

 SCHOLASTIC

No-Sweat Bubble Tests

**Nonfiction Passages With Short Tests to
Get Kids Ready for Standardized Reading Tests**

by the Staff of
Storyworks® magazine

NEW YORK • TORONTO • LONDON • AUCKLAND • SYDNEY **Teaching**
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Cover and interior design by Josué Castilleja

ISBN 0-439-62574-2

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Printed in the U.S.A.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 40 10 09 08 07 06 05 04

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CONTENTS

Introduction	5
E.B. White	6
A Crayon Is Born	8
Kids in the Gold Fields	10
The Real Dracula	12
Thomas Jefferson and the Big Cheese	14
What's a Yankee Doodle?	16
Martin Luther King, Jr.	18
A Star-Spangled Story	20
More Miracles for Helen Keller	22
Star Trek!	24
Arctic Disaster!	26
The Animal Thieves	28
Abraham Lincoln	30
The History of Gum	32
America's Lost Colony	34
Stand Up by Sitting Down	36
Massive Mummy Find!	38
When Wild Animals Become Pets	40
Oceans in Danger	42
Inventing a Game	44
Lunch or Junk?	46
Answers	48

Introduction

“No-Sweat Bubble Test” has always been one of Scholastic *Storyworks* magazine’s most popular features. And why shouldn’t it be? Even before the No Child Left Behind Act was passed in 2002, many teachers and school districts were already relying heavily on standardized tests to assess how much students have learned and what they still need to know.

Standardized tests require students to read both fiction and nonfiction texts. While students usually get lots of practice reading fictional works, many struggle with comprehending nonfiction pieces. Nonfiction has its own set of challenges that fiction doesn’t; for example, readers often have to figure out which information is important and which isn’t. One way to help students navigate nonfiction—and ultimately succeed in tests—is by giving them practice in reading and comprehending nonfiction texts.

To make your job easier, we compiled 21 of *Storyworks*’ best high-interest nonfiction articles and their companion “No-Sweat Bubble Tests” in this one book, ready for you to reproduce and distribute to students. Nonfiction selections range from high-interest historical subjects, such as Roanoke, England’s first colony in America, and life during the California Gold Rush, to kid-pleasing topics, such as cafeteria lunches and the history of bubble gum.

After students read each one-page article, they answer 6 to 8 questions similar to ones they would encounter in standardized tests, complete with fill-in bubbles. Questions assess students’ comprehension and reading skills, such as identifying the main idea, distinguishing between fact and opinion, evaluating the author’s purpose, and drawing conclusions, as well as test students’ vocabulary. In addition, several tests include a “Write It Out!” section that asks students to write a paragraph elaborating on a particular aspect of the article or expressing an opinion about it. (An Answer Key on page 48 will help you quickly grade students’ tests.)

We hope you and your students enjoy reading the nonfiction passages and get the most out of *No-Sweat Bubble Tests*. Enjoy!

E.B. White

The author who spun Charlotte's Web

One day, on a small farm in Maine, a man sat in a barn watching a large gray spider spin a web. The man was E.B. White. E.B.—or Andy, as he was called—thought spiders were spectacular creatures. He thought that one day he might like to write a children's book about a spider.

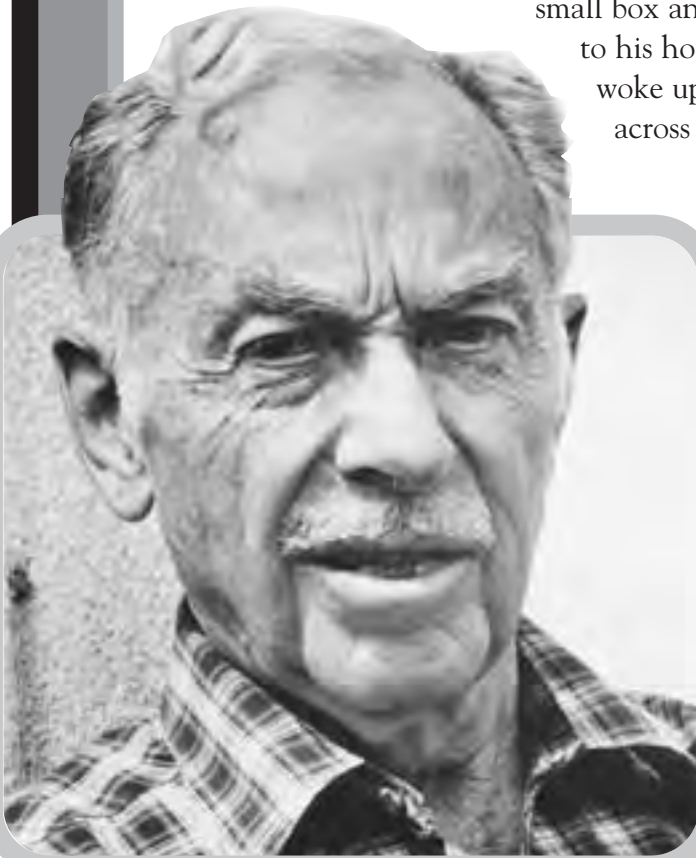
But writing was hard work for Andy. He had written many articles and essays and poems. He had also written one children's book, *Stuart Little*. But Andy could never just rush to turn an idea into an article or book. He told his editor that he needed to let his ideas "ripen."

So for years, Andy continued to think about writing a children's book about a spider. He did some of his best thinking while he meandered around his farm.

Once while he was cleaning his barn, he found a spider's egg sac. Andy wanted to see the eggs hatch. But he was scheduled to leave for a trip to New York City. So he found a small box and carefully placed the egg sac inside. When he got to his hotel, he put the box on the dresser. One morning he woke up, and there were hundreds of baby spiders scurrying across the dresser!

Years later, Andy finally began writing *Charlotte's Web*, the story of a spider named Charlotte and a pig named Wilbur. Andy created most of the book sitting by himself in the tiny boathouse of his farm.

Sometimes he stopped writing and doodled pictures of spiders. Andy always said *Charlotte's Web* was more than just a children's story about animals. It was a timeless story about true friendship.



Name: _____ Date: _____

Directions: Read about E.B. White. Then fill in the circle next to the best answer for each question. Use your answers to solve the riddle below.

1. The main idea of this article is

- ☐ A. E.B. White loved spiders.
- ☐ B. how E.B. White wrote *Charlotte's Web*.
- ☐ C. E.B. White liked living on a farm.
- ☐ D. why E.B. White was called Andy.

2. Andy's farm was located in

- ☐ E. Maine.
- ☐ F. Westchester County.
- ☐ G. New York City.
- ☐ H. New Jersey.

3. When Andy said he wanted his ideas to "ripen" before he wrote a book, he meant

- ☐ I. he wanted them to slowly grow and improve.
- ☐ J. he wanted them to happen quickly.
- ☐ K. he wanted to write them down on fruit-scented paper.
- ☐ L. he wanted to discuss them with his wife.

4. According to the story, Andy brought the spider's eggs to New York City because

- ☐ M. he didn't want spiders living in his farm.
- ☐ N. he was hungry.
- ☐ O. he didn't like to travel alone.
- ☐ P. he wanted to watch the eggs hatch.

5. Which is not a detail from the first paragraph?

- ☐ Q. E.B. White sat in a barn.
- ☐ R. Andy watched a large spider spin a web.
- ☐ S. He wanted to write about a spider.
- ☐ T. Andy wrote *Stuart Little*.

6. Which of these sentences is an opinion?

- ☐ U. Andy wrote many articles and poems.
- ☐ V. Andy traveled to New York City.
- ☐ W. *Charlotte's Web* is the best children's book ever written.
- ☐ X. Spiders lay eggs.

7. According to the article, how did Andy feel about spiders?

- ☐ A. He was afraid of them.
- ☐ B. He thought they were pests.
- ☐ C. He collected them.
- ☐ D. He enjoyed watching them.

8. Andy wrote most of *Charlotte's Web* in

- ☐ E. an office.
- ☐ F. the tiny boathouse in his farm.
- ☐ G. Spanish.
- ☐ H. New York City.

Bonus: Match the number under each line with the questions you just answered. Write the letter of your answer to that question on the line. You will spell out the answer to the riddle below.

What did the duck get when he stepped on a spider?

6 2 1 1 2 7 8 2 2 5

A Crayon Is Born

Nobody takes color more seriously than the makers of crayons

What if you could have jungle green hair and atomic tangerine eyes? Hot magenta pants with a blizzard blue shirt?

You can! When you use crayons, you can color yourself any way you want.

Life wasn't always so colorful, though. A hundred years ago, all crayons were black. They were used in factories and shipyards to label crates and lumber. Kids couldn't use them because they were toxic.

Then a company called Binney & Smith had an idea. They decided to make Crayola crayons for kids and teachers to use in school. They figured out a formula that was safe, and they also decided to add color. The first box of eight Crayola crayons included black, brown, blue, red, purple, orange, yellow, and green. All of the crayons were labeled by hand. The box cost five cents. The crayons were a huge hit!

Today, many companies make crayons, but Crayola is still the biggest. They take crayons very seriously, especially when it comes to color.

For example, Crayola has a team of seven chemists and chemical engineers who do nothing all day but develop new crayon colors. Their laboratory holds the unique, secret formula to every crayon color. They blend different colors to come up with new shades. Once the engineers discover a new color they like, they test it on hundreds of kids and parents to make sure it's really useful. Only then is a crayon ready for the box.

Then comes the hard part—figuring out what to name a new color. In 1993, Crayola introduced 16 new colors for its “Big Box” of 96 crayons. More than two million kids and adults wrote in with color name suggestions. Some winners were *tickle me pink* (bright pink), *timber wolf* (gray), *purple mountains majesty* (purple), *tropical rainforest* (bright green), *granny smith apple* (light green), and *mauve* (light pink).

Over the years, Crayola has changed some of its color names. In 1962 Crayola changed the name of its crayon color “flesh” to “peach.” They recognized that not everyone's flesh is the same color. Despite all the work Crayola puts into developing new colors, kids' tastes haven't changed much. Around the globe, kids still say that red and blue are their favorite crayon colors. What are your favorites?



Name: _____ Date: _____

Directions: Read “A Crayon Is Born.” Then fill in the circle next to the best answer for each question. Use your answers to solve the riddle below.

