

# **24 Nonfiction Passages for Test Practice**

**Grades 2–3**

**by Michael Priestley**

**S C H O L A S T I C**  
**PROFESSIONAL BOOKS**

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# 24 Nonfiction Passages for Test Practice

Grades 2–3

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# Introduction

Today's students receive information from an ever-increasing number of sources. To manage this overload of information, students must be able to distinguish between what is important and what is not—a key skill in reading nonfiction. They must understand what they read in traditional forms of nonfiction, such as textbooks and news articles, but they must also comprehend newer forms of nonfiction, such as advertisements on Web sites and e-mail on the Internet. Many students can benefit from reading more nonfiction, but finding good examples of nonfiction for instruction at different grade levels can be challenging.

## How to Use This Book

The purpose of this book is to provide interesting, well-written nonfiction selections for students to read. These selections can be used for practice and instruction in reading nonfiction, and they can be used to help prepare students for taking tests that include nonfiction passages.

This book provides 24 grade-appropriate nonfiction texts in a wide variety of genres, from informational articles, letters, and biographies to e-mail announcements and how-to guides. Each text (of one page or less) focuses on a high-interest topic and has:

- a prereading question to help students focus on what they read.
- a set of 2–6 comprehension questions that resemble the kinds of questions students will see on standardized tests.

The questions with these texts are designed to measure critical thinking and comprehension skills, such as summarizing information, drawing conclusions, and evaluating an author's purpose and point of view. These questions will help you assess students' comprehension of the material and will help students practice answering test questions. For different passages, questions include multiple-choice items, short-answer items, and written-response items that require longer answers. (You will find answers to these questions in the Answer Key beginning on page 46.)

## Extending Activities

For some of these richly detailed texts, you may want to have students go beyond answering only the questions that are provided. For example, for any given text you could have students write a summary of the selection in their own words or rewrite the passage from a different point of view. For some pairs of texts, you might have students compare and contrast the two selections. For other texts, you might want to create writing prompts and have students write full-length essays about what they have learned. Students will benefit from reading and analyzing these texts, discussing them in class or in small groups, and writing about them in a variety of ways.

**TEXT 1** Who were Hsing-Hsing and Ling-Ling?

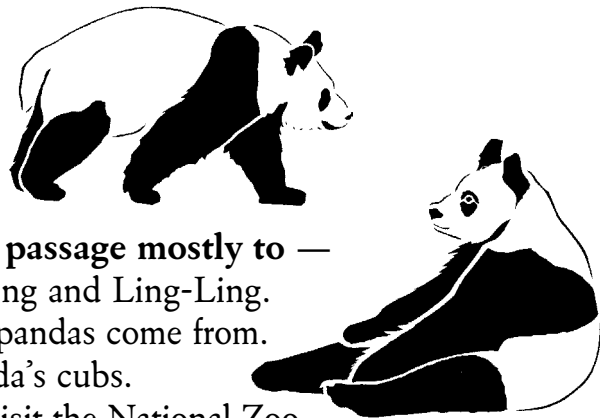
# Panda Pair

In 1972, Americans fell in love with two giant pandas named Hsing-Hsing and Ling-Ling. The pandas came to the United States from China. The National Zoo in Washington, D.C., became the pandas' new home. On their first day there, 20,000 people visited the two pandas. The crowds kept coming year after year.

Hsing-Hsing and Ling-Ling were just cubs when they got to the United States. As the years passed, many hoped the pair would have cubs of their own. Ling-Ling gave birth several times. But none of the babies

lived more than a few days. Each time a cub died, people around the world felt sad.

Both pandas lived to an old age. Ling-Ling was 23 when she died in 1992. Hsing-Hsing died in 1999 at the age of 28. But the pandas were not forgotten. At the National Zoo, the glass walls of their home were covered with letters from children. The letters expressed the children's love for the pandas and told how much they were missed.



- 1. The author wrote this passage mostly to —**
  - (A) tell about Hsing-Hsing and Ling-Ling.
  - (B) explain where giant pandas come from.
  - (C) describe a giant panda's cubs.
  - (D) convince people to visit the National Zoo.
- 2. According to the author, how did people feel about the pandas?**  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 3. If you visited the National Zoo in 2000, what would you have seen at the pandas' home?**  
\_\_\_\_\_

**TEXT 2** *What advice does Vera give to her cousin?*

April 11

Dear Morey,

I just got your letter with the picture of you riding your bike. From the smile on your face, I can tell how much fun you're having. I still remember when you could hardly ride a tricycle. You've come a long way!

Now here's some advice. I'm sure you're a good rider. But you will fall off that bike now and then. So please get yourself a helmet. Wear it every time you ride. A helmet will help protect you from a head injury. Wearing a helmet when you ride a bike is as important as wearing your seat belt when you ride in a car!

No, I'm not trying to be a bossy know-it-all. I just don't want a bad fall to wipe that smile off your face. When you come to visit this summer, bring your bike and your helmet. We'll take some great rides together!

Your cousin,  
Vera



1. **From this letter, what can you tell about the picture of Morey that he sent to Vera?**

(A) He is riding a tricycle.	(C) He is in his driveway.
(B) He is not wearing a helmet.	(D) He is looking scared.
  
2. **Vera's advice shows that she —**

(F) cares a lot about safety.	(H) doesn't like riding bikes.
(G) is often bossy and mean.	(J) is learning to drive a car.
  
3. **What will Morey do with Vera during the summer?**

---



---

**TEXT 3** How did Britney Spears become a star?

# A Star Is Born

Britney Spears is a pop music star on the rise. Her first album, *Baby One More Time*, came out in 1999. It sold 11 million copies! In 2000, Britney's fans snapped up her second album, *Oops! . . . I Did It Again*. They can't get enough of her music.

Britney's success seems sudden, but she's worked hard for it. "She was always performing and belting out these songs," remembers her big brother, Bryan. Britney was just nine when she moved from her home in Kentwood, Louisiana, to New York City. There she attended the Professional Performing Arts School. In her free time, she made commercials and acted in plays. She also performed on the TV talent show *Star Search*, and she won! That



success led Britney to a part on the *Mickey Mouse Club* TV show. The show ended two years later. Britney returned home to Kentwood to attend high school. But before long, Jive Records asked her to make an album. The result was *Baby One More Time*.

What does Britney make of her success? Sure, it's great to win the American Music Award for favorite new artist of the year. Of course, it's fun to hear her songs on the radio and sing for sold-out crowds. And yes, it's wonderful to get fan mail from Britain's Prince William. But Britney still calls herself "a pretty normal girl." She loves eating pizza and shopping at the mall. She wants to go to college someday. Can Britney work these plans into her busy music career? Only time will tell.

- 1. What did Britney do before she became a music star?**

(A) She went to college.                      (C) She performed on television.

