

Reading Comprehension Week 1- Gaby to the Rescue



A Siamese cat crouched on a tree branch, peering down at Gaby with brilliant blue eyes. It cried out. The cat was stuck in the tree in front of her house and, as luck would have it, she had on the nicest cardigan she owned. Gaby pulled the cardigan tighter around her. This was her last good school cardigan until who-knows-when her father would have enough money to buy her a new one. The poor cat cried again. Gaby looked back at her small yellow house. If her mother were here, that cat would already be out of the tree and purring – safe and sound, in her mother’s arms.

Mind made up, Gaby pulled off her cardigan and tossed it onto her porch. ‘You’re out of luck, *gato!*’ she yelled. ‘My mom, master tree climber and cat rescuer, isn’t back yet.’ She rolled up the sleeves of her white shirt. ‘But until she is, you’ve got me.’ Gaby grasped the nearest branch and pulled herself up. ‘Gaby to the rescue.’

The cat meowed.

‘*I am* hurrying.’

The last time Gaby had climbed the tree was when she and her best friend, Alma, had challenged the boys to a water-balloon fight last summer. Up high was the perfect spot for a full-blown assault on the boys below. Those guys never had a chance.

Gaby secured her feet and hands and climbed higher, until the cat was within arm’s reach. ‘See? You aren’t the only one who can climb.’ But then she looked down. Mistake number one.

She knew the universal rule of tree climbing said don’t ever, *ever* look down, but she couldn’t help it. This was the highest she’d ever climbed. If she fell, she’d definitely end up looking like an Egyptian mummy. Gaby imagined herself bandaged from head to toe and sipping dinner through a straw.

Well, she’d just have to not fall. Simple as that. ‘Here, kitty, kitty!’ she called out, the same way she had heard her mom call for stray cats hundreds of times. But this was no stray. The cat was too shiny. Too chubby. Around its neck, a rhinestone collar with gold charms sparkled. Someone loved that cat. She reached out toward it. ‘Almost got you.’ Mistake number two.

The cat arched its back and hissed.

Gaby pulled back, startled. 'Nice teeth.' She resettled on the branch, considering her options.

When Gaby was younger, she had seen her mom climb the same tree many times to rescue a cat. All the way up, her mom had giggled and sweet-talked the cat in Spanish. '*Que bonita eres gatita.* You're so pretty, little cat.' Her mom told her that when dealing with cats you should speak softly and pick them up by the loose skin at the back of their neck, because that's how their mothers carried them. Her mom had always made it look so easy. Once she had the cat nestled against her chest, she would manoeuvre down through the branches, comforting the cat with kisses on the ears and soft words with rolling Spanish *r*'s like purrs.

There were never any arched backs, hisses, or sharp teeth.

Gaby took a deep breath and reached out for the cat again. 'It's okay, little kitty,' she said sweetly. This time the cat latched on to her, digging its claws into her arm and shoulder. 'Ooh, ouch!' She couldn't quite get it by the scruff of the neck like her mom had shown her, but at least she had the animal. That was progress. Now she just had to get down.

Without falling.



Questions:

1. A Siamese cat **crouched** on a tree branch, peering down at Gaby with brilliant blue eyes.

Which word is closest in meaning to *crouched*?

Tick **one**.

balanced

☐

squatted

☐

trembled

☐

pounced

☐

1 mark

2. Look at the first paragraph, beginning: *A Siamese cat...*

Gaby pulled the cardigan tighter around her.

Why does Gaby do this?

Tick **one**.

She is thinking of wrapping the cat in her cardigan.

☐

She is worried about damaging the cardigan.

☐

She is feeling cold.

☐

She is worried the cardigan will be difficult to climb in.

☐

1 mark

3. In the paragraph beginning: *Mind made up...* Gaby says to the cat, '*You're out of luck...*'

In what way does Gaby think the cat is out of luck?

1 mark

4. When Gaby pulls herself up on the branch on page 1, the cat meows.
What does Gaby think that the cat is trying to say when it meows?
-
- 1 mark
5. Why had Gaby climbed the tree the previous summer?
-
-
- 1 mark
6. *Gaby secured her feet and hands and climbed higher...*
What does *secured her feet and hands* mean?
-
-
- 1 mark
7. Gaby thinks she makes two mistakes while trying to rescue the cat.
What is the **first** mistake that Gaby makes while trying to rescue the cat?
-
- 1 mark
8. Look at the paragraph beginning: *She knew the universal rule...*
What does the word *universal* tell you about the rule?
-
-
- 1 mark
9. Look at the paragraph beginning: *Well, she'd just have to not fall...*
The cat was too shiny. Too chubby.
What conclusion does Gaby draw from this?
-
-
- 1 mark

10. Look at page 2.

What are **three** ways the cat shows it does not enjoy Gaby trying to rescue it?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

2 marks

11. *She resettled on the branch, considering her options.*

What does *considering her options* mean in this sentence?

Tick **one**.

thinking about what to do

☐

changing her mind

☐

looking at it from the cat's point
of view

☐

wishing her mother was there

☐

1 mark

12. Look at page 2.

Give **one** piece of advice that Gaby's mother gives her for dealing with cats.

1 mark

13. Gaby uses the Spanish word *gato* for cat.

Who else in the story speaks Spanish?

1 mark

14. Number the following events 1–5 to show the order in which they happened.

The first one has been done for you.

