
Reading comprehension: signal words

Highlighting *signal words* in a text can help you understand the message the author wants to bring across to the readers. But highlighting too many words is not very helpful.

Try it yourself! Critically check the words a pupil has highlighted in an exam on the next pages.

How to do this exercise

1. Read the the tasks on the next page and look at which words the pupil has highlighted in yellow (“pupil’s version”) in the text at the bottom.
2. Ask yourself if the words the pupil has highlighted help to find the answers to the tasks.
3. Can you do better? Use the text on the following page (“your version”) and highlight the words which you think help to find the answers to the tasks. Don’t highlight more than words than you need!
4. Compare the words you have highlighted with the “teacher’s version”. Here, the teacher has highlighted the important words in green.
5. Then do the tasks, using the parts of the text you have highlighted.
6. Finally, check your answers with the solutions at the end.

Leseverstehen: All about maple syrup

- Tick the correct box and give **one** piece of evidence by quoting short passages from the text.
- Do **not** write line numbers.

1. Maple syrup was discovered by ...

- a) local natives.
- b) explorers from overseas.
- c) businessmen from the USA.

One piece of evidence from the text: _____

2. A new invention helped to make maple syrup ...

- a) healthier.
- b) taste better.
- c) more quickly.

One piece of evidence from the text: _____

3. Canadian maple syrup 'grades' are mostly different in ...

- a) quality.
- b) intensity.
- c) sweetness.

One piece of evidence from the text: _____

All about maple syrup¹ (pupil's version)

In this online article you can find out about the history and production of Canada's favourite syrup.

- Read the online article, then do the tasks.

Maple syrup has a long history. It all began long ago with the Indigenous peoples of North America. They were the first to discover how to make syrup from maple trees. They used simple tools like wooden buckets and stone knives to cut into the trees and collect the syrup. This practice was common in areas with many sugar maples, such as the northeastern United States and Canada.

When European settlers arrived, they learned this technique from the Indigenous people. In the 19th century, new technology made maple syrup production more advanced. It let people boil the syrup faster.

Canadian maple syrup is classified into different 'grades'. The grades reflect the time of year when the syrup was collected. One popular grade is 'Golden', which has a light colour and a mild, delicate flavor. It is typically from early in the season, when the syrup is fresher. Also well-loved is 'Amber', which is darker and has a stronger, richer flavor. It is collected later in the season.

Over time, maple syrup became popular all across North America and beyond. The maple syrup industry is now big business, but the basic process of making it is still quite similar to how it was done long ago.

¹ maple syrup – A sweet syrup you get from certain trees

Leseverstehen: All about maple syrup

- Tick the correct box and give **one** piece of evidence by quoting short passages from the text.
- Do **not** write line numbers.

1. Maple syrup was discovered by ...

- a) local natives.
- b) explorers from overseas.
- c) businessmen from the USA.

One piece of evidence from the text: _____

2. A new invention helped to make maple syrup ...

- a) healthier.
- b) taste better.
- c) more quickly.

One piece of evidence from the text: _____

3. Canadian maple syrup 'grades' are mostly different in ...

- a) quality.
- b) intensity.
- c) sweetness.

One piece of evidence from the text: _____

All about maple syrup (your version)

In this online article you can find out about the history and production of Canada's favourite syrup.

- Read the online article, then do the tasks.

Maple syrup has a long history. It all began long ago with the Indigenous peoples of North America. They were the first to discover how to make making syrup from maple trees. They used simple tools like wooden buckets and stone knives to cut into the trees and collect the syrup. This practice was common in areas with many sugar maples, such as the northeastern United States and Canada.

When European settlers arrived, they learned this technique from the Indigenous people. In the 19th century, new technology made maple syrup production more advanced. It let people boil the syrup faster.

Canadian maple syrup is classified into different 'grades'. The grades reflect the time of year when the syrup was collected. One popular grade is 'Golden', which has a light colour and a mild, delicate flavor. It is typically from early in the season, when the syrup is fresher. Also well-loved is 'Amber', which is darker and has a stronger, richer flavor. It is collected later in the season.

Over time, maple syrup became popular all across North America and beyond. The maple syrup industry is now big business, but the basic process of making it is still quite similar to how it was done long ago.

All about maple syrup (teacher's version)

In this online article you can find out about the history and production of Canada's favourite syrup.

- Read the online article, then do the tasks.

Maple syrup has a long history. It all began long ago with the Indigenous peoples of North America. They were the first to discover how to make syrup from maple trees. They used simple tools like wooden buckets and stone knives to cut into the trees and collect the syrup. This practice was common in areas with many sugar maples, such as the northeastern United States and Canada.

When European settlers arrived, they learned this technique from the Indigenous people. In the 19th century, new technology made maple syrup production more advanced. It let people boil the syrup faster.

Canadian maple syrup is classified into different 'grades'. The grades reflect the time of year when the syrup was collected. One popular grade is 'Golden', which has a light colour and a mild, delicate flavor. It is typically from early in the season, when the syrup is fresher. Also well-loved is 'Amber', which is darker and has a stronger, richer flavor. It is collected later in the season.

Over time, maple syrup became popular all across North America and beyond. The maple syrup industry is now big business, but the basic process of making it is still quite similar to how it was done long ago.

Solutions

Leseverstehen: All about maple syrup

- Tick the correct box and give **one** piece of evidence by quoting short passages from the text.
- Do **not** write line numbers.

1. Maple syrup was discovered by ...

- a) **local natives. (right)**
- b) explorers from overseas.
- c) businessmen from the USA.

One piece of evidence from the text:

*“It all began centuries ago with the Indigenous peoples of North America.” **

2. New inventions helped to make maple syrup ...

- a) healthier.
- b) taste better.
- c) **more quickly. (right)**

One piece of evidence from the text:

*“...with the arrival of technology which allowed for faster boiling.” **

3. Canadian maple syrup ‘grades’ are mostly different in ...

- a) quality.
- b) **intensity. (right)**
- c) sweetness.

One piece of evidence from the text:

*“...Golden, which has a light colour and a mild, delicate flavor.” **

* **Tip:** Sometimes there is more than one “piece of evidence” you could give to support your answer. This is true for example for items 2 and 3:

- For item 2 you could write: “...started using metal tools to boil the sap more efficiently.” This piece of evidence is just as good as the one given above.
- For item 3 you could write: “...Amber’, which is darker and has a stronger, richer flavor.” Both answers are good.

But remember: only give **one** piece of evidence, not two! If you think there are two or maybe more “pieces of evidence”, use the one you feel most sure about.