Reading 01

**Boomerang Kids**

Man: Ah, this is terrible! I’ve just graduated from college. But I have to move back in with

my parents!

Woman: Don’t worry about it, Charles. I just read the other day on Monster dot com that

almost half of all graduates our age plan on returning home after graduation.

Man: Really? Almost half? That’s amazing! I guess a lot of new graduates are having problems finding work like I am.

Woman: It’s true. The economic recession has made it difficult to find jobs. And to make matters worse, the cost of living has continued to rise.

Man: Exactly. The cost of living has continued to rise, and there are few jobs. That’s why I

have to move back home.

Woman: Well, look on the bright side. This will give you a chance to reconnect with your

parents.

Man: That’s true. It will give me a chance to reconnect with my parents. I haven’t spent a

lot of time with my parents since I went to university.

Woman: That’s right. Your parents will be really happy, too. I’m sure they would love the

chance to get closer to you.

Man: I just hope I won’t be too much of a burden on them.

Woman: Come on, Charles. Kids are never a burden on their parents.

Reading 02

**Alarm Signals in Fish**

Boy: Mr. Bloom wants us to write about how animals survive when being attacked by predators. What are you writing about Patricia?

Girl: I’m writing about minnows. They survive pike attacks by releasing a chemical that attracts even more pike.

Boy: What!? They survive pike attacks by releasing chemicals that attract more pike? That can’t be right. That’s not a survival strategy. That’s suicide.

Girl: It is true. Look at this book right here. It says that attacked minnows attract more predators and warns other minnows away so that other minnows in their own family can live.

Boy: Hmm! Interesting! Here it says, {reading voice} “Minnows swim in schools. If the original minnow gets eaten, its relatives may still survive and reproduce.” So, it’s like they sacrifice themselves for the good of the others.

Girl: Not only that, the chemical attracts bigger pike. Big pike sometimes eat small pike. You see, they swim up to where the minnow is. They see two possible fish to eat: a tiny minnow or a small pike. The small pike makes a better meal than the minnow.

Boy: Sure. Small pike are much bigger than tiny minnows. So I guess the large pike will chase and eat the small pike, right?

Girl: Exactly. Maybe you could write about a kind of fish that also releases chemicals. There are many other fish that use this survival strategy.

Boy: There are? Let me see that book.

Reading 03

**Alcatraz Island**

Man: Welcome to Alcatraz Island. I will be your tour guide today. My name is Daniel. Why do you think this island was chosen to be a prison?

Girl: I think it was a natural choice because it’s isolated from the city of San Francisco and the water around the island is freezing cold.

Man: Excellent. That’s exactly right. Alcatraz was a natural choice because of its isolation and the cold water. That’s part of the reason that people used to call Alcatraz an “escape-proof” island.

Girl: But people did try to escape, didn’t they? I read that 36 prisoners tried to escape.

Man: That’s right. 36 prisoners tried to escape. The most famous attempt involved six prisoners. They used spoons and an electric drill to make holes. They climbed out air vents. They used raincoats to make small boats to cross the water.

Girl: Right. They used spoons, an electric drill, and raincoats. But nobody survived an escape, did they?

Man: No. It’s believed that everyone that made it to the water probably drowned. But their bodies were never found.

Girl: Yep. And then they finally closed the prison in 1963, didn’t they?

Man: That’s right. You really know a lot about Alcatraz, don’t you, little girl? How come you know so much?

Girl: I’m really interested in this place. I’ve read ten books about Alcatraz. Hey, do you need to hire any more tour guides?

Reading 04

**Product Placement**

Boy: I’m thirsty. I’m going to get a Dr. Pepper. Do you want something?

Girl: Jake, didn’t you just drink a bottle of water? Ah! I bet it’s because of the product placement you just watched from the movie, “*Spiderman*.”

Boy: Product placement? What’s that?

Girl: Product placement is a form of advertising where a product is placed in a scene of a movie or TV show. We also call it PPL for short.

Boy: So PPL is a kind of advertising. They put a product in a scene of a movie or something, right? That’s interesting.

Girl: When Spiderman ran past that big building, you could see a big Dr. Pepper sign. That was a subtle kind of advertising. And it worked! Now you want to drink a Dr. Pepper.

