Year 3 reading comprehension: passage pack

English · Reading comprehension · Level: Easy, medium and hard

Student: _____ Date: _____

Instructions
- Read each text first. There are 48 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 1–4.

Our New Puppy

Our new puppy, Biscuit, chewed my school shoe. Then he chewed Dad's favourite slipper. Dad picked up the soggy slipper and frowned. Biscuit rolled over and wagged his tail. Dad's frown turned into a laugh, and he scratched Biscuit's tummy.

1. Why does Dad frown at first?

Circle one answer.

○ **A** He is tired from work.

○ **B** He is annoyed that his slipper is chewed.

○ **C** He loves his soggy slipper.

2. Why does Dad's frown turn into a laugh?

Circle one answer.

○ **A** Dad thinks school shoes are funny.

○ **B** The slipper has been fixed.

○ **C** The puppy is too cute to stay cross with.

3. Biscuit can best be described as

Circle one answer.

○ **A** mean and dangerous

○ **B** naughty but lovable

○ **C** a very well-trained dog

4. How does Dad treat Biscuit in the end?

Circle one answer.

○ **A** He forgives him.

○ **B** He gives him a new slipper.

○ **C** He is cruel to him.

Read this, then answer questions 5–6.

Broccoli Night

Dad put a big pile of broccoli on Bella's plate. Bella pushed it to the edge with her fork and glared at it. “I'm not hungry,” she grumbled. But when Dad brought out the ice cream, Bella was suddenly starving.

5. Bella ‘grumbled’. This means she spoke

Circle one answer.

○ **A** with a rumbling tummy

○ **B** in a happy, cheerful way

○ **C** in a cross, unhappy way

6. Bella ‘glared at’ the broccoli. This means she

Circle one answer.

○ **A** smiled at it

○ **B** shone a bright light on it

○ **C** looked at it angrily

Read this, then answer questions 7–10.

The Blue Vase

Lily was kicking her soccer ball in the lounge room. Crash! Mum's blue vase lay in pieces on the floor. Lily could have hidden the ball under the couch. Instead, she went to find Mum. “I'm sorry,” she said. “It was me.”

7. Why does Lily go to find Mum?

Circle one answer.

○ **A** to ask Mum to play soccer

○ **B** to own up about the vase

○ **C** to blame someone else

8. How does Lily most likely feel after the crash?

Circle one answer.

○ **A** proud of her kick

○ **B** sorry

○ **C** happy that the vase is gone

9. Lily can best be described as

Circle one answer.

○ **A** good at soccer ○ **B** honest ○ **C** sneaky

10. Lily chooses not to hide the ball. This shows she is

Circle one answer.

○ **A** brave enough to tell the truth ○ **B** careless and naughty

○ **C** scared of soccer balls

Read this, then answer questions 11–12.



Daydreaming

Eli stared out of the window and pictured the lake near Nan's farm. He could almost see the blue water and the ducks. Then the bell rang, and Mr Ng said, “Maths books out, please.” The picture in Eli's mind blurred, and the lake was gone.

11. What does ‘stared out of the window’ suggest about Eli?

Circle one answer.

○ **A** He was listening carefully to Mr Ng

○ **B** His mind was somewhere else

○ **C** He was looking out for the school bell

12. What makes the picture in Eli's mind ‘blurred’?

Circle one answer.

○ **A** The lesson breaks into his daydream

○ **B** He looks at the lake more closely

○ **C** Rain runs down the window

Read this, then answer questions 13–16.

The Kookaburra's Lunch

Grandpa put his sausage sandwich on the picnic table and turned to pour the tea. A kookaburra watched from the gum tree. When Grandpa turned back, his plate was empty. From the branch above came a loud, laughing cackle. Grandpa shook his head, chuckled and made another sandwich.

13. The 'laughing cackle' from the branch makes it seem as if the kookaburra

Circle one answer.

○ **A** is laughing at a joke someone told.

○ **B** is pleased with its stolen lunch.

○ **C** is scared of Grandpa.

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14. Who most likely took the sandwich?

Circle one answer.

○ **A** a dog ○ **B** the kookaburra ○ **C** Grandpa

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15. The kookaburra can best be described as

Circle one answer.

○ **A** a bird that lives in a gum tree ○ **B** cheeky

○ **C** shy

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16. Grandpa's reaction shows that he is

Circle one answer.

