

# **Helping Students Succeed on Timed Life Skills Reading Tests**

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**This handout and PowerPoint presentation can be found at:  
<http://www.quia.com/pages/donna/workshops>**

## **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
- Practice

### **Part II: Narrative Reading**

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

# LESSON F Another view

## 1 Life-skills reading

Gateway Inn		Western Universal Inn	
 <p>524 Memorial Highway Orlando, Florida 407-555-7000</p>		<p>4617 Southland Rd. Orlando, Florida 407-555-9100</p> 	
Amenities	Restaurant in lobby (kids eat free), outdoor pool, fitness center, golf nearby, free transportation to local theme parks	Amenities	Breakfast buffet, outdoor pool, self-parking (free), in-room safe, iron, hair dryer, Internet access
Distance from destinations	Theme parks (3.5 miles)	Distance from destinations	Daytona Beach (47 miles), International Drive (1 mile), Winter Park (8 miles), Theme parks (12 miles)
Room rates	Budget: \$89–\$100 Standard: \$130–\$160 Deluxe: \$200–\$250	Room rates	Budget \$130–\$165 Standard \$160–\$175 Deluxe \$250–\$300
Room tax	12%	Room tax	12%

**A Read the questions. Look at the hotel information. Fill in the answer.**

- What is the rate for a standard room at the Gateway Inn?
  - \$89–\$100
  - \$130–\$160
  - \$160–\$175
  - \$200–\$250
- Where can children eat for free?
  - Daytona Beach
  - Gateway Inn
  - Western Universal Inn
  - none of the above
- How far is the Western Universal Inn from the theme parks?
  - 3.5 miles
  - 8 miles
  - 10 miles
  - 12 miles
- Where is self-parking free?
  - Gateway Inn
  - Western Universal Inn
  - neither a nor b
  - both a and b

**B Talk with a partner. Ask and answer the questions.**

Which hotel do you prefer? Why?

John works in Lakeview. He rides the bus to work every day. It usually takes him about 20 minutes to get to work.

5. How does John get to work?

- (A) He drives.  
 (B) He works in Lakeview.  
 (C) It takes 20 minutes.  
 (D) He rides the bus.

Reading Level A Sample Test Items

FITNESS TODAY MEMBERSHIP FEES		
MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY	DUE UPON JOINING	
	Monthly	One Time 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

Reading Level C Sample Test Items

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 is 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.

According to the situation described, what is Mr. Handy's concern?

- A. 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.
- D. The larger store will buy up all the merchandise.

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.

## 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.

1. 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

Reading Level B Sample Test Items

Reading Level C Sample Test Items

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# LESSON F Another view

## 1 Life-skills reading

### 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.

#### 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.

#### 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.

#### 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.

**A** 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
- When is the computer class?  
(A) Monday and Tuesday  
(B) Monday and Wednesday  
(C) Tuesday and Thursday  
(D) Wednesday and Friday
- Who will teach Media Repair?  
(A) Mr. Stern  
(B) Ms. Cuevas  
(C) Mrs. Gates  
(D) Mr. Chen
- Which class is in English or Spanish?  
(A) Citizenship  
(B) GED  
(C) Introduction to Computers  
(D) Media Repair

**B** Talk with a partner. Ask and answer the questions.

- What do you want to learn about this year?
- What classes will you probably take?

# LESSON F Another view

## 1 Life-skills reading

**JedsSports.com** 

### RETURNED-MERCHANDISE FORM

Please complete this form and send it with the returned merchandise within 21 days to JedsSports.com, 3209 W. Foster Ave., Chicago, IL 60625. Include a copy of the invoice and the original packaging. Call us for a Returned-Merchandise Authorization number (M-F, 8 a.m.-5 p.m., CST) at 800-555-4143.

Name: *Rita Miller* RMA#: *98704370*

Address *271 Dade Drive* City *Largo* State *FL* Zip *33771*

Check one:

☐ Store Credit

☒ Exchange

List items for return:

Item #	Description	Size	Color	Reason	Additional Comments
P4103	sweatshirt	medium	red	wrong size	I ordered a large.

List items to receive in exchange:

Item #	Description	Size	Color
P4128	sweatshirt	large	red

**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.
- (D) 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

3. Which statement is true?

- (A) The buyer must return the items within 21 days.
- (B) The buyer is satisfied with her purchase.
- (C) The buyer needs a smaller sweatshirt.
- (D) The buyer lives in New Jersey.