Boy: Why do they put an advertisement like that into movies?

Girl: Well, it’s great for both advertisers and movie producers. For the advertisers, their brands are naturally associated with a cool character in a movie.

Boy: That’s true. Without realizing it, I have associated Spiderman with Dr. Pepper.

Girl: Right. And the movie producers love it because the film’s PPL advertisers pay lots of money for putting their products in the movies. Sometimes they can pay for the entire production of a movie!

Boy: Really? They can even pay for the entire production of a movie? So are there any problems with PPL?

Girl: Sure. Some movie directors don’t like it because they think it ruins the beauty of movie scenes.

Boy: I can understand that. It kind of ruins the beauty of a movie.

Reading 05

**Review of *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button***

Girl: Have you seen *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button* yet?

Boy: That’s the Brad Pitt movie, isn’t it? No, I haven’t seen it yet. Should I go see it?

Girl: Definitely. It’s great! Brad Pitt plays the main character, Benjamin, who ages backwards.

Boy: He ages backwards? What do you mean?

Girl: I mean, when he’s born, he looks like an old man. As time passes, he gets younger and younger.

Boy: He gets younger and younger over time. What a strange concept for a movie!

Girl: Yeah. And Brad Pitt’s character, Benjamin Button, falls in love with a woman named Daisy. But she keeps getting older while Benjamin keeps getting younger. So it’s a very sad love story.

Boy: Daisy gets older while Benjamin gets younger. That’s so sad. I guess you could say their love was doomed by the passage of time.

Girl: You can say that. So are you going to see the movie?

Boy: Why should I? I already know what happens!

Reading 06

**Resurrection Plant**

Boy: Sasha! You have to water your plants! Look at this poor thing. It’s dead!

Girl: It’s not dead. It’s a resurrection plant. When I don’t water it, it pulls its roots back up and turns brown. It looks like a ball.

Boy: Why does it pull its roots back up?

Girl: So it can be pushed more easily over the ground. Let me explain. When the plant gets really dry in the desert, it pulls its roots back up like this and turns brown. Then it can be blown around by the wind.

Boy: Is there some advantage to being blown around by the wind?

Girl: If it’s blown around by the wind, it might roll into a puddle of water.

Boy: So what happens when it reaches a puddle of water?

Girl: Well, it starts acting like a normal plant. It begins to drink and it spreads out again. Then its leaves turn green again. It comes back to life! That’s why it’s called a “resurrection plant.”

Boy: I see. The plant begins to drink, spreads out again, and turns green. Here. Let’s give it some water. So if I add water, this brown ball will turn green again. It will come back to life?

Girl: Yes, it’ll come back to life again.

Boy: That’s cool. I can see why you keep resurrection plants. You’re always forgetting to water your plants!

Reading 07

**Handwriting Analysis**

Woman: I need to hire a new teacher. But I don’t know who to choose. Here are their work histories. Can you look through them with me?

Man: Sure. I just have one question for you: Why are these work histories all written by hand?

Woman: I always ask job applicants to submit a handwritten letter. By studying their handwriting, I can select the best employees. Some employers I know do the same when employing people.

Man: Really? By studying handwriting, you can select the best employees? How?

Woman: Well, I can tell their personalities by looking at their handwriting. This person’s handwriting is big and elaborate. So this might indicate that she’s outgoing and assertive. This person’s handwriting is small and plain. So he might be really shy.

Man: Interesting! You can tell their personalities by looking at their handwriting. So people with big, elaborate handwriting tend to be outgoing and assertive and people with small handwriting are thought to be shy. Is that right?

Woman: Exactly. And we need to hire an outgoing, assertive teacher. So I think we should hire this woman.

Man: You know, I don’t think this is the best way to select an employee. It seems very unscientific. It seems like palm reading or something like that.

Woman: It may be unscientific, but it works for me!

Reading 08

**Hair Detectives**

Man: Why aren’t you working on the robbery case, Detective?

Woman: I am working on it! I’m working on it right now, in fact. I’m studying this hair found at the crime scene.

Man: You’re studying the hair? Why are you doing that?

Woman: By studying the hydrogen and oxygen atoms in the hair, I can tell where the robber comes from.

