

2024 national curriculum tests

# Key stage 2

## English reading

### Reading answer booklet

First name						
Middle name						
Last name						
Date of birth	Day		Month		Year	
School name						
DfE number						



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Please do not write on this page.



## Instructions

### Questions and answers

You have one hour to complete this test, answering the questions in the answer booklet. Read one text and answer the questions about that text before moving on to read the next text. There are three texts and three sets of questions.

In this booklet, there are different types of question for you to answer in different ways. The space for your answer shows you what type of answer is needed. Write your answer in the space provided. Do not write over any barcodes.

### Short answers

Some questions are followed by a short line or box. This shows that you only need to write a word or a few words in your answer.

### Several line answers

Some questions are followed by a few lines. This gives you space to write more words or a sentence or two.

### Longer answers

Some questions are followed by more answer lines. This shows that a longer, more detailed answer is needed. You can write in full sentences if you want to.

### Selected answers

For some questions you do not need to write anything at all and you should tick, draw lines to or circle your answer. Read the instructions carefully so that you know how to answer the question.

### Marks

The number under each line at the side of the page tells you the number of marks available for each question.

As this is a reading test, you must use the information in the texts to help you to answer the questions. When a question includes a page reference, you should refer to the text on that page to help you with your answer.

**You have one hour to read the texts in the reading booklet and answer the questions in this booklet.**



**Questions 1 – 13 are about *Streaky and Squeaky*  
(pages 4–5)**

**1** According to the text, Madagascar *is well known for its range of weird and wonderful wildlife.*

This suggests...

Tick **one**.

it is very difficult to find your way around the island.

tenrecs are the most famous animals on the island.

there are lots of unusual animals on the island.

streaked tenrecs live all over the world.

1 mark

**2** Read the paragraph beginning: *They are not hedgehogs...*

**Find** and **copy one** word that means the same as 'met'.

\_\_\_\_\_

1 mark

**3** How can you tell streaked tenrecs are *social animals*?

\_\_\_\_\_

1 mark



4

Why are beetle larvae suitable food for streaked tenrecs?

---

1 mark

5

Draw **three** lines to match each paragraph to its main content.

**Paragraph**

**Content**

The paragraph beginning:  
*Imagine treading through...*

diet

The paragraph beginning: *Both highland and lowland streaked tenrecs are...*

behaviour

The paragraph beginning:  
*Tenrecs forage...*

appearance

1 mark

6

Look at the sections: ***What do tenrecs eat?*** and ***What is stridulation?***

(a) Which part of their body do tenrecs use to encourage worms?

---

1 mark

(b) Which part of their body do they use to make sounds?

---

1 mark



7

Look at page 5.

When do streaked tenrecs communicate using stridulation?

---

1 mark

8

The text uses other animals to help describe streaked tenrecs.

Draw **four** lines to match each feature to the animal that it is compared with.

**Streaked tenrec feature**

spines

markings

snout

sounds

**Animal it is compared with**

cricket

bird

hedgehog

bumblebee

1 mark



9

Look at the section: ***What issues are streaked tenrecs facing?***

What serious problems are streaked tenrecs facing?

Give **two** problems.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

2 marks

10

Why are streaked tenrecs important to the rainforest?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

1 mark

11

According to the text, why are streaked tenrecs rarely kept in zoos?

Give **one** reason.

\_\_\_\_\_

1 mark



**12** How are zoos trying to help streaked tenrecs?

---



---

1 mark

**13** Look at the whole text.

Using information from the text, tick one box in each row to show whether each statement is **true** or **false**.

	True	False
There are many different types of tenrec.		
Highland tenrecs have white streaks.		
Tenrecs communicate by stamping their forepaws on the ground.		
Tenrecs live for a long time.		
Lowland streaked tenrecs like to live alone.		

2 marks



**Questions 14–27 are about *The Girl who Walked on Air*  
(pages 6–8)**

**14** Her friend Ned was the first person to see Louie walk the tightrope.

Why did she choose Ned?

