



"Materials"

Reading Comprehension Assessment

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Name _____
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• Reading Comprehension Assessment

Directions: Read the passage. Then answer the questions below.

Materials

A material is what something is made of. There are 5 basic materials. Most things are made with these materials. Some things are made of metal. Some things are made of glass. Some things are made of wood. Some things are made of cloth. And some things are made of plastic. There are some other materials. But they are not used as much as these 5 materials.

Let's talk about metal first. Metal is very heavy. And it is very hard and strong. It usually feels cool if you touch it. We use metal to make lots of things. We use it for forks and knives. We use it for keys. We use it for cars. We use it for these things because it is very strong.



Next, let's talk about glass. Glass is very smooth. It feels cool to touch. It is not as heavy as metal. It is hard. But it is not strong. It breaks very easily! Then why do we use it? We use it because it is clear! You can see through glass! That's why we use it for windows. That's also why we use it for glasses.

Now, let's talk about wood. Wood is lighter than metal and glass. It is not as strong as metal. But it is much stronger than glass. We use wood to make lots of things. Things made from wood are usually light and hard and strong. Chairs and tables are made from wood. Pencils are made from wood.

Now let's talk about cloth. Cloth is very light. It is much lighter than wood. And it is very soft. We use cloth to make lots of things. For example, it is used to make clothing. And it is used to make blankets.

Last, let's talk about plastic. Plastic is also very light. But it is different from cloth. Sometimes it is soft. And sometimes it is hard. Plastic can be used to make thin plastic bags. These are light, soft, and strong. But plastic can also be used to make bicycle helmets. These are light, hard, and strong. A helmet and a bag seem different. But they are both made from plastic.

1) Which sentence from the passage best describes the main idea?

- A. "We use cloth to make lots of things."
- B. "Metal is very heavy."
- C. "There are 5 basic materials."
- D. "A helmet and a bag seem different."

2) According to the passage, which of these things is a material?

- A. chairs
- B. clothing
- C. windows
- D. wood

- 3) According to the passage, how does glass feel?
- A. smooth and cool
 - B. warm and soft
 - C. light and hard
 - D. sharp and heavy
- 4) In paragraph 4, the passage says, "Wood is lighter than metal and glass." What is the main purpose of this sentence?
- A. to explain something
 - B. to recommend something
 - C. to compare something
 - D. to demonstrate something
- 5) Which material would you use if you wanted to make something that was strong and very light?
- A. plastic
 - B. wood
 - C. metal
 - D. glass
- 6) In this passage, the author talks about
- A. hard things first, then soft things
 - B. heavy things first, then light things
 - C. strong things first, then weak things
 - D. cool things first, then warm things
- 7) In this passage, we learn about a 5 different materials. Which of these materials do you think is best? Why?

- 8) In this passage, we learn about a 5 different materials. Which of these materials do you think is worst? Why?

1) **C**

Question Type: Global

In order to answer this question correctly, we need first to figure out what the main idea of the passage is. Then we need to say which sentence from the passage serves as the best description of that main idea. In this passage, we read about 5 materials. We read about metal, glass, wood, cloth, and plastic. The passage tells us about each of these materials. It tells us what each material feels like, and gives some examples of what each material is used for. Because the passage tells us equally about all 5 materials, we can tell that the main idea of the passage does not have to do with any single material, but instead has to do with all 5 materials. From this we can tell that the main idea of the passage is to tell about these 5 materials. The sentence, "There are 5 basic materials," tells us that the passage is going to tell us about 5 basic materials. This agrees with what we said the main idea of the passage was, which was to tell about 5 materials. From this we can tell that the sentence, "There are 5 basic materials," best describes the main idea of this passage. Therefore **(C)** is correct. Using the above information, we can tell that the main idea of this passage is to tell us about 5 basic materials. The sentence, "We use cloth to make lots of things," only talks about one of the 5 materials discussed by the passage. From this we can tell that the sentence, "We use cloth to make lots of things," does not describe the main idea of this passage. This eliminates **(A)**. Using the above information, we can tell that the main idea of this passage is to tell us about 5 basic materials. The sentence, "Metal is very heavy," only talks about one of the 5 materials discussed by the passage. From this we can tell that the sentence, "Metal is very heavy," does not describe the main idea of this passage. This eliminates **(B)**. Using the above information, we can tell that the main idea of this passage is to tell us about 5 basic materials. The sentence, "A helmet and a bag seem different," only talks about two of the 5 materials discussed by the passage. From this we can tell that the sentence, "A helmet and a bag seem different," does not describe the main idea of this passage. This eliminates **(D)**.