1. This article is mainly about
 - ☐ A. the people who name crayons.
 - ☐ B. how many crayons there are.
 - ☐ C. people who have green hair.
 - ☐ D. the making and naming of crayons.
2. In the third paragraph, what does the word *toxic* mean?
 - ☐ E. too big
 - ☐ F. black
 - ☐ G. broken
 - ☐ H. poisonous
3. Crayola has changed the name of its crayon color “flesh” to “peach” because
 - ☐ I. not enough people were using “flesh.”
 - ☐ J. not everyone’s skin is the same shade.
 - ☐ K. a lot of people like peaches.
 - ☐ L. every year, they change the names of all of the colors.
4. What do engineers do when they discover a new color they like?
 - ☐ M. They throw away all the other colors.
 - ☐ N. They test it on kids and parents.
 - ☐ O. They draw pictures with it.
 - ☐ P. They go out to lunch.
5. Which of the following is **not** a new Crayola crayon name?
 - ☐ Q. timber wolf
 - ☐ R. hot chocolate
 - ☐ S. tickle me pink
 - ☐ T. tropical rainforest
6. The fourth paragraph is about
 - ☐ U. the first Crayola crayons.
 - ☐ V. how many crayon colors there are.
 - ☐ W. changing crayon names.
 - ☐ X. kids and parents.
7. Which of these sentences is an opinion?
 - ☐ A. Red is the best color in the world.
 - ☐ B. Some new crayon names were suggested by kids.
 - ☐ C. A hundred years ago, the only crayons were black.
 - ☐ D. Colors are developed by engineers.
8. “Macaroni and cheese” is a new crayon color. What colors do you think are in it?
 - ☐ E. yellow and orange
 - ☐ F. blue and pink
 - ☐ G. red and purple
 - ☐ H. brown and green

Bonus: Match the number under each line with the questions you just answered. Write the letter of your answer to that question on the line. You will spell out the answer to the riddle below.

What’s the best way to find crayon thieves?

Catch them
 5 8 1 — 2 7 4 1 8 1

Kids in the Gold Fields

Imagine you were off to seek your fortune...

Close your eyes and imagine you can travel back in time. You're in California in 1850, just after the Gold Rush begins. You're still a child, but your life is completely different.

In the diggings, your family may live in a tent, a rough shelter of pine boughs, or a tiny cabin. Your chores begin early in the morning when you haul water from the river, collect wood for the fire, or feed your family's animals before you watch your younger brothers or sisters. There is no school, but you will work hard all day long. Your parents need all the help you can give them.

You might help your father pan for gold, or, if you're a boy, you may take his rifle and hunt for rabbits, quail, or squirrels. Girls might gather berries or edible plants in the forest.

If your mother runs a restaurant out of your family's tent, you may wait on tables or wash dishes. You might sing, dance, or play an instrument to entertain miners—and get paid in gold dust or coins. When the saloons are empty, you can run a wet pin along the cracks in the floorboards to pick up any gold dust spilled by miners the night before.

If you have any free time, you can play games with other kids. Or, if you're adventurous, you might sneak away to a Native American camp. The Pomo and Miwok Indians have lived in this area for generations. Maybe you could learn a few words of their languages, and trade gold dust or coins for deerskin moccasins. You might also learn how these Indians' lives have changed now that miners have taken over the land where the Indians hunt and fish.

Later, you could pay a visit to some miners. Don't be surprised if they fuss over you and tell you stories, make you toys, or teach you to read. Most miners have left their families behind, and they miss their children.

Every once in a while, you might go to a dance nearby. If you're a girl, you'll be very popular. There are very few

women in the diggings, so girls of all ages dance. Watch your bare feet around all those heavy boots!

What do you think? Would you enjoy the danger, excitement, hardship, and the adventure of the California Gold Rush?



Name: _____ Date: _____

Directions: Read “Kids in the Gold Fields.” Then fill in the circle next to the best answer for each question. Use your answers to solve the riddle below.

1. What conclusion can you draw about the Gold Rush from this story?
☐ A. Everyone became very rich.
☐ B. Everyday life was not easy.
☐ C. Most miners brought their families with them.
2. Which of the following sentences is an opinion?
☐ D. Some miners lived in tents.
☐ E. Mining for gold was a waste of time.
☐ F. Kids in the diggings worked hard.
3. From the story, you could guess that the word *edible* means
☐ G. safe to eat.
☐ H. delicious.
☐ I. cool and green.
☐ J. poisonous.
4. Pomo and Miwok are Native American
☐ K. authors.
☐ L. articles of clothing.
☐ M. camps made of bark and wood.
☐ N. tribes.
5. According to this article, what chore might a kid living in the gold fields have had?
☐ O. vacuuming the carpets
☐ P. baby-sitting
☐ Q. mowing the yard
6. How did the miners affect the lives of Native Americans who lived nearby?
☐ R. Miners stole moccasins from them.
☐ S. Miners charged the Native Americans a toll to cross the rivers.
☐ T. Miners stayed on their land.
7. Another good title for this story might be
☐ U. “A Kid’s Guide to the Gold Rush.”
☐ V. “California: Land of Gold and Sun.”
☐ W. “Time Travel Back to the Civil War.”
8. About how many years ago did the Gold Rush begin?
☐ X. 50
☐ Y. 100
☐ Z. 150

Bonus: Match the number under each line with the questions you just answered. Write the letter of your answer to that question on the line. You will spell out the answer to the riddle below.

Where did the young dog sleep in the gold fields?

In a
 5 7 5 6 2 4 6

The Real Dracula

The real-life Dracula wasn't a vampire. But he was a bloodthirsty monster!

Five hundred years ago, in a place called Transylvania, there was a man everyone knew as Dracula. He lived in a huge stone castle in the mountains. There, in the dark rooms, Dracula killed thousands of people. Even after he died, stories of his bloodthirsty ways terrified people in Europe.

But this Dracula wasn't a vampire in a story or movie. He was a real man. He was a prince who ruled part of the area we now know as Romania.

Despite his nasty ways, we probably would have forgotten all about Prince Dracula if it hadn't been for Bram Stoker, an Irish writer. During the late 1800s, Stoker was a newspaper editor, a theater critic, and a fiction writer.

One day, someone told him about the legend of the evil Prince Dracula. Stoker was fascinated. He went to the library and read all he could about the real-life Dracula. He learned about Transylvania. He decided to turn Dracula into a true monster: a vampire.

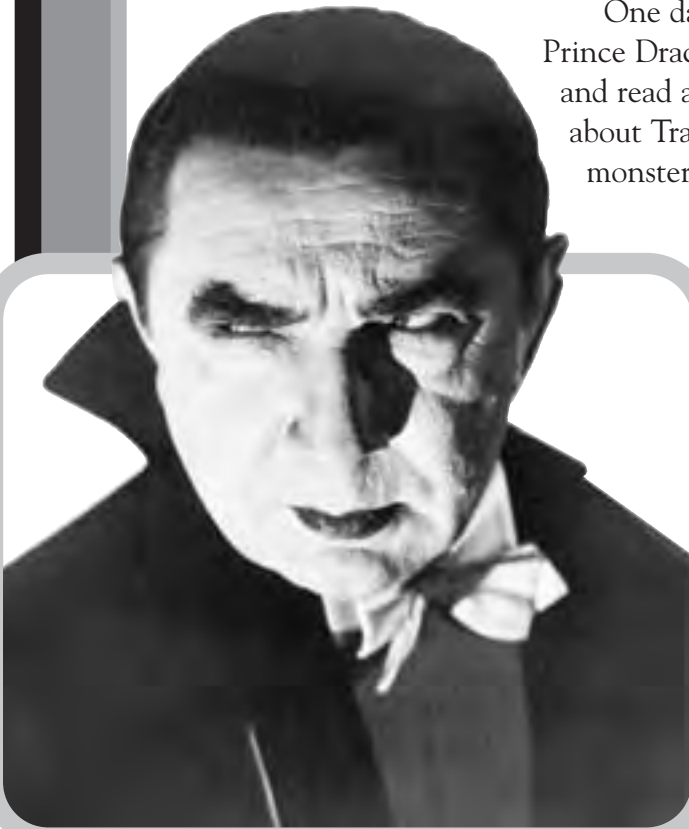
In 1897 he published his masterpiece, *Dracula*. The book is about a British man named Jonathan who goes to Transylvania. There, in a dark stone castle, he meets the strange Count Dracula. As Jonathan soon learns, the count is a vampire who survives by sucking the blood from human victims.

The book was a huge hit. Thanks to Stoker, vampires became the world's most popular monster. Dozens of books, plays, movies, and TV shows have been inspired by Stoker's *Dracula*.

But for Stoker, writing *Dracula* wasn't much fun. While he was writing, he started acting strange. He had always been a gentleman. But suddenly, he started acting mean. His temper grew violent.

Fortunately, Stoker became his sweet old self when he finished the book. "I don't know what happened," he told his family. "While I was writing the book, I seemed to be possessed by an evil spirit."

Maybe it was the spirit of the nasty Prince Dracula!



Name: _____ Date: _____

Directions: Read “The Real Dracula.” Then fill in the circle next to the best answer for each question. Use your answers to solve the riddle below.

1. This article is mostly about
 - ☐ A. living in a castle.
 - ☐ B. life in Transylvania.
 - ☐ C. why Bram Stoker became a vampire.
 - ☐ D. how Bram Stoker based Count Dracula on a real man.
2. Transylvania is in the country that we now know as
 - ☐ E. Great Britain.
 - ☐ F. Romania.
 - ☐ G. Ireland.
 - ☐ H. Draculand.
3. In the article, where did Bram Stoker go to research the real-life Dracula?
 - ☐ I. a castle in Transylvania
 - ☐ J. the movies
 - ☐ K. the Internet
 - ☐ L. the library
4. Bram Stoker was all of the following, except
 - ☐ M. a newspaper editor.
 - ☐ N. a fiction writer.
 - ☐ O. a prince.
 - ☐ P. a theater critic.
5. Which of the following statements is an opinion?
 - ☐ Q. The book *Dracula* was a huge hit.
 - ☐ R. Vampires are cooler than werewolves.
 - ☐ S. Bram Stoker was Irish.
 - ☐ T. People in Europe were terrified of the real Dracula.
6. In the second to last paragraph, what does the word *possessed* mean?
 - ☐ U. made fun of
 - ☐ V. praised
 - ☐ W. controlled
 - ☐ X. owned
7. When Bram Stoker first heard the story of the real Dracula, he was
 - ☐ A. angry.
 - ☐ B. fascinated.
 - ☐ C. terrified.
 - ☐ D. sick to his stomach.
8. Another good title for this story would be
 - ☐ E. “The True Story of Dracula.”
 - ☐ F. “Look Out for Vampires!”
 - ☐ G. “Great Vampire Recipes.”
 - ☐ H. “*Dracula*: The Movie.”

Bonus: Match the number under each line with the questions you just answered. Write the letter of your answer to that question on the line. You will spell out the answer to the riddle below.

What is a vampire’s favorite game?

_____ the _____
2 4 3 3 4 6 7 3 8 8 1 8 5

Thomas Jefferson and the Big Cheese

A true story from American history

Back in 1801, many Americans just loved President Thomas Jefferson. And why wouldn't they? Our third president was an American hero. He wrote the Declaration of Independence. He got the French to sell us the Louisiana Territory, which doubled the size of the United States. He was charming and intelligent. And he wasn't bad looking, if you don't mind a man who wears a white wig.

One person who particularly admired President Jefferson was a man named John Leland. He was the minister of a Baptist church in Cheshire, Massachusetts.

One day, Leland told everyone in town that he wanted to send a wonderful gift to President Jefferson. And he said he had the perfect gift idea: cheese. Not just any cheese. The biggest cheese that anyone had ever seen. A truly stupendous cheese. He asked everyone who loved President Jefferson to donate one day's worth of milk.

The people of Cheshire loved the idea. On the appointed day, they all arrived with pails of milk curds. They mixed up the curds and pressed the cheese in a huge cider press.