○ **A** good-humoured ○ **B** a grandpa having a picnic

○ **C** furious with the bird

Read this, then answer questions 17–18.



Camping by the Creek

Dad and Kai drove for hours to find a good place to pitch the tent. At last they chose a flat patch of grass beside the creek. Kai hammered in the pegs while Dad spread out the canvas. By sunset the tent stood tall, and Kai grinned. “Best pitch in the whole park,” said Dad. Later they cooked sausages over the fire and watched the stars come out. A kookaburra laughed somewhere in the dark, and nobody minded at all.

17. What does ‘Kai grinned’ show?

Circle one answer.

○ **A** He was worried about the creek

○ **B** He was tired after driving

○ **C** He was laughing at Dad

○ **D** He was pleased with the tent

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18. What does ‘pitch’ mean in the first sentence?

Circle one answer.

○ **A** set up ○ **B** throw ○ **C** paint ○ **D** pack away

Read this, then answer questions 19–22.

The Bus Seat

The bus was packed, and Archie had grabbed the last seat. At the next stop, an old man climbed on, with a walking stick in one hand and a heavy bag of shopping in the other. He swayed as the bus pulled away.

Archie looked out the window. He looked at his shoes. Then he looked at the old man's hand, gripping the rail so tightly that his knuckles were pale.

Archie stood up. “Would you like to sit down?” he asked.

The old man smiled and lowered himself into the seat with a sigh. When Archie got off, the old man tapped his stick twice on the floor, like a little round of applause.

19. The old man taps his stick twice on the floor. This suggests that he

Circle one answer.

○ **A** is about to fall over.

○ **B** is checking that his stick still works.

○ **C** is thanking Archie.

○ **D** is angry that the bus is so slow.

20. Archie looks out the window and then at his shoes most likely because he

Circle one answer.

○ **A** doesn't want to give up his seat at first.

○ **B** is admiring the view outside.

○ **C** is watching for his bus stop.

○ **D** has dropped something on the floor.

21. How does the old man seem to feel about Archie?

Circle one answer.

○ **A** afraid of him

○ **B** grateful and impressed

○ **C** annoyed that Archie took so long

○ **D** cross that Archie spoke to him

22. Archie can best be described as

Circle one answer.

- ○ **A** a boy who catches the bus
- ○ **B** rude to older people
- ○ **C** considerate, even though it takes him a moment
- ○ **D** selfish, because he looks away at first

Read this, then answer questions 23–24.

Dust Storm

By lunchtime, the sky over the farm had turned the colour of strong tea. Mum hurried the chooks into their shed and pulled every window shut.

Then the dust arrived. The radio crackled, then went quiet. A rolling brown wall swallowed the windmill, then the shearing shed, then the front gate. Inside, Ava pressed her nose to the glass, but she could not see a thing.

“It'll blow over,” said Dad. But he kept glancing at the paddock where the new lambs were.

23. The dust ‘swallowed the windmill’. This means the dust

Circle one answer.

- ○ **A** made the windmill easier to see
- ○ **B** knocked the windmill to the ground
- ○ **C** hid the windmill from sight
- ○ **D** ate the windmill like food

24. The sky had ‘turned the colour of strong tea’. This tells us the sky was

Circle one answer.

- ○ **A** full of floating tea leaves
- ○ **B** a clear, bright blue
- ○ **C** a dark, dusty brown
- ○ **D** white, like a china teacup

Read this, then answer questions 25–28.

The New Girl

On her first day at Wattle Street School, Anika stood by the bubblers at lunch, holding her sandwich and watching the others play. Nobody asked her to join in.

Ben noticed her. He was in the middle of a game of handball, and he was winning. He looked at Anika, then at the long line waiting for a turn.

"Hey," he called, "you can have my spot." He walked off the court, and when the others groaned, he just shrugged.

Anika won three games in a row. Afterwards she found Ben and offered him half her sandwich.

25. Standing by the bubblers, Anika most likely feels

Circle one answer.

- ○ **A** happy to be on her own.
- ○ **B** bored of handball.
- ○ **C** lonely and left out.
- ○ **D** thirsty after playing handball.

26. Anika offers Ben half her sandwich mainly because

Circle one answer.

- ○ **A** she won three games in a row.
- ○ **B** she wants him to play handball with her again.
- ○ **C** she doesn't like the sandwich.
- ○ **D** she wants to thank him for including her.