Man: By studying the hydrogen and oxygen atoms in the hair, you can track down the robber?

Woman: That’s right. We can use water to solve this crime. The hydrogen and oxygen atoms come from the tap water that the robber used to prepare food.

Man: So, you’re saying that water is central to solving the crime, right? Those atoms come from the tap water that he drank.

Woman: Yeah. Actually, a close look at the individual atoms in a person's hair will show that each hydrogen and oxygen atom varies in weight. So we can pinpoint which atom comes from which area because water in different regions has different atoms.

Man: Let me get this straight. Each atom has a different weight, so we can tell which atom comes from which place?

Woman: Yeah. You’ve got it. Have a look here at this computer. These are the different water samples from the tap water of 65 different cities in the U.S.A. The atoms in the robber’s hair match this record. So, I know that the robber’s from Salt Lake City.

Man: Wow! Okay, now I understand why you’re studying the hair. Great job, Detective!

Reading 09

**War Taboos**

Woman: Cheers, everyone! {the sound of glasses clinking} Markus, I’ve noticed that you never join us in a toast. Why is that?

Man: Ah, I’m sorry. It’s just that we Hungarians never toast. You see, there was a war between Hungary and Austria. Every time Austrian soldiers killed a Hungarian soldier, the Austrians made a toast.

Woman: Really? The Austrians made a toast every time they killed a Hungarian? That seems really cold.

Man: Yeah. Since then, toasting has become associated with the heartbreak of losing a Hungarian soldier. So, to this day, we Hungarians never toast. It’s a taboo.

Woman: We have a similar war taboo in England. During wars, a lot of English soldiers smoked. The problem was that it was easy to see a flame from a great distance.

Man: So I guess the flame from a match must have been very dangerous during wars, right? I mean, it was easy to see a flame from a great distance, so it would expose soldiers’ locations.

Woman: Exactly. The soldiers didn’t want to expose their locations to the enemy. That’s why English soldiers only kept a match lit briefly. With one match, they would light one or two cigarettes. Never three.

Man: Ah, yes. I’ve seen English people do that. They’ll light two cigarettes with a match, but never three. I’ve always wondered why they do that.

Woman: Yes, I guess there are a lot of taboos that started during wars.

Reading 10

**Japanese *Kawaii* Culture**

Boy: Asako, I’ve noticed that you have a lot of handbags and clothes with a lot of cute characters on them. Why do you have so many?

Girl: It’s *kawaii*!

Boy: *Kawaii*?

Girl: Oh, it’s a Japanese word. A lot of foreigners think it means “cute,” but it means a lot more than that. It also refers to a parent’s feeling of love and protectiveness toward a child.

Boy: *Kawaii* also means a parent’s feeling of love and protectiveness toward a child, right? Do you mean these cartoon characters bring out protective, caring instincts in people?

Girl: Exactly. That’s why the characters have huge eyes just like an infant human. You want to pick up and hug that character just like it’s your own little baby.

Boy: I see. Characters that look like babies bring out people’s caring instincts. Do Japanese people wear a lot of these cute characters on their clothing?

Girl: Sure. They wear it on their clothing. They have cartoon characters on their phones. They have posters on their walls. These characters are very popular in Japan.

Boy: Why are the characters so popular in Japan?

Girl: I’m not sure exactly. I think it’s because Japanese people like to conform and not stand out from others. By wearing and showing off *kawaii* characters, we show that we are not aggressive and we will not fight back against authority.

Boy: You show that you’re not aggressive and you will not fight back against authority by wearing cartoon characters? That makes sense.

Reading 11

**Social Darwinism**

Woman: I’ve heard you’re studying the Nazis in university, Tom. Is that right? Why are you studying such a dark topic?

Man: Well, I want to understand how the Nazis could justify the evil they did in the Second World War. They killed six million Jews. A lot of people think the Nazis’ cruelty was based on Social Darwinism.

Woman: Social Darwinism? Do you mean Herbert Spencer’s theory that the strongest should survive and prosper in society while the weak should be allowed to die?

Man: That’s a good way to define Social Darwinism. The strongest survive and prosper while the weak die. I think Social Darwinism is a very dangerous theory.

Woman: Why do you think it’s dangerous?