2) **D**

Question Type: Detail

In order to answer this detail question correctly, we need to find where the passage says what a material is and which things are materials. A good way to do this is to scan the topic sentence (the first sentence) of each paragraph, since this will likely tell us what information can be found in the rest of that paragraph. The topic sentence of paragraph 1 reads: "A material is what something is made of." This lets us know that this paragraph is going to talk about what a material is, and may also tell us which things are materials. From this we can understand that the details we are looking for will likely be in this paragraph. This first sentence also lets us know that a material is what something is made of. In the next sentence, we read: "There are 5 basic materials." This lets us know that the passage is likely going to tell us what the 5 materials are. As we read through the rest of the paragraph, we are told that the 5 basic materials are metal, glass, wood, cloth, and plastic. From this we can understand that wood is a material. Therefore **(D)** is correct. According to this passage, a material is "what something is made of." Although this passage does talk about chairs, it does not say that chairs are something that another thing is made of. Instead, it says what wood is a material, and that we use wood to make chairs. Also, the passage does not say that a chair is a material. This lets us know that, according to this passage, chairs are not a material. This eliminates **(A)**. According to this passage, a material is "what something is made of." Although this passage does talk about clothing, it does not say that clothing is something that another thing is made of. Instead, it says that cloth is a material, and that we use cloth to make clothing. Also, the passage does not say that clothing is a material. This lets us know that, according to this passage, clothing is not a material. This eliminates **(B)**. According to this passage, a material is "what something is made of." Although this passage does talk about windows, it does not say that windows are something that another thing is made of. Instead, it says that glass is a material, and that we use glass to make windows. Also, the passage does not say that windows are a material. This lets us know that, according to this passage, windows are not a material. This eliminates **(C)**.

3) **A**

Question Type: Detail

In order to answer this detail question correctly, we need to find where the passage talks about glass. A good way to do this is to scan the topic sentence (the first sentence) of each paragraph, since this will likely tell us what information can be found in the rest of that paragraph. The topic sentence of paragraph 3 reads: "Next, let's talk about glass." This lets us know that paragraph 3 is going to talk about glass, and that the details we are looking for can likely be found in this paragraph. The next two sentences read: "Glass is very smooth. It feels cool to touch." This lets us know that, according to this passage, glass feels smooth and cool. Therefore **(A)** is correct. In paragraph 3, we read: "Glass is very smooth. It feels cool to the touch." This lets us know that, according to this passage, glass is cool, not warm. We also read, in the same paragraph: "[Glass] is hard." This lets us know that glass is hard, and not soft. From this we can tell that, according to this passage, we cannot say that glass feels warm and soft. This eliminates **(B)**. In paragraph 3, we read: "[Glass] is not as heavy as metal." This lets us know that glass does not feel as heavy as metal. But this does not mean that it feels light. Also, the passage does not say that glass feels "light." From this we can tell that, according to this passage, we cannot say that glass feels light and hard. This eliminates **(C)**. In paragraph 3, we read: "[Glass] is not as heavy as metal" This lets us know that, compared to metal, glass is not heavy. Yet a large piece of glass may still be heavy. In addition, although we know that glass is sometimes sharp, we also know that glass does not always feel sharp. More importantly, the passage does not say that glass feels sharp. From this we can tell that, according to this passage, we cannot say that glass feels sharp and heavy. This eliminates **(D)**.

4) **C**

Question Type: Inference

The topic sentence (the first sentence) of paragraph 4 reads: "Now, let's talk about wood." This lets us know that paragraph 4 is going to tell us about the material wood. The next sentence reads: "Wood is lighter than metal and glass." This lets us know that wood is not as heavy as metal or glass. From this we can understand that, when the passage says that wood is lighter than metal and glass, it is telling us that wood is different from metal and glass. Because we know that when you compare something you are saying that it is like something else or different from something else, we can now understand that, when the passage says, "Wood is lighter than metal and glass," it is comparing wood with metal and glass. From this we can tell that the main purpose of this sentence is to compare something. Therefore **(C)** is correct. In paragraph 4, we read: "Wood is lighter than metal and glass." Using the above information, we can tell that this sentence is comparing wood with metal and glass by saying that wood is different from metal and glass. But is this sentence also trying to explain something? When you explain something, you give reasons for why

something is true. This sentence does not give any reasons for why wood is different from metal or glass. It only tells us that they are different. From this we can tell that the main purpose of this sentence cannot be to explain something. Therefore **(A)** is incorrect. In paragraph 4, we read: "Wood is lighter than metal and glass." Using the above information, we can tell that this sentence is comparing wood with metal and glass by saying that wood is different from metal and glass. But is this sentence also recommending something? When you recommend something, you say that someone would like something. This sentence does not tell us that we would like wood. It only tells us that it is different from metal and glass. From this we can tell that the main purpose of this sentence cannot be to recommend something. Therefore **(B)** is incorrect. In paragraph 4, we read: "Wood is lighter than metal and glass." Using the above information, we can tell that this sentence is comparing wood with metal and glass by saying that wood is different from metal and glass. But is this sentence also demonstrating something? When you demonstrate something, you show that something is true by showing some evidence that it is true. But this sentence does not show any evidence that something is true. It only tells that wood is different from metal and glass. Therefore **(D)** is incorrect.