(B) She acted in movies.                      (D) She got fan mail from a prince.
- 2. How do you know that Britney Spears is a big success as a singer? Tell two ways that you know.**

---



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**TEXT 4** How do you make peanut butter balls?

# Peanut Butter Balls

If you like peanut butter, you'll love this treat. The steps are easy, and there's nothing to cook. You can make it all by yourself!



Here's what's cooking \_\_\_\_\_

Recipe from the kitchen of \_\_\_\_\_

**What you need:**

- |                                  |                       |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 1/4 cups graham cracker crumbs | 1/2 cup peanut butter |
| 2 tablespoons sugar              | 1/3 cup corn syrup    |
| 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon            | 1 cup powdered sugar  |
| 1/4 teaspoon nutmeg              |                       |

**What you do:**

1. In a bowl, mix together the graham cracker crumbs, sugar, cinnamon, and nutmeg.
2. Add the peanut butter and corn syrup. Stir well.
3. Roll heaping teaspoons of the mixture into balls. Place them on a large plate covered with wax paper. Put the plate in the refrigerator for an hour.
4. Take peanut butter balls out of refrigerator. Put powdered sugar in a small bowl. Roll each ball in the powdered sugar until it is covered.

1. **To make this recipe, you must use —**
  - (A) an electric mixer.
  - (B) an oven.
  - (C) a refrigerator.
  - (D) a can opener.
  
2. **Which ingredient do you use the most of in this recipe?**
  - (F) cinnamon
  - (G) graham cracker crumbs
  - (H) nutmeg
  - (J) corn syrup
  
3. **What is the last step in this recipe?**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



**TEXT 5** *How did a pig become a hero?*

# LULU TO THE RESCUE

**VOLUME X**

Anyplace, USA

**Monday, June 11**

JoAnne Altsman always thought her pet pig LuLu was a good companion. Now she also thinks of LuLu as a hero. Why? When JoAnne suffered a heart attack in 1998, LuLu saved her life.

JoAnne was vacationing in her camper when she fell ill. She yelled for help, but no one heard her cries. LuLu knew that JoAnne was in trouble. She pushed through a dog door and ran to the road. She tried to stop passing cars

but had no luck. LuLu hurried back to the camper three times to see how JoAnne was.

At last LuLu did something drivers were sure to notice. She lay down on the road and stuck her feet in the air. Finally, a car stopped. The driver got out and followed LuLu back to the camper. JoAnne heard the man knocking on the door. “There’s something wrong with your pig!” he yelled.

“There’s something wrong with me!” JoAnne yelled back. “Call 911!”

Before long, help was on its way. Today JoAnne is well, and she’s grateful for her pet pig. Without LuLu, she would have died.



1. **Where was JoAnne when she fell ill?**
  - (A) on vacation
  - (C) in her home
  - (B) at school
  - (D) at work
  
2. **Why did LuLu push her way out of the camper and run to the road?**


---
  
3. **“LuLu was a good companion.” What is a companion?**
  - (F) guard
  - (H) doctor
  - (G) nurse
  - (J) friend
  
4. **What probably happened after the man knocked on the door of the camper? Tell two things that probably happened.**


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**Text 6** *Where and when is the treasure hunt?*

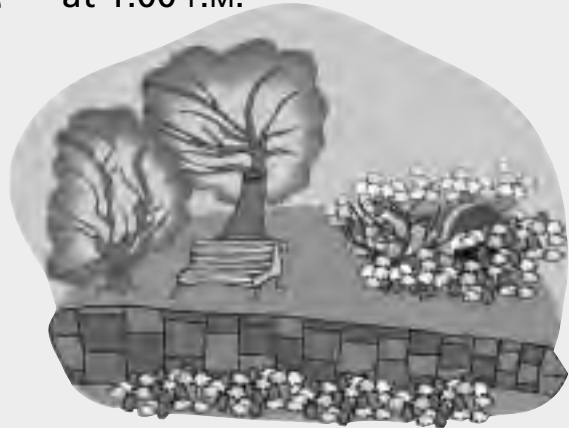
# Treasure Hunt

The city of Whitingham is holding a children's treasure hunt. Children between the ages of seven and twelve may take part. The treasure hunt will take place at Benoit Park on May 31 at 1:00 P.M. Children should meet inside the park's west gate.

Treasure hunters will be given a set of ten clues that lead to the treasure. Children may hunt alone or in teams. The hidden treasure is a box filled with coupons worth \$300 in all. The coupons can be used at these places:

**Aggie's Ice Cream Shop**  
**Bike and Skate World**  
**Feather and Fish Pet Store**  
**Gibbons Bowling Alley**  
**Whitingham Roller Rink**  
**Toy City**

In case of rain, the treasure hunt will take place on June 7 at 1:00 P.M.



- 1. Where will the treasure hunt take place?**  
(A) Whitingham Roller Rink      (C) Gibbons Bowling Alley  
(B) Toy City      (D) Benoit Park
- 2. What is inside the hidden treasure box?**  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 3. What will happen to the treasure hunt if it rains on May 31?**  
\_\_\_\_\_

**TEXT 7** What are the Siegels planning to do?

# Calling All Siegels!



**Yes, it's that time of year again.**

All members of the Siegel family are invited to our family reunion. Last year's reunion was the largest ever. Let's gather even more Siegels together this year!

**When:** July 16–18  
**Where:** Mark and Mary Siegel's house  
14 Oakhaven Circle  
Dayton, Ohio 53201

**Please bring:** Tents, sleeping bags, and family news and photos to share with all.

For directions to our home, call Mark or Mary at 555-7171.

**1. What can you tell about the Siegel family reunions from this invitation?**

- (A) They are usually small.
- (B) They take place every year.
- (C) They are held in the fall.
- (D) They last one day.

**2. In what city and state will the reunion take place?**

\_\_\_\_\_

**3. From reading the invitation, what do you think will happen at the reunion? List two things you think will happen.**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



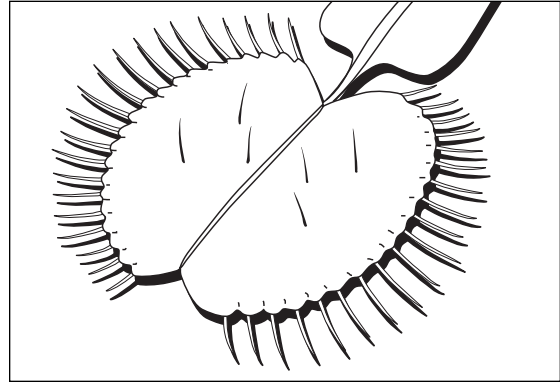
**Text 8** *What is a Venus flytrap?*

# Bye-Bye, Fly

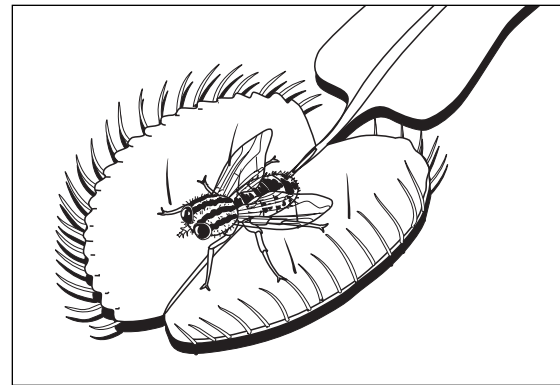
**I**n a marsh somewhere in North Carolina, a hungry fly is looking for a meal. A plant called the Venus flytrap seems like a good bet. Its leaves, which grow in pairs like a clam's shell, shine with a sweet juice. So the fly lands on a leaf. Then it takes a few steps toward the juice.

