# HACKERS PRACTICE

**1** Some linguists believe that language comprehension is a learned skill and that adults will, therefore, be able to understand even unfamiliar language better than children. This theory rests on the idea that over time we develop the ability to understand both verbal and non-verbal clues when communicating. Since this is a learning process, it seems only logical that children would be less skilled at discerning meaning from context. However, this is unlikely to be true. In fact, recent studies by linguists at Germany's Bielefeld University have shown that although children do not accurately anticipate visual clues while listening to stories, they are able to rapidly interpret visual clues to assist with their overall language comprehension. This does not mean that their skills will not improve over time, but it does show that determining context from non-auditory clues is a basic element of language comprehension.

Do the following statements agree with the claims of the writer in the passage?

*Write*

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| ***NOT GIVEN*** | *if it is impossible to say what the writer thinks about this* |

1 Children are not able to determine meaning from context.

2 Understanding unspoken signals is a fundamental aspect of human language.

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**comprehension** n. sự nhận thức/ lĩnh hội **learned** adj. tích lũy kiến thức (khi là tính từ có nghĩa là 'having acquired much knowledge through study') **rest on** phr. dựa vào **logical** adj. hợp lý, hợp logic **discern** v. nhận thức, thấy rõ **interpret** v. hiểu, dịch/ giải thích **non-auditory** adj. không có âm thanh



LIVEWORKSHEETS

**2** When first introduced, coins were known as 'commodity money'. This means that the actual coin had an inherent monetary value because of the materials of which it was made. In the earliest coins from Anatolia - what is now Turkey - and ancient Greece, this was a natural alloy of gold and silver called electrum. By the 7th century, coins had begun to be manufactured from pure gold and silver in the Middle East. However, this eventually changed and coins began to be made of cheaper metals that had no intrinsic value. These types of coins were referred to as 'fiat currency' because the government single-handedly set and guaranteed their values. While this may seem illogical, it actually had several benefits. Perhaps the most obvious of these is that the value of the currency remained more stable, since it did not fluctuate with the price of the precious metals. Further, it conserved these valuable resources. The reason that gold and silver were valuable was because of their scarcity, so using them for minting coins reduced the world's supply of them. Finally, coins in the fiat system were less prone to manipulation, since their constituent metals were not all that valuable. For instance, when coins were made of gold or silver, people sometimes clipped off pieces of the coin and kept the valuable metals.

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3 Coins originally had no value of their own due to the materials they were made of.

4 Precious metals are now too rare to be currency.

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**commodity money** phr. hóa tệ **inherent** adj. vốn có, cố hữu **alloy** n. hợp kim **electrum** n. hợp kim vàng bạc **intrinsic** adj. (thuộc) bản chất, nội tại **fiat currency** phr. tiền định danh **single-handedly** adv. đơn độc, độc lập **fluctuate with** phr. dao động theo **scarcity** n. sự khan hiếm **mint** v. đúc (tiền) **manipulation** n. sự thao túng **constituent** adj. cấu tạo, hợp thành **clip** v. cạo, cắt mép (của đồng tiền vàng, tiền bạc)





LIVEWORKSHEETS

**3** Today, about 30 per cent of the Earth's surface is covered by forestland. However, deforestation is dramatically reducing this percentage each year. Currently, human activity claims more than 13.7 million hectares of forestland annually - an area approximately equal to that of Greece. While it may be assumed that we are cutting down trees to meet our timber needs, the bigger culprit is actually agriculture. Earth's growing population has increased our need for agricultural products and farmers have begun clear-cutting forestland to convert it into farmland where they can plant crops.

This is especially true in countries such as Brazil and Indonesia, where large areas of forestland have been cleared for farmland for cash crops such as soybeans and oil palms. The intense farming methods used for these crops further compound the problem. Continuous crop production depletes the soil of its nutrients so that it can no longer support the biodiversity it once could, making it nearly impossible to return it to forestland in the future. This continued disappearance of the forests will have a major impact on our environment. Trees play an important role in removing carbon dioxide from the air and in returning water to the atmosphere. If the forests are allowed to further deteriorate, it could disrupt the life cycle of plants and animals, and even eliminate entire ecosystems. To avoid this outcome, we must find a way to conserve our forestlands and replace the trees that we remove each year.

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5 Timber is the most common reason for cutting down trees.

6 Clear-cutting forests threatens to destroy ecological systems.

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**deforestation** n. phá rừng **claim** v. chiếm đoạn, lấn chiếm **culprit** n. thủ phạm, bị cáo **clear-cut** v. chặt phá toàn bộ **convert** v. biến đổi **cash crop** phr. nông sản thương mại **oil palm** phr. dầu cọ **compound** v. pha trộn thêm, làm xấu đi **biodiversity** n. đa dạng sinh học **deteriorate** v. làm giảm giá trị, làm xấu hơn



LIVEWORKSHEETS

**4** Over the course of time, members of the genus Homo have undergone a great deal of evolutionary change to morph into anatomically modern humans - members of the Homo sapiens species that have the physical features of modern humans. Today, it is commonly believed by the scientific community that earlier species of Homo sapiens evolved in eastern Africa around 200,000 years ago. In fact, the earliest anatomically modern human fossils were discovered there dating to about 195,000 years ago. Members of this species gradually migrated out of their African homeland and by 60,000 years ago one group had settled in Eurasia and the Middle East. This brought them in contact with another early human species that had previously left Africa, the Neanderthals. Some scientists believe that this interaction brought about violent clashes between the two groups, which eventually led to the extinction of the Neanderthals.

