

Speed and Fluency Cards 200-300 words

In the early stages when reading books are shorter, it is easier to ask pupils to read and re-read the same book several times. This is important for developing speed, fluency and intonation when reading.

These are essential skills for comprehension. Unless a person is reading at around 100+ words per minute, it is going to be difficult for them to retain the words read in a sentence long enough to understand the meaning of the sentence.

We do not need to get hung up on words per minute counts because other factors also come into the mix. But it is important to give our developing readers the opportunity to practice their reading to skills to a level of fluency that helps them to read with ease, expression and thus understanding.

These cards are designed for older readers who need that practice, but are reading longer books where reading and re-reading is not appropriate. Or for older pupils, who find re-reading books cumbersome.

The texts used on these cards are mostly less than 300 words. There is a chart at the bottom to help the pupils to record their own progress so they can see their own improvement and achievements. The texts are sourced from BBC Newsround so they are about topics of high interest and will build up the child's general knowledge.

The reader must read to another person who will keep time and check the accuracy of the reading.

Initial introduction to text could be carried out using text to speech software such as:

Natural Readers Online

Monitoring

Regular monitoring creates a picture of a child's progress through speed and fluency. Calculate the WCPM during the first reading of a new text. This will give a more accurate picture of progress.

Each day, it is useful to record the time taken and the number of mistakes. It is hoped that with each subsequent reading the time take will decrease and so will the mistakes made.

Recording these numbers sets the pupil a challenge and gives evidence of progress.

All of these texts have been taken from BBC Newsround. Why not visit Newsround each day and find out what is happening in the world around you.

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Possible Structure

Day One

1. Support the pupil through the first reading of the text. This could be done through text to voice software, paired reading, choral reading, echo reading. Discuss any difficult vocabulary.
2. Listen to the pupil as they read the text, correcting where they cannot self-correct by showing how you know what the word says. If the reader falters at a word, give four seconds processing time before showing how to decode the word.
3. Time and count mistakes during the third reading.
4. Enter the time and number of mistakes on the chart for day one.
5. Ask the pupil to think of one good question about the text. Write it down to ask the pupil on the next day.
6. Ask the pupil to choose one sentence from the text. Ask them to read it repeatedly until they can remember it without seeing it. Using Clicker 6, ask the pupil to write the sentences. They should then check with the text for accuracy.

Days Two – Five

Repeat steps 3-6. Point out the progress made each day.

Speed and Fluency Monitoring

Enter the details for the first reading of the new text

Name: _____

D.O.B:

WCPM – Words correct per minute
improvement

AWI – Average weekly

Calculating Words Correct Per Minute

Number of words – number of mistakes = number of correct words.

Number of correct words ÷ time taken = WCPM

Eg 250words – 18mistakes = 132 words correct

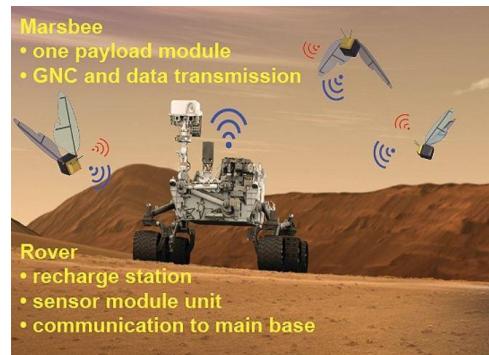
132 ÷ 2.45 (2min 27sec) = 53.8 WCPM

Seconds put into decimals		4mins 29sec – 4.48
E.g. 1 minute 16 sec = 1.26		
1 sec = 0.01	21 sec = 0.35	41 sec = 0.68
2sec = 0.03	22sec = 0.36	42sec = 0.7
3sec = 0.05	23sec = 0.38	43sec = 0.71
4sec = 0.06	24sec = 0.4	44sec = 0.73
5sec = 0.08	25sec = 0.41	45sec = 0.75
6sec = 0.1	26sec = 0.43	46sec = 0.76
7sec = 0.11	27sec = 0.45	47sec = 0.78
8sec = 0.13	28sec = 0.46	48sec = 0.8
9sec = 0.15	29sec = 0.48	49sec = 0.81
10sec= 0.16	30sec= 0.50	50sec= 0.83
11 sec = 0.18	31 sec = 0.51	51 sec = 0.85
12sec = 0.2	32sec = 0.53	52sec = 0.86
13sec = 0.21	33sec = 0.55	53sec = 0.88
14sec = 0.23	34sec = 0.56	54sec = 0.9
15 sec = 0.25	35 sec = 0.58	55 sec = 0.91
16 sec = 0.26	36 sec = 0.6	56 sec = 0.93
17sec = 0.28	37sec = 0.61	57sec = 0.95
18sec = 0.3	38sec = 0.63	58sec = 0.96
19sec = 0.31	39sec = 0.65	59sec = 0.58
20sec = 0.33	40sec = 0.66	

Swarm of robot bees to explore Mars

Nasa has given funding to an exciting new project: Marsbees!