Man: Because it’s a way of justifying racism. It makes people think that one race is more fit than another.

Woman: One race is more fit than another. That’s scary. If Social Darwinism justifies racism, then it is definitely a dangerous theory.

Man: Right. Did you know that Social Darwinism was used by the Europeans to justify dominating North American natives? They came to the New World and colonized it. And they saw it as part of the natural order to dominate the natives.

Woman: So you’re saying the Europeans saw the native North Americans as an inferior race, right?

Man: Right. And later, the Germans saw the Jews as an inferior race, too. So they killed millions of them.

Woman: What a strange and sad world we live in.

Reading 12

**What We Remember during Learning Sessions**

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Man: Ah, I don’t know how to teach this class tomorrow! These kids don’t seem to learn anything from me!

Woman: Don’t worry about it, Derek. Let me help you. Students find it easier to remember details presented at the beginning of a lecture.

Man: Sure, I’ve learned that. I’ve also learned that students remember second best what comes last in a lecture.

Woman: Exactly. That’s important. So they easily remember information presented at the beginning and end of lectures. That means that new information should be presented within the first 20 minutes in a 40 minute lesson.

Man: Present new information within the first 20 minutes. Right. Got it.

Woman: Then, during the next five minutes, have the students practice and review the information.

Man: So I should start having the students review the information after 20 minutes of lecturing, right?

Woman: Right. After that, for the last 15 minutes of the lecture, you should end the lecture with some kind of exercise. During that time, the students can wrap up and digest the information learned earlier in the lesson.

Man: Okay. End the lesson with some kind of exercise so the students can wrap up and digest the information learned previously. Sounds good. Thanks for your advice, Ms. Jenkins. It’s really helpful.

Woman: My pleasure, Derek. If you have any more questions, you can ask me anytime.

Reading 13

**Spider Hunting Wasp**

Boy: Why did you take me to this insect zoo, Myung-Hee? I don’t like looking at all these bugs!

Girl: Really? I love bugs! Look at this spider. It lives in the forests of Central America. Sometimes, a wasp stings this spider to make it stop moving for a few minutes.

Boy: Why does the wasp want to make the spider stop moving for a few minutes?

Girl: Because the wasp wants to lay eggs on the tip of the spider’s belly.

Boy: Really? The wasp lays eggs on the spider’s belly? How odd!

Girl: It is pretty strange. Anyway, a few minutes later, the spider comes back to life. For two weeks, the eggs on the belly grow into larvae. The larvae poke holes into the spider’s belly and drink the spider’s juice to nourish themselves.

Boy: The larvae poke holes into the spider’s belly and drink the spider’s juice? Is the juice like food for the baby wasps?

Girl: Exactly. Then, the night before the baby wasps kill the spider, the spider suddenly acts differently. It starts building a small cocoon for the wasp larvae. It’s totally different from the spider’s usual web.

Boy: Weird! It starts building a small cocoon for the wasp larvae? Why does the spider build a cocoon for the wasp larvae?

Girl: The spider is hypnotized. And when it’s finished building the cocoon, the wasp larvae kill the spider and move into the cocoon. Scientists think the wasp larvae release a hypnotic chemical to make the spider build their cocoon.

Boy: The wasp larvae release a hypnotic chemical to make the spider build their cocoon? How scary!

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Reading 14

**The Gordian Knot**

Woman: I had to sell my car to pay for university fees. And now I have enough money to pay the fees and live comfortably for six months. I cut the Gordian Knot, didn’t I?

Man: You cut the Gordian Knot? What do you mean?

Woman: I mean I solved a big problem decisively by selling my car. ‘Cutting the Gordian Knot’ refers to an old Greek and Roman myth.

Man: It’s from a Greek and Roman myth, huh? Tell me about it.

Woman: Well, once there was a king named Gordius. He was the king of a place called Phrygia. Gordius once tied a very complex knot. It was his way to give thanks to his god.

Man: Gordius tied a knot to give thanks to his god? What a strange way to give thanks.

Woman: Yeah. So, one day, many years later, the Phrygian people had no king. The people went to an oracle to learn who would be their next king. The oracle told them the man that untied the Gordian Knot would be their next king.

Man: So someone had to untie this complex knot to become the king of Phrygia, right?