However, separate evolution is probably a more likely explanation for their disappearance. Despite their shared heritage, these two groups of early humans had evolved quite differently, both physically and intellectually. In their time in more northerly climates, the Neanderthals had become broader, stronger, and more acclimated to cold than the early anatomically modern humans. In other words, they would have physically dominated the newly arrived Homo sapiens. However, differences in brain structure seemed to have had a bigger impact on the two species. Paleoanthropologist Chris Stringer says that Homo sapiens had larger frontal lobes, the area of the brain that produces abstract, creative thoughts, than Neanderthals. This would have allowed them to develop more efficient methods of hunting and gathering, as well as food processing techniques that saved energy. These more advanced skills would have given them enough of an advantage over the Neanderthals to prevail in the long term, and that appears to be what has happened.

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7 Modern humans migrated to Africa from the Middle East.

8 Homo sapiens are intellectually superior to their evolutionary ancestors.

9 The Neanderthals were less skilled than Homo sapiens.

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**Homo** n. loài người **genus** n. giống, loại **undergo** v. trải qua **morph** v. thay đổi, biến đổi, hóa/biến thành **anatomically** adv. về mặt/phương diện giải phẫu **clash** n. xung đột, va chạm **acclimated** adj. thích nghi, thích ứng **dominate** v. chiếm ưu thế, thống trị **paleoanthropologist** n. nhà cổ sinh vật học **frontal lobe** phr. thùy trán **abstract** adj. trừu tượng **prevail** v. chiếm ưu thế, thắng thế





LIVEWORKSHEETS

**5** Phenetics is the systematic classification of organisms based on their morphological, or structural, similarities. Although, on its surface, phenetics seems to be a valid classification method, there are some problems with it. Perhaps the most important of these is that phenetic classifications sometimes show inaccurate evolutionary relationships between species. Palaeontologists have discovered that phenetic classifications can indicate relationships where they do not actually exist. This most likely occurs when species that seem similar are not closely related, but are actually at similar evolutionary levels. This inaccuracy can cause pheneticists to separate an organism from its evolutionary group, because it has a unique evolutionary adaptation. It can also lead to erroneously showing relationships between organisms with similar primitive traits. The classification of dinosaurs is a good example of these problems. We now know that birds from the Mesozoic era and some dinosaurs from the Jurassic and Cretaceous periods have very similar skeletal structures, indicating that they share an evolutionary link. However, dinosaurs are generally lumped in with lizards and alligators - species that they are more distantly related to - as reptiles. One of the reasons for this is the presence of a unique evolutionary adaptation in birds, feathers. Since we did not traditionally believe that dinosaurs had feathers, pheneticists inaccurately classified them based on other physical features. All of this shows the most inherent problem with phenetic classification: it is entirely done through the subjective observations of the pheneticist. Since there is no hierarchical classification in morphological similarity, researchers must make the ultimate decision based on their subjective observations.

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10 Phenetics is currently the most trusted method of studying evolution.

11 Dinosaurs should be classified as both reptiles and birds.

12 Researchers can come to different conclusions about the same evidence.

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**phenetics** n. (thuộc sinh vật học) sự phân loại theo ngoại hình **classification** n. sự phân loại **organism** n. sinh vật **valid** adj. có cơ sở **morphological** adj. (thuộc) hình thái **palaeontologist** n. nhà cổ sinh vật học **pheneticist** n. nhà phân loại sinh vật theo ngoại hình **adaptation** n. thích ứng **primitive** adj. nguyên thủy, cổ xưa **Mesozoic era** phr. thời kì Đại Trung Sinh **Jurassic period** phr. kỷ Jura **Cretaceous period** phr. kỷ Phấn Trắng **skeletal structure** phr. cấu trúc bộ xương **lump** v. xếp vào cùng loại **subjective** adj. tính chủ quan **hierarchical** adj. phân cấp/ thứ bậc



LIVEWORKSHEETS

**6** To day, one in three seniors is suffering from one form of dementia or another. To deal with this debilitating health problem, many patients and their families are turning to alternative treatments. One of these is music therapy. At its core, music therapy works as a traditional therapy with the addition of singing, playing, or listening to music.