Snap! The leaves close tight around the fly. It is trapped. Now, instead of enjoying the Venus flytrap's sweet juice, the fly will be eaten by the plant.

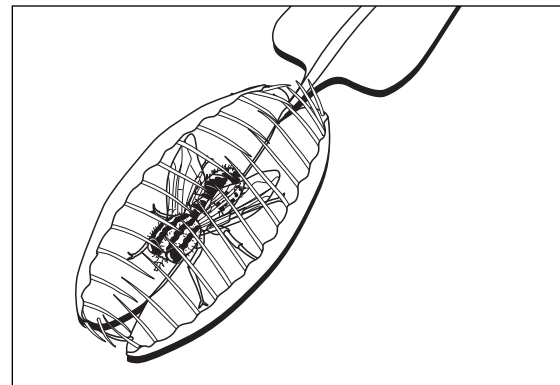
Of course, most plants don't eat insects. They can get all the nutrients they need from the soil. But North Carolina's marshes are missing some important nutrients. Few plants can grow there. The Venus flytrap can, though, because it gets the nutrients it needs from the insects it eats.



The leaves of the Venus flytrap are covered with small hairs.



The Venus flytrap senses the insect when it touches the hairs.



In less than a second, the leaves snap shut. The insect is trapped.



**1. Where does the Venus flytrap grow?**

\_\_\_\_\_



**2. The Venus flytrap attracts insects because it —**

- Ⓐ has leaves that grow in pairs.
- Ⓑ smells like a clam.
- Ⓒ has sweet juice on its leaves.
- Ⓓ has nutrients that insects need.



**3. What causes the Venus flytrap to close its leaves around an insect?**

\_\_\_\_\_

**4. Look at the last picture and read the sentence that goes with it. What will happen next to the insect in this picture?**

\_\_\_\_\_



**5. How is the Venus flytrap different from most plants?**

- Ⓕ It needs nutrients.
- Ⓖ It has shiny leaves.
- Ⓗ It grows in soil.
- Ⓙ It eats insects.



**Text 9** Who is Lucy Blevins?

# A Painter's Story

**M**y name is Lucy Blevins. I'm a very lucky person because I make my living doing what I love—painting beautiful pictures.

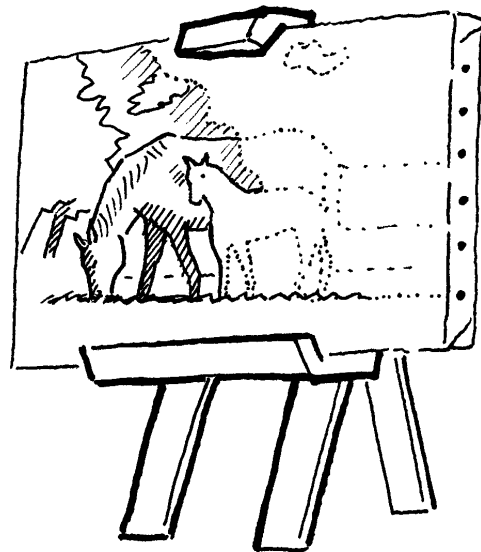
I've loved painting for as long as I can remember. I painted my first masterpiece when I was just four. I had a bedroom with walls the color of the summer sky. One day, when Mom wasn't looking, I gathered up my paint pots and painted a summer scene on one blue wall. I painted myself and my dog Clyde in a meadow filled with daisies. I painted the sun above us, peeking out from behind a fluffy white cloud.

I was just finishing the painting when Mom walked into my room. Her mouth dropped open and she stood absolutely still. "I'm in big trouble," I remember thinking to myself. So I was really surprised when Mom said, "What a beautiful picture, Lucy!" The picture stayed on my bedroom wall and is still there today, nearly 30 years later. I see it every time I go home to visit Mom.

I tell this story because it shows how much Mom supported my love of painting. When I was in

school, she cared as much about what I did in art class as what I did in math or reading or science. She saved all my paintings, and she hung many of them on the walls in our house. She never said, "Painting is a fine hobby, but it's a hard way to make a living." Instead she said, "You are so talented. You'll be a success. Follow your dream."

Today I *am* a success as a painter. I am happy that people love my paintings enough to hang them in their homes. I am proud that some of my paintings hang in museums around the country. Most of all, I am grateful that Mom has always supported me. Much of my success is because of her.



**1. About how old is Lucy Blevins today?**

- Ⓐ 14
- Ⓑ 24
- Ⓒ 34
- Ⓓ 44

**2. Describe Lucy Blevin’s first “masterpiece.” What did she paint?**

---

---

**3. Lucy thought she was going to be in big trouble with her mother because —**

- Ⓕ she had painted on her bedroom wall.
- Ⓖ her painting wasn’t very good.
- Ⓗ she had used her mother’s paints.
- Ⓙ her mother thought painting was a waste of time.

**4. How did Lucy’s mother support her love of painting? Tell two things that she did.**

---

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**5. You can tell that Lucy is a success as a painter because —**

- Ⓐ she has loved painting all her life.
- Ⓑ her bedroom painting is still there.
- Ⓒ she took art classes in school.
- Ⓓ some of her paintings are in museums.