A swarm of robot bees would be fitted with all sorts of sensors and communication devices to talk to each other and document their surroundings.



Because of their small size, the drones could cover lots of ground quicker than the Mars rover has been able to.

When their batteries get low, the swarm would fly back to a larger vehicle to charge up and download everything they've seen. They could then set off on another investigative flight.

The swarm will be able to carry out lots of different jobs, like taking readings and collecting data about temperature, or what gasses are in the air.

Flying about is much quicker than trying to drive over tough terrain, which the rovers have to do.

Being in the sky has other advantages, for example you can see for much further than with the ground level view the rovers have.

This means the little buzzing bots could spot potential points of interest for a rover to investigate later on.

It could also spot safe routes of travel for a rover, free of obstacles like big craters or rocks.

The project will bring together teams from Japan and America and will take sometime to develop.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Time					
Number of mistakes					

Word count: 217

The Queen at 92: Why does she have two birthdays?

1 February 2018



It's the Queen's 92nd birthday on Saturday 21st April 2018! But luckily for her, the celebrations won't be over once the weekend is out of the way.

That's because she has two birthdays - a real one and an official one.

Queen Elizabeth II was born on 21 April 1926, but she has another official birthday, which is usually celebrated on the second Saturday of June.

In the past, official celebrations to mark a King or Queen's birthday in the UK have been held on a day that isn't their actual birthday.

The double birthday tradition was started more than 250 years ago by King George II in 1748.

He was born in November, which is not known in the UK for its good weather.

But King George wanted it to be possible to have a big public celebration - and November wasn't the time to do it.

So, given that his actual birthday wouldn't be a good time of year for a birthday parade, he decided to combine it with an annual military parade in the summer, when the weather would hopefully be nice.

And so this is where the tradition of an official, public summer birthday for the monarch began!

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Time					
Number of mistakes					

Word count: 211

Why is it called Trooping the Colour?

- 17 April 2018

In June, there is a public celebration of the Queen's birthday called Trooping the Colour.



Her actual birthday is back in April, but Trooping the Colour has marked the official birthday of the British monarch for over 260 years.

But why is it called this and what happens at it?

Trooping the Colour is a military parade - so the name has a military background dating back to the 17th Century.

The guards which take part in the parade form one of the oldest regiments of the British Army - the Household Division. They are like the Queen's bodyguards or personal troops, and have been part of the monarchy since the English Civil War ended in 1660.

'Colours' was the name given to the flags representing the different regiments in the British Army. The flags all looked different, depending on the colours and symbols of the particular regiment.

The army used these flags so that soldiers were able to easily identify their unit on the battlefield. Without modern communications, it was easy to get lost in battle, so a regiment's 'colours' would be an easy point to bring everyone in that unit together.

Because of this, it was important that soldiers knew which colours belonged to which regiment, so they needed to be regularly displayed.

To do this, officers would march up and down in front of the troops (this is called 'trooping'), waving their flags (or 'colours'), so everyone could see which flags belonged to which regiment.

This is where the name 'Trooping the colour' comes from, when the colours of the different regiments of the British army were displayed.

Each year at Trooping the Colour, a different regiment's colours are trooped.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Time					
Number of mistakes					

Word count: 293

Millicent Fawcett: New statue to be unveiled in Parliament Square

24th April 2018



A statue of a woman called Dame Millicent Fawcett is going to be unveiled in Parliament Square in London today.

It will be the first statue of a woman to grace the square.

Why is this woman getting her own statue in Parliament Square?

The bronze figure has been designed by an artist called Gillian Wearing - the first female sculptor to have a work displayed here.

But who was Millicent Fawcett and why is she getting a statue?

Millicent Fawcett was an important character in the fight to win women the right to vote for who represented them in Parliament.

