

Free Basic Comprehension Test

10 questions with a worked solution for every one

This is a full-length practice test. Read each short passage, then decide whether the statement that follows is True, False, or Cannot say based only on the passage. Work under exam conditions if you can: give yourself 10 minutes and avoid checking the answers as you go.

The worked solutions start after the last question. They point to the exact wording that settles each answer and explain every wrong option, so a question you get wrong tells you something.

Questions	10
Suggested time limit	10 minutes
Format	Multiple choice: True / False / Cannot say
Answers	Included, with full worked solutions

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Written by Guy Thornton. Updated 20 July 2026.

Questions

PASSAGE

A software company decided to trial a four-day working week for six months. Under the trial, staff worked Monday to Thursday instead of the usual Monday to Friday, and the company asked employees to record how they felt at the end of each week so that it could judge the effect the shorter week was having on their wellbeing over time.

Throughout the trial, staff were paid the same as before, on the condition that they completed the same amount of work as in a normal five-day week. The company was clear that no one's salary would be cut simply because the working week was shorter, and that the trial was meant to test whether the same output could be achieved in fewer days without any loss of pay for the people taking part.

QUESTION 1 OF 10

Employees were paid the same during the trial as they had been before it.

- A) True
 - B) False
 - C) Cannot say
-

PASSAGE

During its trial of a four-day working week, a software company asked most of its staff to work Monday to Thursday and to take Fridays off. Some managers, however, were concerned that customers might struggle to reach the company at the very end of the week, when the offices would be much quieter than usual and most desks would be empty.

To deal with this, the company arranged for a small team of its own staff to answer urgent messages on that day. This meant that while the great majority of employees were away on Fridays, the business was not left completely unstaffed. The company explained that keeping a few people available on Fridays was a deliberate part of the trial, so urgent customer needs could still be met each week.

QUESTION 2 OF 10

No staff worked on Fridays during the trial.

- A) True
 - B) False
 - C) Cannot say
-

PASSAGE

When a software company trialled a four-day week, some managers were concerned that customers might find it harder to reach the company on Fridays, when most of the staff were away from the office. The company took the worry seriously and put a small team in place to handle any urgent messages that might arrive while the rest of the workforce was off.

At the end of the trial, the company reviewed how the arrangement had worked from its own point of view, but it did not gather or publish any feedback from customers about their experience on Fridays. Whether customers had in fact found it harder to get in touch, or had noticed no difference at all, was not something the report recorded, and the company said such feedback would be considered separately.

QUESTION 3 OF 10

Customers found it harder to reach the company on Fridays during the trial.

- A) True
 - B) False
 - C) Cannot say
-

PASSAGE

A software company trialling a four-day working week set one main condition for its staff: they had to complete the same amount of work as they would in a normal five-day week, even though they were now working one day less than before. Managers watched the output figures closely throughout the whole of the six-month trial period.

At the end of the trial, the company compared the output of its teams during the trial with their output before it began, and found that the amount of work completed by the teams did not fall during the trial period. That meant the four days had delivered as much as the previous five. Managers said this was the single most important finding, because the shorter week had not come at the cost of the work the business needed.

QUESTION 4 OF 10

The teams completed as much work during the trial as they had in a normal five-day week.

- A) True
 - B) False
 - C) Cannot say
-

PASSAGE

The Arctic tern is a seabird that makes one of the longest migrations of any animal on Earth. Each year it travels from its breeding grounds in the far north to the far south and back again, following the summer as it moves between the two opposite ends of the planet in search of the long daylight and rich feeding that each pole offers in turn.

Because it takes a winding route rather than a straight line, the total distance an Arctic tern covers in a single year is far greater than the direct distance between the two regions. The bird breeds during the northern summer, when daylight in the far north lasts for most of the day, and then heads south as the northern autumn begins. Few other creatures cover so much ground in a single year.

QUESTION 5 OF 10

The Arctic tern travels between the far north and the far south each year.

- A) True
 - B) False
 - C) Cannot say
-

PASSAGE

Researchers fitted small tracking devices to some Arctic terns in order to record the routes the birds took on their long yearly migration. The devices logged each bird's position at regular intervals over the course of a full year, building up a detailed picture of where the terns went as the seasons changed and they moved between the far north and the far south.

The data revealed the winding paths the terns followed, but the study did not measure how the birds find their way. The researchers were interested in where the terns travelled rather than in the methods they used to navigate, and their devices recorded location only. Questions about whether the birds rely on the sun, the stars, the Earth's magnetic field or some other cue were left entirely open by the study.

QUESTION 6 OF 10

Arctic terns find their way using the position of the sun.

- A) True
 - B) False
 - C) Cannot say
-

PASSAGE

To learn more about the Arctic tern's remarkable migration, researchers tracked a number of individual birds across a full year and compared the routes that each of them had taken. They wanted to see how consistent the long journeys really were from one bird to the next, and whether the terns shared a single well-worn path or spread out across the ocean.

The tracking data showed that individual terns did not all follow exactly the same path. Some birds swung further out over the open ocean, while others hugged different coastlines, so the routes varied noticeably from bird to bird even though all of them travelled between the far north and the far south. The researchers concluded that there was no single fixed route that every tern in the study had followed.

QUESTION 7 OF 10

Every Arctic tern follows exactly the same route on its migration.

