YEAR 8 · READING COMPREHENSION

Fiction Extract with Multiple Choice Questions

Read the extract carefully, then choose the best answer for each question.

Name _____ **Date** _____

FICTION EXTRACT

Rain had stopped by the time Mara reached Halewick station, but drops still tapped on the iron roof. The platform weeds stirred in the evening wind. Above them, the station clock had been frozen at 5:17 for as long as anyone could remember.

Mara was reluctant to enter the signal box. She had promised Mum she would be back by six, and the place looked darker than it had from the path. But Grandad had worked here as a signalman, and Mum had found the little brass key in his desk that morning. “Perhaps his compass is still there,” she had said.

The key turned with a stiff click. Inside, the air smelled of damp paper and machine oil. Mara ran a finger along the dusty desk. One clean rectangle showed where something had recently been moved. She searched beneath the desk, then behind a curled timetable, and found a small tin case.

The compass lay inside, its glass uncracked. Beneath it was a note in Grandad’s handwriting: “North is useful, Mara. Knowing why you’re travelling matters more.”

As she read the words, a gust rattled the loose window. The compass needle wavered, then settled. Mara smiled. She had come looking for a direction; instead, Grandad had left her a question worth carrying home.

Multiple choice

Circle one option for each question.

1 **What time did the station clock show?**

(A) 5:17 (B) 5:30
(C) 6:00 (D) 7:15

2 **Why did Mara go into the signal box?**

(A) To meet Mum there (B) To look for Grandad’s compass
(C) To repair the station clock (D) To collect a timetable

3 **What does “reluctant” mean in the extract?**

(A) Unwilling or hesitant (B) Curious and excited
(C) Angry and impatient (D) Calm and confident

4 **What does the clean rectangle on the desk suggest?**

(A) Rain had washed the desk (B) The desk had been repaired
(C) Something had recently been there (D) The window had been cleaned

5 **What did Mara find behind the curled timetable?**

(A) A brass key (B) A folded map
(C) A small tin case (D) A loose compass needle

6 **What idea does Grandad’s note mainly express?**

(A) Having a purpose matters as well as direction (B) Travelling alone is always best
(C) North is the safest way to travel (D) Old stations are easy to get lost in

7 **What does “wavered” mean when describing the compass needle?**

(A) Moved unsteadily from side to side (B) Shone brightly in the dark
(C) Broke into several pieces (D) Pointed firmly towards the window

8 **How does Mara’s mood seem to change by the end?**

(A) From uncertainty to calm reassurance (B) From excitement to disappointment