Suffragists and suffragettes got their names from the word *suffrage*, which means *right to vote*

Up until 1918, only men were allowed to do this.

In 1897, Millicent set up a group called the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies, which believed in using non-violent tactics to persuade the government that women deserved the right to vote too.

She set up a group called the suffragists. They held meetings, paraded with banners, wrote letters or signed petitions demanding the vote for women.

It proved a difficult battle to win. A woman called Emmeline Pankhurst, who was originally a member of this group, believed that more needed to be done.

She went on to set up a separate group in 1903 called the Suffragettes, who used more violent tactics to make themselves heard - for example, chaining themselves to railings and setting buildings on fire.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Time					
Number of mistakes					

Word count: 258

Amazing women who have changed the world

1 February 2018

Jane Austen: 1775 - 1817



Jane Austen, a literary figure who has had more influence on British culture than she would ever have known during her relatively short life (she sadly died at the age of 41).

Jane Austen started putting pen to paper when she was just a teenager and went on to write six major novels which revealed what life was like in the late 1700s and early 1800s. Four of them were released within just four years of each other! That's some seriously rapid writing.

These were Sense and Sensibility, Pride and Prejudice, Mansfield Park, and Emma. Northanger Abbey and Persuasion were published after she died - and they are loved all over the world. There was actually a seventh and final novel, but sadly she never got to complete it.

While she was alive, she actually published her books anonymously, so nobody knew her as a writer. It is widely accepted that she never got the credit she deserved until after her death.

Now, just over 200 years since she died, millions of people carry Jane around in their pockets every single day. That's because her face is now **on the new £10 note** as a way of marking just what an enormous impact her work still has today.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Time					
Number of mistakes					

Word count: 223

Amazing women who have changed the world

1 February 2018



Florence Nightingale: 1820 - 1910

If there was ever a true hero who dedicated her life to helping others, **Florence Nightingale is it**. Born in Italy in 1820, Florence went against what was traditionally expected of her, by becoming a war-hero nurse.

She was born in Florence - which was the inspiration for her name (fun fact!) - into a very wealthy family who frowned upon her entering into the nursing profession.

She moved to London to work before receiving a letter from the Secretary of War asking her to put a team together to go to work in a place called Crimea during the Crimean War, and look after British soldiers. This was the first time that women had been officially allowed to serve in the army.

The conditions there were terrible. For example, there weren't enough beds, everything was filthy, there weren't proper loos and there were rats everywhere.

When she first arrived in November 1854, the army doctors wanted nothing to do with her. But she wouldn't go away and soon got to work cleaning up the awful conditions there. She quickly got the more able soldiers to work making them scrub the hospital clean.

She used to walk around the hospital at night to make sure the poorly soldiers were comfortable. This is how she became known as *the lady with the lamp*.

She was welcomed home a hero. Even Queen Victoria wrote her a letter to say thank you for what she'd done. It's not every day that you get a thank you letter from the Queen!

Florence Nightingale completely transformed the quality of care in war and went on to improve healthcare all over the world, so that's a pretty amazing legacy to leave.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Time					
Number of mistakes					

Word count: 300

Amazing women who have changed the world

1 February 2018



Emmeline Pankhurst: 1858-1928

Emmeline Pankhurst was a founding member of a group of women called the Suffragettes, who fought incredibly hard to get women the right to vote in the UK.

They often used violent and extreme tactics to do this, and Emmeline was no stranger to a prison cell because of this.

When World War One broke out, however, she recognised that she should help with the war effort, and she encouraged other Suffragettes to do the same.

While the men were away fighting in the war, many women like Emmeline took on jobs that men would traditionally do. They earned lots of respect doing this and it showed just how much women contributed to society - and, therefore, deserved the vote.

In 1918, a law was passed which allowed certain women the right to vote. This was a big step in equality between men and women - and many would argue that, for a large part of this, we have Emmeline to thank.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Time					
Number of mistakes					

Word count: 175

Amazing women who have changed the world

1 February 2018



Marie Curie: 1867 - 1934

Marie Curie was a Polish scientist - and is probably one of the most famous scientists of all time. She was born in the Polish city of Warsaw, but later moved to France where she made an incredible discovery which would change the world. In France, she met her husband - a man called Pierre, who was also a scientist. Together, they built on work done by previous scientists and made discoveries which would earn them a **Nobel Prize** in 1903.