27. Ben can best be described as

Circle one answer.

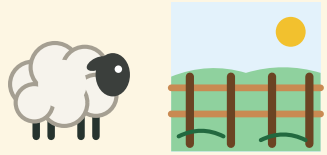
- ○ **A** a boy who plays handball at lunch
- ○ **B** a bad loser
- ○ **C** kind, and willing to give something up for someone else
- ○ **D** a show-off who only cares about winning

28. Which statement about Ben is best supported by the passage?

Circle one answer.

- ○ **A** He gave up his spot because he was losing.
- ○ **B** He is rude, because he shrugs at the others.
- ○ **C** He does what he thinks is right, even when others don't like it.
- ○ **D** He is new at Wattle Street School.

Read this, then answer questions 29–30.



Farmers' words

Farmers use some special words in their work. A paddock is a fenced field for animals. To muster sheep means to gather them together. A drought is a long time without rain.

29. Which workers use the words paddock and muster?

Circle one answer.

○ **A** bus drivers ○ **B** teachers ○ **C** farmers ○ **D** sailors

30. What is a drought?

Circle one answer.

○ **A** a very hot day ○ **B** a long time without rain

○ **C** a way to gather sheep ○ **D** a fenced field

Read this, then answer questions 31–34.

Big Talk at the Show

At the Royal Show, Jasper strutted between the rides with his hands in his pockets, telling anyone who would listen that he wasn't scared of anything. “The Thunderbolt?” he scoffed, pointing at the tallest ride. “That's for babies. I'll go on it twice.”

His little cousin Ava tugged at his sleeve. “You said that about the Ghost Train last year,” she reminded him.

Jasper ignored her. He marched to the front of the queue, but when the attendant lowered the safety bar in front of him, his face went the colour of milk. His knuckles whitened on the bar.

“Actually,” he called, “I think I've left my hat at the dagwood dog stand.” He wriggled out and hurried away, although his hat was sitting right on top of his head.

Ava watched him go. Then she climbed into the empty seat herself, and when the ride roared upwards, she was the one shrieking with delight.

31. Jasper gets off the ride mainly because

Circle one answer.

○ **A** the ride is about to break down.

○ **B** he wants to give Ava a turn.

○ **C** he is too frightened to go on it.

○ **D** he really has left his hat at the stall.

32. Ava's reminder about the Ghost Train suggests that

Circle one answer.

- ○ **A** Jasper is truly brave, just as he says.
- ○ **B** Ava is frightened of the Ghost Train.
- ○ **C** Jasper has boasted before and then backed out.
- ○ **D** the Ghost Train is the scariest ride at the show.

33. Jasper can best be described as

Circle one answer.

- ○ **A** boastful, but not as brave as he pretends.
- ○ **B** fearless, because he says he isn't scared of anything.
- ○ **C** a boy who goes to the Royal Show.
- ○ **D** kind, because he lets Ava have his seat.

34. Compared with Jasper, Ava shows that she is

Circle one answer.

- ○ **A** quietly braver than her loud cousin.
- ○ **B** a girl who likes dagwood dogs.
- ○ **C** unkind, because she teases Jasper.
- ○ **D** too frightened to go on the Thunderbolt.

Read this, then answer questions 35–37.

The Council Letter

Aunty Val read the letter from the council twice, then dropped it on the kitchen table as though it were a dead cockroach.

“They want to cut down the old fig tree,” she said. “To make room for eleven more car spaces.”

“Maybe it'll be easier to park at the shops,” said Jarrah, who was nine and hated walking. He was already picturing a car space right outside the bakery.

Aunty Val snorted. “Easier to park! That tree was there before the shops were. It was there before your great-grandmother was born. Every flying fox in the valley sleeps in it.”

She marched to the dresser, pulled out a writing pad and uncapped a pen with a sharp click.

“What are you doing?” asked Jarrah.

“What I always do when somebody has a silly idea,” said Aunty Val. “I'm going to put them straight.” She wrote until dinner time, and then she wrote some more.

35. The word ‘snorted’ tells us Aunty Val feels _____ the idea that parking will be easier.

Circle one answer.

○ **A** amused by ○ **B** excited about ○ **C** scornful of ○ **D** unsure about

36. Aunty Val drops the letter ‘as though it were a dead cockroach’. This suggests she

Circle one answer.

