)
- 2) diverse texts
- 3) lack of background knowledge

Timed Reading: from Marshall Adult School: Reading Skills for Today's Adult

http://www.marshalladulteducation.org/reading-skills-for-todays-adult

#### STEPS (p. 14 handout)

- Students read an article for one minute.
- Students record number of words per minute on reading graph.
- Students read again more slowly for accuracy and answer multiple choice questions, which is also timed.

### **Classroom Management for Timed Readings**

- Every student has a checklist with a list of the readings.
   (p. 15)
- Every student has a reading and multiple choice questions. (pgs. 16, 17)
- Every student has a reading graph. (p. 18)
- Teacher does timed reading consistently every week.
   Teacher uses a ticking clock to time readings.
- Students can do other levels at home since everything is online.

from Marshall Adult School: Reading Skills for Today's Adult <a href="http://www.marshalladulteducation.org/reading-skills-for-todays-adult">http://www.marshalladulteducation.org/reading-skills-for-todays-adult</a>

#### Timed Timed Reading: (continuing with steps-p. 3 in handout)

To teach 'speed reading', students sit in pairs.

- Student A reads article as fast as she can for 15 seconds (teacher keeps time) and puts a mark on the paper where she has finished.
- Student B starts from where Student A began and tries to beat Student A's speed.
- Do that 3-5 times through.
- Teach students phrase reading by circling phrases (circle who, what, where, when, how, why).
   Compare if phrase reading is better than word for word reading.

from Marshall Adult School: Reading Skills for Today's Adult

http://www.marshalladulteducation.org/reading-skills-for-todays-adult

#### Example of Questions (p. 17 In handout)

#### **Comprehension Questions: A Healthy Pregnancy**

- 1. At the prenatal checkup, what does the nurse do first?
- a. She gets a blood sample.
- b. She listens to the baby's heart.
- c. She weighs Kim.
- d. She takes Kim's blood pressure.
- 2. How often does Kim go to the doctor for checkups?
- a. Daily.
- b. Weekly.
- c. Monthly.
- d. Yearly.
- 3. What is something Kim and Ben won't do when they visit the hospital?
- a. See the birthing rooms.
- b. Visit the nursery.
- c. Meet with the doctor.
- d. Learn about prenatal classes.
- 4. All of these will help the baby and mother healthy except...
- a. Vitamins.
- b. Water.
- c. Alcohol.
- d. Foods with nutrients.
- 5. A synonym for harm on line 142 is:
- a. injure
- b. help
- c. dangerous
- d. assist

from Marshall Adult School: Reading Skills for Today's Adult <a href="http://www.marshalladulteducation.org/reading-skills-for-todays-adult">http://www.marshalladulteducation.org/reading-skills-for-todays-adult</a>

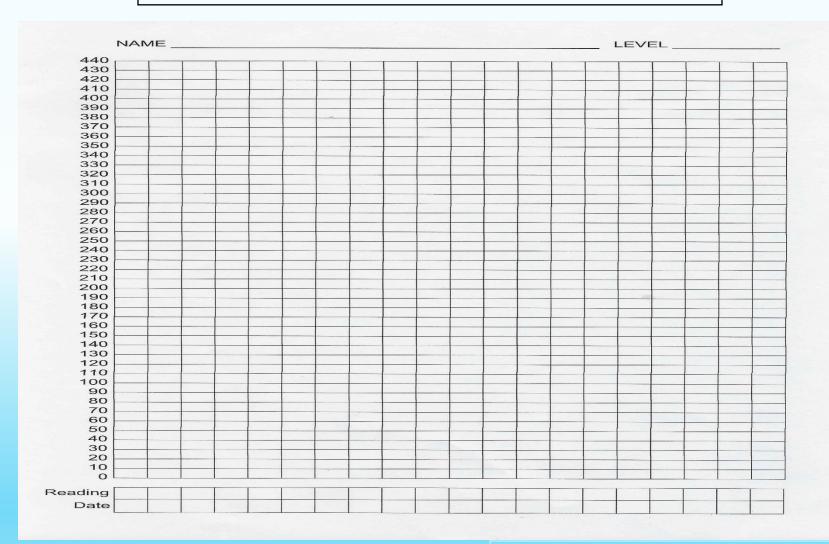
#### Example of Reading (p. 16 In handout