As if that wasn't enough, Marie went on to win another Nobel Prize in 1911. She was the first woman in history to win it.

So what was this amazing work? Well, the Curies made ground-breaking discoveries about something called radioactivity. Radioactivity happens when certain special chemical elements give off energetic particles when a part of them called their nucleus breaks down.

This all sounds rather technical, but through this work, the Curies announced the discovery of two new chemical elements - polonium and radium.

And why was that so important? Well, first of all, their work was used to develop something called radiotherapy, which is used to treat certain illnesses.

These discoveries were also really important in developing X-rays, which are vital in hospitals today. It also meant that during World War One, Curie was able to develop a portable X-ray unit that could be used near the battlefield.

So if you ever find yourself in hospital having an X-ray, you now know who you should be thanking.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Time					
Number of mistakes					

Word count: 265

Amazing women who have changed the world

1 February 2018

Coco Chanel: 1883 - 1971



From science to one of the most iconic brands in the fashion world - Coco Chanel was a woman who changed the face of fashion forever.

She was born in France and taught herself to sew at a young age - something that would certainly come in handy later on!

She opened her first shop in the early 1900s, starting off by designing hats. She soon turned her attention to clothes too and, by the 1920s, launched her first perfume.

Ever heard of the saying the 'little black dress', also known as the LBD? Yep, you have Coco Chanel to thank for that.

She led the way in luxury fashion and today her brand - led by its creative director Karl Lagerfeld - sells clothes, perfume, handbags and watches. Almost 100 years after it was first created, Chanel No 5 is still probably the world's most famous perfume!

All from one hat shop, Chanel is now worth billions of pounds, so it's safe to say she had one heck of an impact!

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Time					
Number of mistakes					

Word count: 187

Amazing women who have changed the world

1 February 2018



Mother Teresa: 1910 - 1997

In September 2016, it was announced that Mother Teresa was **being named as a Saint** - so she is certainly deserving of a place on this list.

At the age of 12, Teresa - who was a Roman Catholic - decided that she wanted to go to India to spread the Christian message and help people.

So this she did. In 1929, she travelled to India and she ended up dedicating her life to helping poor people, particularly in the Indian city of Kolkata. She described her work as God's work.

While she was there, she started something called the Missionaries of Charity. This group now has thousands of people in almost 90 countries helping people living in poverty all over the world.

In 1979 she received the Nobel Peace Prize for her work. She asked that the big dinner to mark this was cancelled and all of the money given to the poor people of Kolkata.

It is said that she only had two possessions of her own - a bucket and two saris. To this day, she is remembered by how much she loved and cared for people, and praised as a Saint.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Time					
Number of mistakes					

Word count: 210

Amazing women who have changed the world

1 February 2018



Queen Elizabeth II: 1926 - present day

At the grand age of 91 years old, Her Majesty is incredibly deserving of her place on a list of women who have left their mark on the world.

She has been sitting on the throne for 66 years, making her the world's longest serving monarch. She has seen the country through good times and bad, as well as sitting with 12 different prime ministers. Phew!

She was just 25 years old when her father died and the crown was passed on to her - and she has been in the spotlight almost every day of her life.

The Queen is an incredibly busy lady. She has many important jobs, including being Head of the Commonwealth, Head of the Church of England and Head of the Armed Forces.

She also has to carry out many extremely important duties like officially opening parliament once a year (the country would be in a spot of bother if that didn't happen!). She even manages to fit in two birthdays a year.

Well, while two birthdays a year sounds like a lot of fun, there's no denying that the Queen has worked incredibly hard throughout her life and has certainly made British monarchy history.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Time					
Number of mistakes					

Word count: 217

Amazing women who have changed the world

1 February 2018



JK Rowling: 1965 - present day

We suspect we don't need to tell you how this woman has changed the world.

Through her books, author Joanne Kathleen Rowling (JK Rowling) brought the world one of the most-loved and most famous literary characters ever. We are of course talking about a certain Harry Potter.

It's hard to imagine now but Rowling did actually struggle to get the book published at first (can you imagine?!).

Since their publication though, the books have been turned into an unbelievably successful series of films, which launched the careers of Hollywood royalty Emma Watson and Daniel Radcliffe.

They also led to further films (**Fantastic Beasts and Where To Find Them**) and a hugely successful play, set after the books have finished (**Harry Potter and the Cursed Child**).

