



**A2Z Learning: 11+**  
**English**  
**Reading Comprehension**  
**My Cousin Rachel (F)**

These comprehensions will help you to experience the type of texts that are usually used in 11+ exams or independent school entrance exams.

The number of marks next to each question will give you an idea about how detailed your answer will need to be. Therefore, if a question is worth 3 marks then the answer will need at least 3 separate points/pieces of evidence from the text.

School selection tests are usually timed, so working within a time limit is something you will need to practise.

A reading comprehension of this length (just over a page) will be expected to be completed in 25-30 minutes.

Make sure you **read the questions carefully**. If it asks you to write a sentence make sure you do!

Good luck! You can do this!



## My Cousin Rachel by Daphne du Maurier

Read the following poem then answer all the questions that follow.

1 I never had any desire to be anywhere but at home. Apart from my schooldays at  
2 Harrow, and afterwards at Oxford, I had never lived in any place but this house, where I had  
3 come at the age of eighteen months after my young parents had died. Ambrose, in his odd  
4 generous way, was seized with pity for his small orphaned cousin, and so brought me up  
5 himself, as he might have done a puppy, or a kitten, or any frail and lonely thing needing  
6 protection.

7 Ours was a strange sort of household from the first. He sent my nurse packing when  
8 I was three years old, because she smacked my bottom with a hair-brush. I don't remember  
9 the incident, but he told me later.

10 "It made me so awfully angry," he said to me, "to see that woman belabouring your  
11 small person with her great coarse hands for some trifling misdemeanour that she was too  
12 unintelligent to comprehend. After that, I corrected you myself."

13 I never had reason to regret it. There could not be a man more fair, more just, more  
14 lovable, more full of understanding. He taught me my alphabet in the simplest possible way  
15 by using the initial letters of every swearword – twenty-six of them took some finding, but he  
16 achieved it somehow, and warned me at the same time not to use the words in company.  
17 Although invariably courteous he was shy of women, and mistrustful too, saying they made  
18 mischief in a household. Therefore he would only employ menservants, and the tribe was  
19 controlled by old Seecombe.

20 I can see Ambrose now, half hunched, half sprawling in his chair – I caught the habit  
21 from him – shaking with silent laughter. I came to appreciate his qualities all the more when  
22 I went to Harrow. The holidays passed all too swiftly, as I compared his manners and his  
23 company with the urchins who were my schoolmates, and the masters, stiff and sober,  
24 lacking to my mind all humanity.



## My Cousin Rachel by Daphne du Maurier

Read the following poem then answer all the questions that follow.

25 "Never mind," he used to say, patting my shoulder before I started off, white-faced, a  
26 trifle tearful, to catch the coach to London. "It's just a training process, like breaking in a  
27 horse; we have to face it. Once your schooldays are behind you, and they will be before  
28 you've even counted, I'll bring you home here for good, and train you myself."

29 "Train me for what?" I asked.

30 "Well, you're my heir, aren't you? That's a profession in itself."

31 And away I would go, driven by Wellington the coachman to pick up the London  
32 coach at Bodmin, turning for a last glimpse of Ambrose as he stood leaning on his stick with  
33 the dogs beside him, his eyes wrinkled in sure and certain understanding, his thick curling  
34 hair already turning grey; and as he whistled to the dogs and went back into the house I  
35 would swallow the lump in my throat and feel the carriage wheels bear me away, inevitably  
36 and fatally, along the crunching gravel drive across the park and through the white gate, past  
37 the lodge, to school and separation.

1. How are Philip and Ambrose related to each other?

A. Ambrose is Philip's father.

B. Ambrose is Philip's cousin.

C. Ambrose is Philip's brother.

(1)

2. What event caused Philip to come and live with Ambrose when he was eighteen months old?

(1)

3. What did Ambrose do when he caught Philip's nurse smacking him with a hairbrush? (Choose **two** answers)

A. He laughed.

B. He got angry.

C. He smacked her with a hairbrush himself.

D. He fired her.

E. He shouted at her.

(2)

4. How did Ambrose educate Philip?

A. He made Philip spend a lot of time staring at books.

B. He made Seecombe teach Philip.

C. He found 26 swear words to match each letter of the alphabet.

5. Write two sentences that explain Ambrose's attitude towards women. You must write in complete sentences.

i)

ii)

(4)

6. Read lines 20-21. How does Philip describe Ambrose as he sits in the chair? (Choose **three** answers).

- |    |                                   |     |
|----|-----------------------------------|-----|
| A. | He sits in a polite, upright way. |     |
| B. | He sits in a messy way.           |     |
| C. | He laughs a lot.                  |     |
| D. | He laughs only a little bit.      |     |
| E. | His laugh is very noisy.          |     |
| F. | His laugh is very quiet.          | (3) |

7. Select from the passage **ONE WORD** which most closely corresponds to the word or phrase on the left. Guidance is given on the right for the lines you need to be looking at. (10)

A.	Peculiar	lines 3-6
B.	Delicate	lines 3-6
C.	Unimportant	lines 10-12
D.	Understand	lines 10-12
E.	First	lines 14-16
F.	Polite	lines 17-18
G.	Quickly	lines 22-24
H.	Noisy children	lines 22-24
I.	Career	lines 29-31
J.	Unavoidably	lines 34-37

8. How does Ambrose try to comfort Philip when he has to go away for school? Write two ways Ambrose tries to comfort Philip in complete sentences:

i)

ii)

(4)



9. What is the name of the coachman who would drive Philip off to catch the London coach?

(1)

10. Pick four phrases or words between lines 25-37 which show how much Philip dislikes school.

i)

ii)

iii)

iv)

(4)

11. The passage suggests Ambrose 'is rich'. Write two sentences that give evidence of this.

i)

ii)

(4)

12. Re-write the sentence below so that the punctuation and grammar is correct:

**Ambrose who adopt's Philip is a kind man**

(5)

Total: 32 Marks