Year 6 reading comprehension: How Sandstone Forms

English · Reading comprehension
Level: Medium

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.



How Sandstone Forms

The golden cliffs around Sydney Harbour are made of sandstone, a rock built from sand that was once loose. The story began more than 200 million years ago, when rivers carried sand and mud down from distant highlands. Each flood dropped a fresh layer of sand on top of the one before, and the layers slowly built up. A sand grain is small, between about 0.06 and 2 millimetres across. As more layers piled on top, their weight squeezed the lower sand grains tightly together. Water seeping between the grains left behind minerals, which acted like a natural glue. Over millions of years, the loose sand was glued into solid rock. Later the land was lifted, and wind and rain began to wear the rock away. They have been shaping it into cliffs and valleys ever since. Sandstone is soft enough to cut into blocks, so early builders in Sydney used it for houses and bridges.

1. A builder finds a sandstone block whose grains fall apart when she rubs it. What does this suggest?

Circle one answer.

- ○ **A** Little natural glue holds the grains together.
- ○ **B** The block was made from mud with no sand in it.
- ○ **C** The block is more than 200 million years old.
- ○ **D** The block was squeezed by too few floods.

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2. Why did the loose sand become solid rock?

Circle one answer.

- ○ **A** Minerals left by seeping water glued the squeezed grains together.
- ○ **B** The sun baked the sand dry.
- ○ **C** Each flood dropped a fresh layer.
- ○ **D** The land was lifted up.

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3. Which of these is NOT given in the text?

Circle one answer.

- ○ **A** Sydney sandstone was made from lava that cooled.
- ○ **B** Early builders in Sydney cut sandstone into blocks.
- ○ **C** Minerals in seeping water acted like a natural glue.
- ○ **D** Each flood dropped a fresh layer of sand.

Answer key

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1. A — Little natural glue holds the grains together.
The text says: “Water seeping between the grains left behind minerals, which acted like a natural glue.” Minerals acted like a natural glue to hold the sand grains together. So: Grains that fall apart suggest the glue is weak.

2. A — Minerals left by seeping water glued the squeezed grains together.
The text says: “Water seeping between the grains left behind minerals, which acted like a natural glue.” The weight of the layers squeezed the grains together, and the minerals glued them. Over time the loose sand became solid rock.

3. A — Sydney sandstone was made from lava that cooled.
The text says: “The golden cliffs around Sydney Harbour are made of sandstone, a rock built from sand that was once loose.”