

ESL According to Fran

Reading Comprehension Exercises

Stories are a valuable resource for **multiskill** ESL lessons at all stages of language development and competence. Learners **listen**, **ask** questions to **elicit** facts, and **discuss** details and opinions. Variations in **strategies** encourage reading for **pleasure**, **information** or **instructions**. **Comprehension** and **inference** questions can involve **oral** or **written** answers. Related exercises reinforce **vocabulary** usage and **grammar** concepts. **Written** accounts give practice in **sentence formation** and **concise summarization** of main points.

However, **reading comprehension** can be evaluated **separately** from other skills. The exercises in this booklet require either **little** or **no writing**. They are designed to test understanding of **main ideas**, **supporting details**, **specific facts**, **vocabulary** in context and **recognition** of some **grammar** structures. They can be used **immediately** following the reading to quickly test comprehension - or they can be used **after** the existing exercises in the reader workbook to **review** comprehension and evaluate **retention** of facts.

The exercises include:

- **multiple choice**
- **true false**
- **sequencing events**
- **matching vocabulary**
- **phrasal verbs, homonyms, synonyms, antonyms**
- **word building**
- **sentence completion**

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No Dogs Allowed

Checking the Facts

Choose one answer that best completes each of these statements.

1. Another appropriate *title* for the story might be
 - a) Fran's Favourite Pet
 - b) Brutus - A Free Spirit
 - c) The Dog that Liked Ice Cream

2. If you were travelling to the little village *from* Toronto, you would go
 - a) south
 - b) east
 - c) north

3. Brutus *waited* for the southbound train for
 - a) half an hour
 - b) 14 minutes
 - c) 13 minutes

4. Brutus *staggered* because he was
 - a) tired
 - b) drunk
 - c) lame

5. Brutus slept *soundly* means
 - a) he slept well
 - b) he snored
 - c) he had insomnia

6. The word that does *not* tell a sound made by a dog is
 - a) bark
 - b) purr
 - c) growl

7. Brutus' *habits* were
 - a) rare
 - b) common
 - c) disgusting

8. A *village* is
 - a) as big as a city
 - b) a very small town
 - c) a luxurious house

Use clues from the story and choose the best answer.

1. Brutus could pursue his unusual habits because
 - a) he lived in a small village where everyone knew him
 - b) the waitress was afraid of him
 - c) he couldn't read

2. Brutus did not like Sundays because
 - a) he had to go to church
 - b) Fran told him to bark and growl at the little old ladies
 - c) the restaurant and the pub were closed and the train didn't run

3. Brutus was a free spirit because
 - a) he didn't pay for anything
 - b) he could do the things he enjoyed
 - c) he was really a ghost dog

4. Brutus barked and growled on Sundays because
 - a) he was a good watchdog
 - b) he was boring
 - c) he was bored

5. I think that this story is
 - a) true
 - b) exaggerated
 - c) fiction

Choose the correct meaning for each word.

- | | | | |
|------------|--|------------|--|
| 1. routine | a) regular procedure
b) something gone bad
c) having roots | 5. rode | a) propelled a boat
b) street, avenue, highway
c) traveled |
| 2. lived | a) lift
b) angry
c) resided | 6. allowed | a) loudly
b) permitted
c) by law |
| 3. daily | a) once a week
b) milk, cheese product
c) every day | 7. hopped | a) jumped
b) hoped
c) wished |
| 4. chewed | a) ate with teeth
b) bit
c) the sound trains made | 8. let out | a) permitted to leave
b) made to go out
c) made smaller |

A Thoughtful Wife

Let's Check It Out!

Circle the letter of the correct answer.

