

Reading comprehension exercise
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Nasreddin and the Beggar

One day, Nasreddin was up on the roof of his house, mending a hole in the tiles. He had nearly finished, and he was pleased with his work. Suddenly, he heard a voice below call "Hello!" When he looked down, Nasreddin saw an old man in dirty clothes standing below.

"What do you want?" asked Nasreddin.

"Come down and I'll tell you," called the man.

Nasreddin was annoyed, but he was a polite man, so he put down his tools. Carefully, he climbed all the way down to the ground.

"What do you want?" he asked, when he reached the ground.

"Could you spare a little money for an old beggar?" asked the old man. Nasreddin thought for a minute.

Then he said, "Come with me." He began climbing the ladder again. The old man followed him all the way to the top. When they were both sitting on the roof, Nasreddin turned to the beggar.

"No," he said.

1. Why was Nasreddin on the roof of his house?

- A. He was looking at the view.
- B. He was waiting for the old man.
- C. He was fixing the roof.

2. Who was the old man?

- A. A beggar
- B. Nasreddin's friend
- C. A roof-mender

3. Why was Nasreddin angry?

- A. It was a hot day.
- B. He knew the beggar only wanted money.
- C. It was a long way to go down the ladder.

4. Why did Nasreddin go down the ladder?

- A. He wanted to get away from his work.
- B. Because the beggar asked him to.
- C. He wanted to speak to the beggar.

5. Why did Nasreddin make the beggar climb up the ladder?

- A. He wanted to show him the view from the roof.
- B. He wanted to get his revenge on the beggar.
- C. He wanted the beggar to help him fix the roof.

Nasreddin Goes Shopping

One day Nasreddin went to town to buy new clothes. First he tried on a pair of trousers. He didn't like the trousers, so he gave them back to the shopkeeper. Then he tried a robe which had the same price as the trousers. Nasreddin was pleased with the robe, and he left the shop. Before he climbed on his donkey to ride home, the shopkeeper and the shop-assistant ran out.

"You didn't pay for the robe!" said the shopkeeper.

"But I gave you the trousers in exchange for the robe, didn't I?" replied Nasreddin.

"Yes, but you didn't pay for the trousers, either!" said the shopkeeper.

"But I didn't buy the trousers," replied Nasreddin. "I am not so stupid as to pay for something which I never bought."

6. How did Nasreddin get to the shop?

- A. on foot
- B. by camel
- C. by donkey
- D. the story doesn't say

7. What did Nasreddin do first in the shop?

- A. He tried on some trousers.
- B. He tried on a robe.
- C. He tried on a hat.
- D. He greeted the shopkeeper.

8. What did Nasreddin try on next?

- A. a robe
- B. a pair of trousers
- C. a hat

9. Which item did Nasreddin like best?

- A. the robe
- B. the hat
- C. the trousers

10. How many people were working in the shop?

- A. four
- B. three
- C. two

11. Why was the shopkeeper angry when Nasreddin left?

- A. He didn't take the trousers.
- B. He didn't pay for the robe.
- C. He didn't say goodbye.

12. What did Nasreddin actually pay for?

- A. nothing
- B. the robe
- C. the trousers
- D. the hat

Nasreddin and the Pot

One day Nasreddin borrowed a pot from his neighbour Ali. The next day he brought it back with another little pot inside. "That's not mine," said Ali. "Yes, it is," said Nasreddin.

"While your pot was staying with me, it had a baby."

Sometime later Nasreddin asked Ali to lend him a pot again. Ali agreed, hoping that he would once again receive two pots in return. However, days passed and Nasreddin had still not returned the pot. Finally Ali lost patience and went to demand his property. "I am sorry," said Nasreddin. "I can't give you back your pot, since it has died." "Died!" screamed Ali, "how can a pot die?" "Well," said Nasreddin, "you believed me when I told you that your pot had had a baby."

13. Who was the owner of the pot?

- A. Nasreddin
- B. Ali
- C. the baby

14. How many times did Nasreddin borrow the pot?

- A. once
- B. twice
- C. three times

15. How many pots did he give back the first time?

- A. none
- B. one
- C. two

16. Why was the neighbour happy to lend his pot a second time?

- A. He was greedy.
- B. He was a good neighbour.
- C. He had lots of spare pots.

17. How many pots did Nasreddin return the second time?

- A. none
- B. one
- C. two

18. What probably happened to the pot?

- A. It died.
- B. The neighbour took it back.
- C. Nasreddin kept it.

Nasreddin and the Smell of Soup

One day, a poor man, who had only one piece of bread to eat, was walking past a restaurant. There was a large pot of soup on the table. The poor man held his bread over

the soup, so the steam from the soup went into the bread, and gave it a good smell. Then he ate the bread.

The restaurant owner was very angry at this, and he asked the man for money, in exchange for the steam from the soup. The poor man had no money, so the restaurant owner took him to Nasreddin, who was a judge at that time. Nasreddin thought about the case for a little while.

Then he took some money from his pocket. He held the coins next to the restaurant owner's ear, and shook them, so that they made a jingling noise.

"What was that?" asked the restaurant owner.

"That was payment for you," answered Nasreddin.

"What do you mean? That was just the sound of coins!" protested the restaurant owner.

"The sound of the coins is payment for the smell of the soup," answered Nasreddin. "Now go back to your restaurant."

19. What food did the poor man have?

- A. Soup
- B. Bread
- C. Nothing

20. What kind of food did he see in the restaurant?

- A. Bread
- B. Meat
- C. Soup

21. Why did he hold the bread over the soup?

- A. So the steam from the soup would go into the bread.
- B. So he could warm his hand.
- C. So the restaurant owner would get angry.

22. Why did the restaurant owner take the poor man to Nasreddin?

- A. Because Nasreddin was a judge.
- B. So that Nasreddin could pay for the soup.
- C. Because Nasreddin was the man's relative.

23. What did Nasreddin do with the coins?

- A. He gave them to the restaurant owner.
- B. He made a noise with them.
- C. He gave them to the poor man.

24. What was the payment for the smell of the soup?

- A. the sound of money.
- B. a few coins.
- C. there was no payment