

Example 2: “Become an expert on instant noodles”

Reading comprehension

Foundation level

MYP year: 5

Criterion	A	B	C	D	E
Level achieved	–	–	–	–	3

Background

The students completing this exercise had explored Internet sites in English regularly. The text entitled “Become an expert on instant noodles” was chosen as it was on a topic that all the students in the class were familiar with and would be interested in. The text was an extract from a web page.

Students were given 40 minutes to read the text and answer the questions. The task was completed under examination conditions and the use of dictionaries or notes was not allowed.

There was the expectation that whenever possible the answers should be written in the target language.

An answer key is included.

Note 1: The text used as a stimulus contained four pictures. For copyright reasons, these could not be reproduced. The pictures were illustrative only, and their omission does not compromise the text.

Note 2: As the work was done under examination conditions, the student’s responses were handwritten; they have been retyped here to facilitate reading. All orthographical and grammatical errors remain as per the original work.

Assessment

Criterion E: reading comprehension

Maximum 8

Achievement level	Descriptor
3–4	The student identifies basic and more-complex facts in texts with familiar language , and identifies the main idea . The student shows an understanding of some parts of the text(s) .

This work achieved level 3 because the student:

- identifies basic facts written in familiar language
- identifies the main idea
- shows an understanding of a few parts of the text.

The student would have achieved a higher level if he had:

- identified more-complex facts written in familiar language
- shown understanding of more parts of the text.

Reading comprehension text

Become an expert on instant noodles

Have you ever eaten instant ramen? They're noodles that can be made just by adding hot water. Many instant ramen products come in cups, and all you have to do is fill the cup with hot water and wait for two or three minutes. Others are sold in bags; these you take out of the bag and boil in hot water, also for two or three minutes, then put in a bowl to eat.

A total of 46.4 billion packs of instant ramen are eaten per year in over 80 countries around the world. China is the biggest consumer: The Chinese eat 15.9 billion packs annually. Indonesia follows at 9.2 billion, and Japan is third, consuming 5.2 billion servings. Besides Asia, instant ramen is also popular in the United States, where 2.9 billion packs are consumed annually.

The world's first instant ramen went on sale in Japan in 1958. Both the taste and production methods have continued to improve since then, and instant ramen has come to be accepted and loved by people throughout the world. The following information will take you through the history of instant ramen, from its invention and popularization to the technological improvements that have been made over the decades.

Statistical data courtesy of Japan Convenience Foods Industry Association

Spreading around the globe

Instant ramen produced in Japan is exported to 43 countries around the world, many of them in Asia. The amount of instant ramen eaten overseas is more than seven times the amount consumed in Japan. Nissin's Chicken Ramen was the first brand to be exported, going on sale both in Japan and overseas in 1958. Momofuku Ando, who was president of the company at the time, sent a few samples to a company in the United States and was surprised at the positive response: A request came right away for Nissin to send 500 cases. Beginning around 1964, requests to set up joint ventures and form technological alliances came in one after another from companies in countries like Italy and South Korea.

Today Japan exports some 92 million packs of instant ramen every year. Most of the 41 billion packs that are eaten in the world annually, though, are produced overseas in the countries where they will be consumed, and the noodles have been customized to suit the tastes and eating habits of local people. For example, chicken soup is used for the base in the United States, while tomato-flavored and cheese-flavored ramen are popular in Brazil. In Europe, meanwhile, the soup is a bit thicker, and chicken and tomato flavors are well-liked. Spice is the key to popularity in Asian countries. Instant ramen sold in China is flavored with such spices as fennel, cinnamon, and star anise, and the noodles sold in Thailand have the taste of the traditional spicy and sour *tom yum* soup.

Flavor is not the only consideration when selling instant ramen in other countries. Hindus do not eat beef because the cow is sacred to them, and Muslims do not eat pork because they see the pig as a dirty animal. So for India, where Hinduism and Islam are the two major religions, vegetarian ramen flavored with *masala* (spices) is produced.

In Islam, a prayer must be said when an animal is killed. Food that conforms to Muslim dietary tradition is called *halal*, and only the meat of an animal properly killed may be eaten. So in a predominantly Muslim country like Indonesia, it is only natural that packages of instant ramen carry the *halal* mark.

Kids Web Japan. Reprinted with kind permission.

Student work

Level 1–2

1. In one short sentence describe what are instant ramen?
"They're noodles that can be made just by adding hot water"
2. How many countries does Japan export instant ramen to?
43 countries
3. When was the first instant ramen sold?
"Ramen went on sale in Japan in 1958"

Level 3–4

4. Which country did the company Nissan first export instant ramen to?
Japan and overseas
5. Is Japan the only country that produces instant ramen?
No
6. What are the two different types of packaging of instant ramen?

Level 5–6

7. What aspects other than taste do the makers of instant ramen have to think about when exporting their products to different countries?
Because hindus do not eat beef and muslims do not eat pork
8. Which region in the world eats the most instant ramen?
Islam

Level 7–8

9. Using the information provided in the webpage, explain why there has to be a variety of flavours of instant ramen?
10. After reading the webpage, why do you think that instant ramen is so popular? Your answers must be justified with information provided in the text.
Many Asian countries like spice taste

Answer key

Level 1–2 (basic facts with familiar language)

1. In one short sentence describe what are instant ramen?
They are noodles that are made just by adding hot water.
2. How many countries does Japan export instant ramen to?
43
3. When was the first instant ramen sold?
1958

Level 3–4 (main idea and more-complex facts with familiar language)

4. Which country did the company Nissan first export instant ramen to?
The United States
5. Is Japan the only country that produces instant ramen?
No. Italy and South Korea also produce instant noodles.
6. What are the two different types of packaging of instant ramen?
Cups—where you just add hot water
Bag—where you take the noodles out of the bag and boil in hot water.

Level 5–6 (supporting details, basic and more-complex facts with unfamiliar language)

7. What aspects other than taste do the makers of instant ramen have to think about when exporting their products to different countries?
Cultural differences and eating habits. For example in India you cannot use beef or pork and in Muslim countries noodles have to carry the halal mark.
8. Which region in the world eats the most instant ramen?
Asia.

Level 7–8 (drawing conclusions)

9. Using the information provided in the webpage, explain why there has to be a variety of flavours of instant ramen?

Different regions in the world have different tastes so the instant noodles reflect this.

In India, people like curry so they have curry flavoured noodles; in Brazil, tomatoes and cheese are popular so their noodles are made with this flavouring; in Thailand, they like spicy food so the noodles there are spicy; in China noodles are flavoured with different spices such as fennel and cinnamon; Americans like chicken so the noodles that are the most popular are chicken flavoured.

Answers must be justified with information from the text.

10. After reading the webpage, why do you think that instant ramen is so popular? Your answers must be justified with information provided in the text.

Because they only need hot water and take two or three minutes to cook. It makes them very easy to make and cheap for those who do not have much time to cook for example. There are many different flavours so you will not get bored with the same food.

They can be found in many different countries.

Other answers are acceptable provided they are justified by information found on the webpage.