\_\_\_\_\_

1 mark

**15** Ned thought that it was just *one big prank* when Louie wanted to climb onto the tightrope.

Why did Ned think Louie was joking?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

1 mark

**16** Look at page 6.

Write **two** things Louie had to do before walking the tightrope.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

1 mark



**17** What was Ned doing every day while Louie practised?

---

1 mark

**18** How do you know that Louie had thought about tightrope walking for a long time?

---

1 mark

**19** Read the paragraph beginning: *“Help me up,” I said...* to the paragraph ending: *...feel wonderfully light.*

Write the numbers 1–4 to show the order that Louie got onto the rope.

Louie balanced on her stomach on the rope.

Louie stood up straight and looked forward.

Louie looked down towards Ned.

Louie pushed off Ned’s hands.

1 mark



20

Look at page 7.

Louie said to Ned, *“Now step back and watch.”*

What **two** things does this show about Louie?

Tick **two**.

She wanted Ned close by for safety.

She was confident that she would be safe.

She was showing off by going backwards.

She wanted Ned to be able to see her properly.

She was teaching Ned how to do it.

1 mark

21

Look at page 7.

Give **two** pieces of evidence that tightrope walking is difficult.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2 marks



22

Read the paragraph beginning: *Arms out to the side...*

How can you tell that Louie was feeling more confident on the rope at this point in the story?

Give **two** ways.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

2 marks

23

Look at page 8.

*The flames were there inside me.*

How did Louie feel at this point?

Tick **one**.

hot

amused

nervous

excited

1 mark



24

*Focus, Louie.*

Who said this and how?

Tick **one**.

Louie said it loudly.

Louie said it in her head.

Ned whispered it to himself.

Ned shouted it as a warning.

1 mark

25

Look at page 8.

How can you tell that Louie enjoyed performing to an audience?

---

---

1 mark



26

Look at the whole text.

Write **three** pieces of evidence that show Ned was nervous about Louie's tightrope walking.

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3 marks

27

Look at the whole text.

Draw **three** lines to match Louie's feelings to the moment that she felt them.

before going on  
the rope

shy

while walking along  
the rope

anxious

back down on  
the ground

focused

1 mark



**Questions 28–39 are about *The Leopard*  
(pages 10–11)**

**28** Read the first paragraph, beginning: *I first saw the leopard...*

Ruskin noticed several signs that the leopard was nearby before he actually saw it.

Give **two** signs that the leopard was nearby.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
2 marks

**29** ...he must have **sensed my presence**...

What does *sensed my presence* mean?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
1 mark

**30** ...he **melted** into the shadows...

What does the word *melted* mean in this sentence?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
1 mark



**31** Read the paragraph beginning: *He was not looking toward me...*

What did Ruskin think the leopard had been doing before he noticed it?

---

1 mark

**32** Read the paragraph beginning: *The leopard, like other members...*

In the weeks after he first saw it, what sign did Ruskin have that the leopard was still in the area?

Tick **one**.

He saw it at twilight.

He heard its heartbeat.

He heard it coughing.

He saw it on the rock.

---

1 mark



33

Look at page 11.

**Find** and **copy one** word that shows the hunters made Ruskin uncomfortable.

\_\_\_\_\_

1 mark

34

Look at page 11.

How did the hunters know that there was a leopard in the forest?

Give **two** ways.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

1 mark

35

Read the paragraph beginning: *One day...*

What made Ruskin suspect that the leopard was inside the cave?

\_\_\_\_\_

1 mark



**36**

Look at page 11.

Using information from the text, tick one box in each row to show whether each statement is **true** or **false**.

	True	False
Exporting skins was not allowed.		
The leopard could be heard from outside the cave.		
The hunters used their weapons carefully.		
The pine martens were scared of Ruskin.		

2 marks

**37**

Read the paragraph beginning: *I paused...* to the paragraph ending: *...ignoring me altogether.*

Tick one box in each row to show whether each statement is something **Ruskin knew** or something **Ruskin imagined**.

	Ruskin knew	Ruskin imagined
There was no movement inside the cave.		
The leopard was hiding inside the cave.		
The leopard recognised Ruskin.		

1 mark



38

Read the paragraph beginning: *Perhaps I had made...*

*I did not **venture** any further...*

Which of the following is closest in meaning to *venture* in this sentence?

Tick **one**.

think about things

plan ahead

ask questions

dare to explore

1 mark

39

Ruskin's personality made him different from the hunters he met in the forest.