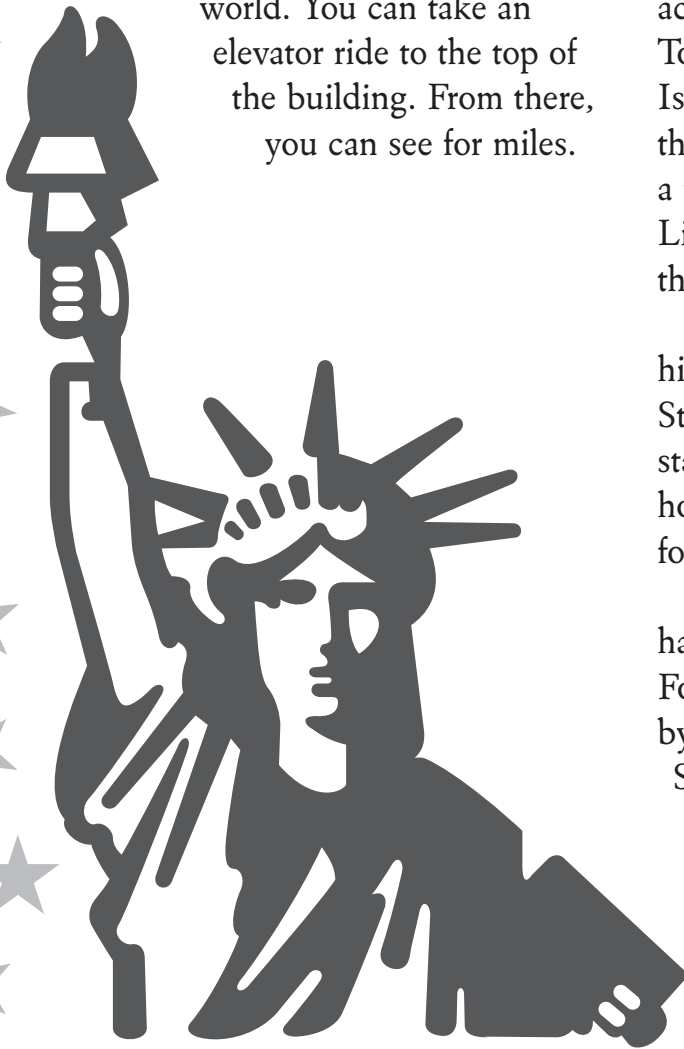


**Text 10** *Where is the Statue of Liberty?*

# The Statue of Liberty

**H**ave you ever been to New York City? There are many exciting things to see. One sight is the famous Brooklyn Bridge.

It was built more than 100 years ago. Another is the Empire State Building. It is one of the tallest buildings in the world. You can take an elevator ride to the top of the building. From there, you can see for miles.



One of the best things to see in New York is the Statue of Liberty. It stands on Liberty Island in New York Harbor.

The best way to see the statue is to go to Battery Park. Stand in Battery Park looking out at the water. The Statue of Liberty is across the harbor in front of you. To the right you will see Ellis Island. Behind you is an old fort that you can explore. You can take a ferry from Battery Park to Liberty Island, if you want to see the statue up close.

The Statue of Liberty is 151 feet high. It was given to the United States by France in 1884. The statue is a woman in a long robe holding a torch, and she stands for freedom.

Since 1886, millions of people have visited the Statue of Liberty. For many people who came here by ship from other countries, the Statue of Liberty was the first thing they saw. It is an important symbol of our nation.



**1. Name three famous things you can see in New York City.**

---

---

**2. Where is the Statue of Liberty?**

- (A) on Ellis Island
- (B) in Battery Park
- (C) on Liberty Island
- (D) in Brooklyn

**3. Where did the Statue of Liberty come from?**

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**4. Suppose you are standing in Battery Park looking out at the water. What can you see in front of you, and what is behind you?**

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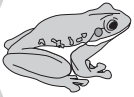
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**Text 11** *Does a flying squirrel really fly?*

# Animals With Parachutes



A skydiver jumps from a plane and begins falling to the ground. The skydiver's body is falling quickly. The speed is deadly. But before long, the skydiver's parachute opens like a huge umbrella. The parachute greatly slows the skydiver's speed. Now the skydiver can drift safely to the ground.

Some animals have built-in parachutes which help them glide through the air. The flying squirrel is a good example. When a flying squirrel wants to get from a high tree branch to a lower one, it leaps into the air with its four legs spread wide

apart. Flaps of skin between its front and back legs act like a parachute to slow the squirrel's fall. The squirrel can control which way it falls by steering with its wide, flat tail. Flying squirrels usually glide about 60 feet from branch to branch. But they can glide as far as 150 feet in one leap!

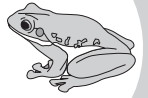
The flying tree frogs of Asia have built-in parachutes, too. The frog's parachutes are the webbed skin between its long toes. When the frog is resting, the skin is folded up. But when the frog leaps, it stretches its toes apart to unfold its parachutes.



**1. What happens when a skydiver releases a parachute?**

---

---



**2. A flying squirrel can control which way it falls by steering with its —**

- (A) feet.
- (B) skin flaps.
- (C) tail.
- (D) head.



**3. Does a flying squirrel really fly? Explain your answer.**

---

---



**4. According to the article, how are flying squirrels and flying tree frogs alike?**

- (F) They both have built-in parachutes.
- (G) They both have webbed skin.
- (H) They both glide about 150 feet.
- (J) They both live in Asia.



**Text 12** What is the message of this ad?

# For All Your Stains, Get Wash-Away!

We all get dirty. We all spill things. But with Wash-Away, there's no need to worry. Wash-Away washes away messes better than any other detergent. But don't take our word for it. Buy Wash-Away today and see for yourself.



**Whoops!**



**Whoops!**

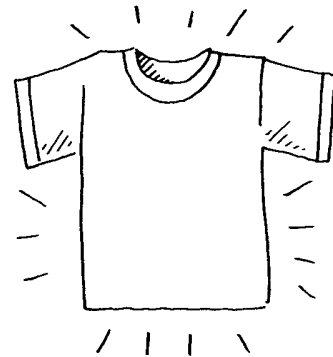


**Whoops!**

Shirt washed  
with another  
brand



Shirt washed  
with  
Wash-Away



Wash all those stains away with

**Wash-Away**



**1. This is an ad for —**

- Ⓐ paint.
- Ⓑ ice cream.
- Ⓒ coffee.
- Ⓓ detergent.

**2. What do the pictures of people in this ad suggest?**

- Ⓕ We all get messy sometimes.
- Ⓖ Some messes can't be cleaned.
- Ⓖ Grown-ups are messier than children.
- Ⓙ People should stop making messes.

**3. According to the ad, why should you buy Wash-Away instead of another detergent?**

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**4. Why are the pictures of the two shirts included in this ad?**

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**5. Suppose you are trying to decide whether Wash-Away is a good buy. What other information do you need to help you decide?**

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**Text 13** *What happened to Christopher Reeve?*

# A Super Man

One day in 1976, a young actor named Christopher Reeve stepped in front of a movie camera. Reeve was wearing blue tights and a blue top with a red and yellow “S” on the front. A long red cape hung from Reeve’s shoulders. The making of *Superman: The Movie* was under way. Christopher Reeve had the starring role. The movie was a huge hit. Millions loved Reeve’s performance as “the Man of Steel.” He played the role three more times in the movies *Superman II*, *Superman III*, and *Superman IV*. Reeve also acted in many other movies and plays. He played all kinds of characters. But in the minds of most fans, Christopher Reeve would always be Superman.

Then one day in 1995, something terrible happened to Reeve. He was riding in a horse show in Virginia. As his horse neared a jump, it suddenly stopped. Reeve was thrown off, and he landed hard on his head. In that split second, he injured his spinal cord. As a result, Reeve was paralyzed. He could no longer move any muscle below his neck. He could not even breathe without the help of a special machine. Doctors had little hope that he would ever get better.

