

# The travels of Marianne North

These questions will help you practise:

- ★ identifying and explaining how information is related
- ★ identifying and explaining how language choices enhance meaning
- ★ giving the meaning of words in context
- ★ making comparisons
- ★ retrieving and recording information
- ★ explaining inferences.



## Brazil

October 1872

Such scenery! High trees draped with bougainvillea to the very tops, bushes of the same nearer the ground reminding one of the great rhododendrons in our own shrubberies in May at home, and of much the same colour, though occasionally paler and pinker. There were orange-flowered cassia trees (whose leaves fold close together at night like the sensitive plant) and scarlet erythrinas looking like gems among the masses of rich green; exquisite peeps of the river, winding below its woody banks or rushing among great stones and rocks, came upon us, and were gone again with tantalising rapidity.

## India

1878

It was delightful after a long night and day in the dusty train to find myself again opposite Benares; and the weather had become perfect, neither too hot nor too cold. I hired a carriage for the week and went every morning to sketch on the river, where there was such a mass of picturesqueness that the attempt to paint and reproduce it almost drove me to despair. Sitting in a boat anchored by a rope or a stone, with a fidgety man holding an umbrella between me and the cloudless morning sun, is not a comfortable mode of painting.

## Australia

1880

But it was always raining in this unexpected bit of the tropics, and I had no easy task to finish a picture there. Three times I packed up my things in disgust, and at last brought home my paper wetter with rain than with oil paint. . . . Another day I stopped to paint a gigantic fig tree standing alone, its huge buttresses covered with tangled creepers and parasites.

## South Africa

January 1883

So I painted more flowers. A loranthus (tree parasite) was very interesting. When I touched the end of the bud, if ripe, it suddenly burst, and the petals sprang backwards, while the pistil in the middle, which was curved like the spring of a watch, was jerked out a yard or more. A tree called the wild pear (*Dombeya rotundifolia*) was just in full bloom, and very conspicuous in the landscape with its fine white flowers.

*Abundant Beauty: The Adventurous Travels of Marianne North* Introduction by Laura Ponsonby

1 Look at the section about Brazil.

a) **Find** and **copy one** word that is similar in meaning to 'perfect'.

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1a

(1 mark)

b) Look at the section about India.

**Find** and **copy one** word that is similar in meaning to 'style' or 'type'.

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1b

(1 mark)

2 a) The writer has used similes in this extract.

**Find** and **copy one** of the similes.

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2a

(1 mark)

b) Explain the effect of using the simile.

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2b

(1 mark)

3 *A tree called the wild pear (Dombeya rotundifolia) was just in full bloom, and very conspicuous in the landscape with its fine white flowers.*

What does the word *conspicuous* mean in this sentence?

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3

(1 mark)

4 How did the weather in Australia compare to the weather in India?

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4

(1 mark)

5 According to the information in the text, in which country would you find trees with orange flowers?

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5

(1 mark)

6 What job do you think the writer has?  
Refer fully to the text in your answer.

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6

(3 marks)

/ 10

Total for  
this text