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.
- (D) The buyer wants the same color.

5. What does "RMA#" mean?

- (A) returned-merchandise invoice number
- (B) returned-merchandise authorization number
- (C) credit card number
- (D) none of the above

6. How did Rita get the RMA number?

- (A) She e-mailed the store.
- (B) She called an 800 number.
- (C) She got it from the original invoice.
- (D) It was written on the merchandise.

**B** Talk with your classmates. Do you think it is difficult to return or exchange merchandise at this store? Why or why not?

**Fluency and Accuracy with  
Marshall Adult School's Reading Skills for Today's Adult**  
<http://www.marshalladulthoodeducation.org/reading-skills-for-todays-adult>

**Steps:**

- 1) Students read an article quickly for one minute.
- 2) Students record number of words per minute on a reading graph.
- 3) Students read again more slowly for accuracy and answer five multiple choice questions, which is also timed.
- 4) Teacher goes over answers.
- 5) To teach 'speed reading', students sit in pairs.\*
- 6) Student A reads as fast as she can for 15 seconds (teacher keeps time) and puts a mark on the paper where she has finished.
- 7) Student B starts from where Student A began and tries to beat Student A's speed.
- 8) Do that 3-5 times through.
- 9) Teach students phrase reading by circling phrases (circle who, what, where, when, how, why). Compare if phrase reading is better/faster than word for word reading.
- 10) This activity is done weekly for fluency (speed) and accuracy (comprehension). Consistency and monitoring are important for students to see progress.

\*Technique from Dr. Fredricka Stoller, Northern Arizona University

# Marshall's Adult Education Checklist Level 5.0

Name \_\_\_\_\_

<http://www.marshalladulthoodeducation.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				
5.0	Flora's Story				
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				
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...				



# A Healthy Pregnancy

## Pre-reading

### Questions:

- What is prenatal care?
- What do you already know about prenatal care?

### Definitions:

- Prenatal – taking place before birth
- Checkup – a medical examination given by a doctor
- Regularly – happening over and over at the same time, or in the same way



## Reading

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.

Level 5.0

### **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

### **Homework**

1. Why is Kim receiving prenatal care?
  
2. Do you think it's a good idea? Why or why not?
  
3. At the prenatal checkup, what does the nurse do first?
  
4. What can Kim do to keep herself and her baby healthy?

LEVEL \_\_\_\_\_

[illegible][illegible]

## **Resources for CASAS Test Preparation**

**This handout and PowerPoint presentation can be found at:**

**<http://www.quia.com/pages/donna/workshops>**

### **Articles and Webinars**

*Teaching and Testing Document Literacy*, by Gretchen Bitterlin

<http://www.cambridge.org/ventures/professionaldevelopment/teaching-and-testing-document-literacy/>

*Teaching and Testing Life Skills Reading* (webinar), by Lynn Savage

<http://www.cambridge.org/ventures/professionaldevelopment/teaching-and-testing-life-skills-reading/>

*Why Teachers Should Use Timed Reading in ESL Classes*, by J Browning. The TESOL Journal. <http://iteslj.org/Articles/Browning-TimedReading.html>

### **Practice items in Core textbooks:**

- Side by Side, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition – Activity and test prep workbooks
- Side by Side Plus
- Ventures -One display and questions in each unit in student book and workbook lesson F
- Ventures Online Teachers' Resource room – CASAS Test Prep exercises [www.cambridge.org/ventures/resources](http://www.cambridge.org/ventures/resources)

### **Practice on websites:**

1. CASAS (Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment Systems) reading sample items: <https://www.casas.org/product-overviews/curriculum-management-instruction/sample-test-items/life-and-work-reading>
2. Individual learning activities by CASAS test level and student level: <http://www.johnmh.com/pages/ila.html>
3. Milpitas Adult School mega-site for CASAS practice by levels: <https://adulthood.musd.org/digitalresources>
4. Mrs.Rango's ESL Beginning Low Class (a teacher's website): <http://rangooroom44.weebly.com/casas-test-exercises---all-levels.html>
5. Seminole State College of Florida CASAS reading practice: <http://www.seminolestate.edu/adult-ed/els/pett/reading-tests>

### **Timed reading website:**

Marshall Adult Education Reading Skills for Today's Adult:

<http://www.marshalladulthoodeducation.org/reading-skills-for-todays-adult>