Explain **two** ways in which his personality made him different from them, using evidence from the text to support each answer.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3 marks





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2024 key stage 2 English reading

Reading answer booklet

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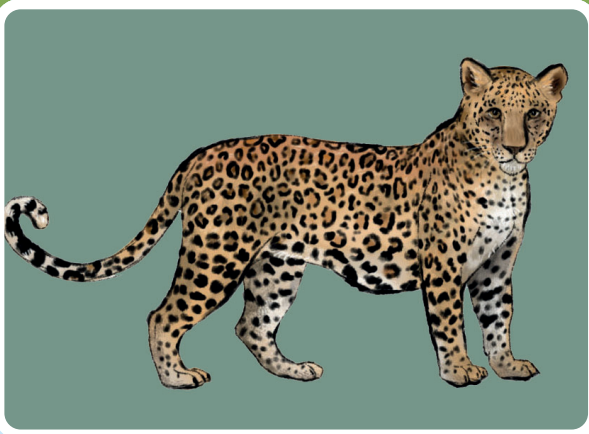




**Streaky and Squeaky**



**The Girl who  
Walked on Air**



**The Leopard**

# Reading Booklet

2024 key stage 2 English reading booklet



# Contents

**Streaky and Squeaky**

**pages 4–5**

**The Girl who Walked on Air**

**pages 6–8**

**The Leopard**

**pages 10–11**

# Streaky

and

# Squeaky

Madagascar is an island country in the Indian Ocean, off the coast of East Africa. It is well known for its range of weird and wonderful wildlife.

Imagine treading through the rainforest in Madagascar and noticing hurried movements in the plants below you. You creep forward to investigate. Suddenly, you see a group of animals unlike anything that you have seen before. Ten of them are sniffing along the ground with long, pointy snouts that look almost like bird beaks. The creatures are quite small – maybe the size of a pet hamster. Their bodies are round and covered with spines like a hedgehog. They are brightly coloured like a bumblebee with yellow streaks running down their backs and legs. On their heads, each of the animals has a crown of bright yellow spikes.

They are not hedgehogs, birds or bumblebees, even if they look like a confused hodgepodge of these animals. You have encountered a family of lowland streaked tenrecs. They are one of many species of tenrecs living in Madagascar.

### **Are all tenrecs the same?**

Lowland streaked tenrecs look unlike any of the other types of tenrec except for their cousins who live in highland rainforests. Highland streaked tenrecs are as spectacularly weird as their lowland cousins, but they have white stripes running down their sides instead of yellow ones.

Both highland and lowland streaked tenrecs are very social animals and are the only kinds of tenrec that live in family groups.

### **What do tenrecs eat?**

Tenrecs forage in the rainforest for soft-bodied invertebrates such as worms and beetle larvae. They sometimes stamp on the ground with their forepaws, to create vibrations, which may increase earthworm activity. They have very fragile jawbones and can only eat soft food. If they tried to eat anything harder, it could damage or even break their jaws.



### **How do streaked tenrecs communicate?**

Sometimes streaked tenrec families get separated in the rainforest and need to communicate with each other. They make high-pitched sounds when they need to find each other. This process is called stridulation.

### **What is stridulation?**

Unlike other types of tenrecs, a streaked tenrec has special spines on its back that it can rub together to produce high-pitched squeaks and chirps. Crickets and other insects commonly use stridulation to communicate.

Humans cannot hear the noises made when streaked tenrecs stridulate because they are made at sound frequencies that are too high for human hearing. Scientists need a specialist microphone to pick up and record the sounds.

### **What issues are streaked tenrecs facing?**

Streaked tenrecs are unique to the rainforest in Madagascar and cannot be found anywhere else in the world. In recent years much of this landscape has been destroyed. As a result of deforestation, where humans cut down the rainforest for wood, tenrecs are in decline. Streaked tenrecs play an important role in their habitat as they hunt smaller creatures and are prey for larger animals like birds and snakes. Without tenrecs, the whole food-chain could be disrupted, causing serious problems for wildlife in Madagascar.

### **How are people helping streaked tenrecs?**

While there have been efforts to help tenrecs by keeping some in zoos, this is not necessarily the best solution due to their short lifespan and the need to keep them in groups or pairs.