5) **A**

Question Type: Inference

In paragraph 6, we read about plastic. The passage tells us that plastic is "very light," and that it can be "soft" or "hard." It then gives us an example of a soft plastic thing and an example of a hard plastic thing. It tells us that plastic can be used to make thin plastic bags, which it describes as "light, soft, and strong." This lets us know that plastic can be light, soft, and strong. It then tells us that plastic can be used to make bicycle helmets, which it describes as "light, hard, and strong." This lets us know that plastic can be light, hard, and strong. Because both the plastic bag and the bicycle helmet are described as light and strong, we can understand that plastic can be used to make something that is both very light and strong. This lets us know that, if you wanted to make something that was strong and very light, you would use plastic. Therefore **(A)** is correct. In paragraph 4, we read about wood. The passage tells us that it is "lighter than metal and glass." But this does not mean that wood is light. It only means that it is not as heavy as metal and glass. In fact, in paragraph 5, we read that cloth is "very light," and is "much lighter than wood." This lets us know that we cannot describe wood as "very light," because it is not nearly as light as cloth. All of this lets us know that, although wood is strong, it cannot be described as very light. From this we can tell that if you wanted to make something that was strong and very light, you would not use wood. Therefore **(B)** is incorrect. In paragraph 2, we read about metal. The passage tells us that it is "very heavy" and "strong." This lets us know that, although metal is strong, it cannot be described as very light. From this we can tell that if you wanted to make something that was strong and very light, you would not use metal. Therefore **(C)** is incorrect. In paragraph 3, we read about glass. The passage tells us that it is "not as heavy as metal." From this we can tell that glass is not as heavy as metal, but this does not mean that it is very light. In fact, later in the passage, we learn that other materials are much lighter than glass. Paragraph 3 also lets us know that glass "is not strong," and even that it "breaks very easily." This lets us know that we cannot describe glass as strong. From all of this we can understand that if you wanted to make something that was strong and very light, you would not use glass. Therefore **(D)** is incorrect.

6) **B**

Question Type: Global

In this passage, the author first tells us what a material is, and then tells us what the 5 most basic materials are. In the next paragraph, the author talks about metal, which is described as "very heavy." In the 3rd paragraph, the author talks about glass, which is described as "not as heavy as metal." In the 4th paragraph, the author talks about wood, which is described as "lighter than metal and glass." In the 5th paragraph, the author talks about cloth, which is described as "very light," and as "much lighter than wood." In the final paragraph, the author talks about plastic, which is also described as "very light." From all of this we can tell that the author talks first about metal, which is the heaviest, then about glass, which is less heavy, then about wood, which is even less heavy, and then about cloth and plastic, which are the least heavy. This lets us know that the author talks first about heavy things (metal, glass, wood) and then about light things (cloth and plastic). Therefore **(B)** is correct. In this passage, the author talks first about metal, second about glass, third about wood, fourth about cloth, and last about plastic. Does the author talk first about hard things and then about soft things? In paragraph 6, we are told that plastic is sometimes hard and sometimes soft. Because plastic is sometimes hard, and because it is the last material discussed in the passage, we cannot say that the author talks about hard things first and then soft things. Therefore **(A)** is incorrect. In this passage, the author talks first about metal, second about glass, third about wood, fourth about cloth, and last about plastic. Does the author talk first about strong things and then about weak things? The first material, metal, is described as strong. This lets us know that the author starts with a strong thing. The second material, glass, is described as "not strong." This lets us know that the author talks about a strong thing first and a weak thing second. The third material, wood, is described as strong, again. This lets us know that the author talks first about a strong thing, then about a weak thing, and then about another strong thing. The fourth material, cloth, is not described as either strong or weak. And the fifth material, plastic, is described as "strong." This lets us know that the last thing the author discusses, plastic, is a strong thing. From all this we can tell that the author does not talk about strong things first and then weak things. Therefore **(C)** is incorrect. Although the author does describe some materials as "cool," he or she does not describe any materials as "warm." From this we can understand that we cannot say that the author talks about cool things first and then warm things. Therefore **(D)** is incorrect.