By the time the cheese was dried, it weighed more than 1,600 pounds. It was more than four feet in diameter and one foot thick.

Leland and his neighbors hoisted the cheese up onto a sled. They hitched it up to a horse, and off Leland rode to Washington. He made the three-week journey by himself. He must have been quite a sight.

When Leland got to Washington, he borrowed four horses and a wagon and brought his gift straight to the White House.

And how did President Jefferson like the gift? He was thrilled! He had his servants bring it into the East Wing of the White House. He kept it there for more than a year. People came from far and wide to admire this most unusual gift. A poet even wrote about it:

"Some said 'twas Jefferson's intent,
to erect it as a monument."

Finally on July 4, 1802, President Jefferson decided it was time to share. He invited all his friends and fellow politicians to enjoy this most stupendous cheese. Most people agreed it was very tasty.



Name: _____ Date: _____

Directions: Read “Thomas Jefferson and the Big Cheese.” Then fill in the circle next to the best answer for each question. Use your answers to solve the riddle below.

1. This article is mostly about
 - ☐ A. how to make cheese.
 - ☐ B. when an enormous cheese was given to President Jefferson.
 - ☐ C. why Thomas Jefferson was popular.
 - ☐ D. cheesy poetry.
2. When was Thomas Jefferson president of the United States?
 - ☐ E. 1801–1809
 - ☐ F. 1807–1809
 - ☐ G. 1776–1801
3. What happened when the French sold the Americans the Louisiana Territory?
 - ☐ H. The U.S. doubled in size.
 - ☐ I. The French were furious.
 - ☐ J. Americans had to learn French.
 - ☐ K. French fries were invented.
4. Why did John Leland want to give the president a big cheese?
 - ☐ L. Leland had too much cheese at home.
 - ☐ M. Leland admired President Jefferson.
 - ☐ N. Cheese is good for the brain.
5. Which of the following is an opinion?
 - ☐ O. Cheese is the best present to give.
 - ☐ P. Cheese is made from milk curds.
 - ☐ Q. The people of Cheshire helped make the enormous cheese.
 - ☐ R. The cheese John Leland made weighed more than 1,600 pounds.
6. In the fifth paragraph, what does the word *hoisted* mean?
 - ☐ S. threw
 - ☐ T. lifted
 - ☐ U. melted
 - ☐ V. yelled at
7. Which words best describe John Leland?
 - ☐ W. greedy and jealous
 - ☐ X. silly and forgetful
 - ☐ Y. generous and hardworking
 - ☐ Z. charming and intelligent
8. Which of these happens last in the story?
 - ☐ A. Jefferson shares the cheese.
 - ☐ B. Jefferson writes the Declaration of Independence.
 - ☐ C. Leland delivers the cheese.
 - ☐ D. Leland asks the townspeople for milk.

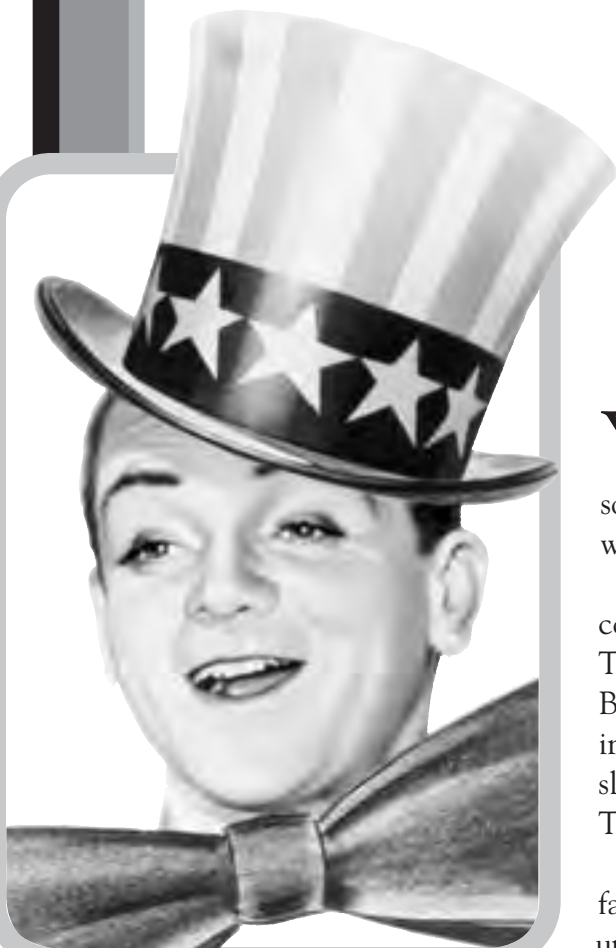
Bonus: Match the number under each line with the questions you just answered. Write the letter of your answer to that question on the line. You will spell out the answer to the riddle below.

Where was the Declaration of Independence signed?

8 6 6 3 2 1 5 6 6 5 4

What's a Yankee Doodle?

America's most famous song started out as a big joke!



*Yankee Doodle went to town,
A-riding on a pony,
Stuck a feather in his cap,
And called it macaroni.
Yankee Doodle, keep it up,
Yankee Doodle dandy.
Mind the music and the step
And with the girls be handy.*

You probably know this famous song. Americans have been singing it for more than 250 years. But where does this song come from? What exactly is a Yankee Doodle? And what's this business about macaroni?

The song was written around 1750 by a British composer—nobody knows his name. But one thing is certain: The composer didn't like Americans very much. Like most British people, he thought that people living across the ocean in the American colonies were a bunch of unsophisticated slobs. The word *Yankee* was a nickname for the colonists. The word *doodle* was another word for "fool." Get the picture?

Now for the macaroni part. Back in colonial days, fashionable men in London wore their hair long and tied up in a bun on top of their heads. They called this style the macaroni. (Aren't you dying to try it yourself?) The song

jokes that Yankees were so uncool that they thought that wearing a feather in a cap was the same as having a fancy macaroni hairdo. How insulting!

During the Revolutionary War, British soldiers tried to infuriate American colonists by singing "Yankee Doodle." But their joke backfired like a broken cannon. The American soldiers thought the song was so funny they made it *their* song. They sang it when they marched. They sang it after they won battles. They sang it any time they felt like it.

After the Americans won the war, "Yankee Doodle" remained a big hit. It's still popular today. And nobody seems to mind that it started out as a big joke!

Name: _____ Date: _____

Directions: Read “What’s a Yankee Doodle?” Then fill in the circle next to the best answer for each question. Use your answers to solve the riddle below.

1. This article is mostly about
 - ☐ **A.** the origins of the song “Yankee Doodle.”
 - ☐ **B.** who won the Revolutionary War.
 - ☐ **C.** macaroni and cheese.
 - ☐ **D.** a British composer.
2. Why didn’t some British people like the American colonists?
 - ☐ **E.** They thought the colonies were too far away.
 - ☐ **F.** They thought Americans were unsophisticated.
 - ☐ **G.** They were jealous of them.
3. In the fourth paragraph, what does the word *infuriate* mean?
 - ☐ **H.** make them angry
 - ☐ **I.** put them to sleep
 - ☐ **J.** hurt them
 - ☐ **K.** make them laugh
4. Which of the following is an opinion?
 - ☐ **L.** “Yankee Doodle” is a popular song.
 - ☐ **M.** Americans won the Revolutionary War.
 - ☐ **N.** Yankee was a nickname for colonists.
 - ☐ **O.** Putting a feather in your hat is uncool.
5. According to the article, macaroni was a
 - ☐ **P.** pony.
 - ☐ **Q.** fool.
 - ☐ **R.** hairdo.
 - ☐ **S.** delicious meal.
6. “But their joke backfired like a broken cannon.” This sentence contains a simile, which is
 - ☐ **T.** a figure of speech that compares two things.
 - ☐ **U.** the main idea in an article.
 - ☐ **V.** an exaggeration.
 - ☐ **W.** a conversation between two people.
7. What conclusion could you draw about the American colonists from this article?
 - ☐ **A.** All of them wore caps with feathers.
 - ☐ **B.** They wished they were like the British.
 - ☐ **C.** They didn’t mind being made fun of.
 - ☐ **D.** They didn’t have their own songs.
8. Another good title for this article would be
 - ☐ **E.** “America’s First Famous Song.”
 - ☐ **F.** “250 Years Ago.”
 - ☐ **G.** “Mind the Music and the Step.”
 - ☐ **H.** “Why the Soldiers Sang.”

Bonus: Match the number under each line with the questions you just answered. Write the letter of your answer to that question on the line. You will spell out the answer to the sentence below.

What flies when it’s on and floats when it’s off?

1 2 8 1 6 3 8 5

Martin Luther King, Jr.

Hero and dad

Can you imagine what it would have been like to have Martin Luther King, Jr., as your father?

In fact, Dr. King was a father. He and his wife Coretta had four children. They had two sons, Martin Luther III and Dexter, and two daughters, Yolanda and Bernice.

When the King children were growing up in Atlanta in the 1950s and 1960s, there was a great deal of discrimination against African Americans. Some white people did not believe that African Americans should be treated the same as whites. They believed, for example, that African Americans should have separate schools and hospitals and swimming pools.

The King children watched as their father fought laws that made this sort of segregation legal. The King kids were among the first African-American children to go to school with white children. They traveled with their parents to meetings where thousands of people got together to protest racism. Every year, their father became more famous.

But there were some terrifying moments. Some people did not want segregation to end. Twice the King family's home was bombed. Both times the family escaped unharmed, but the children knew that their father's peaceful work put him—and them—in danger.

In 1968 Dr. King was assassinated by a man named James Earl Ray. The oldest of the King children, Yolanda, was 13. The youngest, Bernice, was only 5. All of them walked alongside their mother at their father's funeral.

Today, all of Dr. King's children are carrying on their father's work. Yolanda is an actress and filmmaker who teaches children about the cruelty of racism. Martin Luther III is the president of a civil-rights group. Dexter is the president of the King Center, an organization set up in honor of his father. Bernice, like her father, is a minister at a Baptist Church.

In 1963 Dr. King said: "I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character."

Today, those four children are grown up. And they are each working to bring their father's dream closer to reality.



Name: _____ Date: _____

Directions: Read “Martin Luther King, Jr.” Then fill in the circle next to the best answer for each question. Use your answers to finish the sentence below.

1. What is the main idea of paragraph three?

- ☐ A. Some thought that African Americans should go to different schools.
- ☐ B. African Americans were discriminated against in the 1950s and 1960s.
- ☐ C. Dr. King was African American.
- ☐ D. Dr. King had four children.

2. The article is a work of

- ☐ E. nonfiction.
- ☐ F. fiction.
- ☐ G. historical fiction.

3. What do you think the word *segregation* means in paragraph four?

- ☐ H. going to school with white children
- ☐ I. keeping people or groups apart
- ☐ J. going to the hospital

4. The period in history that Dr. King was involved with is called

- ☐ K. the American Revolution.
- ☐ L. the Civil Rights movement.
- ☐ M. the Great Depression.
- ☐ N. the Civil War.