What did Reeve do next? First he spent a few weeks getting used to the idea of being paralyzed. He was scared and very sad. But as the father of three children, Reeve decided he could not feel sorry for himself. Instead, he made up his mind that he would walk again someday.

Today, Reeve is still paralyzed. He uses a wheelchair to get about. But he has gotten a little better. He can breathe on his own for more than an hour at a time. He can move his left shoulder a bit. Reeve is still a long way from ever walking again. But to speed things along for himself and others with spinal cord injuries, Reeve is speaking out. He is asking scientists to work harder to find a cure for these injuries. He is asking the government to give these scientists the money needed for this work. Thanks to Reeve, scientists and the government have joined together to find a cure.

Christopher Reeve should be proud of himself. He really is a super man.

- 1. What did Reeve's Superman costume look like? Describe two or three details.**



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- 2. This article states that Reeve would always be Superman in the minds of most fans. Tell why.**



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- 3. Reeve's accident happened while he was —**

- (A) acting in a play.
- (B) using a special machine.
- (C) riding a horse.
- (D) playing with his children.



- 4. Today, Christopher Reeve is able to —**

- (F) walk.
- (G) use his arms and hands.
- (H) lift his legs.
- (J) breathe by himself for a while.



- 5. What has Reeve asked the government to do?**

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- 6. From reading this article, you can tell that the author —**

- (A) admires Reeve.
- (B) thinks Reeve is foolish.
- (C) doesn't like Reeve's movies.
- (D) thinks Reeve is lucky.



**Text 14** What wish came true for Matthew Nonnemacher?

# PENNIES COUNT

**VOLUME XI**

Anyplace, USA

**Tuesday, June 12**

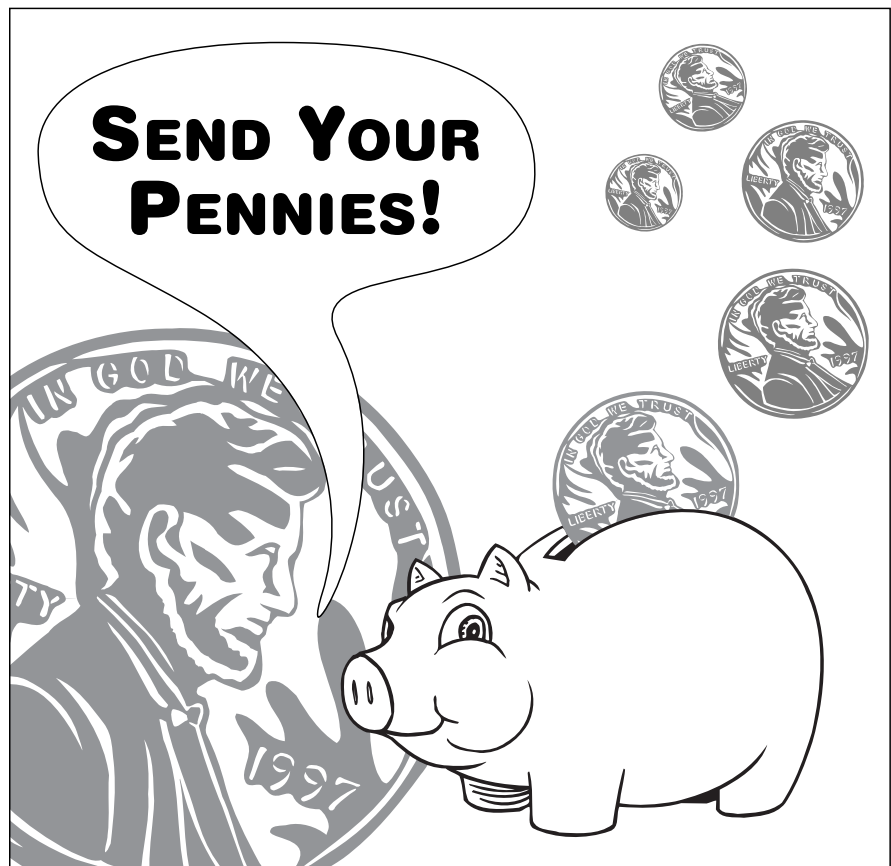
**T**wo years ago, Matthew Nonnemacher's teacher asked her students to think of one wish they wanted to come true. Matthew didn't have to think too hard. He drew a picture of himself giving money to a poor person.

Drawing a picture is easy, of course. But Matthew did much more than that. He decided to start a drive to collect pennies. "I thought nearly everyone has extra pennies," says Matthew. He knew that if lots of people chipped in, the pennies could really add up. His goal was to collect a million pennies. That many pennies would equal \$10,000.

Once he had set his goal, Matthew got busy.

He put penny jars in schools and businesses. He also went on TV to ask people to send their pennies. When the penny drive ended, the counting started. And that was a big job! In all, Matthew collected more than \$18,000 in pennies.

Matthew donated his money to the United Way, a group that gives many kinds of help to people in need. With his own hard work, Matthew made his wish come true in a very big way.





**1. What was Matthew's wish?**

\_\_\_\_\_

**2. How did Matthew collect pennies? Tell two things he did.**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**3. Matthew's goal was to collect a million pennies. Did he reach his goal? Tell how you know.**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**4. The article says that Matthew donated his money to the United Way. What does donated mean?**

- (A) gave
- (B) reported
- (C) lent
- (D) traded

**5. What conclusion can you draw about Matthew from reading this article?**

- (F) He is quiet and shy.
- (G) He spends a lot of money.
- (H) He is an excellent student.
- (J) He cares about others.



**Text 15** What do these directions tell you how to make?

# Party Time

When it's time for a party, many folks bring out confetti and noisemakers. Why not put the two things together? The directions below tell how to make a confetti noisemaker. Follow these easy steps to make one for yourself. You'll be the life of the next party!

## What you need:

- 3–4 sheets of colored paper
- paper punch
- empty plastic soda pop bottle
- cloth ribbon,  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch in width
- scissors
- ruler
- 3 small jingle bells with loops

## What you do:

1. Use the paper punch to punch confetti dots from the sheets of construction paper.
2. Fill the soda pop bottle with the confetti.
3. Cut a 12-inch length of ribbon.
4. String the jingle bells on the ribbon. Tie the ribbon and bells around the neck of the bottle.

Now you're ready for a party. Just give your confetti noisemaker a shake, turning it upside down. The bells will jingle as the confetti falls out.

**1. How is the confetti made?**

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**2. What do you do next after you make the confetti?**

- Ⓐ Cut the ribbon.
- Ⓑ Put the confetti in the bottle.
- Ⓒ String the bells on the ribbon.
- Ⓓ Tie the ribbon and bells around the bottle.

