

Reading Comprehension

Vocabulary Development Series

Level 6



READING COMPREHENSION WORKBOOK

Level 6

Series Designer

Philip J. Solimene

Editor

Dorothy M. Bogart

Reading Consultant

Sidney J. Rauch, Ed.D.

Professor of Reading and Education
Hofstra University, New York

EDCON

Story Authors

**Ruth W. Barrett
Eleanor Coleman
Ellen Cummiskey
Jaskson Daviss
Walter Holden
Justine Kusner
Nancy Byrnes Martel
Jacqueline Nightingale**

Copyright © 2014
Edcon Publishing Group, Inc.
www.edconpublishing.com

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system without permission of the publisher, with the following exception:

Student activity pages are intended for reproduction. EDCON Publishing grants to individual purchasers of this book the right to make sufficient copies of reproducible pages for use by all students of a single teacher. This permission is limited to an individual teacher, and does not apply to entire school systems.

CONTENTS

NO.	TITLE	SOMETHING ABOUT THE STORY	STORY	QUESTIONS
1	Secrets of the Ancient Stones	A message from the past will change the future of a small village.	1	4
2	Be a Better Baby-Sitter	Baby-sitters have a duty to others—and to themselves.	6	9
3	Soaring	When weather conditions are right, some flyers move through the sky as birds do.	11	14
4	Croatan, the Lost Colony	The mystery of what happened on Roanoke Island 300 years ago may finally be solved.	16	19
5	Six Secrets of Changing Behavior	Have you a habit you would like to change? One of these “secrets” may help you.	21	24
6	Hidden Messages	“Happy anniversary to the Andrews!” may really mean “Troops will land today.”	26	29
7	Escape to Freedom	Names have been changed, but this is the true story of one family’s voyage to freedom.	31	34
8	The Hudson River Whitewater Derby	Canoeists thrill to the challenge of a difficult and dangerous course.	36	39

CONTENTS

NO.	TITLE	SOMETHING ABOUT THE STORY	STORY	QUESTIONS
9	Elias Howe and the Sewing Machine	One man's imagination and work changed the lives of millions.	41	44
10	The Bermuda Triangle	Are mysterious forces at work, or has a legend been created from some easily explained accidents?	46	49

Key Words 51

Comprehension Check
Answer Key 53

Vocabulary Check
Answer Key 55

Secrets of the Ancient Stones

Learn the Key Words

archaeologist	(är' kē ol' ə jist)	a person who studies people, customs, and the life of ancient times <i>Because she was an <u>archaeologist</u>, Beth understood the customs of ancient people.</i>
civilization	(siv ə lə zā' shən)	the life and manners of a race, nation, etc. <i>Paintings of an advanced <u>civilization</u> decorated the temple's walls.</i>
corridor	(kôr' ə der, kor' ə dôr)	a long hallway passage <i>A <u>corridor</u> in the temple had stone walls.</i>
crisscross	(kris' krôs)	1. made or marked with crossed lines <i>The group of stars had a <u>crisscross</u> pattern.</i> 2. to mark 3. a pattern of crossed lines
investigate	(in ves' tə gāt)	examine closely; look into carefully <i>They were anxious to <u>investigate</u> the secret of the temple.</i>
sacred	(sā' krid)	belonging to or given to God or a god; holy <i>The temple was <u>sacred</u> to the villagers.</i>

Preview:

1. Read the title.
2. Look at the picture.
3. Read the first two paragraphs of the story.
4. Then answer the following question.

You learned from your preview that

- a. Beth Morris is a Peace Corps worker.
- b. David Larsen is a Peace Corps worker.
- c. David Larsen has ancestors in North Africa.
- d. the villagers are not friendly.

Turn to the Comprehension Check on page 4 for the right answer.

Now read the story.

Read to find out what the ancient ones knew.

Secrets of the Ancient Stones



Things you will read about:

Acrux (ă' kruks)

the brightest star in the Southern Cross

solstice (sol' stis)

the sun's direction in space when it is at its farthest point north or south among the stars

Southern Cross (suTH' ərm krōs)

a group of four bright stars in the form of a cross

Curiosity is leading Beth and David along a path to danger.

Beth Morris moved closer to the campfire and glanced at the starlit desert. An archaeologist working in North Africa, she had come to the desert to visit her friend David Larsen, a Peace Corps worker. "Aren't you lonely here?" she asked David.