She has also published books under a different name, Robert Galbraith. Some publishers rejected books that 'Robert Galbraith' had written, with one even saying that 'he' should go on a writing course! We bet they were rather embarrassed when they found out who 'he' really was.

As the first female novelist to become a billionaire, we think it's safe to say she has left a lightning bolt-shaped scar in history!

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Time					
Number of mistakes					

Word count: 211

Amazing women who have changed the world

1 February 2018



Jessica Ennis-Hill: 1986 - present day

Many of us will have sports stars who we massively look up to. Jessica Ennis-Hill is one of those stars **who inspired millions of people** during the London 2012 Olympics.

She first got into athletics at school and took home her first official medal from the Commonwealth Games in Australia, back in 2006. This was to be the first of many medals to come and just three years later, she got her first gold medal in the 2009 World Championships in Germany.

But it was the London 2012 Olympics that really secured her spot in the history books.

Jessica was named as the main face of the Games in the run-up to the Olympics, so she starred in adverts and lots of campaigns promoting the event. Her face was plastered on billboards and screens up and down the country.

So you'd have thought the pressure might have got to her - but not a bit of it. Jessica went and won gold in the heptathlon, before going on to win silver in the Rio Olympics just four years later.

Not long after, she announced her retirement from athletics and was deservedly made a Dame in 2017's New Year's Honours.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Time					
Number of mistakes					

Word count: 216

Amazing women who have changed the world

1 February 2018

Malala Yousafzai: 1997 - present day



Now aged 20, **Malala became one of the most famous schoolgirls in the world.**

As a young girl of 11, the Pakistani student wrote an anonymous diary about what life was like under the rule of an extreme group called **the Taliban** in north-west Pakistan.

In the diary, she talked about how she wanted to stay in education and about how girls should be able to go to school. The Taliban wanted to ban girls' education. Lots of people read the diary all over the world and she became well-known for fighting for her right to an education.

But the Taliban didn't like this. Because of what she said in her diary, in October 2012, she was shot by their soldiers - but she survived the attack.

The world was appalled by what happened to her and Malala quickly won the support of millions more people.

At 14, she became the youngest person ever **to win the Nobel Peace Prize**. When she received it, she joked that she was probably the first winner who still fought with her younger brothers!

She has gone on to win more awards, and continues to campaign for girls' rights all over the world and inspire many generations.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Time					
Number of mistakes					

Word count: 219

How does the Queen mark her birthdays?

1 February 2018



The Queen usually spends her actual birthday with her family, although there will be special gun salutes in London at midday to mark it.

There will be a 41-gun salute in Hyde Park, a 21-gun salute in Windsor Great Park and a 62-gun salute at the Tower of London.

For her 'official' birthday in June, the day is marked publicly with a big parade in London called **Trooping the Colour**.

Trooping the Colour has marked the official birthday of the British monarch for over 260 years.

Over 1400 soldiers, 200 horses and 400 musicians take part in the event, so it's quite a spectacle!

Lots of members of the public waving flags and wearing Union Jacks will fill the Mall outside Buckingham Palace to watch it.

On the day, a big parade will start at the Queen's official residence - Buckingham Palace - before moving along the Mall to Horse Guards Parade at Whitehall, near to Downing Street, and then back again.

Those watching from the Mall will also hope to catch a glimpse of the royal family as they travel down the Mall as part of the ceremony, and then when they gather on Buckingham Palace's balcony to greet well-wishers and watch RAF planes perform an aerial display for the occasion.

This year will be the first time that newly-weds Prince Harry and Meghan Markle will be in on the balcony together, as husband and wife.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Time					
Number of mistakes					

Word count: 244

What is hay fever? And how does it affect people?

19 April 2018

What is Hay fever? - and how does it affect people?



It's summer here in the UK, and whilst that means lots of warm and sunny weather, it also can mean that people with hay fever might have a hard time.

Hay fever is an allergy - and people who have it are allergic to pollen.

Pollen is a type of fine powder which is released by lots of different plants and trees.

It has proteins in it which can cause your nose, eyes and throat to become swollen or irritated.

This means people can suffer from symptoms like itchy eyes or runny noses as your body tries to protect itself from the pollen by flushing it out.

Hay fever is one of the most common allergies and affects around 13 million people in the UK.

You can get it at any age, although it usually starts when you are young.

Not everyone has hay fever, but it is more common in people whose family members already have it, or other allergies, especially asthma.