Woman: Right. Then, one day, Alexander the Great came to Phrygia. Alexander wanted to conquer the whole world. People told him, if he untied the Gordian Knot, he could become the king. So, Alexander took out his sword and cut the knot in half.

Man: Ah, so that’s how he untied the Gordian Knot. He cut right through it. So that’s what

you mean by ‘cutting the Gordian Knot,’ huh? Interesting.

Reading 15

**Polychronic & Monochronic Cultures**

Man: Hi, Frances. What’s wrong? You look stressed out.

Woman: Oh, hi, Gabriel. Yes, I just find it difficult to work here in Spain. It’s very different than working back home in England. It’s like Spanish people are doing ten things at once!

Man: Yes, we often have many things happening at the same time. We do several jobs at once and we often work while eating. I guess you could say we’re polychronic people.

Woman: Polychronic? What do you mean?

Man: “Poly” means many, and “chronic” means time. So polychronic people like to do many things at once.

Woman: I see. “Poly” means many, and “chronic” means time. So polychronic people like doing many things at once. So what’s the opposite? What’s it called when people don’t like doing many things at once?

Man: It’s called “monochronic.” “Mono” means one. Most English people are monochronic.

Woman: I like to do one thing at a time. So I guess I’m a typical English woman. I feel stressed when I’m asked to do many things at once.

Man: It sounds like it. Spanish people like me just find it natural to do a bunch of things at once. Also, being late for a meeting is understandable in Spain. But to most English people, it is very rude to be late for a meeting.

Woman: Yes, I do find it rude. It can delay the meeting. Well, I guess I’ll have to get used to it if I want to continue working here in Spain.

Man: That’s the spirit. You’ll get used to it after a while.

Reading 16

**Maggot Therapy**

Man: Well, Michelle, it looks like we’re going to have to put maggots in your wound.

Woman: Maggots!? Dr. Reese, isn’t there some medicine I could take instead? I don’t want fly larvae crawling around on me. That’s gross!

Man: No, Michelle. Maggots are the best solution. We’ve already given you antibiotics, and they didn’t work for you. Sometimes antibiotics don’t work. So I will try maggot therapy. The maggots will help clean your wound.

Woman: Yeah, antibiotics didn’t work for me. But are you saying that the maggots will help clean my wound? How will they do that?

Man: They’ll crawl around inside the wound and eat all of the rotting flesh. That’s one way they clean the wound.

Woman: They clean the wound by eating rotting flesh? Yuck!

Man: That’s not all they do. They also clean the wound by eating harmful bacteria. This will promote healing, too.

Woman: All of this talk of maggots eating rotting flesh and bacteria is making me sick! I really don’t understand how they promote healing.

Man: You shouldn’t think like that, Michelle. Sure, maggots might seem disgusting. But they’re amazingly helpful. They’ve been helping cure people for thousands of years.

Woman: If you say so, doctor!

Reading 17

**Ella Fitzgerald**

Girl: What a great song! Who’s the singer?

Boy: Ella Fitzgerald. I’m a big fan.

Girl: Ah, sure! I should have guessed! Ella Fitzgerald. She was the queen of scat.

Boy: Scat? What is that? Are you talking about the way she sings “do be do be dos” and other random vocal sounds?

Girl: Right. Scat is wordless singing. It uses those random vocal sounds to copy the sounds of musical instruments.

Boy: That makes sense. Scat is wordless singing and uses random vocal sounds to copy the sounds of musical instruments. Wait. Listen to the sounds she’s making right now. It sounds a bit like a horn or something like that. It sounds great, doesn’t it? What’s the name of this song? {reading} A-Tisket, A-Tasket.

Girl: A-Tisket, A-Tasket. This is one of her most famous songs. She sold more than a million copies of this record.

Boy: A million records! That’s so many!

Girl: That’s nothing! She sold more than 40 million records over her entire career.

Boy: She sold more than 40 million records? Amazing!

Reading 18

**What Do You Do with Your Palms?**

Boy: Believe me, Jenny. I didn’t take your book! I promise!

Girl: I believe you, Sam. I know you’re not lying.

Boy: How do you know that?