5. Which of the following is false?

- ☐ O. Dr. King wanted blacks and whites to be treated equally.
- ☐ P. Dr. King fought peacefully to end discrimination.
- ☐ Q. Dr. King bombed his own home as a protest.
- ☐ R. Dr. King was assassinated in 1968.

6. Why was the King family threatened?

- ☐ S. because Dr. King was a minister
- ☐ T. because they lived in Atlanta
- ☐ U. because the King children met important people
- ☐ V. because some people didn't want segregation to end

7. From reading this article, what do you know about Dr. King's kids?

- ☐ W. They don't care about Dr. King's work.
- ☐ X. They all still live in Atlanta.
- ☐ Y. They are all involved in continuing their father's work.
- ☐ Z. They all perform in schools.

Bonus: Match the number under each line with the questions you just answered. Write the letter of your answer to that question on the line. You will finish the sentence below.

Martin Luther King, Jr. is famous for the words

“ _____
3 1 2 4 3 2 6 2 ...”

A Star-Spangled Story

The birth of our national anthem

*Oh! Say can you see,
By the dawn's early light...*

How many times have you sung those words? Have you ever wondered what they mean and where they came from?

The person to thank is a man named Francis Scott Key. He was a lawyer and a poet in the years after the Revolutionary War.

Those were exciting times. America was newly independent from Great Britain. We were looking to expand west and to spread our wings as a new nation. But in 1812 we hit a big snag. We went to war with Great Britain.

The War of 1812 was a mess, and by 1814, we were losing badly. In August, the British marched into Washington, D.C., and stormed into the deserted White House, gobbled down a big dinner, and started setting fires. By the time they left, most of the city was in flames, including the White House, the Capitol building, and the Library of Congress.

Meanwhile, Mr. Key was worried about his good friend, Dr. William Beanes. He had been seized by British soldiers and taken prisoner on a British ship. Mr. Key didn't just sit around and wait for news. He went looking for the British fleet. He found them on the Potomac River. Dr. Beanes was there.

Mr. Key convinced the British that his friend had been imprisoned unfairly. They agreed to set him free. But not so fast. The British were about to launch an attack on Baltimore. The two Americans would have to wait on a ship and watch while the British bombed the city.

It was a terrible night. The British fired more than 1,500 bombs, and troops stormed the shore. The sky turned black with smoke. Mr. Key kept his stinging eyes on the enormous American flag hanging over Fort McHenry. As long as that flag was raised, the American troops were surviving.

In the morning, the bombing stopped and the smoke cleared. Our flag was still there! Mr. Key pulled an envelope out of his pocket and jotted down the words that would soon be famous: "Oh! Say, can you see, by the dawn's early light..."

When he returned to Washington, D.C., the words were set to music. Everyone loved the song. And in 1931 "The Star-Spangled Banner" became our national anthem.



Name: _____ Date: _____

Directions: Read “A Star-Spangled Story.” Then fill in the circle next to the best answer for each question. Use your answers to solve the riddle below.

1. What is this article mainly about?

- ☐ A. the origin of our national anthem
- ☐ B. how a lawyer rescued his friend
- ☐ C. why we were at war with Britain
- ☐ D. where the American flag was flying

2. In the third paragraph, the phrase “spread our wings” means

- ☐ E. go to war.
- ☐ F. honor the eagle as our national bird.
- ☐ G. get airplanes for our soldiers.
- ☐ H. learn how to grow and be on our own.

3. What was the “British fleet”?

- ☐ I. British soldiers
- ☐ J. British guns and cannons
- ☐ K. the British flag
- ☐ L. British ships

4. Which of the following is an opinion?

- ☐ M. Francis Scott Key was a great poet.
- ☐ N. The British fired more than 1,500 bombs on Baltimore.
- ☐ O. Francis Scott Key was a lawyer.
- ☐ P. Dr. Beanes was a prisoner.

5. What does the word *jotted* mean?

- ☐ Q. wrote it down slowly and carefully
- ☐ R. wrote it down quickly
- ☐ S. wrote it in Spanish
- ☐ T. wrote it in invisible ink

6. Which words best describe Mr. Key?

- ☐ U. selfish and cowardly
- ☐ V. confused and angry
- ☐ W. loyal and brave
- ☐ X. friendly and frightened

7. “The Star-Spangled Banner” was inspired by which war?

- ☐ A. The Revolutionary War
- ☐ B. The Civil War
- ☐ C. The War of 1812
- ☐ D. The British-American War

8. Another good title for this article would be

- ☐ E. “A Song for Our Nation.”
- ☐ F. “Francis’s Favorite War.”
- ☐ G. “Burning the Capitol.”
- ☐ H. “How to Write an Anthem.”

Bonus: Match the number under each line with the question you just answered. Write the letter of your answer to that question on the line. You will answer the riddle below.

During what time of year do soldiers go to battle?

4 1 5 7 2

More Miracles for Helen Keller

An unexpected hero

Imagine the most famous person you know. Tiger Woods. Britney Spears. Prince William. Now think of this: Not one of them is as famous as Helen Keller was in her day.

Back in the late 1800s, nobody believed that blind or deaf people could lead normal lives. Most were sent away from their homes. They lived in bleak schools that were more like prisons than places to learn and grow. Few people believed that a person who was both blind and deaf could ever learn to communicate. But Annie Sullivan believed she could teach 7-year-old Helen Keller language.

When Annie first met Helen in 1887, Helen was wild and angry. She spoke by grunting and screaming. Nobody, not even Helen's parents, believed Annie would succeed. And when she did succeed, news of this miracle spread far.

Helen often said that she had spent her early childhood in a "dungeon of silence" and loneliness. Freed from this dungeon by Annie, Helen blossomed. By the age of 10, Helen was able to write and read Braille—an alphabet system based on raised dots that people can feel on a page. In addition to English, Helen also learned French and Greek. She even learned to talk clearly enough so that Annie could understand her.

People all over the country wanted to witness Helen's miracle themselves. Writer Mark Twain, inventor Alexander Graham Bell, and President Grover Cleveland were just a few of the people who met with young Helen. When she got older, she went to Radcliffe College, the most selective women's college in the country. Annie went to all of Helen's lectures with her, and translated them into sign language. Helen graduated with honors.

She became an author, writing 13 books and hundreds of articles. She and Annie traveled around the world. She learned to ride a horse and a bike. When she died, just before her 88th birthday, she had become one of America's great heroes.

"Life," Helen once said, "is either a daring adventure or nothing."



Name: _____ Date: _____

Directions: Read “More Miracles for Helen Keller.” Then fill in the circle next to the best answer for each question. Use your answers to answer the question below.

1. What is this article mainly about?

- ☐ A. how to read Braille
- ☐ B. why Helen went deaf and blind
- ☐ C. the life of Helen Keller
- ☐ D. what happened to Annie Sullivan

2. How old was Helen when she met Annie?

- ☐ E. 7
- ☐ F. 5
- ☐ G. 10
- ☐ H. 88

3. How was Helen freed from her “dungeon of silence”?

- ☐ I. Annie taught her to communicate.
- ☐ J. Annie unlocked the door.
- ☐ K. Annie arrived with a fire-breathing dragon.

4. Which of the following is an opinion?

- ☐ L. Deaf people can’t hear.
- ☐ M. Helen wrote books and articles.
- ☐ N. Blind people can’t ride horses.

5. In the fourth paragraph, what does the word *blossomed* mean?

- ☐ O. grew and improved
- ☐ P. sprouted leaves
- ☐ Q. became taller

6. Why did people want to meet Helen?

- ☐ R. They wanted to learn sign language.
- ☐ S. They wanted her to write their college essays.
- ☐ T. They were impressed with her accomplishments.

7. What is Braille?

- ☐ U. a system of writing and reading for blind people
- ☐ V. a way of speaking with your hands
- ☐ W. a piece of hair that has been woven
- ☐ X. a French alphabet

8. Another good title for this article is

- ☐ A. “Helen Learns to Read.”
- ☐ B. “Helen and Mark Twain.”
- ☐ C. “Helen Keller: An American Hero.”
- ☐ D. “Life Is a Daring Adventure.”

Bonus: Match the number under each line with the questions you just answered. Write the letter of your answer to that question on the line. You will answer the question below.

Where did Helen live when she was older?

1 5 4 4 2 8 6 3 1 7 6

Star Trek!

A new space laboratory makes history

Years ago, someone had an idea that was out of this world. What if countries from around the globe could get together and build a gigantic spacecraft? The craft would be an enormous moving laboratory that would orbit the Earth. Teams of astronauts from different countries could live on that craft, working together to conduct important scientific experiments. Imagine what the world could learn about space!

Some people said it couldn't be done. But as you read this, that fantastic idea is becoming a reality. The International Space Station (known as ISS) is currently orbiting the Earth, 220 miles above the ground. It is, in fact, the third-brightest object in the night sky, after the moon and Venus. How did it happen?

The ISS is being constructed like a gigantic Lego® airship. Large pieces, called *modules*, are rocketed into space. Astronauts connect the pieces on risky space walks while moving at speeds of up to 17,500 miles per hour. That's like trying to build a car while it's speeding around a track!

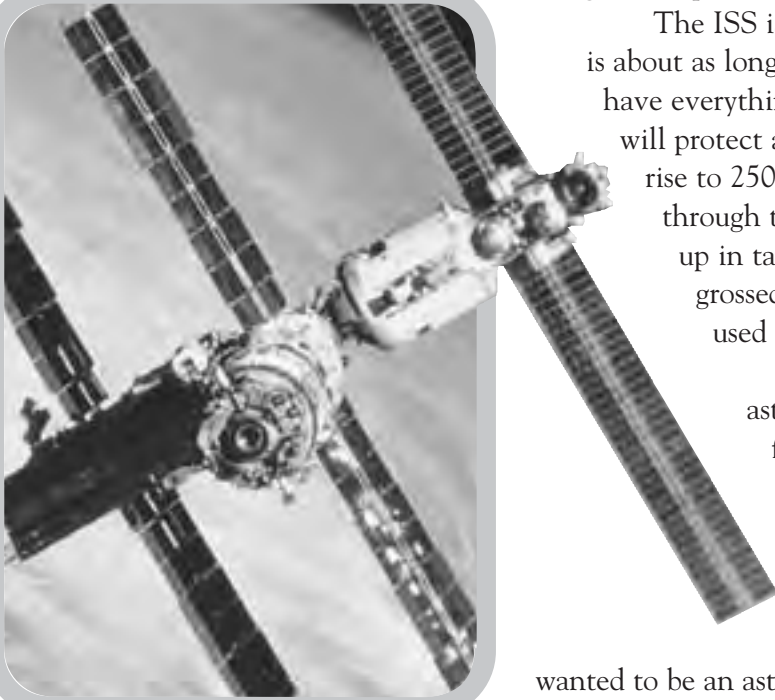
The crews load supplies into the different modules and connect wiring so computer data and electricity can flow between modules.

The ISS isn't the most luxurious place; the living module is about as long as your average classroom. But astronauts will have everything they need to survive in space. The thick walls will protect astronauts from space temperatures, which can rise to 250°F and drop to -250°F. Breathable air is piped through the station from special tanks. Water is brought up in tanks and then recycled through filters. (Don't be grossed out, but even astronaut urine is filtered and used for drinking. It's cleaner than most tap water!)