Although there is no cure for hay fever, people who have it can manage the symptoms in lots of different ways.

Special medicine called antihistamines or steroids are sometimes used to help prevent a reaction and reduce the swelling.

Top tips also include avoiding freshly cut grass, changing your clothes if you have been outside, and closing your windows at night-time.

However, it is always best to talk to a doctor about what is right for you, if you think you might have hay fever.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Time					
Number of mistakes					

Word count: 219

Sabrina and Daniel: We saved our Grandma's life

18 March 2018

Brother and sister Daniel, 10, and Sabrina, 8, managed to do something amazing when an unexpected emergency happened to their family.

They had just got home after the last day of school in July when they found their Grandma on the floor, unconscious.

Luckily, they had both learnt how to do emergency first aid at scouts a few months earlier.

They put their Grandma into the recovery position and cleared her airway, which means making sure her throat is not blocked and she can breathe.

They phoned an ambulance and told the operator what they had done to help.

When the paramedics arrived, they were surprised to find it was Daniel and Sabrina who had given first aid to their Grandma.

What they did saved their Grandma's life, and afterwards, she was able to recover in hospital.

Daniel and Sabrina have been praised for their quick thinking and reactions by their family and friends.

They've also won a Scouts award for bravery and will be presented with the award by head Scout, Bear Grylls, at a ceremony at Windsor Castle in April.

They say they're happy they were able to save the life of someone they love and are encouraging other children to learn first aid too.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Time					
Number of mistakes					

Word count: 218

Heavy rainfall causes floods and closes roads

28 May 2018

Storms and heavy rain have caused floods across the West Midlands.



The Environment Agency has issued more than 20 flood warnings and more than 40 flood alerts are in place covering much of Central England.

In Birmingham more than a month's worth of rainfall fell in just one hour on Sunday.

On Monday a man in his 80s died in Walsall after his car got caught in the flooding. The Met Office has issued **amber weather warnings** for rain and thunderstorms in East Anglia, London and the South East and the South West of England, this afternoon.

But even with all the rainfall, the South East could also experience the hottest day of the year so far.

The Met Office - which forecasts the UK's weather - said temperatures could be as high as 28C or 29C.

Homes and roads in Northamptonshire have also been flooded after heavy rainfall overnight on Sunday, with major roads closed.

The Met Office said a site at Winterbourne, in the Birmingham area of Edgbaston, recorded 58mm of rainfall in just one hour on Sunday afternoon, and 81mm in a 12-hour period. The monthly average for the West Midlands region in May is 55mm.

On one road, in an area called Selly Park, homes flooded and cars were under water, while wheelie bins floated down the road.

But in other parts of Birmingham, the rain hasn't been as heavy. At another site 10 miles away, just 3mm of rain was recorded in 12 hours.

West Midlands Police said some roads in Birmingham were still affected by flooding and advised drivers not to ignore road closure signs.

It was impossible to travel along one of the city's major road routes, because the water was up to 5ft deep.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Time					
Number of mistakes					

Word count: 300

What is a red weather warning?

1 March 2018

A red weather warning has been issued for parts of the UK - the most serious kind of weather warning that the Met Office can announce.



On Wednesday, the alert was issued for parts of Scotland, which was the first time a red warning for snow had been issued in Scotland. This warning has now gone back to amber.

On Thursday morning, the Met Office - which forecasts the UK's weather - upgraded the amber warning in south-west England and south Wales to red as well.

In Lincolnshire, the RAF has been helping people who work in hospitals to get to work.

Up to 1,000 people in Scotland had to sleep in their cars overnight, after one of one of Scotland's busiest motorways - the M80 - was closed.

Drivers couldn't move their vehicles from the road between Glasgow and Stirling, after lorries skidded out of control and blocked the road in both directions.

All 11 Scottish Professional Football League matches which were due to take place on Wednesday evening were cancelled.

BBC Weather forecaster Ben Rich says because of the very cold winds, it could feel as cold as -11C in Birmingham and Cardiff.

He's also predicting parts of south-west England and Wales could experience freezing rain on Thursday night - something we don't normally see in the UK because it only happens when it is really, really, intensely cold.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Time					
Number of mistakes					

Word count: 241

Royal Wedding 2018: What is a coat of arms?

26 May 2018



Meghan Markle, the new Duchess of Sussex, has been given a coat of arms. Sounds exciting! So what exactly is it and how do you get one?

