

HUMAN MYSTERIES

B2 CEFR Reading Worksheet | The Room That Remembered

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

Learning goals

By the end of this worksheet, you should be able to identify key details, infer meaning, distinguish evidence from assumptions, understand vocabulary in context, and explain the message of a narrative.

Reading text

THE ROOM THAT REMEMBERED

Paragraph 1 At the edge of a quiet Malaysian town stood an old teachers' training college. Most people knew it for its beautiful trees and long corridors, but former students whispered about Room 17. The room had been locked for nearly thirty years. According to local stories, its lights sometimes flickered after midnight, and a soft tapping sound came from inside—even when the building was empty. Some believed the room was haunted. Others insisted there was a more ordinary explanation.

Paragraph 2 When the college reopened its archive to mark its fiftieth anniversary, English teacher Ms Hana volunteered to help organise old photographs and handwritten records. She wore round spectacles and a lavender hijab, and she had a habit of asking questions that other people considered unnecessary. Her colleague, Mr Daniel, joked that she could turn a missing paper clip into a detective case. Yet Hana's curiosity had often uncovered forgotten facts, so the principal agreed to let her investigate Room 17 with two student helpers, Amir and Mei Ling.

Paragraph 3 The first clue was a photograph dated 1989. It showed a group of trainee teachers standing outside Room 17. One person had been carefully scratched out, leaving a pale rectangle where a face should have been. On the back, someone had written: 'We promised not to forget.' Hana noticed that the ink had faded unevenly, suggesting the note had been exposed to light for years. She also found a register in which one name—A. Rahman—appeared repeatedly, followed by the words 'temporary leave'. No return date was recorded.

Paragraph 4 The tapping began on their second visit. Three sharp knocks sounded from behind a wooden cabinet. Amir stepped back, while Mei Ling raised her phone to record the noise. Hana did not dismiss their fear, but she asked them to examine what they could observe. The knocks came at regular intervals, exactly seven seconds apart. A ghost, she reasoned, would be a poor explanation for such a predictable pattern. She moved the cabinet a few centimetres and discovered a narrow ventilation panel behind it.

Paragraph 5 Inside the panel was a small metal box, protected from dust by a folded cloth. It contained a pocket watch, several letters, and a cassette tape labelled 'For the next class'. The letters were written by a trainee teacher named Aisyah Rahman. In 1989, she had developed an unusual ability to remember spoken information

after hearing it only once. Her classmates called it a gift, but some lecturers doubted her and accused her of memorising answers in advance. When Aisyah tried to explain her method, she was misunderstood and eventually left the college.

Paragraph 6 The letters revealed that Aisyah had not disappeared mysteriously. She had moved to another state to care for her ill mother, but she had been too embarrassed to return after the accusations. Before leaving, she hid her notes in Room 17, hoping a future student might discover them. The pocket watch had a loose internal part. When the building's ventilation system started, the vibration made the watch strike the metal box, creating the rhythmic tapping. The 'haunting' had a physical cause, although nobody had noticed it for decades.

Paragraph 7 The cassette tape offered a final surprise. With the principal's permission, Hana found an old player and listened carefully. Aisyah's voice described how she grouped information into meaningful patterns, connected new ideas to familiar experiences, and rehearsed them aloud. Her ability was impressive, but it was not magic. Modern researchers might describe parts of her method as association and retrieval practice—strategies that can help many learners remember information. Hana realised that Aisyah had been ahead of her time, not beyond human explanation.

Paragraph 8 The college eventually located Aisyah, who was living peacefully in a coastal town. She was delighted that her letters had survived and agreed to visit the anniversary exhibition. Standing beside the restored photograph, she explained that the scratched-out face had been her own choice: she had wanted to remove herself from a painful memory, not conceal a crime. The promise on the back referred to a classmate who had vowed to preserve her notes. He had kept that promise by hiding them safely.

Paragraph 9 Room 17 was reopened as a small learning room, with Aisyah's permission. The college displayed the letters, the pocket watch, and a copy of the cassette transcript. Visitors still asked whether the room had been haunted. Hana's answer was gentle: 'A mystery is not proof of the supernatural. It is an invitation to look more closely.' She also reminded students that a sensible explanation did not make the story less extraordinary. The real mystery was how easily people can mistake what they do not understand for something impossible.

Approximate reading-text word count: 800 words

Section A — Reading comprehension

Choose the best answer for each question.

1. Why did people find Room 17 mysterious?

- A. It was painted a different colour.
- B. Strange sounds and flickering lights were reported there.
- C. Students were forbidden to study there.
- D. The principal lived inside it.

Answer: _____

2. What personal quality helped Ms Hana investigate the room?

- A. Her impatience
- B. Her popularity
- C. Her curiosity
- D. Her fear of old buildings

Answer: _____

3. What did the scratched-out face and note initially suggest?

- A. Someone wanted a person or memory to be forgotten.
- B. The photograph was brand new.
- C. The college had never used the room.
- D. The photograph belonged to Hana.

Answer: _____

4. Why did Hana pay attention to the timing of the knocks?

- A. She wanted to frighten the students.
- B. The regular pattern suggested a mechanical cause.
- C. She thought the sound was music.
- D. She needed to check the time.

Answer: _____

5. What was Aisyah accused of doing?

- A. Stealing the pocket watch
- B. Damaging the archive
- C. Leaving the town without permission
- D. Memorising answers in advance

Answer: _____

6. Why had Aisyah left the college?

- A. She had been offered a scholarship overseas.

- B. She wanted to become a detective.
- C. She needed to care for her ill mother and felt embarrassed.
- D. She was afraid of the cassette player.

