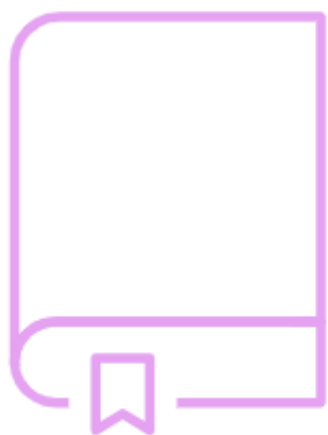


The ACER Advance Awards for Schools



Literacy

Sample Questions & Marking Guide

Summary

The ACER Advance Awards for Schools consists of two challenges, one in Literacy and one in Numeracy.

The Literacy assessment contains 50 questions with a difficulty level intended to engage and challenge high-ability students. Students will have 45 minutes to complete the Literacy assessment.

The sample questions included here represent a typical range of questions in the literacy component of the Advance Awards. The page following the sample materials shows the marking guide for each of the questions.

Sample Questions

Read the following article and use the information to answer questions 1 and 2

Studying Meowsic

Researchers at Lund University in Sweden are studying how cats communicate. Referred to affectionately as Meowsic, the study is focusing on how cats vary their sounds when communicating with humans and other cats, and also how cats respond to different vocal sounds from humans. Aimed at improving our understanding of how we communicate with pets, the researchers expect that results could improve the quality of animal care generally, not just the care of cats. The researchers also intend to look at whether cat noises vary in different parts of the world. Previous studies have shown that some animals, such as whales, have ‘regional accents’. Such research could easily be dismissed as a waste of resources and a sign of people having too much time on their hands. It is easy to laugh off studies that don’t lead directly and obviously to medical discoveries or greater wealth, but something about the notion of learning more about life around us has an irresistible appeal to many people. Anything that expands our understanding of the world around us has the potential to lead to new, and sometimes very useful, discoveries. Brilliant mathematician Alan Turing, now widely regarded as the inventor of computer science, was initially investigating abstract concepts that may even have seemed pointless to some people at the time. Yet today we rely heavily on the fruits of his research. Who knows where a greater understanding of cat–human chat might ultimately lead us?

Question 1

Why is Alan Turing mentioned in the text?

- A. He is part of the Lund University research team.
- B. The most practical results of his research were slow to appear.
- C. His research was proven to be a waste of time.
- D. He developed a program to help people understand animal communication.

Question 2

The writer is arguing that useful research projects

- A. focus on humans not animals.
- B. should be clearly economically justifiable.
- C. can have benefits that are not apparent at first.
- D. mainly occur in the field of medical science.

Question 3

Which one of the following words means ‘to spread or make widely known’?

- A. ACCENTUATE
- B. PROMULGATE
- C. DISSIMULATE
- D. PREDOMINATE

Question 4

Consider the following claim.

Playing a competitive sport helps build a person’s emotional resilience.

Which sentence most strongly argues **against** this claim?

- A. Constantly losing in a competitive sport can undermine a person’s self-esteem.
- B. Playing competitive sport often puts significant pressure on a person to perform.
- C. Competitive sport teaches people that winning is more important than participating.
- D. Players of competitive sport must often suppress their emotions in the heat of a match.

Read the following excerpt and use the information to answer questions 5 and 6

Flowers for Mrs Partington

The flowers in Eliza’s hands trembled. Soon she would see this old person, this Mrs Partington – over 100 years old, they said. ‘She stays in bed these days,’ her aunt said. Eliza couldn’t even count up to 100 and couldn’t imagine a real person, who wasn’t a baby, being able to bear staying in bed forever. She thought it very nice of Auntie to bring her here, though. She would have liked to see the Queen even more, but the Queen was a long way away, Auntie had said crossly, and Mrs Partington lived in town and must be visited. Auntie gripped Eliza’s hand hard as they climbed the three, splintered stairs to the verandah. An old woman appeared at the open door and at first Eliza thought it was her, the one they whispered about. Maybe she had grown tired of sleeping. Auntie murmured something about hoping it was a good day and then yanked at Eliza’s hand. ‘Say hello to Miss P, Eliza,’ she said. ‘She looks after her mother.’ ‘Hello,’ Eliza whispered, shyly. She didn’t know that grownups needed to be looked after. She didn’t even know that old people had mothers.

‘Come through,’ said Miss P. The hall was shadowy and the floorboards gleamed faintly. Miss P led the visitors into a bedroom. The light was even dimmer in there. Eliza could see a small bump under the blankets on a high iron bed. It seemed to Eliza that Miss P slid the bump up from under the covers and set it up on a puffed-up pillow. ‘We don’t really want to disturb ...’ Auntie said. ‘Mother loves visitors, don’t you, Mother?’ said Miss P. Then she whispered, ‘It’s actually hard to know how much she takes in.’ Eliza could see the soft, deeply lined face of Mrs Partington: her trembling mouth opened and

closed, but did not speak. Her head nodded and her eyes looked like some of the blue had been washed out of them. Eliza thought she looked like a lovely old doll, one of the china ones adults wouldn't let you play with. But she wasn't really a doll, after all. She was a little woman, a tiny, perfect, old, old woman. While her aunt placed the flowers in the vase on the bedside table, Eliza looked and looked at Mrs Partington. She stared at the feathery hair and delicate skin. She leant forward to tentatively touch the tiny brown-spotted white hand that lay on the quilt. The small fingers curled around Eliza's like a baby's. Eliza smiled at the very old Mrs Partington, and Mrs Partington smiled back.

Question 5

How does Eliza feel on the way to see Mrs Partington?

- A. fascinated
- B. afraid
- C. reluctant
- D. relaxed

Question 6

The description of Mrs Partington as a bump in the bed makes her seem

- A. quaint.
- B. amusing.
- C. a burden.
- D. Insignificant

Question 7

Which of the following words is most **opposite** in meaning to the word COMPLACENT?

- A. RESIGNED
- B. UNINHIBITED
- C. DISSATISFIED
- D. JUDGEMENTAL

Marking Guide

Question	Key	Answer
1	B	The most practical results of his research were slow to appear.
2	C	can have benefits that are not apparent at first.
3	B	PROMULGATE
4	A	Constantly losing in a competitive sport can undermine a person's self-esteem.
5	A	fascinated
6	D	insignificant
7	D	JUDGEMENTAL