**3. The ruler is used to measure the —**

- Ⓕ ribbon.
- Ⓖ colored paper.
- Ⓗ bells.
- Ⓙ soda pop bottle.

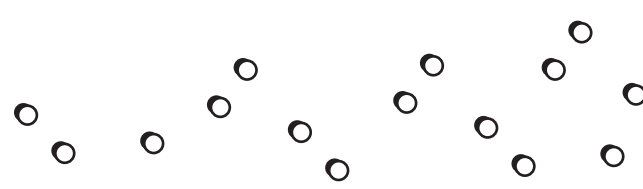
**4. What happens to the confetti when you shake the confetti noisemaker?**

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**5. What kind of noise does the confetti noisemaker make?**

- Ⓐ honking
- Ⓑ tapping
- Ⓒ jingling
- Ⓓ ringing



**Text 16** *When did people first land on the moon?*

# Putting Men on the Moon



Have you ever heard of the “space race”? It sounds like a game, but it was not. The “space race” was a kind of contest between the United States and the Soviet Union. Both countries wanted to be the first to send people into outer space.



Both the Soviet Union and the United States sent rockets into space in the 1950s, but not people. Then in 1961, a man from the Soviet Union became the first person to travel in space. Yuri Gagarin went around Earth in a spaceship. He was in space for 108 minutes as he orbited Earth.



People in the United States were unhappy. They had hoped an American would be first in space. Soon President John F. Kennedy announced that Americans would be the first to land on the moon. He said they would get there by 1970.



Landing on the moon hardly seemed possible at the time. Only one American had ever traveled in space and for only 15 minutes. A trip to the moon and back would



take eight days! But President Kennedy’s promise was kept.

On July 16, 1969, a huge white rocket blasted off from the United States. It was carrying a spacecraft called *Apollo 11*. In the spacecraft were three U.S. astronauts: Neil Armstrong, Michael Collins, and Buzz Aldrin. They had been in training for many months. Now they were heading for the moon.



*Apollo 11* traveled quickly through space. On the fourth day, it was near the moon. Armstrong and Aldrin put on spacesuits. They crawled into the *Eagle*. That was their landing craft. It would leave the command ship and land on the moon.

Collins stayed in the command ship. He orbited the moon while the *Eagle* went in for a landing. Armstrong and Aldrin watched the moon getting closer and closer. Finally Armstrong eased the landing craft down. He used his radio to tell people on Earth, “The *Eagle* has landed.” He and Aldrin stepped out into a strange new world. They were walking on the moon!

1. **Who was the first person to travel into space?**
  - (A) Buzz Aldrin
  - (B) Neil Armstrong
  - (C) Michael Collins
  - (D) Yuri Gagarin
  
2. **The article says, “He orbited Earth.” What does orbited mean?**
  - (F) went to
  - (G) left
  - (H) went around
  - (J) watched

3. **Which men walked on the moon in 1969? Write their names.**

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4. **Which of these things did Neil Armstrong do first?**
  - (A) eased the *Eagle* down on the moon
  - (B) put on a spacesuit
  - (C) used his radio to talk to people on Earth
  - (D) crawled into the *Eagle*

5. **Write a summary of *Apollo 11*'s trip to the moon.**

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**Text 17** *Could you act out a poem?*

# “Poetry Play”

## Was a Great Success

**M**ost of us had no idea what to expect last Monday. Our teachers told us that it was National Poetry Week. The whole school would be seeing a show called “Poetry Play.”

When we got to the auditorium, we saw a big trunk in the middle of the stage. A man was sitting on it. After everyone sat down, the man stood up. He started pulling up the sail on a ship. There was no ship. There was no rope. He didn’t say anything. But we could tell exactly what he was doing. We all got very quiet and watched. Soon he was sailing on the sea. He began speaking. “If I had a ship, I’d sail my ship.” He was reciting “The Island,” a poem by A. A. Milne.

By then we knew that Peter Williams, the man on stage, was going to give us a great performance. Between poems, he often lifted the lid of the trunk and stuck his head inside. When he came out, he had changed into a different character by putting on a funny nose or a hat. First he was a silly guy with big red cheeks and a round nose. Then he turned into a very proper

English gentleman. Next he was a cat. With each change he used a different voice. Williams was truly amazing. He became five different characters and recited more than twenty poems in all.

His performance of “Jabberwocky” by Lewis Carroll was one of the best parts of the show. The poem is filled with made-up words. No one knows exactly what they mean. But when Peter Williams acted out the poem, it became an exciting adventure.

Williams was often very funny. But he was serious, too. He really showed how poems can fit every mood. He told us that we should say poems out loud. We should all try to learn some poems by heart. He left us with these words from a poem by Beatrice Shenk de Regniers: “Keep a poem in your pocket.”

If you visit our school today, you’ll see that Peter Williams’s words came to life. In every room you will hear people reading poems out loud. Ask anyone what his or her favorite poem is. Your friend will probably start reciting it! “Poetry Play” got National Poetry Week off to a wonderful start.

**1. The author’s main purpose in writing this passage was to —**

- Ⓐ tell about a show called “Poetry Play.”
- Ⓑ explain how to write a poem.
- Ⓒ make the reader want to learn poems by heart.
- Ⓓ give information about poetry.

**2. Which sentence tells an opinion?**

- Ⓕ Our teachers told us that it was National Poetry Week.
- Ⓖ We saw a big trunk in the middle of the stage.
- Ⓗ The poem is filled with made-up words.
- Ⓙ “Poetry Play” got National Poetry Week off to a wonderful start.

**3. Which sentence tells a fact?**

- Ⓐ “Poetry Play” was a great success.
- Ⓑ He recited more than twenty poems.
- Ⓒ His performance of “Jabberwocky” was one of the best parts of the show.
- Ⓓ Williams was truly amazing.

**4. Which of these is the title of a poem by A. A. Milne?**

- Ⓕ “Poetry Play”
- Ⓖ “If I had a ship, I’d sail my ship”
- Ⓗ “The Island”
- Ⓙ “Jabberwocky”

**5. What did Peter Williams do to change into a new character? Name two things he did.**

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**6. Does this passage make you want to see “Poetry Play”? Tell why or why not.**

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Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Text 18** Why is Becky upset? Read what she wrote in her diary to find out.

# The New Girl

**October 13**

Dear Diary,

There's a new girl named Sasha in our class. Mrs. Ramirez put Sasha at our table, right next to me. Then Mrs. Ramirez said, "Becky, I know you'll be a big help to Sasha." I smiled at Sasha, and she smiled back. Maybe we'll become friends. It would be so great to have a new friend!

**October 17**

Dear Diary,

I am really upset with Sasha. I'm not sure I want to be her friend. I've been trying hard to be nice, but today she got me in big trouble!