Certainly life in space has its dangers. Many astronauts worry the most about space debris—junk from old spacecrafts and satellites—and rocks from deep space. If even a *tiny* object hits the station, the force could cause catastrophic damage.

For the men and women who train for years to become astronauts, nothing compares with the excitement of going into space. "I've wanted to be an astronaut since the fourth grade," says Jerry Ross, an American astronaut who "can't wait" to join another ISS mission.

"The risks are a small price for the experience of going into space. And I really want to believe that what we will discover there will be enormously important for mankind."



Name: _____ Date: _____

Directions: Read “Star Trek!” Then fill in the circle next to the best answer for each question. Use your answers to solve the riddle below.

1. What is this article mainly about?

- ☐ A. scientific experiments in space
- ☐ B. why space is dangerous
- ☐ C. the making of the International Space Station
- ☐ D. how to build a Lego® airship

2. Currently, what is the third-brightest object in the night sky?

- ☐ E. the ISS
- ☐ F. Venus
- ☐ G. the moon
- ☐ H. the sun

3. What does it mean when an idea is “out of this world”?

- ☐ I. insane
- ☐ J. hard to understand
- ☐ K. fantastic
- ☐ L. scientific

4. What does the word *debris* mean?

- ☐ M. frozen astronaut food
- ☐ N. life on other planets
- ☐ O. scattered pieces of something that has been broken or destroyed

5. Which of the following statements is false?

- ☐ P. Different countries are working together to build the International Space Station.
- ☐ Q. The ISS orbits the Earth 220 miles above the ground.
- ☐ R. Building the ISS is as easy as building a Lego® airship.
- ☐ S. A tiny space rock can damage the ISS.

6. Why does Jerry Ross want to go back into space?

- ☐ T. He thinks important discoveries will be made.
- ☐ U. He wants to learn Russian.
- ☐ V. He likes a certain restaurant on Mars.
- ☐ W. He wants to leave his footprints on the moon.

7. Another good title for this article would be

- ☐ A. “The Space Shuttle.”
- ☐ B. “Station in the Sky.”
- ☐ C. “An Adventure to the Moon.”
- ☐ D. “An Astronaut’s Life.”

Bonus: Match the number under each line with the questions you just answered. Write the letter of your answer to that question on the line. You will spell out the answer to the riddle below.

How do you put a baby astronaut to sleep?

You -
 5 4 1 3 2 6

Arctic Disaster!

People who tried to explore the Arctic

Imagine driving a dogsled across dangerous Arctic ice. Cold wind bites at your face. Your fingers are frozen. It's snowing so hard you can barely see the black ears of your dog. The temperature is fifty below zero. You're lost. What do you do?

Modern Arctic explorers can radio for help in emergencies.

Helicopters can swoop in and rescue them. Many early Western explorers went to the Arctic to map it or look for passageways to improve trade. But they were on their own when they became lost or stranded.

The history of polar exploration is full of disasters. One of the first occurred in 1553, when Englishman Sir Hugh Willoughby and his crew died after their boat was blocked by ice. They didn't have the proper clothing or food to survive the winter. Today's explorers can choose from high-tech, waterproof fabrics that protect the skin from damaging cold. Special boots protect toes from frostbite. But early explorers usually wore leather boots. Sometimes their feet got so numb their socks would burn before they felt the heat of a fire!

Food and vitamins were another problem. The freeze-dried foods, nutrition bars, and vitamins of today weren't available. Explorers often suffered from *scurvy*, a painful disease caused by the lack of vitamin C.

The most famous Arctic disaster was the Franklin expedition. In 1845 Sir John Franklin set out from England with two of the best ships available. When Franklin vanished, at least 40 search parties were sent out. Eventually the remains of the party were found. Some of the men had died from cold or starvation. Scientists now believe some of the men were poisoned from eating tins of food that weren't prepared properly.

The thick pack ice of the Arctic also caused serious problems for early expeditions. Many explorers had to continue by foot when their boats were crushed by ice. Today, boats are equipped with thick steel hulls to cut through ice. Modern technology can also locate dangerous icebergs. And, now that the area has been mapped, there's less danger of getting lost.

Robert E. Peary and Matthew Henson, who discovered the North Pole in 1909, were two of the most successful Arctic explorers. Their secret? They spent years living with and learning from the native people, the Inuit. Peary and Henson traveled on sleds like the Inuit, wore the same fur boots and parkas, slept in igloos, and learned to hunt and eat the same foods. Their respect for the Inuit way of life helped save their lives.



Robert E. Peary



Matthew Henson

Name: _____ Date: _____

Directions: Read “Arctic Disaster!” Then fill in the circle next to the best answer for each question. Use your answers to solve the riddle below.

1. What is this article mainly about?
 - ☐ A. what to wear and eat in the Arctic
 - ☐ B. ships used for Arctic exploration
 - ☐ C. who discovered the North Pole
 - ☐ D. the history of polar exploration
2. When were Sir Hugh Willoughby and his crew stranded in the Arctic?
 - ☐ E. 1999
 - ☐ F. 1845
 - ☐ G. 1909
 - ☐ H. 1553
3. In paragraph two, what does the word *stranded* mean?
 - ☐ I. not sitting
 - ☐ J. drowned
 - ☐ K. needed supplies
 - ☐ L. left somewhere without a way of getting out
4. Why couldn't Willoughby's and Franklin's crews be saved?
 - ☐ M. They didn't wear the right shoes.
 - ☐ N. They were too cold to call for help.
 - ☐ O. Airplanes and radios had not been invented yet.
 - ☐ P. They were far from home.
5. Which of the following did Peary and Henson **not** learn from the Inuit?
 - ☐ Q. how to hunt for food
 - ☐ R. how to avoid dangerous icebergs
 - ☐ S. how to travel on sleds
 - ☐ T. what kind of fur boots to wear
6. What does *polar exploration* mean?
 - ☐ U. exploring the people of Poland
 - ☐ V. traveling through ice
 - ☐ W. exploring the North and South Poles
 - ☐ X. searching for big, white bears
7. What three kinds of transportation are mentioned in the article?
 - ☐ A. canoes, boats, airplanes
 - ☐ B. dogsleds, skis, airplanes
 - ☐ C. dogsleds, ships, helicopters
 - ☐ D. snowmobiles, boats, canoes
8. Another good title for this article is
 - ☐ E. “Early Arctic Exploration.”
 - ☐ F. “Modern Technology Helps Ships.”
 - ☐ G. “Discovering the North Pole.”
 - ☐ H. “No Telephones in the Arctic.”

Bonus: Match the number under each line with the questions you just answered. Write the letter of your answer to that question on the line. You will spell out the answer to the riddle below.

What is the difference between the North Pole and the South Pole?

The
 6 2 4 3 8 6 4 5 3 1

The Animal Thieves

Selling illegal pets is big business!

His name is Anson Wong, and he was one of the world's most dangerous thieves. He didn't rob banks or steal jewels. He stole animals from the wild—endangered and deadly animals. His specialty was the Komodo dragon, the world's largest land lizard. Wong earned millions of dollars selling his stolen animals to collectors around the world.

Wildlife experts celebrated when Wong was finally caught and put in jail. But animal smuggling remains a huge—and growing—problem around the world. “There are people in the United States and around the world who want to own exotic animals as pets,” says Craig Hoover, an expert who works for the World Wildlife Fund. “As long as there are people willing to pay thousands of dollars for these animals, there will be people like Anson Wong willing to smuggle the animals out of the wild.”

Dozens of different bird and reptile species are the victims of this illegal business. Endangered breeds of parrots, rare giant lizards and tortoises, and deadly snakes are especially popular with collectors.

Smugglers steal the animals or eggs from native habitats like jungles and rain forests. They then sneak them into countries where they can be sold as pets. Their smuggling methods are often cruel.

“They pack snakes and lizards into suitcases and drug birds before stuffing them into tires or tennis ball cans,” says Hoover. “These people will do anything.” Of course, many animals die during their journeys.

This business has hurt many animal populations. “Thieves will go into a rain forest and steal hundreds of eggs from a single area,” says Hoover. For a species already threatened or endangered, this kind of theft can be devastating.

Animal smuggling endangers humans, as well. Often someone will buy an exotic animal without having any idea how to care for it. Every year, for example, dozens of people in the United States are bitten by deadly snakes that were illegally sold as pets. One Florida man died in 2001 from a cobra bite.

“This is an evil business,” says Don Bruning, a bird specialist who works at the Wildlife Conservation Society in New York City. “It's wonderful that people are interested in unusual animals. But no one should be selling endangered or dangerous animals. And

no matter how much money a person has to spend, they should never be able to buy a priceless part of our natural world.”



Name: _____ Date: _____

Directions: Read “The Animal Thieves.” Then fill in the circle next to the best answer for each question.

1. What is a Komodo dragon?

- ☐ A. a large land lizard
- ☐ B. a fire-breathing monster
- ☐ C. a large flying insect
- ☐ D. an exotic red flower

2. What would probably happen if people stopped buying exotic animals?

- ☐ E. Animal smuggling would stop.
- ☐ F. Animal smuggling would become legal.
- ☐ G. Animal smuggling would become a bigger problem.
- ☐ H. Animal smuggling would not change.

3. You can tell that the author of this article thinks

- ☐ I. parrots make good pets.
- ☐ J. animal smuggling is an exciting job.
- ☐ K. Craig Hoover is a nice man.
- ☐ L. animal smuggling is bad.

4. From the cruel ways they transport animals, you can guess that animal smugglers

- ☐ M. are very wealthy.
- ☐ N. don't really care about the animals' comfort or happiness.
- ☐ O. must not have pets.
- ☐ P. are breaking the law.

5. Which of the following statements is an opinion?

- ☐ Q. Anson Wong committed crimes.
- ☐ R. Komodo dragons are endangered.
- ☐ S. Animal thieves are evil people.
- ☐ T. A Florida man was killed by a snake.

6. What is the main purpose of this article?

- ☐ U. to tell you how to get exotic animals
- ☐ V. to encourage you to keep pets
- ☐ W. to inform you about animal smuggling
- ☐ X. to warn you about poisonous snakes

Write It Out!

How does illegal animal smuggling hurt both people and animals?
Write a paragraph that includes three reasons. For each reason,
write supporting sentences or additional details.

Abraham Lincoln

Our nation's hero wasn't always considered heroic

Abraham Lincoln was one of America's greatest presidents. He led our country through one of the most frightening times in its history, the Civil War, when the North was fighting the South, and it seemed like our country would crack in two.

Today we honor Lincoln as a hero—the simple boy from the Illinois woods who became one of our bravest, wisest leaders. We celebrate his birthday, live in towns named after him, and fill our piggybanks with pennies that feature his famous profile. More books have been written about Abraham Lincoln than about any other American in history.

So you might be surprised to learn that back in 1861, when the Civil War began, most Americans did not consider Lincoln a hero at all. In fact, he was the most hated president America had ever known.