○ **A** had found an insect inside the envelope

○ **B** found the letter's news disgusting

○ **C** was too shocked to hold anything

○ **D** treasured the letter and wanted to keep it

37. When Aunty Val says “I'm going to put them straight”, she means she will

Circle one answer.

○ **A** tell the shoppers where to park

○ **B** show the council they are wrong

○ **C** agree with the council's plan

○ **D** line the council workers up in a neat row

Read this, then answer questions 38–41.

Moving Day

The removal truck had taken everything except the clock on the kitchen wall, and Hamish could hear it ticking through the empty rooms.

He wandered out to the back fence, where the old gum tree leaned over the creek. His initials were still carved in the bark, next to the mark that showed how tall he had been when he was five.

“Ready, mate?” Dad called from the car. His voice was cheerful, but he stood for a long time looking at the house before he got in.

Hamish ran his thumb along the letters. Then he picked up a smooth grey stone from the creek bed and pushed it deep into his pocket.

“The new house has a pool,” his sister Bella said, bouncing in the back seat. “And my room is twice as big!”

Hamish didn't answer. He watched the gum tree get smaller and smaller in the side mirror until the road curved and it was gone.

After a while, Dad reached back without looking and squeezed his knee.

38. How does Hamish most likely feel about leaving?

Circle one answer.

- ○ **A** worried about the ticking clock
- ○ **B** cross with Bella for bouncing
- ○ **C** excited about the pool at the new house
- ○ **D** sad to be leaving a place he loves

39. Hamish pushes a creek stone deep into his pocket. This suggests that he

Circle one answer.

- ○ **A** is collecting stones for the new pool.
- ○ **B** plans to throw it at the removal truck.
- ○ **C** needs it to carve more letters in the tree.
- ○ **D** wants something to remember the place by.

40. Compared with Hamish, Bella seems

Circle one answer.

- ○ **A** just as sad as Hamish is.
- ○ **B** unkind, because she doesn't care about Hamish.
- ○ **C** older than Hamish.
- ○ **D** more excited about the move than sad.

41. Which statement about Dad is best supported by the passage?

Circle one answer.

- ○ **A** He hides his own sadness so he can comfort his children.
- ○ **B** He doesn't care about leaving the house.
- ○ **C** He is driving the removal truck.
- ○ **D** He is impatient and wants Hamish to hurry.

Read this, then answer questions 42–44.

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.

42. 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

43. ‘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

44. ‘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

Read this, then answer questions 45–48.

The Missing Medal

When the swimming medal vanished from the classroom shelf, Kirra's eyes went straight to Dev. He was the new boy, after all, and he had been the last one inside at lunch.

“Turn out your bag,” she ordered, loudly enough for the whole class to hear. “Go on. Unless you've got something to hide.”

Dev's cheeks burned. Without a word, he tipped his bag onto the desk: a squashed sandwich, two pencils and a library book about turtles. No medal.

At that moment Ms Tran walked in, polishing something gold on her sleeve. “Whoever left this by the sink nearly lost it down the drain,” she said, holding the medal up by its ribbon. “It's yours, isn't it, Kirra?”

Kirra's mouth fell open. She remembered now: she had taken it off to wash the paint from her hands.

The class was very quiet. Dev began, slowly, to put his things back into his bag. Kirra looked at him, then at the floor, then at him again.

45. The class is very quiet at the end mainly because

Circle one answer.

- ○ **A** they are still waiting for the medal to be found.
- ○ **B** they are looking at Dev's library book about turtles.
- ○ **C** Ms Tran has told them to stop talking.
- ○ **D** everyone realises Kirra blamed Dev for nothing.

46. Dev's cheeks burned mainly because he

Circle one answer.

- ○ **A** was embarrassed at being accused in front of the class.
- ○ **B** had eaten something spicy at lunch.
- ○ **C** was the new boy and didn't know anyone yet.
- ○ **D** had taken the medal and was afraid of being caught.

47. Kirra's treatment of Dev can best be described as

Circle one answer.

- ○ **A** brave, because she spoke up in front of everyone.
- ○ **B** fair, because she gave him a chance to explain.
- ○ **C** unjust, because she blamed him without any proof.
- ○ **D** sensible, because he was the last one inside at lunch.

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48. At the end of the passage, Kirra seems to be

Circle one answer.