When recess ended this afternoon, Mrs. Ramirez asked me to bring the kickball inside and put it away. When I walked into the classroom, I broke a rule—I bounced the ball indoors. Wouldn't you know it? The ball landed on the counter and knocked over a flower pot. The flowers didn't get hurt, but dirt spilled all over the counter. Since Mrs. Ramirez was still out in the hall, all I had to do was pick up the pot and clean up the dirt. But before I could, Sasha ran and got Mrs. Ramirez. What a tattletale! Now I have to stay inside for recess tomorrow. I am so mad at Sasha!

**October 21**

Dear Diary,

Today our class went to the computer lab. When the lesson was over, Mr. Munn reminded us to turn off the computers and printers. Then we lined up and waited to be dismissed. That's when I noticed that the computer and printer that Sasha had used were still on. I thought about telling Mr. Munn. But instead, I slipped out of line and turned off the machines. When I got back in line, Sasha was smiling at me. She made a silent "thanks" with her mouth.

Maybe Sasha and I can be friends after all.



**1. What happened first?**

- Ⓐ The class went to the computer lab.
- Ⓑ Becky got upset with Sasha.
- Ⓒ Mrs. Ramirez put Sasha at Becky’s table.
- Ⓓ Sasha made a silent “thanks” with her mouth.

**2. Who is Mrs. Ramirez?**

\_\_\_\_\_

**3. In her diary, Becky wrote, “Then we lined up and waited to be dismissed.” What does dismissed mean in this sentence?**

- Ⓕ taught
- Ⓖ surprised
- Ⓖ let go
- Ⓙ looked at

**4. Why did Becky have to stay inside for recess?**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**5. You can guess that Becky is a kind person because she —**

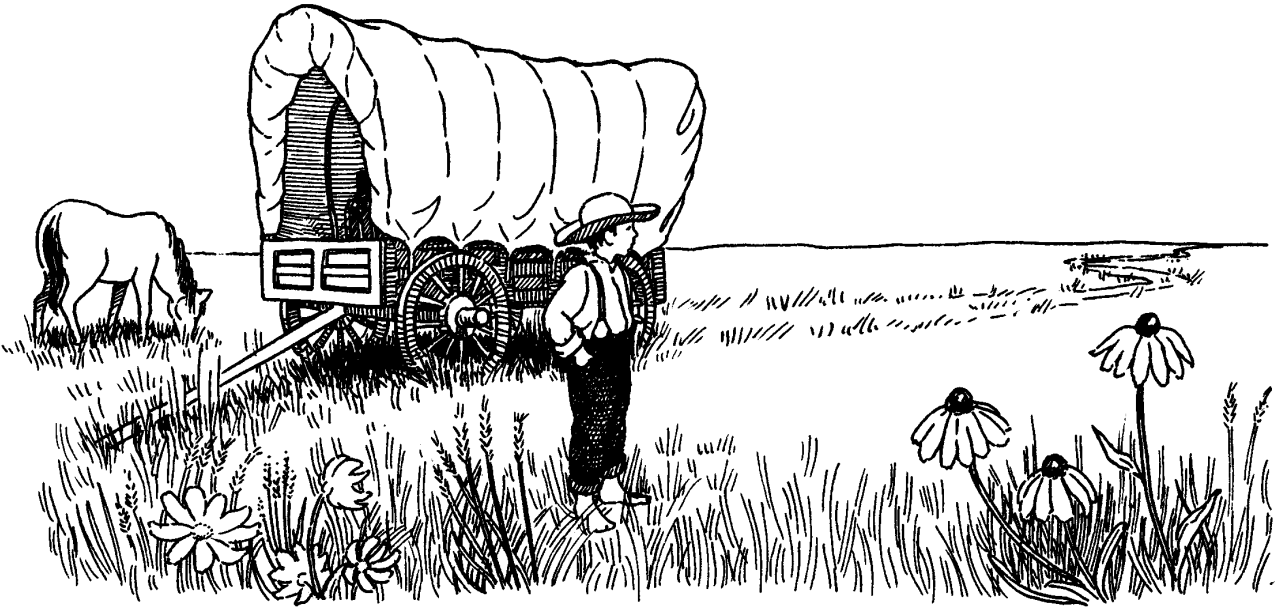
- Ⓐ took the ball inside from recess.
- Ⓑ followed all the school rules.
- Ⓒ didn’t hurt Mrs. Ramirez’s flowers.
- Ⓓ decided not to tell on Sasha.

**6. How does Becky feel about Sasha at the end of this passage? Tell how you know.**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



**Text 19** *Why is Robert homesick?*

July 21, 1871

Dear Henry,

I am writing to you from the home of my Aunt Grace and Uncle Jacob in St. Louis, Missouri. We stopped here for a few days to visit and rest. I am so glad to be sitting on Aunt Grace's front porch swing. I've had quite enough of bouncing along dusty trails in a covered wagon. It's been seven weeks since we left Pennsylvania, but it seems like much more!

Thankfully, our journey is almost over. Papa likes the look of the land near St. Louis. He thinks we can have a good homestead here. And Mama likes the idea of living near Aunt Grace and Uncle Jacob. They have offered to help us build our new home and clear land for our cornfield. Uncle Jacob will also give us a horse and some chickens. It seems we will be off to a good start.

I miss Pennsylvania already. I miss the mountains. I miss fishing at Thunder Pond. But mostly I miss my old friends and neighbors. Please say hello to everyone for me. I will write again soon. Please write back.

Your friend,  
Robert

**1. As Robert wrote this letter, he was probably feeling —**

- Ⓐ lonely.
- Ⓑ excited.
- Ⓒ angry.
- Ⓓ silly.

**2. In Missouri, Robert’s father will probably make a living by —**

- Ⓕ building houses.
- Ⓖ farming.
- Ⓖ running a store.
- Ⓙ fishing.

**3. How will Aunt Grace and Uncle Jacob help Robert and his parents? Tell two ways they will help.**

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**4. What does Robert miss most about Pennsylvania?**

- Ⓐ his old house
- Ⓑ the mountains
- Ⓒ his friends and neighbors
- Ⓓ Thunder Pond

**5. How do you know this letter was written long ago? Tell two ways you know.**

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**TEXT 20** For a class project, Brendan interviewed his grandmother, Dr. Isabel Polk. Read the interview to find out what Brendan learned about his grandmother.

## A Grandmother's Life

**Brendan:** When did you decide to become a doctor?

**Grandma:** I was probably just five or six when I made up my mind.

**Brendan:** Were people surprised by your decision?

**Grandma:** Yes. When I was young, very few doctors were women. Many people told me that the job would just be too difficult for me. They said that if I wanted to help sick people, I could always be a nurse.

**Brendan:** How did that make you feel?

**Grandma:** It made me want to become a doctor even more! Knowing that people doubted me helped me work hard to reach my goal.

**Brendan:** You are a terrific doctor. And Dad says you were the best mom a kid could ever have. Did being a doctor help you be a good mother, too?

