



Three-Minute Reading Check _____(name)

These sentences are all about cars and trucks. Please read each sentence out loud.

Our new truck is on the street.

My dad's old car gave him a lot of trouble.

When dad went to get a new car, he visited many dealers.

At last, my dad had to choose between a fully equipped truck and an enormous SUV.

While the choice may seem quite simple, my father thought long and hard before he made his decision.

Certainly the SUV offered many advantages, but the final comparison made his ultimate decision remarkably easy.

Now read out loud these passages from actual novels.

Sara loved the summer. She loved the warm summer air. She loved the chance to skip rope with her friends. She loved waking up and **not** going to school.

In the dark tunnel, both boys looked at each other. Scott was shaking from the cold, or from fear, or both. Cody was shaking too, and breathing hard.

“You know what I think?” Cody said at last.

“What?”

“I think we better get out of here, like fast.”

In front of us was a white shape, the shape of a man - but not a **living** man. We could almost see through the shape, which was like a tower of dust or a plume of smoke. But the shape was neither dust nor smoke. It had a head, arms, legs and a body. It was real, but not something from this world.

A flash of lightning seemed to hit right in front of us.

“That was a little too close for comfort,” the pilot said as the thunder boomed. There was a lot of white noise in our headsets. Each time there was a flash of lightning, it got a little worse.

Then there was another bright flash followed quickly by a loud clap of thunder. It was so close I was surprised that our plane wasn’t hit. The pilot swore again, and his jaw got very tight. Things were bad – and then they got worse.

The elevator doors opened to the underground garage. The big greaser still had my arm twisted behind me. Maybe I could pull free, but what then? If I ran for it, the gang would just chase me down, or the thug would shoot me.

“Over there,” the Candyman said, pointing to the far wall.

The greaser pushed me forward before I was ready to move. I stumbled and started to fall, but he held my arm tight.

“This is a stupid way to die,” Connor said to Sam.

There was nothing Sam could do to stop Connor’s grumbling. Nor could he help much with the fear that lay beneath his words.

Connor wasn’t used to the harsh land or the freezing cold of the Arctic winds. He was used to roaring out on his snowmobile, taking what he wanted, then racing back to the warmth of his house. Now the three of them had no snowmobile and the dog sled was gone. What little warmth they had wouldn’t last long in the coming storm.

You guys are ...” I looked at all of them, and then shouted more swear words than I ever knew were in me.

I don’t know how long my swearing would have continued, but Nick came over and stopped it with a sucker punch right to my gut. The pain shot through me, sizzling and white. I lost my grip on the bag when he hit me, making it easy for Geoff to take the garbage bag from my arms. When Nick landed his second punch, to my face, I fell to the floor.

The old lady set the burlap sack down on the ground and untied the drawstring. The cloth fell down and revealed the most amazing thing - a transparent skull. It was almost the size of a person’s head, shaped like a real skull, but perfectly clear. It had carved indentations for its eyes and an opening where a nose would have been. But the scariest part was the teeth, which were smiling in a really gruesome way.

I don’t know how long I just stared at the skull, watching the light bounce around inside it. I was amazed that something could be so beautiful and so horrible all at once.