Zoos are working to build a population of these animals by breeding them in captivity, so that people around the world can learn about the marvellous streakiness and squeakiness of the streaked tenrecs.

This is an extract from a story in which Louie shows her circus skills to her friend, Ned. This is the first time she has ever shown anyone her ability to walk across a tightrope.

## The Girl who Walked on Air



I was ready. No one had ever watched me before. Jittery though I was, I trusted Ned to be straight with me. He saw all the acts go in and out of the ring, so he'd know a star turn if he saw one.

The rope was now about ten feet off the ground. Ned watched from the ground. He thought it was all one big prank. Right up until I kicked off my clogs, tied back my hair and asked him for a leg-up on the rope.

"You ain't getting up on that?" he said in amazement.

"Of course I am! Now help me up."

"It isn't safe, Louie. You can't just get up on the rope and ... well ... do it. It's a proper skill. It takes years of practice!"

"Yes," I said. "I know."

I could've told him about my scrapbook. About Blondin\*, my hero. And that while he, Ned Bailey, had been snoring away in his cosy bed, I'd been practising every morning for as long as I could remember. But I wanted him to see it for himself.

\*Charles Blondin was a French tightrope walker and acrobat who was famous in the 1800s.

"Help me up," I said.

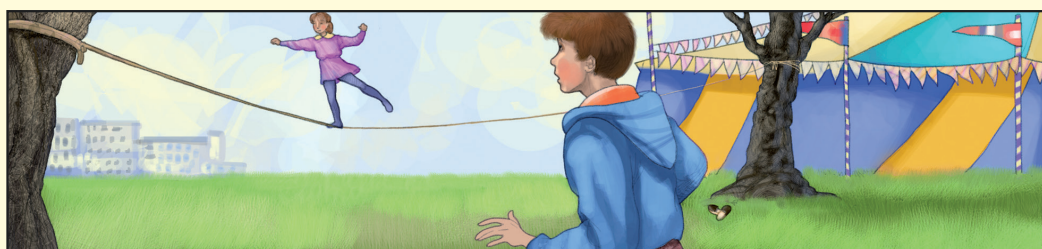
So he cupped his hand for my foot and on the count of three he heaved me upwards. I moved onto the rope till I lay flat across it. Slowly, I eased myself into a crouching position. Now I was a lot taller than Ned. The thought made me giggle. Or maybe it was just my nerves.

"I've got a bird's-eye view of the top of your head," I said. "Now step back and watch."

"Shouldn't I stay here? Just in case you fall?"

"You're a pea-brain, Ned. Course I won't fall."

My mind went quiet. I stood up slowly, counted to five and focused straight ahead. The entire world had shrunk right down on this one length of rope. Nothing else existed. Under my feet the rope swayed slightly. It was part of me now. It had grown out of my heels and toes. We were the same thing, this rope and me. It made me feel wonderfully light.



Arms out to the side, I took a step forward. Then another. Left foot, right foot, sliding forward along the rope. When I reached the other side I stopped. Turned right round to face the way I'd come. The only movement was in my ankles as they worked to keep me upright. I started walking again, this time making more of a show, flourishing my wrists, stopping to crouch down and stretch out each leg in turn. It felt good to be watched. It made me think harder about how I moved, what shapes and lines I made.

When I reached the middle, the rope began to sway. Not badly, but enough to make me steady myself. I didn't have a balance pole; I made do with outstretched arms. Bending my knees a little helped too. Slowly, surely, I kept moving, the rope always a part of me. As it grew still again, I spun on one foot like a dancer. Below me, Ned breathed in sharp. Eventually, at the other side, I leaned on the tree trunk and grinned down at him.

"What d'you reckon?"

His mouth hung open. "Do it again," he said. "Blimey, Louie! Do it again!"

The flames were there inside me. Now I'd started, I wanted more. More people, more cheers, more gasps of delight.

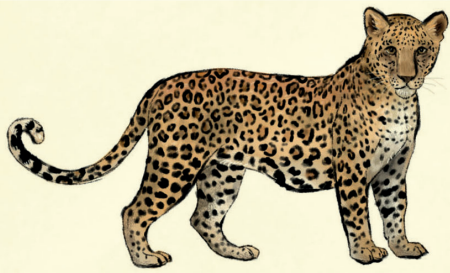
Focus, Louie.