1. Fran and Ross were
 - a) out of the way to London
 - b) on the way to London
 - c) in the way to London

2. They went *out of their way* to
 - a) avoid construction trucks
 - b) pick up a friend
 - c) get to the wedding on time

3. The meaning of *held up* in the story is
 - a) robbed
 - b) delayed
 - c) shown as an example

4. The word *accelerated* means
 - a) went faster
 - b) was excited
 - c) did an excellent job

5. The policeman was *panting* means
 - a) he was out of breath
 - b) he was wearing pants
 - c) he was in a panic

6. The policeman
 - a) signalled them to stop
 - b) pulled them out of the car
 - c) moved them to the side of the road

7. Fran told the policeman that
 - a) he shouldn't give Ross a ticket
 - b) he was going to have a heart attack
 - c) he was going to give her a heart attack

8. The meaning of *fine* in the story is
 - a) money paid as a penalty
 - b) in good health
 - c) of high quality

9. To *exceed* the speed limit means
- a) to stay within the limit
 - b) to be an excellent driver
 - c) to go faster than the limit
10. The policeman didn't give Ross a ticket because
- a) he thought it would spoil Ross' day
 - b) he felt sorry for him
 - c) he was afraid he would have a heart attack

Work with words!

Match the words in column A with words that mean the same in column B.

A	B
panting	incidentally
nag	on the whole
all in all	sympathize with
after all	scold repeatedly
feel sorry for	gasping
by the way	all things considered

Put in the correct *way* expression.

The table is in my way, so please move it _____ .

True or False

Mark T if the sentence is true.

Mark F if the sentence is false, then change one or two words to make it true.

1. Fran was rude to interfere when the policeman was talking.
2. The policeman gave Ross a ticket for speeding.
3. It is dangerous to exceed the speed limit.
4. You don't have to have your licence with you when you drive.
5. The only penalty for speeding is having to pay a fine.

Willy's Hair Raising Experience

Let's Check It Out!

Circle the letter of the correct answer.

1. Willy's last name was
 - a) character
 - b) unknown
 - c) object of ridicule

2. A person who is an *object of ridicule* is often
 - a) teased
 - b) respected
 - c) distinguished

3. A *shack* is a
 - a) tremble
 - b) large home
 - c) a wooden hut

4. A person who works *regularly* has a
 - a) steady job
 - b) an odd job
 - c) shift work

5. Willy slept in the station because
 - a) his furnace was out of order
 - b) his hut was unheated
 - c) he didn't want to walk home

6. Willy's hair was
 - a) dirty blonde
 - b) turning gray
 - c) dirty white

7. Another word for *graveyard* is
 - a) cemetery
 - b) fruit orchard
 - c) funeral home

8. Willy's hair turned white and stood straight up because
 - a) he didn't comb it
 - b) he had been terrified
 - c) he didn't wear a hat

9. When Willy says *bin*, he means

- a) a container
- b) been
- c) a vegetable

10. When he says *outa* he means

- a) out of
- b) outer
- c) ought to

Work with Words!

Match the words or expressions in column A with expressions that mean the same in column B.

A

kicked the bucket
pitch black
tried my darndest
curious
used to be
pub
grave
tale
stocky
stumbled

B

did my best
were in the past
passed away
intensely dark
inquisitive
burial place
story
fell
bar
short and sturdy

Use the word *character* in three sentences to show three different meanings.

Underline the word or words that you choose.

1. I think Willy's story is (sad, funny, boring).
2. If Willy had lived in a large city, he probably would have been (homeless, cared for by the city).

A Family Tradition

Checking the Facts

1. Fran's family *tradition* began
 - a) last year
 - b) forty years ago
 - c) on December 1958

2. She wanted to buy
 - a) a Christmas present for Ross
 - b) new shoes for herself
 - c) a birthday gift

3. She chose
 - a) one shoe
 - b) a pair of shoes
 - c) a grocery bag

4. She started to
 - a) rap the gift
 - b) return the gift
 - c) wrap the gift

5. She *changed her mind* because
 - a) the shoes cost a lot of money
 - b) the shoes didn't fit
 - c) Ross didn't need new shoes

6. For *Christmas* she gave Ross
 - a) the other shoe
 - b) another shoe
 - c) one of the shoes

7. Ross said
 - a) "Cheep, cheep"
 - b) "Cheap, cheap"
 - c) "This is a wonderful gift"

8. Ross received *the other shoe*
 - a) in March
 - b) on February 14
 - c) the next Christmas

Match the words in column A with the words in column B.