Lincoln was hated in the South because he wanted to free the slaves. Many southern farmers depended on slaves for free labor, and they were furious that Lincoln wanted to take their slaves away. Many southerners felt so strongly that they wanted the southern states to join together and become a separate country altogether!

On the other hand, many in the North thought that Lincoln was a coward for not having freed the slaves already. They didn't care about the southern states' threat to break away. Many blamed Lincoln for the Civil War, which was the bloodiest war America had ever known. More than 600,000 people were killed during that terrible war. Lincoln's heart broke for each one. "Sometimes I think I'm the tireddest man on earth," he said.

Another person might have withered from the pressure and criticism. But Lincoln was tough. He refused to give up the fight to keep our country whole. In 1862, he signed the Emancipation Proclamation, which freed all the slaves in the southern states.

Finally, on April 9, 1864, the South surrendered and the Civil War finally ended. Lincoln said, "I never felt so happy in my life."

Tragically, just five days later, an angry southerner shot and killed Lincoln as he and his wife were watching a play. A great president was lost. But his achievements endure.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Directions: Read about Abraham Lincoln. Then fill in the circle next to the best answer for each question.

1. In the Civil War, who fought against the northern American states?

- ☐ A. slaves
- ☐ B. the southern American states
- ☐ C. England
- ☐ D. Indians

2. This article is mostly about

- ☐ E. great U.S. presidents.
- ☐ F. battles of the Civil War.
- ☐ G. Abraham Lincoln's presidency.
- ☐ H. slavery.

3. Why did Lincoln say he was "the tiredest man on earth"?

- ☐ I. His sadness over the soldiers' deaths made him weary.
- ☐ J. He always stayed up late reading.
- ☐ K. The job of being president was too hard for him.
- ☐ L. He was tired of slavery.

4. How would you describe Lincoln after reading this article?

- ☐ M. evil and pushy
- ☐ N. tall and handsome
- ☐ O. tough but kind
- ☐ P. weak and sickly

5. Which of the following is an opinion?

- ☐ Q. 600,000 died in the Civil War.
- ☐ R. Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation in 1862.
- ☐ S. Abraham Lincoln was a great president.
- ☐ T. In 1861, most people hated Lincoln.

6. During his presidency, most people _____ President Lincoln.

- ☐ U. loved
- ☐ V. admired
- ☐ W. had no opinion about
- ☐ X. hated

Write It Out!

Do you think Abraham Lincoln was a great president? Why or why not? Write a paragraph that includes three reasons. For each reason, write supporting sentences or additional details.

The History of Gum

Fascinating facts about your favorite treat!

Got the urge to chew? Maybe you should go out to the garage and rip off a nice chunk of car tire. Not your idea of a tasty treat? A nice chunk of chewing gum is probably more like it. But there is a link between car tires and chewing gum, as a quick trip through the halls of gum history will show you.

The history of gum begins thousands of years ago, when prehistoric men and women chewed on lumps of tree *resin* (a sticky brownish substance that oozes from trees). The ancient Greeks chewed on resin, and so did Native Americans. Early settlers to New England loved to chew too. Gum made from spruce tree resin was a popular treat among early Americans.

The first big breakthrough in modern gum technology came in 1869, when a young New Yorker named Thomas Adams began experimenting with *chicle* (resin from sapodilla trees). He thought he could combine chicle with rubber and invent a new material for making tires.

His experiments were disastrous, but then Adams had another idea. If people couldn't drive on his chicle, maybe they could chew on it! Before long, Adams New York No. 1 chicle gum was all the rage.

By the late 1800s, the gum business was booming. A new product called Dentyne came out, promising to help "dental hygiene."

Around 1900, an inventive gum maker coated small pieces of chicle gum with candy and Chiclets were born.

The first bubble gum, called Blibber-Blubber, was invented in 1906, but it never sold. It was so sticky that if it popped on your skin, it was impossible to remove!

It was in 1928 that Walter Diemer accidentally invented Double Bubble, the first successful bubble gum. Diemer was an accountant who liked to experiment with new gum recipes in his spare time. One day, without specifically trying to, he happened to hit upon the perfect bubble gum recipe. He added pink dye because pink was the only color left on the shelf, then carried a five-pound lump of the gum to a local grocery store. It sold out that afternoon.

So, what will "pop" up next in the ever-evolving history of gum? That's something for you to chew on!



Name: _____ Date: _____

Directions: Read “The History of Gum.” Then fill in the circle next to the best answer for each question.

1. This article is mostly about

- ☐ A. how gum is made.
- ☐ B. why chewing gum is better than chewing tires.
- ☐ C. the invention of Chiclets.
- ☐ D. the history of gum.

2. Blibber-Blubber was unsuccessful because

- ☐ E. it was too sticky.
- ☐ F. it tasted bad.
- ☐ G. people thought blowing bubbles was rude.
- ☐ H. the pieces were too big.

3. Chicle is made from the resin of _____ trees.

- ☐ I. spruce
- ☐ J. sapodilla
- ☐ K. maple
- ☐ L. chicle

4. Why did Thomas Adams decide to use his chicle to make gum instead of tires?

- ☐ M. He thought he could make more money from gum than tires.
- ☐ N. There was a shortage of rubber.
- ☐ O. His efforts to invent tires were a failure.
- ☐ P. A fortuneteller advised him to.

5. When did people first chew tree resin?

- ☐ Q. thousands of years ago
- ☐ R. no one knows
- ☐ S. 1869
- ☐ T. 1928

6. Which of the following happened last?

- ☐ U. Thomas Adams invented chicle gum.
- ☐ V. Bubble gum was invented.
- ☐ W. Chiclets were invented.
- ☐ X. Ancient Greeks chewed tree resin.

Write It Out!

Why do you think chewing gum is so popular?
Ask some friends and family members who chew gum why they love to chew it. Then write a paragraph that includes three reasons.
For each reason, write supporting sentences or additional details.

America's Lost Colony

Has the mystery of Roanoke finally been solved?

In 1587, 117 people set sail from England for America. They were the first English colonists, families eager to start fresh lives in a new world. They had been sent by Queen Elizabeth's most trusted advisor, Sir Walter Raleigh. They were headed to the bountiful shores of Chesapeake Bay, near present-day Maryland. Raleigh was hopeful the settlement would be a huge success for the colonists—and for him. A thriving colony would make Raleigh even more important in Queen Elizabeth's court.

But the colonists never reached Chesapeake Bay. For mysterious reasons, the admiral of their fleet of ships sent them ashore one hundred miles south, on a sandy island known as Roanoke. Then the ships sailed away.

The colonists knew they were in trouble the moment they landed on Roanoke. The

year before, a group of English soldiers had built a fort on the island. The soldiers had made enemies of the area's Native American tribes. The colonists weren't safe on Roanoke. Plus, the sandy soil was unsuitable for planting. They would starve without fresh supplies.

Within a week of landing, the colonists' leader, John White, set sail back to England. He promised to return in three months with supplies. But a war between England and Spain made his return impossible for three years. When White finally returned to Roanoke, he was shocked by what he found: nothing. He could not find one trace of the colony. Brokenhearted, White returned to England.

So what happened to the colonists? And why had they been left on Roanoke in the first place? New research suggests that they were actually doomed before they left England. Sir Walter Raleigh had made enemies in Queen Elizabeth's court. These men knew the failure of the colony would help ruin Raleigh's reputation. So they persuaded the admiral of the fleet

to leave the colonists at Roanoke. The colonists, they knew, would be massacred by hostile Native Americans. Raleigh would be destroyed. And nobody would discover the evil plot. Unfortunately for the 117 colonists, the plan worked all too well.



Name: _____ Date: _____

Directions: Read “America’s Lost Colony.” Then fill in the circle next to the best answer for each question.

1. This article is mostly about
 - ☐ A. Queen Elizabeth.
 - ☐ B. America’s first English colony.
 - ☐ C. life in the 16th century.
 - ☐ D. wars between Native Americans and settlers.
2. Which of the following is a fact?
 - ☐ E. Raleigh’s enemies were evil.
 - ☐ F. The story of Roanoke is mysterious.
 - ☐ G. The Native Americans had a right to hate the English colonists.
 - ☐ H. The colonists were originally headed for Chesapeake Bay.
3. Who was Sir Walter Raleigh?
 - ☐ I. an adviser to Queen Elizabeth
 - ☐ J. the leader of the colonists
 - ☐ K. the admiral of the fleet of ships that left the colonists at Roanoke
 - ☐ L. an enemy of Queen Elizabeth’s
4. You can guess that life for the colonists in Roanoke was
 - ☐ M. happy and peaceful.
 - ☐ N. boring and predictable.
 - ☐ O. difficult and frightening.
 - ☐ P. fun and exciting.
5. Why did John White originally leave Roanoke?
 - ☐ Q. He went to get supplies for the colonists.
 - ☐ R. He was scared of the Native Americans.
 - ☐ S. He received orders from Queen Elizabeth.
 - ☐ T. He was ill with scurvy.
6. *Thriving*, as it is used in the first paragraph, means
 - ☐ U. large.
 - ☐ V. failing.
 - ☐ W. royal.
 - ☐ X. successful.

Write It Out!

Briefly explain why some people in England wanted the first American colony to fail. Use a separate sheet of paper to write your answer in a complete paragraph.

Stand Up by Sitting Down

The true story of the Greensboro sit-in

On February 1, 1960, in the town of Greensboro, North Carolina, four African-American college students sat down on high stools at the lunch counter of the local Woolworth's department store. They weren't sitting down for a cup of coffee or a slice of pie. They were sitting down to change the world, or, at least, a part of it.

Throughout the South, prejudice against African Americans was common. The Woolworth's lunch counter—like many restaurants, hotels, and hospitals—refused to serve African Americans. This humiliating treatment had many African Americans fed up and saying, “No more!” So, Ezell A. Blair, Jr., Franklin McCain, Joseph O'Neil, and David Richmond—the four college students—decided to fight back...without violence.

The four men walked into the Woolworth's with a clear plan of action. They knew the waitress would refuse to serve them. They knew other customers would treat them rudely. Some may even try to hurt them. But no matter what, the men vowed, they would remain peaceful and polite, even to those who behaved hatefully toward them.

They'd been inspired by civil-rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. (1929–1968). Dr. King urged African Americans to challenge prejudice and demand equal treatment. But he did not believe in using violence to get results. King said that love can lead to

understanding, but hate only leads to more hate. African Americans, he said, must do something extremely difficult: fight violence and hate with peace and love.

The four men in Greensboro believed passionately in the teachings of Dr. King. But as they took their seats at the counter, they had to wonder: Would these ideas work?

Indeed they did. By the end of the week, the four were joined by hundreds of other protesters. News of their “sit-in” spread around the country, and soon other groups were protesting at Woolworth's around the country and other segregated restaurants in the South. By July, the lunch counter at Woolworth's was officially open to African Americans. Other

restaurants soon followed. Through their simple act of sitting down, the four men took a bold stand for equality, justice, and peace.



Name: _____ Date: _____

Directions: Read “Stand Up by Sitting Down.” Then fill in the circle next to the best answer for each question.