Girl: I can read your body language. When you talk to me, you turn your palms to face me. So I know you’re probably being honest. People tend to turn their palms towards the listener when they are telling the truth.

Boy: I am turning my palms towards you! It’s surprising that you could catch that. I didn’t know that people tend to turn their palms towards the listener when they are being honest. So who do you think took your book?

Girl: Actually, I think Jeff might have taken the book.

Boy: Why? Can you read his body language, too?

Girl: Yep. Earlier, when I asked him if he had seen my book, he looked away and said, “No.” Then, he put his hands in his pockets. That told me he was trying to hide information.

Boy: You mean you could tell he was lying because he looked away and put his hands in his pockets?

Girl: That’s right. Avoiding eye contact could mean that he was lying. Also putting his hands in his pockets could mean that he was hiding information. I use the same technique that salespeople use to see if someone is lying.

Boy: Hey, what’s this underneath the blanket? Jenny! It’s your book.

Girl: {sounding embarrassed} Oh, my book. Um… thanks.

Reading 19

**Animals Are Their Own Doctors**

Girl: Wow! Barack. Look at those elephants. They are walking up that big volcano. Why do they go up there?

Boy: There’s a special cave up there that the elephants go into. The walls of the cave have salt in them. The elephants dig rock out of the cave walls and eat the salty rock. The salt helps stimulate their bodily defenses, keeping them healthier.

Girl: Really? The elephants eat the rock from the cave walls to keep themselves healthy? Amazing! It’s like elephants are their own doctors.

Boy: That’s true. Actually, many animals are their own doctors. Mountain gorillas also have their own way to cure themselves. They eat clay to get rid of poisons that may be in their bodies.

Girl: Amazing! I would never have guessed that gorillas eat clay to get rid of poisons in their bodies.

Boy: Sure. And some chimpanzees chew parts of specific plants to kill internal parasites.

Girl: Internal parasites? Do you mean they chew parts of plants to kill bad bugs in their stomachs?

Boy: Exactly. Many animals do similar things to keep themselves healthy.

Girl: Animals are really amazing, aren’t they?

Boy: Sure. In some ways, they have more sense than people. They know what they need to do to keep themselves healthy. And they do it!

Reading 20

**Edgar Allan Poe**

Boy: What are you reading, Erin? {reading} Edgar Allan Poe’s *The Tell-Tale Heart*. What’s it about?

Girl: It’s about a guy that goes crazy and murders his roommate. He then hides the body under the floorboards of his room.

Boy: A guy goes crazy and murders his roommate? That’s horrifying! I’ve heard that Poe’s stories are pretty dark.

Girl: Yeah, they’re dark alright! I think it has something to do with the fact that Edgar Allan Poe had a really miserable life.

Boy: How was his life miserable?

Girl: Well, Poe’s parents died before he was three years old. After that, he got into trouble at school and entered a military academy. However, he dropped out of that school.

Boy: Yeah, it does sound like he had a miserable life.

Girl: That’s nothing. His misery continued into his adult life. He got married and then divorced. During his failed marriage, he became an alcoholic. He even suffered from mental illness.

Boy: How terrible! He suffered from alcoholism and mental illness. Did those tragedies influence his writing?

Girl: Absolutely. His personal tragedies influenced the tone, style, and content of his writing. They were the inspiration for his famous stories like *The Tell-Tale Heart*. And his stories are some of the greatest ever written.

Boy: Sure, his tragedies influenced the tone, style, and content of his writing. I guess you could say that terrible things can often inspire some of the greatest works of art.

Reading 21

**The Water Crisis**

Girl: Why are there so many protestors in front of the Turkish embassy?

Boy: Those protestors are Iraqi and Syrian. They’re protesting against Turkey’s decision to build hydroelectric dams along the Euphrates River.

Girl: They’re protesting against Turkey’s decision to build hydroelectric dams? Why should Iraqi and Syrian people care what the Turkish government does with their own rivers?

Boy: It’s because the Euphrates River begins in Turkey, but the water flows into Iraq and Syria. Iraq and Syria are really dry countries. They need the water from the Euphrates River.

Girl: Ah, I see. So, by building hydroelectric dams, the Turkish government is stopping the flow of a lot of water to Iraq and Syria, right? They’re reducing the flow of water downstream.

