

2 Worksheet on Reading Comprehension

Text: Gary Younge, “Mirth of a Nation”, from: Michael Mitchell, *Ethnic Diversity in the UK*, Viewfinder Topics (München: Langenscheidt, 2010), pp. 28f.

A READING COMPREHENSION – WHY?

Some people may wonder why reading comprehension is tested at all. Everybody can read, can't they? Yes, but it is not only about “reading”, it is about “comprehension”, too. English texts can be quite tricky sometimes, for example the syntax can be misleading for a learner of English who is not experienced enough.

Reading comprehension tasks are supposed to help you look closer at particularly interesting spots of a text and also to help you find out whether you are able to put into your own words what you have just read.

So concentrate – and do not hesitate to read the same sentence a couple of times if you do not understand it fully the first time. The same goes for the tasks, too. Be careful – if some information in one option is correct, but other pieces of information are not, then you must not choose that option as the correct one, because it is partly false. The correct option must be without any wrong details, but it may be expressed in different words than in the original text.

B QUESTIONS AND TASKS

1. What is called “new inclusiveness” in the introduction is (tick only 1)

- ☐ a lot of new mixtures in order to make cocktail drinks.
- ☐ a certain mixture of musical styles.
- ☐ a new kind of youth culture which included influences from Asia, the U.S., the Caribbean.
- ☐ a new mainstream that was positively white.

2. *Goodness Gracious Me* was a successful show. (Tick the two correct statements)

- ☐ Its title could be played in stereo.
- ☐ Its title had to do with a song by Peter Sellers.
- ☐ It contained questionable prejudices and assumptions.
- ☐ Clichés and stereotypes were satirized.
- ☐ Sophia Loren was an Indian actor who sang a duet with Peter Sellers.

3. What did *Goodness Gracious Me* achieve on British TV? Refer to ll. 7-9.

4. Decide whether the following statements about ll. 12–29 are true, false or not in the text.

	true	false	not in text
a) The genre “Asian Comedy” was completely new to British TV.	☐	☐	☐
b) The producer was not sure who would watch his show.	☐	☐	☐
c) Someone was shot in the dark.	☐	☐	☐
d) The show found its viewers even outside Britain.	☐	☐	☐
e) Its quality was considered debatable.	☐	☐	☐
d) The term “oil of race relations” was meant as a compliment.	☐	☐	☐
d) The British army uses the show for workshops on race-relations.	☐	☐	☐

5. What did Aimé Césaire write about the importance of humour (ll. 39-42)? Paraphrase.

6. Which two statements about British Asians are true (ll.56-67)?
(Do not tick more than 2 options)

- ☐ The show's popularity is a sign that the second generation feels more at ease.
- ☐ It made Asians of the first generation protest against race attacks.
- ☐ It formed their experience as immigrants.
- ☐ It enabled their children to be less frustrated.
- ☐ The second generation feel more frustrated if not given their rights in the UK.

7. Give three examples that show the increasing acceptance of Asian culture in the UK.

8. What does Younge take as a symbol of Britain having "re-branded itself" (l. 82)?
(Do not tick more than 1 option)

- ☐ potent illustrations
- ☐ curry as a national dish
- ☐ club-goers swearing in Hindi
- ☐ white mainstream synonyms

9. Why does Younge use the expression "Goodness, gracious me" at the end of his text?

(Peter Ringeisen)