Answer: _____

7. What caused the tapping sound?

- A. A loose part in a pocket watch vibrating against a metal box
- B. A student knocking on the door
- C. Branches hitting the window
- D. A faulty classroom clock on the wall

Answer: _____

8. Which memory strategies did Aisyah describe?

- A. Copying notes without reading them
- B. Avoiding repetition
- C. Guessing answers from pictures only
- D. Connecting ideas, grouping information and rehearsing aloud

Answer: _____

9. What did the scratched-out face actually mean?

- A. A crime had taken place.
- B. Aisyah wanted distance from a painful memory.
- C. Hana had altered the photograph.
- D. The classmate had forgotten her name.

Answer: _____

10. What is the main message of the story?

- A. Old buildings should always remain locked.
- B. Every unusual event is supernatural.
- C. Careful observation can reveal explanations, and misunderstanding can hide human stories.
- D. Memory is a talent that cannot be learned.

Answer: _____

Section B — Multiple-choice vocabulary and understanding

Choose the most suitable answer. Questions focus on vocabulary, inference, reference and the writer's message.

11. The word “whispered” in paragraph 1 suggests that the stories were shared ____.

- A. loudly and publicly
- B. quietly and privately

- C. in writing only
- D. angrily

Answer: _____

12. “Unnecessary” in paragraph 2 is closest in meaning to ____.

- A. not needed
- B. impossible
- C. expensive
- D. urgent

Answer: _____

13. The phrase “uncovered forgotten facts” means Hana ____.

- A. buried old documents
- B. made people forget
- C. discovered information that had been overlooked
- D. damaged the archive

Answer: _____

14. Why is the date 1989 important?

- A. It marks the college’s opening.
- B. It is the year Hana was born.
- C. It is the date the room was repaired.
- D. It helps connect the clues to Aisyah’s story.

Answer: _____

15. “Exposed to light” most nearly means ____.

- A. hidden underground
- B. kept in darkness
- C. placed where light could reach it
- D. written with invisible ink

Answer: _____

16. Hana’s response to the students’ fear was to ____.

- A. acknowledge it and examine the evidence
- B. send them home immediately
- C. tell them ghosts were real
- D. ignore every sound

Answer: _____

17. Which detail is an example of evidence rather than an assumption?

- A. Room 17 was definitely haunted.
- B. The knocks occurred seven seconds apart.
- C. Aisyah had magical powers.
- D. The college was cursed.

Answer: _____

18. The word “predictable” means ____.

- A. impossible to hear
- B. completely random
- C. likely to happen in an expected way
- D. difficult to describe

Answer: _____

19. The letters were “protected from dust” because they were ____.

- A. left on the floor
- B. washed regularly
- C. placed outside
- D. kept under a folded cloth

Answer: _____

20. In paragraph 5, “lecturers” are people who ____.

- A. teach at a college
- B. repair watches
- C. record music professionally
- D. run a seaside hotel

Answer: _____

21. Aisyah’s classmates viewed her memory as a “gift”. This means they thought it was ____.

- A. a punishment
- B. a special ability
- C. a mistake
- D. a secret object

Answer: _____

22. “Misunderstood” means that people ____.

- A. listened carefully and agreed
- B. knew every detail
- C. interpreted her incorrectly
- D. forgot the college’s address

Answer: _____

23. Which word best describes the explanation for the tapping?

- A. supernatural
- B. imaginary

- C. deliberate
- D. mechanical

Answer: _____

24. The phrase “ahead of her time” means Aisyah ____.

- A. had ideas that were advanced for her period
- B. arrived late to every lesson
- C. travelled through time
- D. refused to learn

Answer: _____

25. “Retrieval practice” involves ____.

- A. hiding information
- B. trying to recall learned information
- C. reading a page once and never returning to it
- D. copying a friend's work

Answer: _____

26. Aisyah felt embarrassed because ____.

- A. her watch was broken
- B. she had lost the letters
- C. people had doubted and accused her
- D. she disliked the coast

Answer: _____

27. The word “restored” in paragraph 8 means ____.

- A. thrown away
- B. hidden permanently
- C. made more confusing
- D. returned to a good or original condition

Answer: _____

28. Why did the classmate hide Aisyah's notes safely?

- A. He wanted to preserve them as promised.
- B. He planned to sell them.
- C. He wanted to frighten future students.
- D. He was hiding a stolen watch.

Answer: _____

29. Hana's final statement suggests that mysteries should encourage people to ____.

- A. believe every rumour
- B. investigate carefully
- C. avoid asking questions
- D. blame others quickly

Answer: _____

30. Which title best captures the deeper meaning of the story?

- A. The Most Dangerous College
- B. A Watch That Stopped Time
- C. The Cost of Misunderstanding
- D. The Student Who Hated Books

Answer: _____

Section C – Match the words with their meanings

Write the correct letter (A–J) beside each word. Use the word bank to review the vocabulary.

Word bank

flicker • archive • register • interval • vibration • retrieve • rehearse • extraordinary • accusation • evidence

No. / Word	Meaning	Letter
31. flicker	H. unusual or remarkable	_____
32. archive	E. a list or official record of names or events	_____
33. register	A. a repeated, regular movement or shaking	_____
34. interval	J. facts or information that support a conclusion	_____
35. vibration	D. a collection of historical records	_____
36. retrieve	I. a statement that someone has done something wrong	_____
37. rehearse	C. to become briefly brighter and dimmer	_____
38. extraordinary	G. to bring information back from memory	_____
39. accusation	F. a period of time between events	_____
40. evidence	B. to practise or repeat information to help remember it	_____