- ○ **A** still certain that Dev is a thief.
- ○ **B** only pleased to have her medal back.
- ○ **C** ashamed, and unsure how to say sorry.
- ○ **D** angry with Ms Tran for finding it.

Answer key

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1. B — He is annoyed that his slipper is chewed.
He picks up the ‘soggy slipper’ and ‘frowned’. He is annoyed.

2. C — The puppy is too cute to stay cross with.
Biscuit ‘rolled over and wagged his tail’, and then Dad's ‘frown turned into a laugh’. The puppy is too cute to stay cross with.

3. B — naughty but lovable
He ‘chewed my school shoe’ (naughty), but he ‘wagged his tail’ and made Dad laugh (lovable). Chewing doesn't make him dangerous.

4. A — He forgives him.
Dad's ‘frown turned into a laugh’ and he ‘scratched Biscuit's tummy’. He forgives him. A frown isn't cruel.

5. C — in a cross, unhappy way
Bella ‘pushed it to the edge’ of her plate. She doesn't want the broccoli. ‘Grumbled’ means said in a cross, unhappy way.

6. C — looked at it angrily
Bella doesn't want to eat it, and she says ‘I'm not hungry’. ‘Glared’ means she gave it an angry look.

7. B — to own up about the vase
She tells Mum ‘I'm sorry’ and ‘It was me’. She is owning up, not blaming anyone.

8. B — sorry
Mum's vase is ‘in pieces’ and Lily says ‘I'm sorry’. She feels sorry.

9. B — honest
She ‘could have hidden the ball’ but said ‘It was me’. She is honest.

10. A — brave enough to tell the truth
‘Instead, she went to find Mum.’ Owning up is brave. Kicking a ball inside was a mistake, but it isn't the whole story.

11. B — His mind was somewhere else
The text says: “He could almost see the blue water and the ducks.” He is picturing a lake, not looking at what is in front of him. So: his mind was somewhere else.

12. A — The lesson breaks into his daydream
The text says: “Then the bell rang, and Mr Ng said, “Maths books out, please.”” The bell and Mr Ng's voice push the daydream away. So: the lesson breaks into his daydream.

13. B — is pleased with its stolen lunch.
The ‘plate was empty’ and then came a ‘laughing cackle’. It sounds like the kookaburra is pleased with itself. Nobody told a joke.

14. B — the kookaburra
A ‘kookaburra watched’, then the ‘plate was empty’, and a ‘laughing cackle’ came from the branch. The kookaburra took it. Grandpa was busy pouring tea.

15. B — cheeky
It took the sandwich (‘plate was empty’) and gave a ‘laughing cackle’. That is cheeky, not shy.

16. A — good-humoured
Grandpa ‘chuckled’ and ‘made another sandwich’. He isn't furious; he sees the funny side.

17. D — He was pleased with the tent
The text says: “By sunset the tent stood tall, and Kai grinned.” The tent stands tall and Dad praises the spot. So: he was pleased with the tent.

18. A — set up
The text says: “Kai hammered in the pegs while Dad spread out the canvas.” Kai hammers in pegs and Dad spreads the canvas, so they are setting the tent up. So: set up.

19. C — is thanking Archie.
The old man ‘smiled’, and his taps were ‘like a little round of applause’. He is saying thank you. He is sitting safely, so he isn't about to fall.

20. A — doesn't want to give up his seat at first.
Archie had ‘the last seat’. He looks ‘out the window’ and ‘at his shoes’, away from the old man, because he doesn't want to give it up yet. Then he looks at the man's hand and changes his mind.

21. B — grateful and impressed
He ‘smiled’, sat ‘with a sigh’ of relief, and gave Archie ‘a little round of applause’. He is grateful. Nothing shows he minded the wait.

22. C — considerate, even though it takes him a moment
He notices the man's ‘knuckles were pale’, then ‘stood up’ and asked ‘Would you like to sit down?’ Looking away for a moment doesn't make him selfish overall.

23. C — hid the windmill from sight
Afterwards Ava ‘could not see a thing’. The windmill was still there. The dust just covered it, so it disappeared from view.

24. C — a dark, dusty brown
Strong tea is dark brown. Soon a ‘rolling brown wall’ of dust arrives, so the sky had turned a dusty brown.

25. C — lonely and left out.
It's her ‘first day’, she is ‘watching the others play’, and ‘Nobody asked her to join in’. She feels left out. She hasn't played yet, so she isn't thirsty from handball.