Gaby breaks the universal rule of tree climbing.

Gaby notices the cat.

Gaby tries to pick up the cat.

Gaby remembers the water-balloon fight.

Gaby takes her cardigan off.

1 mark

Mark schemes

1. **Content domain:** 2a – give / explain the meaning of words in context

Award 1 mark for:

squatted



1 mark

2. **Content domain:** 2d – make inferences from the text / explain and justify inferences with evidence from the text

Award 1 mark for:

She is worried about damaging the cardigan.



1 mark

3. **Content domain:** 2d – make inferences from the text / explain and justify inferences with evidence from the text

Award 1 mark for reference to any of the following:

1. Gaby's mother wasn't there, e.g.

- *Gaby's mum wasn't back*
- *because the cat rescuer isn't there.*

2. Only Gaby is available, e.g.

- *that Gaby is the only one here for the cat.*

3. Gaby's mother is the expert, e.g.

- *her mum could get cats out of trees easily*
- *because it says her mum is a master tree climber and cat rescuer.*

4. Gaby is inexperienced at rescuing cats, e.g.

- *because she wasn't as experienced at getting cats*
- *she has never climbed up a tree to rescue a cat before.*

Do not accept reference to the cat being stuck up a tree.

1 mark

4. **Content domain:** 2d – make inferences from the text / explain and justify inferences with evidence from the text

Award 1 mark for references to the cat wanting Gaby to hurry, e.g.

- *hurry up*

- *get me down from here quickly*
- *it's being impatient.*

Do not accept 'I am hurrying'.

1 mark

5. **Content domain:** 2b – retrieve and record information / identify key details from fiction and non-fiction

Award 1 mark for reference to either of the following:

1. to have a water fight / to attack the boys, e.g.
 - *to have a water-balloon game with the boys*
 - *so she could beat the boys in a water-balloon fight*
 - *to get the boys with water bombs.*
2. it was a good position for the game, e.g.
 - *because it was the perfect spot for a full-blown assault on the boys*
 - *she could throw balloons better from up there.*

Also accept quotations that meet an acceptable point.

1 mark

6. **Content domain:** 2a – give / explain the meaning of words in context

Award 1 mark for reference to either of the following:

1. getting a good / firm hold, e.g.
 - *she gripped her hands and feet onto the branch.*
2. adjusting her feet and hands, e.g.
 - *she got her hands and feet into place.*

Also accept references to ensuring that she doesn't fall / is safe (with no reference to hold / adjustment), e.g.

- *she checked her hands were in a safe place on the tree.*

1 mark

7. **Content domain:** 2b – retrieve and record information / identify key details from fiction and non-fiction

Award 1 mark for reference to Gaby looking down.

1 mark

8. **Content domain:** 2a – give / explain the meaning of words in context

Award 1 mark for reference to either of the following:

1. it is something everyone knows / agrees on, e.g.

- *it is a rule that everybody should keep*
- *that this rule applies to everyone in the universe*
- *the rule is global because everyone knows that rule.*

2. it is something that is known / agreed on everywhere, e.g.

- *it is known all around the world.*

Also accept references to it being a rule that all climbers should know / agree on, e.g.

- *it is known by all tree climbers.*

Do not accept reference to it being the only rule / the one rule.

Do not accept answers which qualify everyone and everywhere, e.g.

- *many people know it.*

1 mark

9. **Content domain:** 2b – retrieve and record information / identify key details from fiction and non-fiction

Award 1 mark for references to the cat having an owner / being looked after, e.g.

- *it wasn't a stray*
- *somebody loved it*
- *it's well fed.*

Do not accept answers which do not sufficiently recognise human care for the cat, e.g.

- *it looks glossy / fat.*

1 mark

10. **Content domain:** 2d – make inferences from the text / explain and justify inferences with evidence from the text

Award 1 mark for reference to any **two** of the following.

Award 2 marks for reference to any **three** of the following.

1. it arched its back
2. it hissed, e.g.
 - *the cat hissed to tell her to go away.*
3. it showed its teeth, e.g.
 - *it snarled at Gaby*
 - *it bares its teeth.*

4. it dug its claws into her / latched onto her, e.g.

- *it scratches Gaby*
- *the cat attacked her.*

Up to 2 marks

11. **Content domain:** 2a – give / explain the meaning of words in context

Award 1 mark for:

thinking about what to do



1 mark

12. **Content domain:** 2b – retrieve and record information / identify key details from fiction and non-fiction

Award 1 mark for reference to either of the following:

1. speak softly to them, e.g.

- *talk gently to it.*

2. pick them up by the loose skin / by the back of their neck, e.g.

- *to take hold of their loose skin*
- *hold a cat by the scruff of their neck like its mother would have.*

Do not accept anything that Gaby's mother does that is not offered as advice, e.g.

- *to giggle and sweet talk the cats.*

1 mark

13. **Content domain:** 2b – retrieve and record information / identify key details from fiction and non-fiction

Award 1 mark for **any** reference to Gaby's mother, e.g.

- *Mum.*

1 mark

14. **Content domain:** 2c – summarise main ideas from more than one paragraph

Award 1 mark for the correct sequence:

Gaby breaks the universal rule of tree climbing.

4

Gaby notices the cat.

1

Gaby tries to pick up the cat.

5

Gaby remembers the water-balloon fight.

3

Gaby takes her cardigan off.

2

1 mark