- A) True
 - B) False
 - C) Cannot say
-

PASSAGE

A delivery company installed self-service lockers outside shops in several neighbourhoods, so that customers could have parcels delivered to a locker instead of to their home. Each customer collects their parcel using a code that the company sends to their phone once the parcel has arrived and been placed inside the locker ready for them to pick up.

The company reported that parcels sent to lockers were, on average, delivered a day faster than parcels sent to homes. This was because a driver could fill a single bank of lockers with many parcels in one stop, rather than driving to many separate home addresses. The time saved on the road, the company said, was passed on to customers as quicker delivery, and was a main reason it planned to expand the network.

QUESTION 8 OF 10

Parcels sent to lockers were delivered faster on average than parcels sent to homes.

- A) True
 - B) False
 - C) Cannot say
-

PASSAGE

A delivery company's self-service lockers were designed to make collecting parcels far more convenient for its customers. When a parcel arrives at a locker, the customer is sent a code to their phone, which they then enter at the locker to open the correct compartment and take out their delivery whenever they happen to be passing by that particular location.

The lockers were available at any hour, so customers did not need to be at home to receive a delivery, and could pick up a parcel early in the morning or late at night if that suited them. Because collection depends only on the code and not on the customer being at any particular address, someone could have a parcel delivered while they were at work and then collect it whenever it best suited them.

QUESTION 9 OF 10

Customers must be at home to collect a parcel from a locker.

- A) True
 - B) False
 - C) Cannot say
-

PASSAGE

A delivery company explained the rules that applied whenever a parcel was left sitting unclaimed in one of its self-service lockers. Customers are sent reminders to collect their items, and because the space inside the lockers is limited, uncollected parcels cannot be allowed to stay in them indefinitely and take up room that other deliveries would otherwise need.

The company noted that a parcel left uncollected for more than five days was returned to the sender, but it did not say how often this happened. It gave no figure for the share of parcels that ended up uncollected, and did not indicate whether such returns were a common event or a rare one. The report therefore described what happened to an abandoned parcel without showing how frequently the situation actually arose.

QUESTION 10 OF 10

Parcels left in lockers are returned to the sender frequently.

- A) True
 - B) False
 - C) Cannot say
-

Answers and worked solutions

Every wrong option is explained too, not just the correct answer.

Question 1

Correct answer: A) True

True: the passage states that under the trial staff "were paid the same as before". False is wrong because nothing in the text says pay changed. Cannot say is wrong because the passage states the pay directly, so the reader can decide the statement from the text rather than being left uncertain about it.

Question 2

Correct answer: B) False

False: the passage says the company "arranged for a small team of its own staff to answer urgent messages on that day", meaning Friday, so some staff did work on Fridays. True is wrong because it takes the Monday-to-Thursday pattern at face value and overlooks that Friday team. Cannot say is wrong because the passage settles the point rather than leaving it open, so the statement can be judged false against the text.

Question 3

Correct answer: C) Cannot say

Cannot say: the passage reports only that some managers were "concerned that customers might find it harder" and that a team handled urgent messages; it never records what customers actually experienced. True is wrong because a concern that something might happen is not a statement that it did. False is wrong because the passage does not claim customers had no difficulty either; it simply leaves their experience unreported.

Question 4

Correct answer: A) True

True: the passage states that "the amount of work completed by the teams did not fall during the trial period", so the four-day output matched the earlier five-day output. False is wrong because the passage says output held rather than dropped. Cannot say is wrong because the text addresses the workload directly, so the reader can decide it without guessing.

Question 5

Correct answer: A) True

True: the passage states that each year the tern "travels from its breeding grounds in the far north to the far south and back again". False is wrong because nothing contradicts this yearly journey. Cannot say is wrong because the movement between the two regions is stated outright, so the reader can decide it from the passage alone.

Question 6

Correct answer: C) Cannot say

Cannot say: the passage explicitly states that the study "did not measure how the birds find their way", so it offers no information about the sun or any other method. True is wrong because it imports an explanation the passage never gives, perhaps from outside knowledge. False is wrong because the passage does not rule the sun out either; it is simply silent on how the birds navigate.

Question 7

Correct answer: B) False

False: the tracking data "showed that individual terns did not all follow exactly the same path", which directly contradicts the claim that every bird takes the same route. True is wrong because it accepts a neat generalisation the data disproves. Cannot say is wrong because the passage decides the matter, reporting variation between birds, so it is not left open.

Question 8

Correct answer: A) True

True: the passage states that parcels sent to lockers were "on average, delivered a day faster than parcels sent to homes". False is wrong because the passage reports the lockers as faster, not slower. Cannot say is wrong because the comparison is stated directly, so the reader can decide it from the text rather than being left unsure.

Question 9

Correct answer: B) False

False: the passage says lockers were "available at any hour, so customers did not need to be at home to receive a delivery", and parcels are collected using a code sent to the phone. True is wrong because it contradicts the passage's stated point of a locker. Cannot say is wrong because the text settles the matter rather than leaving it open.

Question 10

Correct answer: C) Cannot say

Cannot say: the passage states that a parcel uncollected for more than five days "was returned to the sender", but adds that it "did not say how often this happened", so the frequency is unknown. True is wrong because "frequently" claims a rate the passage never gives. False is wrong because the passage does not say returns are rare either; it simply does not report how often they occur.

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