A	B
gift	Feb. 14
received	two
another	not expensive
Christmas	present
Valentine's Day	got
cheap	one more
pair	Dec. 25

Make sentences:

- a) a shoe
- b) the shoe
- c) the shoes
- d) shoes (do not use the)
- e) another
- f) the other

What do you think?

A pair of shoes is a _____ gift.

Tell about it - or write about it!

My Favourite Family Tradition

Blowin' in the Wind

Let's Check It Out!

Circle the letter of the correct answer.

1. Fran's husband *warned* her
 - a) to stay out of her car
 - b) not to go to school
 - c) to get inside the school as soon as possible

2. He gave her some
 - a) advise
 - b) advice
 - c) suggestion

3. A strong *gust* of wind
 - a) slammed the door shut
 - b) blew the car across the parking lot
 - c) blew the car door wide open

4. The wind
 - a) picked Fran up
 - b) picked up her
 - c) made a mess of Fran's hair

5. Fran
 - a) lay calmly on the pavement
 - b) sat on the ground
 - c) lay bruised and stunned

6. Fran's glasses had *blown away* so she was
 - a) winking
 - b) squinting
 - c) blinking

7. She *resented* the words
 - a) skinny and drunk
 - b) lady and old
 - c) skinny and old

8. The young man found her glasses
 - a) near her car
 - b) at the other end of the plaza
 - c) beside Fran

9. Her glasses had
a) broken lenses
b) a missing arm
c) nothing wrong with them
10. Fran
a) should not have driven home
b) did the right thing by driving home
c) should have walked home

Choose the word in column A that is *opposite* in meaning to a word in column B.

A	B
suddenly	sober
skinny	quiet
drunk	gradually
put on	few
loud	obese
several	took off

Make *adjectives* from these nouns.

strength _____
miracle _____

The word *close* can be pronounced in two ways. Write a sentence using each pronunciation and meaning.

1. _____
2. _____

Number the sentences in the correct order.

The weather suddenly changed.

Fran, her car, and her glasses were all hurt in some way.

Ross worries about Fran on windy days.

The wind blew the car door wide open.

Fran was at the local plaza.

A Good Bargain

Let's Check It Out!

Circle the letter of the best answer.

1. Another suitable *title* would be
 - a) How to Bargain
 - b) A Student's Lesson
 - c) How to Buy Shoes on Sale

2. The shoes were
 - a) shiny black
 - b) an excellent bargain
 - c) too big

3. The ESL student *taught* the class
 - a) how to freeze shoes
 - b) how to make shoes bigger
 - c) what to do with old newspapers

4. *Final sale* means
 - a) no returns or refunds
 - b) the store is going out of business
 - c) the item is the last one in the store

5. The word *excess* means
 - a) some
 - b) very good
 - c) more than necessary

6. *Put in* is the opposite of
 - a) put out
 - b) take out
 - c) take off

7. The teacher
 - a) limped
 - b) hopped
 - c) paced

8. *Before* you see if the shoes will fit
 - a) you must remove the excess water
 - b) you have to take out the ball of paper
 - c) you must try it on

9. *Stocking feet* means
- a) bare feet
 - b) without shoes
 - c) smelly feet
10. *At first*, the teacher was
- a) embarrassed about her bargain
 - b) proud of her good deal
 - c) unhappy because the shoes hurt her toes
11. *If* she had known the shoe was too small
- a) she would still have bought the pair
 - b) she didn't bought them
 - c) she wouldn't have purchased them
12. *If* our class gives presentations about how to do something
- a) we will learn new things
 - b) we will be bored
 - c) our teacher won't have anything to do

Work with Words!

Match the words in column A with words in column B.

A	B
crumple	make bigger
instructions	boasted
bragged	below the usual price
pinching	squeezing tightly
discount	how to do something
stretch	wrinkle and crush

Use the word *bargain* as a verb, a noun, and an adjective.

1. _____ .
2. _____ .
3. _____ .

What do you think?

The shoe was too small because.....

A Communication Problem

Let's Check It Out!

Circle the letter of the correct answer.