"Not really. The villagers are friendly, even though they are so stubborn. We have been trying to teach them about irrigation, but all they know are the ways of their ancestors. All we ever hear is 'the ancient ones.' Their ancient ones are just bones."

"An archaeologist learns a

great deal from an old civilization," said Beth.

"I apologize," laughed David. "I appreciate your being here, even though you are a digger in old stones. The other Peace Corps workers won't return from the agricultural meeting until after Christmas."

"Even an archaeologist needs to see a face from home at this time of year," Beth teased. "In this hot place it's hard to realize that tomorrow is the first day of winter."

"You're wrong," David corrected. "It won't be the first day of winter here in the

southern half of the world, but the first day of summer — the summer solstice. Look at that group of stars, the Southern Cross, with the bright star Acrux at the top. That's not visible back home."

"Summer in winter," yawned Beth. "I'm sleepy and ready for bed. See you in the morning."

She was awakened by David shouting her name outside her tent. Beth dressed and ran outside. The stars had faded and, although it was still dark, faint streaks of dawn appeared along the top of a dark mountain.

"The whole village is going some place," David cried, pointing to a shadowy line of people marching toward the mountain. "Let's investigate."

They grabbed flashlights and followed the marchers, climbing in the dusky light over rough boulders along a crisscross path leading to a wild place David had never seen before. Three huge boulders guarded the edge of a valley.

Peeking through a crack between the rocks, they saw in the valley below a great stone building with a pointed roof. The murmuring villagers knelt in front of the building.

"It's the sacred temple of the ancient ones," David whispered.

Suddenly the sun popped over the mountain, sending a shaft of light onto the building. A brilliant light seemed to explode from a corner of its roof, glittering like a star. The people threw themselves to the ground, shouting.

"They are praying to the ancient ones," David guessed. "But why?"

"Today is the summer solstice." Beth's eyes narrowed as she spoke. "Ancient civilizations celebrated the solstice. The temple was designed so that a corner of the roof would catch the first light on this day of the year. The villagers have forgotten its meaning to their ancestors, but they know it is important. They are praying to a memory."

The sun rose higher, the sparkling light dimmed, and the villagers got up and scattered back toward their homes.

Beth ran down the hill, shouting, "I'm going to investigate. This is a big find for an archaeologist."

"But it's a sacred place," protested David, as he followed her.

They searched the outside of the building until they found a loose stone. Forcing it aside, they slipped into the building, pointing their flashlights at the walls.

"Look at those paintings!" exclaimed David.

Decorating the walls were brilliant pictures of people in richly embroidered garments, walking through fields of barley and wheat.

"The ancient ones were an advanced civilization!" exclaimed Beth in astonishment.

David paced up and down the crisscrossed corridor. "Wheat, barley," he considered. "Nothing like the dry stalks of grain that grow here now. Where did the ancients get the water? And why do the corridors crisscross in this way? There is one long passageway and two at angles, like a cross."

"Here's the opening in the roof where the sun flashed," called Beth. "It has a shiny stone like marble to catch the light."

David grabbed her shoulders. "Beth, these corridors are in the shape of the Southern Cross and the light at the end is the star Acrux. It's a message of some sort." He wheeled around. "What's that loud noise outside?"

They rushed outside to investigate and found themselves facing the furious villagers. Spears gleamed as

angry natives crowded near, shouting, "You go into sacred place. You die."

"Stop!" David shouted. "We have learned the magic of the ancient ones."

The men still held their spears, but they halted.

"We'll show you the magic tonight," David promised.

"What magic?" asked Beth in a shaking voice.

"I have an idea about the star Acrux," whispered David. "Just hope that I'm right."

All day, Beth and David crouched on the sharp rocks, surrounded by angry natives. Drums beating in the distance made them shiver.

When darkness came, David led the villagers to a spot directly beneath the star Acrux. "Dig!" he urged.

Muttering, the men dug their spears into what seemed to be ordinary sand. But then a cry of wonder went up as a spear came out dripping with water. The diggers scrambled into the hole, tossing out earth. Suddenly, a fountain of water shot from the earth and spread along the ground. The natives joyously flung themselves into the water, singing and splashing.