While this type of treatment will not cure cases of dementia, it can help patients recall memories and ease the anxiety they often feel. Neurologist Oliver Sacks believes that this occurs because listening to music evokes emotions that stimulate memories and increase cognitive ability. One of the main reasons for this is that music plays a large role in every stage of our lives. While we may not consciously think about it, we often associate music with certain activities and events. By playing music that was important at one point in the patient's life, long forgotten memories may be recalled. This could occur when playing music that was popular during a certain time period or music that was played for a special event, like a jazz song heard in a movie or a song at a patient's wedding. Music therapy can also help patients remain independent longer. By pairing music with everyday activities, patients can learn to associate the music and its patterns with the activity. This can help them recall the activity much longer.

Perhaps the most interesting discovery about music therapy is that it even works with non-verbal, late-stage patients who have lost the ability to control their emotions. These patients have very different needs than others, because they are not able to express themselves. This may cause them to feel trapped and frustrated. Oftentimes, this can lead to agitation and disruptive behaviour. By introducing music therapy activities, such as singing, dancing, or rhythm playing, the patients' attention can be redirected and they may be able to find a way to express themselves through music, which will calm them. Surprisingly, these effects take place almost immediately and continue after the music therapy session has ended. Studies by music therapist and researcher Dr Linda A. Gerdner have shown that they can be seen for at least one hour after the therapy session.

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13 Music therapy is incapable of curing dementia.

14 Listening to music can increase brain activity in patients.

15 Jazz music is particularly effective at helping patients remember the past.

16 Patients who cannot speak do not benefit from music therapy.

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senior n. người lớn tuổi dementia n. bệnh sa sút trí tuệ debilitating adj. làm suy nhược alternative adj. thay thế, thay đổi neurologist n. nhà thần kinh học cognitive adj. liên quan đến nhận thức agitation n. sự bất an, kích động disruptive adj. phá vỡ redirect v. thay đổi phương hướng





LIVEWORKSHEETS

## 7 The Emergence of Writing

In order to understand the origins of writing, it is necessary to debunk a couple of once-popular theories about language and culture. First, languages are not descended from a single prototype, as many scholars have suggested. That view largely derived from a Biblical interpretation of the origin of language and held that writing systems emerged in ancient Mesopotamia, and then spread and evolved throughout the rest of the world. Further, 19th century sociologists who applied the biological theory of evolution to language development viewed writing as not only having a common ancestor but also exhibiting an evolutionary hierarchy, which placed alphabetical scripts above ideographic or syllabic writing systems. In the context of the linguistic history of the ancient world, that perspective presented European and Near Eastern cultures as more highly evolved than those of Asia, Africa, and Mesoamerica. Nothing could be further from the truth given that empires rich in cultural splendour, complete with magnificent architecture, art, laws, and infrastructure, were built by civilisations with non-alphabetic scripts.

Scholars now agree that the advent of writing seems to coincide with the transition from nomadic lifestyles to more permanent agrarian ones - because people were growing food and tending to livestock, it became necessary to develop ways of keeping track of inventory and property. It is also agreed that different forms of writing developed not only in the Fertile Crescent, but also within the ancient societies of Asia and Mesoamerica and that none of these civilisations had any contact with one another during this time. Of these geographical areas, it is most likely that the earliest writing occurred in the Fertile Crescent territory of Sumer, possibly as early as 8000 B.C. The ancient Sumerians originally used tokens, such as small clay triangles, spheres, and cones, to symbolise sheep, measures of grain, jars of oil, and other goods. Basically, the shape of the token carried the meaning of the word that was being represented. Eventually, the Sumerians began pressing the tokens into soft clay tablets, much as one would use stamps, to transcribe their dealings. Much later, around 3100 B.C., the Sumerians invented numerals, separating the symbol for an object from the number of an object, suggesting that writing and mathematics could have evolved together. Archeological excavations at Uruk, once the largest city of the ancient world, show that the Sumerian script gradually advanced from pictographs to ideographic writing, meaning that some symbols represented concepts rather than just the symbol itself. At that point, writing was already developing into a tool that went beyond simply transmitting information; it was becoming a means of communicating ideas, sharing knowledge, and recording history.



LIVEWORKSHEETS

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17 The Bible's account of the origin of language is accurate.

18 Cultures with alphabets were no more advanced than others.

19 Asian writing systems were less technical than Middle Eastern ones.

20 In Sumer, mathematics developed separately from writing.



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**debunk** v. vạch trần, lật lại **descend** v. bắt nguồn từ, xuất thân từ **prototype** n. nguyên mẫu **hierarchy** n. hệ thống cấp bậc **ideographic** adj. chữ tượng hình, chữ biểu ý (sử dụng kí hiệu, biểu tượng để diễn đạt ý nghĩ phức tạp) **syllabic** adj. (thuộc) âm tiết **Mesoamerica** n. Trung bộ châu Mỹ **splendour** n. sự huy hoàng, chói lọi **advent** n. sự đến (của một việc quan trọng) **nomadic** adj. (thuộc) du mục **agrarian** adj. (thuộc) nông nghiệp **sphere** n. hình cầu **pictograph** n. chữ tượng hình, chữ hình vẽ (chữ của người nguyên thủy có sử dụng hình ảnh đơn giản)



LIVEWORKSHEETS