A deep breath, a thought of Blondin and my mind cleared. I stepped out onto the rope, spread my arms and walked as if I was strolling in the park. Then I turned right round and did it all again. Finally Ned said, "You better come down."

Back on the ground, I felt suddenly shy in my too-big tunic and old tights. Ned seemed unable to speak.

**The test continues on the next page.**  
Please turn over to read the next text.

*In this account, the writer Ruskin Bond looks back on the experiences he had while living in the mountains and forests near Mussoorie, in northern India.*



# The Leopard

I first saw the leopard when I was crossing the small stream at the bottom of the hill. As I began climbing, the grunting and chattering increased, as though the monkeys were trying to warn me of some hidden danger. A shower of pebbles came rattling down the steep hillside, and I looked up to see a sinewy, orange-gold leopard poised on a rock about twenty feet above me.

He was not looking toward me, but had his head thrust attentively forward. Yet he must have sensed my presence, because he slowly turned his head and looked down at me. He seemed a little puzzled at my presence there; and when, to give myself courage, I clapped my hands sharply, the leopard sprang away into the thickets, making absolutely no sound as he melted into the shadows. I had disturbed the animal in his quest for food. But a little later I heard the quickening cry of a deer as it fled through the forest. The hunt was still on.

The leopard, like other members of the cat family, is nearing extinction in India, and I was surprised to find one so close to Mussoorie. It was some weeks before I saw the leopard again, although I was often aware of its presence. A dry, rasping cough sometimes gave it away. At times I felt almost certain that I was being followed. Once, when I was late getting home, and the brief twilight gave way to a dark, moonless night, I was startled by a family of porcupines running about in a clearing. I looked around nervously, and saw two bright eyes staring at me from a thicket. I stood still, my heart banging away against my ribs. Then the eyes danced away, and I realised that they were only fireflies.



On one occasion, I found the remains of a deer, which had only been partly eaten. I wondered why the leopard had not hidden the rest of his meal, and decided that it must have been disturbed while eating.

Then, climbing the hill, I met a party of hunters resting beneath the oaks. They asked me if I had seen a leopard. I said I had not. They said they knew there was a leopard in the forest.

Leopard skins, they told me, were selling in Delhi for very good money. Of course there was a ban on the export of skins, but they gave me to understand that there were ways and means... I thanked them for their information and walked on, feeling uneasy and disturbed.

The hunters had seen the carcass of the deer, and they had seen the leopard paw prints, and so they kept coming to the forest. Almost every evening I heard their guns banging away, for they were ready to fire at almost anything.

"There's a leopard about," they always told me.  
"You should carry a gun."

"I don't have one," I said, and they went away.

After that, there were fewer birds to be seen, and even the monkeys had moved on. The pine martens, who had previously become bold, now dashed into hiding at my approach. The smell of one human is like the smell of any other.



One day, I was out walking and came across the entrance to a cave. The silence was so absolute that it seemed to be ringing in my ears. But there was something else of which I was becoming increasingly aware: the strong feline odour of one of the cat family.

I paused and looked about. I was alone. There was no movement of dry leaf or loose stone. Perhaps the leopard was crouching there in the dark, watching me, recognising me, knowing me as the man who walked alone in the forest without a weapon.



I like to think that he was there, that he knew me, and that he acknowledged my visit in the friendliest way: by ignoring me altogether.

Perhaps I had made him confident – too confident, too careless, too trusting of the human in his midst. I did not venture any further; I was not out of my mind. I did not seek physical contact, or even another glimpse of that beautiful sinewy body, springing from rock to rock. It was his trust I wanted, and I think he gave it to me.

But did the leopard, trusting one man, make the mistake of bestowing his trust on others? Did I, by casting out all fear – my own fear, and the leopard's protective fear – leave him defenceless?



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**The Girl who Walked on Air:** Taken from *The Girl who Walked on Air*, Faber & Faber, 2014. Author: Emma Carroll.

**The Leopard:** Taken from *Collected Short Stories*, Penguin Books, 2016. Author: Ruskin Bond.

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