#### A Healthy Pregnancy

#### Reading

	Kim and Ben wanted to have a baby. They are very happy because Kim is
15	pregnant. They want to have a healthy baby. Seeing a doctor regularly is an
29	important part of prenatal care. Kim sees the doctor every month for checkups.
42	At the clinic the nurse weighs Kim. Then she takes Kim's blood pressure and
56	gets a blood sample. The doctor listens to the baby's heart. She also lets Kim and
72	Ben listen. It is very exciting for them to hear the "thump, thump, thump" of their
88	little one's heart!
91	After the checkup, the doctor talks with Kim and Ben. She reminds Kim to
105	eat healthy foods and drink lots of water. Kim also needs to take a daily vitamin.
121	Good foods, water and vitamins keep baby and mom healthy.
131	The doctor explains the harmful effects of smoking, drinking alcohol and
142	using drugs during pregnancy. These activities could harm the baby's health. The
154	doctor also tells Kim and Ben what to expect as the baby grows.
167	Kim and Ben will visit the hospital soon. They want to tour the place where
182	their baby will be born. They will see the birthing rooms. They will also visit the
198	nursery where nurses care for the babies while moms rest.
208	At the hospital, Kim and Ben will <b>receive</b> information about prenatal classes.
220	These classes are a good way to meet other parents and learn more about their baby.
236	Teachers will talk about the birthing process. They will also discuss feeding,
248	dressing, diapering, and bathing babies.
253	Level 5.0

#### Reading Graph to Record Time (p.18 In handout)



http://www.marshalladulteducation.org/reading-skills-for-todays-adult

#### Reading Checklist (p. 15 In handout)

Marshall's Adult Education Checklist Level 5.0
Name
http://www.marshalladulteducation.org/index.php/reading-skills-for-
todays-adult

Level	Title	WPM for 1 minute	Read carefully. Time it takes to read for meaning	Number correct	Teacher's initials
5.0	A Healthy Pregnancy				
5.0	A Speed Limit Myth				
5.0	April Fool's Day				
5.0	Caffeine				
5.0	Environmental Health			100	
5.0	Flora's Story			A Control	
5.0	Good Employees Get				
5.0	Laughter, the More the				
5.0	Merry Christmas				
5.0	National Wear Red Day				
5.0	Overcoming Obesity				
5.0	Potty Time				
5.0	Reading and Storytelling				
5.0	Safe Eating on the Go				
5.0	State Symbols				14.7
5.0	Tim Lost His Job	1			
5.0	TV Parental Guidelines				
5.0	Using an ATM				
5.0	Volunteering in Your				
5.0	Wanted, a Good Repair				
5.0	Where Are Your Cell				
5.0	Young Children and				

#### Timed Reading, Reading Graph, Checklist, Questions

#### Reading

42

88

91

105

121

131

154

167

182

198

208

220

236

248

253

Kim and Ben wanted to have a baby. They are very happy because Kim is pregnant. They want to have a healthy baby. Seeing a doctor regularly is an important part of prenatal care. Kim sees the doctor every month for checkups.

At the clinic the nurse weighs Kim. Then she takes Kim's blood pressure and gets a blood sample. The doctor listens to the baby's heart. She also lets Kim and Ben listen. It is very exciting for them to hear the "thump, thump, thump" of their little one's heart!

After the checkup, the doctor talks with Kim and Ben. She reminds Kim to eat healthy foods and drink lots of water. Kim also needs to take a daily vitamin. Good foods, water and vitamins keep baby and mom healthy.

The doctor explains the harmful effects of smoking, drinking alcohol and using drugs during pregnancy. These activities could harm the baby's health. The doctor also tells Kim and Ben what to expect as the baby grows.

Kim and Ben will visit the hospital soon. They want to tour the place where their baby will be born. They will see the birthing rooms. They will also visit the nursery where nurses care for the babies while moms rest.

At the hospital, Kim and Ben will **receive** information about prenatal classes. These classes are a good way to meet other parents and learn more about their baby. Teachers will talk about the birthing process. They will also discuss feeding,

dressing, diapering, and bathing babies.

Marshall's Adult Education Checklist Level 5.0 Name http://www.marshalladulteducation.org/index

http://www.marshalladulteducation.org/index.php/reading-skills-fortodays-adult

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5.0	Merry Christmas				
5.0	National Wear Red Day				
5.0	Overcoming Obesity				
5.0	Potty Time				
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5.0	Safe Eating on the Go				
5.0	State Symbols				
5.0	Tim Lost His Job				
5.0	TV Parental Guidelines				
5.0	Using an ATM				
5.0	Volunteering in Your				
5.0	Wanted, a Good Repair				
5.0	Where Are Your Cell				
5.0	Young Children and				

## 

#### Comprehension

### Questions: A Healthy Pregnancy

- 1. At the prenatal checkup, what does the nurse do first?
- a. She gets a blood sample.
- b. She listens to the baby's heart.
- c. She weighs Kim.

### **Action Plan**

One thing I learned from this session that I plan to use in my teaching is \_\_\_\_\_\_