1. This article is mostly about
 - ☐ A. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
 - ☐ B. Woolworth’s lunch counters.
 - ☐ C. a protest in Greensboro, North Carolina.
 - ☐ D. violence in the South.
2. From this article, you can tell that the four protesters
 - ☐ E. were very hungry.
 - ☐ F. were committed to nonviolence.
 - ☐ G. were wealthy men.
 - ☐ H. had met Dr. King.
3. How did the four men know the waitress would not serve them?
 - ☐ I. Somebody told them.
 - ☐ J. The waitress was rude.
 - ☐ K. Woolworth’s did not serve African Americans at the lunch counter.
 - ☐ L. Dr. King told them.
4. Which of the following is an opinion?
 - ☐ M. The protests took place in 1960.
 - ☐ N. Woolworth’s was an evil place.
 - ☐ O. Dr. King was a civil rights leader.
 - ☐ P. Eventually, the Woolworth’s counter was opened to African Americans.
5. In paragraph 5, what does the word *passionately* mean?
 - ☐ Q. angrily
 - ☐ R. thoughtfully
 - ☐ S. with great emotion
 - ☐ T. with great effort
6. What was the author’s main purpose in writing this story?
 - ☐ U. to encourage you to protest
 - ☐ V. to inform you about an important event in history
 - ☐ W. to share a fun story
 - ☐ X. to persuade you not to eat at Woolworth’s lunch counters

Write It Out!

Why do you think the Greensboro lunch counter sit-in was so successful? Why do you think the protest convinced Woolworth’s to change its rules? Use a separate sheet of paper to write your answer in a complete paragraph.

Massive Mummy Find!

A discovery in Peru will reveal the mysteries of an ancient empire

Five hundred years ago, the greatest nation on earth was led by a people who called themselves “Children of the Sun.” They were the Inca, and at one time, their nation stretched 2,000 miles up and down the western coast of South America. They built splendid cities of stone, created thousands of miles of mountain roads that are still used today, and created spectacular treasures of gold and silver. The Inca empire collapsed in the mid-1500s. But its treasures continue to fascinate scientists eager to understand Inca culture and traditions.

In 2002, *archaeologists* made one of their most amazing discoveries ever. While digging in Peru, they unearthed a massive Inca graveyard. It contained more than 2,000 Inca mummies. This was the biggest stash of mummies ever found from one time period.

“This is one of the most significant finds in the history of Inca archaeology,” says Guillermo Cock, the archaeologist in charge of this project.

Scientists already know much of the history of the Inca people. But many questions have yet to be answered. Were the Inca a healthy people? How did they create such a huge empire? Studying the mummies will help answer these and other questions.

Many of the bodies were found in “mummy bundles,” or large cotton cocoons that held up to seven corpses and weighed as much as 400 pounds. Also inside the cocoons were jewels, silver, and weapons. These objects were offerings believed to comfort the dead in the afterworld.

Scientists found that the bodies in those bundles were remarkably well preserved. “Many still have skin, fingernails, even eyes,” says Brian Bauer, an *anthropologist*, a scientist who studies human culture. “The coast of Peru is one of the driest places on earth, so people buried there can last for thousands of years.”

One thing scientists have already learned is that there may have been an Inca castle nearby. They are guessing this because they found the

bodies of many of the *elite*, or rich and privileged people.

But it will be a long time before they’ve learned all they can from this massive mummy find, says Cock. “We’ve got so much that we will be busy for years sorting it out.”



Name: _____ Date: _____

Directions: Read “Massive Mummy Find!” Then fill in the circle next to the best answer for each question.

1. What is the main idea of this story?

- ☐ A. The mummies were very well preserved.
- ☐ B. Mummy bundles weighed as much as 400 pounds.
- ☐ C. A discovery of mummies will teach scientists about the Inca empire.

2. What is an archaeologist?

- ☐ D. a scientist who studies treasures
- ☐ E. a scientist who studies ruins and artifacts from the past
- ☐ F. a South American Indian person

3. Why were the mummies so well preserved?

- ☐ G. because of how deep they were buried
- ☐ H. because of the dry climate on the coast of Peru
- ☐ I. because they were near a castle

4. Which of the following is an opinion?

- ☐ J. Finding that many mummies was exciting!
- ☐ K. 2,000 mummies is the largest number ever found at one time.
- ☐ L. The graveyard is located in Peru.

5. When did the Inca live?

- ☐ M. more than 1,000 years ago
- ☐ N. 500 years ago
- ☐ O. in the 1600s

6. Why did the author write this story?

- ☐ P. to persuade you to become an archaeologist
- ☐ Q. to inform you about a recent archaeological discovery
- ☐ R. to instruct you on how to make a mummy

Write It Out!

Many people are fascinated by mummies, from the scientists who study them to the filmmakers who create horror movies about them. Why do you think mummies interest so many people? Write a paragraph explaining your ideas. Use this topic sentence to begin: *Mummies fascinate people for many reasons.* Include three reasons. For each reason, write at least two sentences that support your idea or provide detail. Don't forget a concluding sentence!

When Wild Animals Become Pets

Not all cats make *purr*-fect pets

At the age of six weeks, Lilo seemed like the perfect family pet. His family's 9-year-old girl loved to snuggle with the cat and brush his beautiful striped fur. But as Lilo grew up, he didn't like being brushed. One day, as the little girl approached him, Lilo lashed out at her with a swipe of his massive paw. The girl's arm was injured so badly she needed 50 stitches.

It's rare for a family pet to attack its loving owner. But Lilo should never have been anyone's pet. This cute and playful "cat" was actually a tiger, one of at least 15,000 tigers, lions, leopards, cougars, and other big cats currently kept as pets in American homes and backyard zoos.

Owning a pet tiger or lion, experts say, is a dangerous fad in America. "People love these animals and they love the idea of owning something wild and exotic," says Nicole Paquette of the Animal Protection Institute. "They have no idea how hard it is to take care of them."

Tigers like Lilo can grow to weigh 650 pounds. They eat 15 pounds of raw meat per day. Their powerful paws, even when declawed, can crush a human skull. Dozens of people each year are injured or killed by pet tigers and other big cats.

The situation can also be deadly for the big cats themselves. Fully grown cats often end up confined to small cages that are never cleaned because their owners are afraid to get too close. Living in squalid conditions, the cats become sickly and often more aggressive. Many animals die from neglect. Others are sold to ragtag roadside zoos or to ranches where hunters are allowed to shoot and kill them for sport.

Shirley Minshew works for the International Fund for Animal Welfare, an organization that rescues abandoned and abused big cats. She helps place some fortunate cats in *sanctuaries*, private shelters that keep the cats well fed and safe. But as Minshew says, "Most of these sanctuaries are already full." So are big city zoos.

The only solution, experts agree, is for people to stop buying these animals. "Wild animals are exactly that—wild," says Paquette. "Although they can be kept in cages, they are not tamable. They will never be like a dog or a cat. They are wild—and they should be allowed to stay that way."



Name: _____ Date: _____

Directions: Read “When Wild Animals Become Pets.” Then fill in the circle next to the best answer for each question.

1. What is the main idea of this story?

- ☐ A. Keeping big cats as pets is a dangerous trend.
- ☐ B. Tigers are vicious.
- ☐ C. Cubs are cute but grow quickly.
- ☐ D. Tigers are expensive to own.

2. What are sanctuaries?

- ☐ E. private zoos
- ☐ F. animal hospitals
- ☐ G. private shelters for wild animals
- ☐ H. places where big cats are sold

3. From reading the article, you can tell

- ☐ I. Siberian tigers are endangered.
- ☐ J. lions are native to Africa.
- ☐ K. bobcats are tamer than tigers.
- ☐ L. it is possible to buy tiger cubs.

4. Which of the following is an opinion?

- ☐ M. 15,000 big cats are kept as pets.
- ☐ N. Many people are hurt each year by their pet big cats.
- ☐ O. Keeping tigers as pets is wrong.
- ☐ P. Tigers can grow to be 650 pounds.

5. In paragraph five, the word *squalid* means

- ☐ Q. scary.
- ☐ R. dirty.
- ☐ S. broken.
- ☐ T. wet.

6. Why did the author write this story?

- ☐ U. to inform you of the dangers of making wild animals pets
- ☐ V. to tell you about big cats
- ☐ W. to teach you about big cats
- ☐ X. to tell you an entertaining story

Write It Out!

Why do you think people would want to own a tiger or other big cat as a pet? Write a paragraph that includes three reasons. For each reason, write at least two sentences that support your idea or provide details. Don't forget a concluding sentence!

Oceans in Danger

Marine wildlife is disappearing

In 2003 a group of scientists finished a 10-year project to count tuna, cod, swordfish, and other large fish in the world's oceans. They made a shocking discovery: These fish are almost gone. Because of too much fishing, almost 90 percent of the worldwide population of large fish—the ones we usually eat—have disappeared. If we don't act, these animals will totally vanish, and that will affect every animal in the ocean.

No stretch of the ocean is untouched. New fishing technologies like *sonar*, which uses sound waves to detect fish in deep waters, help fishermen find fish all over the globe. Their huge boats, sometimes up to 100 feet long, can travel for days without refueling, withstand giant waves, and capture 100 tons of flounder or shrimp in a single harvest of their nets.

Demand for fish is growing. Almost a billion people around the world get their protein mostly from fish. Doctors praise seafood for being low in fat. But what seems like a healthful choice for humans is causing a disaster in our oceans. "People are consuming too much," says Lance Morgan, Chief Scientist at the Marine Conservation Biology Institute.

A single grilled tuna steak costs more than just one animal's life. When fish like tuna disappear from the ecosystem, the ocean's food chain breaks. Animals such as sharks, which normally feast on tuna, starve. Nets can also catch and kill more than their intended targets. The *bottom trawl*, a huge weighted net that large ships drag across the ocean floor, traps plenty of shrimp. But for every pound of shrimp, it also captures 10 pounds of

unwanted wildlife. Even worse, the trawl scrapes up the ocean floor, destroying natural habitats. Fish farmers hope to solve these problems by growing fish in captivity. Yet farmers must feed their animals other fish—which means killing more animals from the wild.

While the news may be frightening, recovery is possible. World organizations are urging countries to ban overfishing. Groups here in the United States, like the Environmental Protection Agency, have ordered entire fleets of Pacific cod and halibut fishing boats on the West Coast to stop casting nets that also kill rockfish. The Monterey Bay Aquarium publishes a list of responsible seafood choices for anyone hoping to reap health benefits without contributing to environmental destruction.

"If you care about wildlife, first spend time and think about your own values and ethics," says Morgan. Then decide what you're going to eat."



Name: _____ Date: _____

Directions: Read “Oceans in Danger.” Then fill in the circle next to the best answer for each question.

1. What is the main idea of this story?

- ☐ A. Fish are healthful to eat.
- ☐ B. There are a lot of seafood restaurants.
- ☐ C. Bottom trawls are harmful.
- ☐ D. Marine wildlife is in serious danger because of people.

2. Why did the author write this story?

- ☐ E. to encourage you to fish
- ☐ F. to inform you about a problem
- ☐ G. to entertain you
- ☐ H. to tell you about different kinds of seafood

3. Which of the following is an opinion?

- ☐ I. People should stop eating fish.
- ☐ J. Fishing boats can travel farther than they did 50 years ago.
- ☐ K. Scientist claim almost 90 percent of large fish are gone.
- ☐ L. Fish farmers feed their stock other fish.