Boy: Exactly. Like you said, the Turkish government is reducing the flow of water downstream. So it’s creating a lot of political tension among the countries. Many experts think it may create a water war.

Girl: A water war? What do you mean? Are the three countries going to go to war because of the building of hydroelectric dams?

Boy: It’s possible. That’s why some people are creating preventive measures. For example, they’re forming international organizations to resolve water claims, they’re reinforcing conservation efforts, and so on.

Girl: I see. They’re forming international organizations to resolve water claims and reinforcing conservation efforts. Well, I certainly hope these countries can resolve these water claims before there is a big war in the Middle East.

Boy: Yeah, me, too!

Reading 22

**Crime Fiction**

Woman: I need your help with something, Trevor. I’m trying to write a crime story right now, but it’s not going very well.

Man: Why? What’s the problem?

Woman: Well, first of all, I don’t really know how to make a tense atmosphere.

Man: Well, if you want to make a tense atmosphere, you have to describe scenes very specifically. You have to use a lot of adjectives and adverbs.

Woman: Describe scenes specifically using lots of details? Hmmm… Let me try. For example, instead of writing, “He entered the room,” I could write, “He entered the room on tiptoes.”

Man: Exactly. That’s a great example. Also, you should include some details that are like clues. I mean, if you write a murder story, you should add some clues in the story.

Woman: Why should I add clues into the story? Is that to make readers search for evidence like they’re detectives?

Man: That’s it. You want to make them feel like they are detectives. But you should be careful. Don’t give too many or too few clues. If you do, their excitement and interest will turn into boredom.

Woman: Okay, got it. I should not give too many or too few clues. Readers might get bored. Thanks for your advice, Trevor. I’m going to go home right now and start working on my story.

Reading 23

**Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty**

Man: Do you want to come with me today? I’m going to go to the nuclear non-proliferation

demonstration.

Woman: Nuclear non-proliferation? What are you talking about?

Man: Nuclear non-proliferation means stopping the spread of nuclear weapons throughout the world. We want all countries to stop making nuclear weapons and destroy the ones they’ve already made.

Woman: I see. It means stopping the spread of nuclear weapons throughout the world. But that may be pretty difficult, Bill. I’ve heard that there are around 20,000 nuclear weapons around the world.

Man: That’s true. But we still have hope. The number of nuclear weapons has been dropping steadily.

Woman: The number of nuclear weapons has been dropping steadily? It’s good to hear that.

Man: Yeah. In 1985, there were 65,000 nuclear weapons. Today the number of them is around 20,000. And in ten years, there will be 30 to 50% fewer nuclear weapons.

Woman: I guess people are making progress. So what can be done to further control the spread of nuclear weapons?

Man: Well, for one thing, all countries should sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. There are four countries that are not parties to the treaty: India, Israel, Pakistan, and North Korea.

Woman: Yeah, all four of those countries probably have nuclear weapons, don’t they?

Man: I guess so. And, of course, the United States and Russia have the most nuclear weapons, so they have to dramatically reduce the amount of weapons that they hold.

Woman: Right. Okay, Bill, let’s go to the demonstration. I think it’s a good cause.

Reading 24

**Endangered Species**

Boy: Would you like to make a donation to save endangered animal species?

Girl: Why would I do that? What’s the point of saving a bunch of animals? They’re not my pets!

Boy: Heather, there are some excellent reasons to save endangered species. First of all, we should conserve plants and animals because they are beautiful and enrich our lives.

Girl: Yeah, they are beautiful. But how do they enrich my life?

Boy: Well, don’t you get bored with man-made, artistic works? But when you look at the beauty of nature, you never get bored. There is such tremendous diversity in nature.

Girl: Okay, so you’re saying I should conserve plants and animals for aesthetic reasons. What’s another reason?

Boy: If you don’t care about aesthetics, I’m sure you care about your own health. Many medical prescriptions contain chemicals discovered in plants and animals. If they become extinct, we will not be able to find medicine ingredients in them.

Girl: So you’re saying that we may not be able to cure some human diseases if plants and animals die. Well, I suppose that’s a pretty good reason to save animals. Okay, here’s some change.

Boy: Thanks, Heather. Every little bit of change helps.