1. Marie and Mike were *lonely* because
 - a) Marie had no family in Canada, and Mike didn't too
 - b) Mike didn't have any relatives in Canada
 - c) Marie didn't have any relatives in Canada, and neither did Mike

2. The meaning of *nanny* in this story is
 - a) grandmother
 - b) childminder
 - c) housekeeper

3. Marie and Mike *didn't listen* to the ESL lessons because
 - a) they were more interested in each other
 - b) they already spoke English
 - c) the lessons were boring

4. They planned to get *married*
 - a) even though they couldn't speak a common language
 - b) despite they had problems to communicate
 - c) in spite of teacher's warning

5. Mike *lost his job* because
 - a) the boss didn't like him
 - b) the owner had to downsize
 - c) he was not qualified

6. Mike followed his *boss' lead* by
 - a) contacting his boss' friend
 - b) going everywhere his boss went
 - c) thanking his boss

7. A synonym for *reluctantly* is
 - a) willingly
 - b) unwillingly
 - c) hesitantly

8. "*Luck was with Mike!*" means
 - a) he had been lucky all his life
 - b) he won the lottery
 - c) he got the job and found an apartment

9. Marie told her *employer* that she
 - a) would put a notice up to recruit her replacement
 - b) would work for two weeks before leaving her job
 - c) would need two weeks to get ready to leave

10. Mike was *disappointed* because
 - a) Marie didn't arrive
 - b) Marie was the last person to get off the bus
 - c) Marie had missed the bus

11. Marie's employer told Mike that Marie
 - a) had gone to board with another family
 - b) had got on the bus to Toronto
 - c) didn't say where she was going

12. Mike finally decided that Marie
 - a) had stood up him
 - b) had stayed in Sudbury
 - c) had stood him up

13. Mike worked many extra hours in order to
 - a) forget about Marie
 - b) think about other things
 - c) control his anger

14. At coffee break in the new ESL class
 - a) Mike asked Joe to show him around
 - b) Joe asked Mike to go to the cafeteria
 - c) the teacher asked Mike a lot of questions

15. Mike and Marie were *astonished* because
 - a) they never thought they would meet again
 - b) they asked each other many questions

16. Mike had written
 - a) Thursday instead of Tuesday
 - b) Tuesday instead of Thursday
 - c) the right words

17. Marie and Mike
 - a) reconciled
 - b) broke up again
 - c) became just friends

18. Correct *pronunciation and spelling*
- a) are not very important
 - b) could have prevented a lot of frustration
 - c) are easier in English than any other language
19. The *bride and groom* were
- a) Joe and Marie
 - b) the ESL teacher and Mike
 - c) Marie and Mike
20. The fact that the couple *found each other* again was
- a) totally unexpected
 - b) totally unacceptable
 - c) totally anticipated
21. Number the events in the correct order.

Marie and Mike planned to get married.
They finally understood what had happened.
They met again in an ESL class in Toronto.
A young couple met in an ESL class in Sudbury.
She did not arrive in Toronto on Thursday.
He found a job and an apartment in Toronto.
Mike lost his job in Sudbury.
A lovely wedding took place.
Marie was supposed to join Mike in Toronto.
Mike could not find Marie.

- 22.. Joe should have said,
- a) "I'll introduce you"
 - b) "I gonna introduce you"
23. Marie should have asked,
- a) "Why you didn't meet me"
 - b) "Why didn't you meet me"
24. Mike should have asked,
- a) "Why weren't you on the bus?"
 - b) "Why weren't you on bus?"
25. The day *before* Wednesday is _____.
- 26 The day *after* Wednesday is _____.

A Teacher's Gift

Let's Check It Out!

Circle the letter of the best answer.