What is a coat of arms?

A coat of arms sounds pretty strange, but actually it's just a drawing that represents a person, family or organisations.

Coats of arms date back to the 12th Century, when they were worn over armour in battle and in tournaments so that opponents could identify each other.

What's Meghan's coat of arms like?

According to Kensington Palace, Meghan's coat of arms reflects her Californian background and includes a shield containing the colour blue, representing the Pacific Ocean, and rays, symbolising sunshine.

The lion supporting the shield relates to her husband, and the songbird relates to the Duchess of Sussex, Meghan.

Can anyone have a coat of arms?

Unfortunately not. In the UK (apart from Scotland) the coat of arms must be granted to a person by something called the College of Arms and the Court of Chivalry. It's a little different in Scotland, where somewhere called the Lord Lyon King of Arms decides who gets one.

They make their decision on whether someone should have a coat of arms based on lots of factors - such as honours from the Crown, military honours and other qualifications.

You can also have a coat of arms by being directly related (down the male line) to a person to whom arms were given.

Organisations can also have their own coats of arms.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Time					
Number of mistakes					

Word count 264

Why did the Holocaust happen?

24 January 2012

In 1921 Adolf Hitler became leader of the Nazi party. The Nazis were racists and believed that their Aryan race was superior to others.



To them, an Aryan was anyone who was European and not Jewish, Romany or Slavic.

They also thought Germany was a more important country than its neighbours.

Laws against the Jews

In 1934 Hitler became Germany's head of state. He introduced anti-Semitic laws which discriminated against Jewish people living in the areas he controlled.

Some of these laws meant that Jewish children could no longer go to school, keep pets or have a bicycle.

The Nazis believed that Jews were a problem that needed to be removed. The mass killings of the Holocaust were what Hitler called "The Final Solution".

Hitler also wanted to make Germany bigger, so he invaded neighbouring countries and took them over.

Many of the non-German people living on land that he wanted for Germans were also sent to concentration camps.

Today we call this ethnic cleansing.

The Nazis and their collaborators were able to do these things partly because not enough people stood up to them.

Background information courtesy of the Holocaust Educational Trust

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Word count 213

Brainy bees learn from watching each other

24 February 2017

A team of researchers has taught some bumble bees to play golf!

Lots of other tests have tried to find out just how clever the little insects are but almost all of them involved tasks that have been similar to bees normal behaviour.

The scientists were surprised to find out that bees could watch and learn behaviour from other bees.

Then the bees used their newly learned skills to get a food reward.

The team showed a set of bees how to push a ball into a small hole using a plastic demonstration bee.

Scientists then gave some other bees two types of training, watching a bee who had been trained with the plastic bee, push a ball into a hole and another where the ball was moved into the hole using a magnet.

The bees that watched the trained bee pushing the ball into the hole were better at learning what to do than the bees who watched the ball move on its own.

Not only that, the little black and yellow insects did not just copy exactly what they saw, but figured out their own way to get the ball to the right place.



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How did people die during the Holocaust?

24 January 2012

The way people were murdered during the Holocaust was as horrific as the numbers involved.



From the start of the war in 1939 the Nazis moved many hundreds of thousands of Jews into areas very small, overcrowded areas of cities called ghettos.

They were not allowed to leave, and if they tried to they would be executed.

Many died of starvation because they didn't have enough food, and others of disease because the living conditions were very poor - there were hardly any toilets and sewers, and no heating during the winter.

Concentration camps

The Nazis set up huge prisons called concentration camps - where prisoners were starved, often tortured and worked to death.

They housed people who opposed the Nazis, prisoners of war and those who the Nazis felt were a threat.

Conditions inside the camps were appalling, and starvation and diseases were very real dangers.

When in 1945 British troops entered the concentration camp at Bergen-Belsen in Germany, they found 60,000 starving survivors and many thousands of unburied dead bodies.

Many of those who were found alive were to die in the weeks and months after the liberation.

Extermination camps

In 1942 the Nazis set up six extermination camps in Poland which used specially-built poison gas chambers to kill people.

The largest of these was Auschwitz-Birkenau - a vast collection of slave labour camps, the concentration camp of Auschwitz and the extermination camp of Birkenau.

Around 2.7 million Jews were murdered during 1942 alone. This was the most intense period of killing in the Holocaust.

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Word count 267