

## Speed Reading Practice for Eiken Pre-1: No. 7

Total: 12 minutes (Passage 1: 4 min / Passage 2: 6 min / Review: 2 min)

Target Score...Passing Target: At least 5 out of 7 correct...High Score Target: At least 6 out of 7 correct

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Read each passage and choose the best answer from among the four choices for each question.

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### Libraries as Community Spaces

For a long time, public libraries were seen mainly as places where people went to borrow books or study quietly. Although these roles remain important, the purpose of many libraries has expanded in recent years. In some cities, libraries now offer language classes, computer training, children's programs, and even advice on job searching. This change reflects a growing belief that libraries should serve not only as centers of information but also as spaces that support the wider needs of local communities.

One reason for this shift is that access to information alone is no longer enough. While the internet has made large amounts of knowledge available, not everyone has equal ability to use digital tools effectively. Libraries can help address this gap by providing public computers, internet access, and guidance from trained staff. In addition, because library services are usually free, they can be especially valuable to people who cannot easily afford private educational support or workspaces.

Supporters of this broader role argue that libraries can strengthen communities by bringing together people of different ages and backgrounds. A library event, for example, may help new residents feel less isolated or give older people opportunities for social contact. However, some critics worry that asking libraries to do too much may place pressure on limited budgets and staff. They also argue that if libraries try to serve every social purpose, they may lose focus on their traditional strengths.

For this reason, many specialists believe the most effective libraries are those that adapt to local needs without abandoning their original mission. In other words, libraries may succeed best when they combine their traditional role as places of learning with newer forms of community support.

## Questions

- (1) What is one reason the role of libraries has changed in recent years?
  1. Printed books are no longer considered useful in education.
  2. Many people now believe libraries should help meet a wider range of community needs.
  3. Libraries have been required to replace schools in some cities.
  4. Most libraries can no longer afford to lend books.
  
- (2) According to the passage, how can libraries help reduce inequality?
  1. By selling digital devices at lower prices than private companies.
  2. By giving all users the same level of formal education.
  3. By providing free access to digital tools and support for people who need them.
  4. By limiting services to those with the greatest financial need.
  
- (3) What is the author's main point in the final paragraph?
  1. Libraries should return completely to their traditional role.
  2. Libraries are most successful when they balance old and new functions.
  3. Community events are more important than educational services.
  4. Libraries should avoid changing in response to local conditions.

## Cooling Cities with Trees

As global temperatures continue to rise, many cities are searching for practical ways to reduce heat in urban areas. One widely discussed approach is to increase tree cover along streets, in parks, and around buildings. Trees provide shade, which helps keep surfaces such as roads and sidewalks from becoming extremely hot. They also release moisture into the air through a natural process, which can lower surrounding temperatures. For these reasons, urban trees are often seen as a simple and effective tool for making cities more comfortable during hot weather.

The benefits of urban trees are not limited to cooling alone. Trees can improve air quality, absorb some rainwater, and make neighborhoods more attractive. Some studies suggest that access to green spaces may also support mental health by reducing stress and encouraging outdoor activity. In addition, streets with more shade can become easier and safer for people to walk along, especially during the summer. As a result, city governments often present tree-planting programs as investments that support public health as well as environmental goals.

However, expanding tree cover is not always easy. Trees require regular care, especially in their early years, and some may die if they are not watered properly or if soil conditions are poor. In crowded cities, finding enough space for large numbers of trees can also be difficult. There are further concerns about fairness. In some places, wealthier neighborhoods already have more trees than poorer ones, meaning that the cooling benefits are not shared equally. Unless tree-planting programs are planned carefully, they may fail to address this imbalance.

Because of these challenges, experts often argue that planting trees should be part of a broader urban strategy rather than treated as a complete solution. Trees can make an important contribution to healthier cities, but their effects are strongest when combined with other measures such as improved building design, shaded public spaces, and better transportation planning.

## Questions

- (4) Why are trees considered useful for cooling cities?
1. They prevent all sunlight from entering urban areas.
  2. They provide shade and help reduce surrounding temperatures.
  3. They remove the need for air conditioning in all buildings.
  4. They make roads warmer during the winter.
- (5) What is one additional benefit of urban trees mentioned in the passage?
1. They guarantee equal living conditions in every neighborhood.
  2. They can improve air quality and support mental well-being.
  3. They make cities less crowded by moving residents to parks.
  4. They reduce the need for public transportation.
- (6) What problem related to tree-planting does the passage mention?
1. Trees usually grow too quickly for city planners to control.
  2. Most city residents oppose tree-planting programs.
  3. Poorer neighborhoods may receive fewer of the benefits if planning is unfair.
  4. Trees are unable to survive in any urban environment.
- (7) What does the author suggest in the final paragraph?
1. Tree-planting should replace all other urban planning efforts.
  2. Trees are helpful, but they work best as one part of a larger plan.
  3. Transportation planning is more important than all environmental measures.
  4. Tree-planting has only a minor effect on city life.