4. From reading the article, you can tell that

- ☐ M. most of America’s seafood is imported.
- ☐ N. Americans eat more fish than people from other countries.
- ☐ O. tuna is the most popular fish to eat.
- ☐ P. some people believe eating fish is good for you.

5. What does *overfishing* mean?

- ☐ Q. catching fish faster than they reproduce
- ☐ R. fishing with nets
- ☐ S. eating too much fish
- ☐ T. growing fish in captivity

6. What is a bottom trawl?

- ☐ U. a net to catch fish
- ☐ V. a boat
- ☐ W. a fish that is caught in tuna nets
- ☐ X. a tool for measuring fish populations

Write It Out!

Fish may become extinct if we don’t do something. What are some ways you and your family can protect the oceans and marine animals?

Answer this question by writing a paragraph. Include three things you can do. For each possibility, write at least two sentences that provide details. Don’t forget a concluding sentence!

Inventing a Game

How basketball was born

It was the cold winter of 1891, and the adult students at the Springfield YMCA training school in Massachusetts were growing restless. They hated the boring routine of jumping jacks and weight lifting. Not even the teachers thought these activities were fun, but they had run out of ideas. Finally, the school's director called a meeting. "We need a new indoor game," he told the gathering of exhausted instructors. Then he looked at a young teacher named James Naismith. "You," he said with a pointed finger. "Come up with something. You've got two weeks."

For the next 13 days, Naismith experimented with ideas for a brand new game. Nothing worked. Kicked balls shattered gym windows. Tackles left students' bodies bruised and bloody after they crashed to the hard wooden floor. But Naismith wouldn't give up. He had one last, desperate idea.

The next morning he rushed to the gym. He grabbed a soccer ball from the equipment room and, as his mystified students watched, hammered two peach baskets to the walls. He then scribbled 13 rules for playing his new game and tacked them on the gym's bulletin board: Players could not run with the ball. There would be no kicking or tackling. To score a point, a player must toss the ball into the basket.

The new game didn't have a name yet, but it soon would: basketball.

The first game, on December 21, didn't start smoothly. The players ran with the ball and knocked each other down. Nobody wanted to pass. But the thrill of making a basket soon had the men hooked. They loved the new game, and other classes loved to stop and watch. The game spread to other classes. Even the students at a nearby women's school started to play.

Basketball quickly became a sensation. Students took the game home to their local YMCAs. Colleges like Yale and the University of Iowa began playing regular games. By 1936, the sport became an Olympic event. Ten years later, professional basketball began, and the National Basketball Association soon followed. Sports in America—and the world—would never be the same.

The first game in 1891 didn't have backboards, three-point shots, dribbling, or 7-foot players who earn millions of dollars. But, amazingly, most of Naismith's original rules still hold. So the next time you see a basketball game on TV, remember that it all started one morning, more than a hundred years ago.



Name: _____ Date: _____

Directions: Read “Inventing a Game.” Then fill in the circle next to the best answer for each question.

1. This article is mostly about

- ☐ **A.** the original rules of basketball.
- ☐ **B.** the history of basketball.
- ☐ **C.** the invention of basketball.
- ☐ **D.** James Naismith’s life.

2. Why did James Naismith invent basketball?

- ☐ **E.** To make money
- ☐ **F.** To entertain students at the YMCA
- ☐ **G.** He was tired of playing football.
- ☐ **H.** He liked to invent games.

3. In the first sentence, *restless* means

- ☐ **I.** sleepy.
- ☐ **J.** sad.
- ☐ **K.** bored.
- ☐ **L.** athletic.

4. Which of the following is a fact?

- ☐ **M.** Basketball is fun to watch.
- ☐ **N.** Basketball began with 13 rules.
- ☐ **O.** Basketball is a very hard game to play.
- ☐ **P.** Baseball is better than basketball.

5. When did professional basketball begin?

- ☐ **Q.** the 1890s
- ☐ **R.** the 1930s
- ☐ **S.** the 1940s
- ☐ **T.** the 1960s

6. Why did the author write this story?

- ☐ **U.** to persuade you to play basketball
- ☐ **V.** to teach you how to play a sport
- ☐ **W.** to make you laugh
- ☐ **X.** to inform you about a part of basketball history

Write It Out!

Basketball is one of the most popular sports in the world today. Now you know how it started. What are some ways it has changed over the years? Answer this question by writing a paragraph. Include three ideas. For each idea, write at least two sentences that provide supporting details. Don’t forget to write a concluding sentence!

Lunch or Junk?

Health experts get tough on school lunches

It's lunchtime at Hall Memorial School in Connecticut, and 10-year-old Haley is making her way through the food line. Many of her friends are thrilled with the day's lunch selections: pizza and French fries and hot dogs. But Haley feels discouraged. "I use four or five napkins just trying to get the grease off the pizza," she says. "Where are the healthy options?"

Health experts are asking the same question. They say foods high in fat, salt, and sugar should be banned from school lunch programs. This includes some items you might not suspect, like fruit punch, which is loaded with sugar, and macaroni and cheese, which is sky-high in fat and salt. "Children are already consuming too much junk food," says Jen Keller, a dietitian at the Physician's Committee for Responsible Medicine. "It's important to offer them only healthy items in school."

It's not that health experts want to deprive kids of foods they like best. They just want to help kids avoid many of the health problems that come with eating large quantities of unhealthful food. Today, 15 percent of children ages 6 to 11 are obese, or seriously overweight. That's up from just 6.5 percent in the late 1970s. Poor diet and obesity can cause diseases like type-2 diabetes, which can lead to blindness and kidney problems.

As of a few years ago, this disease was so rare in children that it was called "adult onset diabetes." "Many foods that are offered in cafeterias are linked to these problems," Keller says.

Most schools do offer some healthful foods, but experts say that doesn't solve the problem. "Given a choice, most kids are going to choose junk over something healthy," says Pat Thorton, a psychologist who studies obesity in children.

Thorton and other experts agree that schools and parents need to educate kids about making good food choices, both in and out of school. For example, few kids understand that many popular candies, chips, and sodas come in containers that actually contain two or even three servings. And kids need to become skeptical about food advertisements they see on TV and in magazines. "Just because Beyonce sells Pepsi doesn't mean it's a good product for your body," Thorton says.

Of course some kids already seem to know all of this. "The junk food is tempting," says 10-year-old Tim. "But my parents tell me that if I eat healthy now, I'll have strong bones when I get older."



Name: _____ Date: _____

Directions: Read “Lunch or Junk?” Then fill in the circle next to the best answer for each question.

1. This article is mostly about
 - ☐ A. how to cook a healthful meal.
 - ☐ B. greasy pizza.
 - ☐ C. food in school cafeterias.
 - ☐ D. how to cure diseases.
2. In the second to last paragraph, what does the word *skeptical* mean?
 - ☐ E. overweight
 - ☐ F. hungry
 - ☐ G. doubtful
 - ☐ H. healthy
3. Which of the following is a fact?
 - ☐ I. More children are obese today than in the late 1970s.
 - ☐ J. Hot dogs and fries taste good.
 - ☐ K. People should never eat junk food.
 - ☐ L. Soda vending machines should not be allowed in schools.
4. According to the article, who should be responsible for children’s healthy diets?
 - ☐ M. children
 - ☐ N. parents
 - ☐ O. teachers
 - ☐ P. all of the above
5. From reading the article, you can tell that the percentage of overweight children a little over 20 years ago was
 - ☐ Q. 15 percent.
 - ☐ R. 30 percent.
 - ☐ S. 6.5 percent.
 - ☐ T. 10 percent.
6. Why did the author write this story?
 - ☐ U. to discuss his favorite meal
 - ☐ V. to educate you about eating healthy
 - ☐ W. to teach you how to exercise
 - ☐ X. to tell you about type-2 diabetes

Write It Out!

Do you think junk food should be eliminated from school lunches? Why or why not? Answer these questions by writing a paragraph. Include three ideas. For each idea, write at least two sentences that provide supporting details.

Bonus: Expand your paragraph into a five-paragraph essay.

ANSWERS

E.B. White (page 7)

1. B 2. E 3. I 4. P 5. T 6. W 7. D 8. F

Bonus: Webbed feet

A Crayon Is Born (page 9)

1. D 2. H 3. J 4. N 5. R 6. U 7. A 8. E

Bonus: Catch them red-handed!

Kids in the Gold Fields (page 11)

1. B 2. E 3. G 4. N 5. P 6. T 7. U 8. Z

Bonus: In a pup tent

The Real Dracula (page 13)

1. D 2. F 3. L 4. O 5. R 6. W 7. B 8. E

Bonus: Follow the bleeder

Thomas Jefferson and the Big Cheese (page 15)

1. B 2. E 3. H 4. M 5. O 6. T 7. Y 8. A

Bonus: At the bottom

What's a Yankee Doodle? (page 17)

1. A 2. F 3. H 4. O 5. R 6. T 7. C 8. E

Bonus: A feather

Martin Luther King, Jr. (page 19)

1. B 2. E 3. I 4. L 5. Q 6. V 7. Y

Bonus: "I believe..."

A Star-Spangled Story (page 21)

1. A 2. H 3. L 4. M 5. R 6. W 7. C 8. E

Bonus: March

More Miracles for Helen Keller (page 23)

1. C 2. E 3. I 4. N 5. O 6. T 7. U 8. C

Bonus: Connecticut

Star Trek! (page 25)

1. C 2. E 3. K 4. O 5. R 6. T 7. B

Bonus: You rock-et

Arctic Disaster! (page 27)

1. D 2. H 3. L 4. O 5. R 6. W 7. C 8. E

Bonus: The whole world

The Animal Thieves (page 29)

1. A 2. E 3. L 4. N 5. S 6. W

Write It Out! Answers will vary.

Abraham Lincoln (page 31)

1. B 2. G 3. I 4. O 5. S 6. X

Write It Out! Answers will vary.

The History of Gum (page 33)

1. D 2. E 3. J 4. O 5. Q 6. V

Write It Out! Answers will vary.

America's Lost Colony (page 35)

1. B 2. H 3. I 4. O 5. Q 6. X

Write It Out! Answers will vary.

Stand Up by Sitting Down (page 37)

1. C 2. F 3. K 4. N 5. S 6. V

Write It Out! Answers will vary.

Massive Mummy Find! (page 39)

1. C 2. E 3. H 4. J 5. N 6. Q

Write It Out! Answers will vary.

When Wild Animals Become Pets (page 41)

1. A 2. G 3. L 4. O 5. R 6. U

Write It Out! Answers will vary.

Oceans in Danger (page 43)

1. D 2. F 3. I 4. P 5. Q 6. U

Write It Out! Answers will vary.

Inventing a Game (page 45)

1. C 2. F 3. K 4. N 5. S 6. X

Write It Out! Answers will vary.

Lunch or Junk? (page 47)

1. C 2. G 3. I 4. P 5. S 6. V

Write It Out! Answers will vary.