Reading

"Every text is entered with its readings, and each reading is followed to its end. Interpretation weighs a reading; it never fixes one."

The kind of answer: read · Reading on the map

In a child's words. Before you decide what a sentence means, list everything it could mean, and keep each meaning until something rules it out.

The Institute habit

Every lesson at the Institute carried a second message under the first, and the students were drilled until they no longer noticed it.

The book

From the newspaper advertisement through the tests to Mr. Benedict's first explanation. Reynie noticed that the advertisement spoke to children, not to their parents. Ask what else it leaves unsaid.

Week 1 · the kind of answer

Monday: sentences with two readings ("Visiting relatives can be boring"; "I saw the girl with the telescope"). For each, follow both readings to their end: what else would have to be true? Wednesday: read the advertisement two ways, as an honest offer and as a trap, and say what each reading predicts you would find at the test.

Week 2 · into the gap

Reading is still a gap on the map. The child writes a 300-word essay for it, as a letter from Reynie to Miss Perumal, about a sentence they once misread.

Week 3 · the case

Joshua 10:12–13, "the sun stood still", can be read as a description of how things looked, or as astronomy. Read as of 1700, before the question was settled, both readings stay open: interpretation alone was not allowed to decide it. Leave it open. Unit 3 comes back to it.

The workshop · suggested

For a child taking the workshop strand, Project 0, the workbench. The five introductory lectures, watched as the course is read whole before it is taken apart, and the bench set up.

The end first

The same tiles can make a king or a fox, Irenaeus said of the scriptures: what decides is the picture they are for. Draw one two-reading sentence as a small graph, a dot for each reading and a line to what each would make true. Keep every branch until something found closes it.

Fridays

One question on the test cannot be answered without reading another question first, as on Mr. Benedict's second test.

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