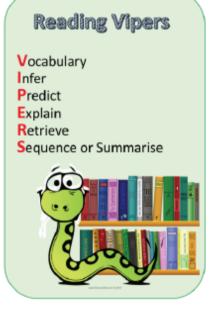This free pack is aimed at those children working at the expected reading level for a child in Y3 in England. P4 in Scotland and Ireland. (Ages 7-8)
The texts have a Lexile level range between 560L and 760L.

What do the letters mean?

The questions in the comprehensions are not numbered but labelled with a letter from VIPERS. These letters correspond with key reading skills. Many schools use these codes in reading lessons so lots of children will be familiar with them.

If your child is not familiar with the letter codes, then do not worry – it is just highlighting the skill for them.

If you would like to read more about VIPERS then there is an explanation on our blog here: www.literacyshedblog.com/vipers

Reading Vipers

Vocabulary
Infer
Predict
Explain
Retrieve
Sequence or Summarise

Ambush

"Be careful. We don't want them to see any movement in the trees." Robin Hood's voice was hushed but fierce. I'd been serving him faithfully now for nearly a year, and it upset me that he didn't trust me yet. This was my first night hunting with him, and I didn't want to let him down.

I didn't reply. Instead, I squeezed myself up into a smaller ball on the thick bough of the tree. I tried my hardest to stay quiet but I felt a sneeze building up at the back of my nose. It was hard, but I managed to snuffle it out with my thick, woollen sleeve. I heard my master sigh under his breath.

"Have we had any word from John yet?" I asked after a long silence. Again he sighed.

"Have you seen that big giant of a man come running down the road?" he asked with strained patience. I shook my head.

The night passed slowly. I didn't dare to speak again after that. I was worried it would provoke him further. My fine cloak had been a gift from Robin when I'd swore allegiance to his men. Its thick fibres were certainly keeping the chill air from my bones.

Unable to help myself, I asked, "Have you had luck on this road before?"

"Several times," he answered with a nod. "The main road to London passes by not far from here. There are a lot of dangerous men on that road, so the wealthy travellers normally use these more sheltered roads."

"And that's where we attack them?" I asked with what I thought was enthusiasm.

"We don't attack if we can help it. Little John will give them the option of paying to pass. If they refuse, then we have no choice."

Once more, I was silent. Whilst training in the heart of Sherwood Forest, I'd assumed I'd get to use all of my skills tonight. True, I wasn't very good with a bow, but my swordsmanship was one of the best in my group.

As if out of nowhere, I heard the low rumble of a cart on the track. A piercing whistle came from directly below my branch. I looked down and saw the broad back of Little John. How had somebody of his size managed to sneak so close to me?

"One day, take a minute to watch him move," Robin Hood said as if he'd read my mind.

I didn't have time now to watch him, he was striding out into the middle of the road just in time for the cart to pull up.

"What the devil are you doing?" the driver was clearly in no mood to surrender to our demands.

"This is a toll path." Little John's voice was calm. It didn't need to be big or loud, his size did that for him.

"Over my dead body!" The driver banged on the roof of the carriage, and several armed guards stepped out.

"That can be arranged," said Robin as he dropped from the tree and drew his sword. "Take them as a prisoner if you can. They're worth more that way!"

VOCABULARY FOCUS

1. What word or phrase tells you that Robin Hood's voice was quiet?

2. Find one word in the text which means "in a loyal way".

3. What does the phrase "I didn't dare" say about the author?

4. What does the phrase "strained patience" tell you about Robin?

5. Write a definition for "piercing". You may use a dictionary if you are stuck.

VIPERS QUESTIONS

I Why did Robin sigh under his breath?

R What type of traveller are they expecting to use the road?

S What happened immediately after the driver refused to pay?

E In the paragraph that starts "The night passed…", what effect does the use of short sentences have?

R Where had the author trained?