Year 3 reading comprehension: The Pelican Feeder

English · Reading comprehension
Level: Hard

Student: _____ Date: _____

Instructions
- Read the text first. There are 3 questions. Read each one carefully.
- Circle the best answer. Look back at the text to find the words that tell you.
- A grown-up can read the text aloud — that's fine.
- The answers are at the end. Check them together when you have finished.

Questions

Read this, then answer questions 1–3.

The Pelican Feeder

At three o'clock every afternoon, Mr Okafor walked to the end of the Kingfisher Bay jetty with a bucket of fish scraps, and the pelicans came gliding in from every corner of the lake.

Ruby had watched him from the bait shop window all summer. Today, at last, she worked up the courage to follow him.

“Can I help?” she asked.

Mr Okafor looked her up and down. “They're not pets, you know,” he said gruffly. “They'll take your fingers if you're careless.”

“I'll be careful,” Ruby promised.

He studied her a moment longer, then grudgingly held out the bucket. “One fish at a time. Throw it, don't hand it.”

Ruby tossed the first fish. An enormous pelican snapped it out of the air with a clack of its beak, and she squealed before she could stop herself.

The old man's mouth twitched. By the time the bucket was empty, he was telling her the name he had given every bird on the lake, and Ruby was hanging on every word.

1. The word ‘grudgingly’ tells us that Mr Okafor hands Ruby the bucket

Circle one answer.

- ○ **A** angrily, because Ruby has been rude to him
- ○ **B** carefully, so that the fish scraps don't spill
- ○ **C** even though part of him would rather not
- ○ **D** eagerly, because he has wanted a helper

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2. ‘The old man's mouth twitched.’ This suggests that Mr Okafor

Circle one answer.

- ○ **A** was cross that Ruby had squealed
- ○ **B** had a sudden pain in his jaw
- ○ **C** was trying not to smile
- ○ **D** was about to warn Ruby again

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3. ‘Ruby was hanging on every word.’ This means Ruby was

Circle one answer.

- ○ **A** holding on tightly to the old man's arm
- ○ **B** listening closely and eagerly
- ○ **C** bored and hardly listening
- ○ **D** writing down the names of the birds

Answer key

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1. C — even though part of him would rather not

He ‘studied her a moment longer’ before giving it, and he has just warned her the birds can ‘take your fingers’. He isn't keen, but he lets her help anyway. That is doing something grudgingly.

2. C — was trying not to smile

Ruby's squeal was funny, and straight afterwards the old man starts ‘telling her the name he had given every bird’. He is warming to her. His twitching mouth is a smile he is trying to hide.

3. B — listening closely and eagerly

Ruby has ‘watched him from the bait shop window all summer’, and now he is telling her the birds' names. Nobody is hanging from anything. The phrase means she is listening closely and doesn't want to miss a word.