"Soon you will have great fields of grain, just like the ancient ones," shouted David. "This temple is a map to tell you that water is at the spot where the star Acrux shines on the night of the summer solstice."

Then she laughed. "We've all learned from an old civilization. I wonder what else the ancient ones will teach us."

Secrets of the Ancient Stones

Preview answer:

b. David Larsen is a Peace Corps worker.

COMPREHENSION CHECK

Choose the best answer.

1. David Larsen was in North Africa working for
 - ___a. the African government.
 - ___b. the Southern Cross.
 - ___c. the Peace Corps.
 - ___d. the archaeologists.

2. David had been trying to teach the villagers about
 - ___a. irrigation.
 - ___b. building roads.
 - ___c. old stones.
 - ___d. their ancestors.

3. Beth probably believed that
 - ___a. the villagers were lazy.
 - ___b. sacred places should never be entered.
 - ___c. the cave paintings could be removed and sold.
 - ___d. other ancient ways of the villagers should be studied.

4. David described the natives as stubborn because
 - ___a. they celebrated the summer solstice.
 - ___b. they spoke of their ancestors when he tried to teach them.
 - ___c. they marched in shadowy lines.
 - ___d. they prayed to the ancient ones at the sacred temple.

5. One dawn, David and Beth followed the villagers as they marched toward
 - ___a. the sacred temple.
 - ___b. the Southern Cross.
 - ___c. their homes.
 - ___d. the desert.

6. When Beth and David entered the sacred building, they found
 - ___a. a flashlight.
 - ___b. loose stones.
 - ___c. dry stalks of grain.
 - ___d. a crisscrossed corridor.

7. The temple was
 - ___a. a fountain
 - ___b. a map.
 - ___c. a grain field.
 - ___d. a hiding place.

8. In the future, David will probably
 - ___a. locate more big, bright stars.
 - ___b. teach the villagers to paint the walls of the temples.
 - ___c. pay more attention to the ways of the villagers' ancestors.
 - ___d. search for old stones.

9. Another name for this story could be
 - ___a. "The Work of the Peace Corps."
 - ___b. "Teaching Stubborn Villagers."
 - ___c. "A Visit in Africa."
 - ___d. "The Clue in the Temple."

10. This story is mainly about
 - ___a. a lonely Peace Corps worker.
 - ___b. how stars help all people.
 - ___c. discovering an ancient secret.
 - ___d. discovering the summer solstice.

Check your answers with the key on page 53.

Idea starter: Why did the villagers forget the message of the temple?

Secrets of the Ancient Stones

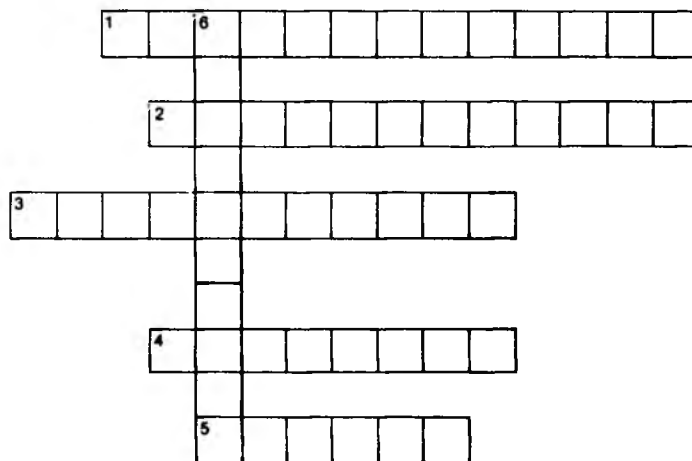
VOCABULARY CHECK

archaeologist	civilization	corridor	crisscross	investigate	sacred
---------------	--------------	----------	------------	-------------	--------

I. Use the key words from the box to fill in the blanks in the puzzle.

Across

- A person who studies ancient civilizations
- The life and manners of a nation or race
- Look into
- A long hallway
- Holy



Down

- Make or mark with crossed lines

II. Fill in each blank with a key word from the box above.

- Someone is talking about ancient civilization. She is an _____.
- The objects in the temple are _____. Don't touch them!
- This is very strange. Let's _____!
- I got lost in that building. I used the wrong _____.
- The archaeologists are excited. They discovered an ancient _____.
- I want to visit many cities. I will follow a _____ route.

Check your answers with the key on page 55.