1. The Home Economics teacher was *not* a good teacher because
 - a) she didn't assign good projects
 - b) she discouraged her students instead of encouraging them
 - c) she forced students to take her subject

2. Fran loved school
 - a) expect for Home Economics
 - b) except for one subject
 - c) in spite of Home Economics

3. Fran learned
 - a) how to cook
 - b) how to humiliate people
 - c) how not to be a teacher

4. The students
 - a) must make two blouses
 - b) had to sew two blouses
 - c) should have made uniforms

5. Fran *didn't get* someone to help her because
 - a) the teacher wouldn't let her
 - b) no one knew how to sew
 - c) she was stubborn

6. Fran would have *preferred* to
 - a) take Home Economics
 - b) drop Home Economics
 - c) stay home

7. The teacher
 - a) praised Fran
 - b) yelled at Fran
 - c) said the material was dirty

8. Fran couldn't
 - a) drive well
 - b) sew straight
 - c) wear her uniform

Work with Words!

Place a *not* prefix with each of these words. Use the new words in sentences.

ability
finished
pleased

Choose the word from column A that is *opposite* to a word from column B.

A	B
wrinkled	useless
compulsory	allowed
valuable	smooth
crooked	whispered
refused	straight
shouted	optional

Write a *homonym* from the story for each word.

tot
so
won
too
sea
knew
brake

Circle words that describe the Home Economics teacher.

unkind pleasant quiet rude

Circle words that describe how Fran felt in the Home Economics class.

frustrated clever humiliated happy

Tell it or write it!

Why was Fran relieved when her family moved?

Friday the Thirteenth

Let's Check It Out!

Choose the best answer.

1. Another suitable *title* for the story is
 - a) The Tow Truck
 - b) A Superstitious Person
 - c) A Stroke of Luck!
2. Fran knew it would be a *bad day* because
 - a) she parked illegally
 - b) she is a pessimist
 - c) she woke up with a feeling of dread
3. The *second* unfortunate thing that happened was
 - a) the car being towed away
 - b) the cost of getting the car back
 - c) a black cat running in front of her
4. *Double double* coffee means
 - a) two creams and two sugars
 - b) very strong coffee
 - c) a very large mug
5. Fran found a parking *spot* in front of the store
 - a) at 4:23
 - b) at 3:45
 - c) between 4 p.m. and 6 p.m.
6. Fran *made a mistake* by
 - a) not putting money in the meter
 - b) speeding
 - c) not checking the sign
7. The word *retrieve* means
 - a) regain possession
 - b) go back
 - c) the opposite of give
8. Fran's bad luck *ended* when she
 - a) retrieved her car
 - b) got home
 - c) found a penny

9. Fran *spotted* a penny means that
- a) it had a mark on it
 - b) she picked it up
 - c) saw it
10. To *retrieve* her car, Fran paid by
- a) Visa
 - b) cash
 - c) cheque

Work with words!

Make *adjectives* from these words. Use the new words in sentences.

optimism
superstition
bump
luck

Match words from column A with words from column B.

A	B
misfortune	pleaded
carefully	saw
happened	bad luck
begged	occurred
spotted	cautiously

Write the *ordinal* number for each word.

one
two
three
thirteen

What lesson did you learn from this story?

I learned that I should always _____ parking signs carefully.

ESL According to Fran

Let's Check It Out!

Finish these sentences.

1. ESL students often *talk about*
2. ESL teachers are *proud* that their students are
3. I hope the student meant *smile* instead of
4. English is sometimes *difficult* because it has
5. A person with a *golden tongue* is one who
6. *High caffeine consumption* means
7. If someone is *fed up*, she
8. Fran speaks *only*, but she
9. The *most* difficult thing about learning English
10. The *Canadian mosaic*

Match the words from column A that mean the same as words from column B.

A

beginning
amazed
courage
diverse
unique
goals
intended
cuisine
patience
answer
equality
understand

B

aims
comprehend
method of cooking
reply
bravery
having the same rights
start
varied
ability to wait
surprised
one of a kind
meant

An Exciting Challenge!

The following phrasal verbs are used in the stories you have just read. Can you use each one in a sentence with the same meaning as it is used in the story?

Can you think of other meanings for some of the expressions? If you can, make more sentences.

jump up

got on

used to

held up

pulled over

looked over

felt like

balked at

found out

tried on

leave for

worry about

picked up

looked at

put on

hang on

took off

looked around

turned around

got in touch

turned out

got off

stood up

figure out

supposed to

fed up