26. D — she wants to thank him for including her.
Ben gave her ‘my spot’. ‘Afterwards she found Ben’ on purpose to share her lunch. She is saying thank you. Winning is what happened, not why she shares.

27. C — kind, and willing to give something up for someone else
Ben ‘noticed her’, and even though ‘he was winning’ he said ‘you can have my spot’. He gave up something he enjoyed. Playing handball is a fact, not a judgement.

28. C — He does what he thinks is right, even when others don't like it.
When ‘the others groaned’, ‘he just shrugged’ and let Anika play anyway. He was winning, not losing. Anika is the new one, not Ben.

29. C — farmers
The text says: “Farmers use some special words in their work.”

30. B — a long time without rain
The text says: “A drought is a long time without rain.”

31. C — he is too frightened to go on it.
His face ‘went the colour of milk’ and his ‘knuckles whitened’, which show fear. His hat excuse can't be true, because the hat was ‘right on top of his head’. Ava does get the seat, but that isn't why he leaves.

32. C — Jasper has boasted before and then backed out.
Ava says ‘You said that about the Ghost Train last year’, and Jasper ‘ignored her’. She is hinting he boasted then and didn't go through with it, which is just what happens again.

33. A — boastful, but not as brave as he pretends.
He ‘strutted’ and called the ride ‘for babies’, so he is boastful. Then he ‘went the colour of milk’ and ‘hurried away’, so he isn't brave. He didn't give Ava his seat to be kind; he ran off.

34. A — quietly braver than her loud cousin.
Ava doesn't boast. She just ‘climbed into the empty seat herself’ and was ‘shrieking with delight’. Her reminder was true, not cruel, so she isn't being unkind.

35. C — scornful of
Aunty Val repeats “Easier to park!” and lists the reasons the tree matters. Later she calls it a ‘silly idea’. Her snort shows she is scornful of it: she thinks it isn't worth taking seriously. People sometimes snort when they laugh, but nothing here is funny to her.

36. B — found the letter's news disgusting
Nobody wants to touch a dead cockroach. The letter says the council wants to ‘cut down the old fig tree’, which Aunty Val loves. She drops it as if it disgusts her. There was no real insect.

37. B — show the council they are wrong
She says she does this ‘when somebody has a silly idea’, then writes letters until dinner time. To put someone straight is to correct them, to show them they are wrong.

38. D — sad to be leaving a place he loves
He ‘ran his thumb along the letters’ he carved, ‘didn't answer’ Bella, and ‘watched the gum tree get smaller and smaller’. These clues show he is sad. The pool is what Bella is excited about.

39. D — wants something to remember the place by.
He takes a stone ‘from the creek bed’ of the home he is leaving and pushes it ‘deep into his pocket’ to keep it safe. It is a keepsake. He doesn't use it to carve: he only runs his thumb along the old letters.

40. D — more excited about the move than sad.
Bella is ‘bouncing in the back seat’ and boasting that her room is ‘twice as big’. She is excited, not sad. Nothing shows she is unkind; she just feels differently.

41. A — He hides his own sadness so he can comfort his children.
Dad's ‘voice was cheerful, but’ he stood ‘looking at the house’ for a long time, so he is sad too. Then he ‘squeezed his knee’ to comfort Hamish. ‘Ready, mate?’ is one small moment, not impatience. The truck had already gone.

42. 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.

43. 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.

44. 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.

45. D — everyone realises Kirra blamed Dev for nothing.

The medal was Kirra's own, left by the sink. Her ‘mouth fell open’, and Dev ‘slowly’ packs up his things. Everyone knows he was blamed for nothing, so it feels awkward. The medal has already been found.

46. A — was embarrassed at being accused in front of the class.

Kirra accuses him ‘loudly enough for the whole class to hear’, and right then ‘Dev's cheeks burned’. He is embarrassed. He hadn't taken the medal: there was ‘No medal’ in his bag.

47. C — unjust, because she blamed him without any proof.

Kirra suspects Dev because he is ‘the new boy’ and was ‘the last one inside at lunch’. Neither of those is proof. She ‘ordered’ him in front of everyone and there was ‘No medal’. She didn't let him explain.

48. C — ashamed, and unsure how to say sorry.

Kirra ‘looked at him, then at the floor, then at him again’. She feels ashamed and is working up to saying sorry. She now knows Dev didn't take it.