**Grandma:** Oh, yes. As a doctor, I learned to listen to my patients. They told me how they felt and helped me figure out what was wrong. Then I could help them. A mother must be a good listener, too. She can't help her children unless she really understands their problems and worries.

**Brendan:** Is being a grandmother a lot like being a mother?

**Grandma:** Not at all! When you come to visit me, you get to stay up late and eat lots of ice cream. I didn't allow your father to do that. Grandmothers get to do a lot of spoiling. Mothers don't.

**1. Many people told Grandma Polk that instead of becoming a doctor, she could be a —**

- Ⓐ teacher.
- Ⓑ mother.
- Ⓒ nurse.
- Ⓓ writer.

**2. How did Grandma feel when people doubted that she could become a doctor?**

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**3. According to Grandma, both a doctor and a mother must be —**

- Ⓕ funny.
- Ⓖ good listeners.
- Ⓗ clever.
- Ⓙ hard workers.

**4. What did Brendan’s father say about Grandma?**

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**5. According to Grandma, what is the difference between mothers and grandmothers?**

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**Text 21** What does the writer want people in Albertsville to do?

## Make Albertsville Shine

After a long and snowy winter, spring has finally come to Albertsville. The leaves are out on the trees, and the grass is green again. All around town, people are sprucing up their homes. They are pulling weeds and planting flower boxes. They are sweeping porches and washing windows. Before long, Albertsville will look as fresh and shiny as a new penny, right?

Not quite. Just take a look at the streets and sidewalks around town. There is litter everywhere: fast food wrappers, soft drink cans, plastic bags, and more. This litter is dirty and ugly. It takes the shine off our lovely town.

But it doesn't have to be this way. In many neighboring towns,

volunteer groups "adopt" a mile of a street or road to keep clean. The groups include schools, churches, and clubs. Volunteers pick up litter, trim bushes, wash sidewalks, and even plant flowers!

Sure, the volunteers work hard, but they also get to enjoy the beauty of their town. Better yet, they feel proud of themselves for making their town a better place to live.

So what are the people of Albertsville waiting for? Talk to people in your school, church, or club about adopting part of a street or road. Then get to work! If enough volunteer groups get busy, Albertsville really will shine this spring.



**1. At what time of year was this editorial written?**

- (A) winter
- (B) spring
- (C) summer
- (D) fall



**2. According to the author, why doesn't Albertsville look as bright and shiny as a new penny?**

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**3. What jobs do volunteers do when they adopt a mile of road or street? Name three jobs.**

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**4. According to the author, what do the volunteers get out of cleaning up roads and streets?**

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**5. The author wrote this passage mainly to —**

- (F) describe the beauty of Albertsville.
- (G) convince people to stop littering.
- (H) compare Albertsville to neighboring towns.
- (J) get people to help clean up Albertsville.

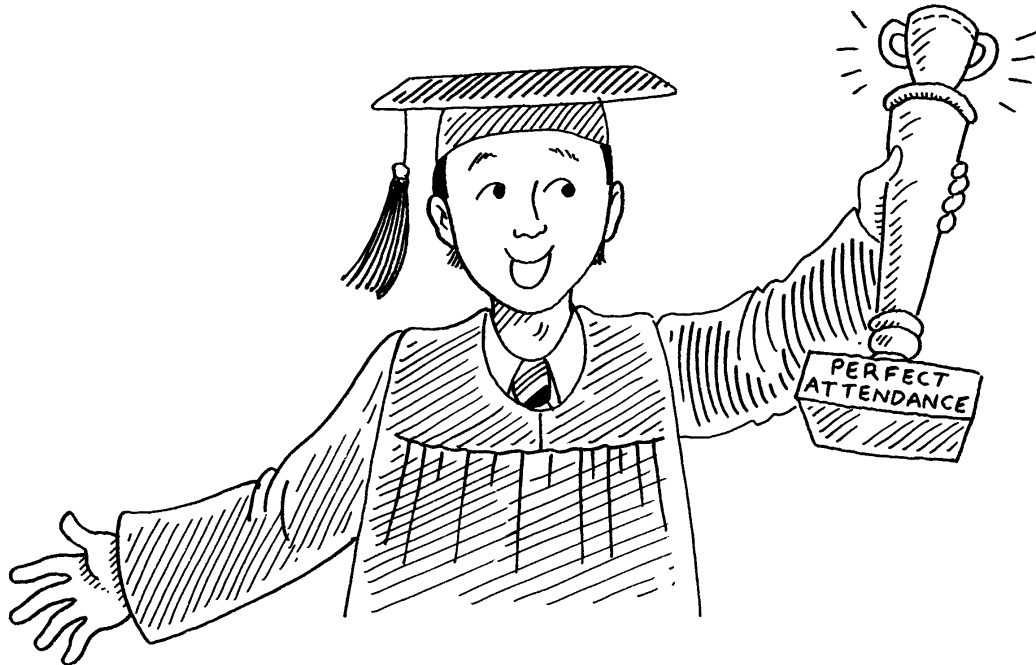


**Text 22** What is special about Travis?

# NEVER SAY SICK

**VOLUME XII**

Anyplace, USA

**Wednesday, June 13**

Picture this scene. You wake up on a school morning, and you know you're sick. Maybe your throat is sore. Maybe your stomach is upset. Maybe your head hurts. Whatever the problem is, Mom or Dad sends you back to bed to rest and recover. This happens to every kid once in a while, right?

Wrong. And the living proof is eighteen-year-old Travis Schmidt. From his first day of kindergarten to his last day of high school, Travis never once stayed

home sick. At first, Travis didn't think too much about never being absent. But then he reached third grade with perfect attendance. At that point, Travis decided to see how long he could keep it up.

How did Travis pull off 13 years of perfect attendance? In the first place, he's a very healthy kid. Although he got colds like everyone else, Travis never felt bad enough to stay home. But Travis also planned ahead. For example, he knew he'd probably get chicken pox sooner or later.

So when a friend caught chicken pox one summer, Travis made sure to visit. A few days later, he was covered with the itchy spots. But he had plenty of time to get better before school started in the fall.

Travis is proud of his record. "I may not be the smartest or the coolest. But I'm always there," he says. On the other hand, when he starts college next year, Travis may give himself a few sick days. After all, as Travis points out, they don't keep attendance in college.



**1. How is Travis different from most kids?**

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**2. How many years of perfect attendance does Travis have?**

- (A) 3
- (B) 7
- (C) 10
- (D) 13

**3. Why did Travis visit a friend who had the chicken pox?**

- (F) He wanted to see what his friend's spots looked like.
- (G) He hoped to cheer up his friend.
- (H) He wanted to catch chicken pox during the summer.
- (J) He had to bring some medicine to his friend.

**4. If Travis gets sick in college, what will he probably do?**

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**5. Do you think that having a perfect attendance record is something to be proud of? Tell why, or why not.**

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**Text 23** *Would you buy this art kit?*

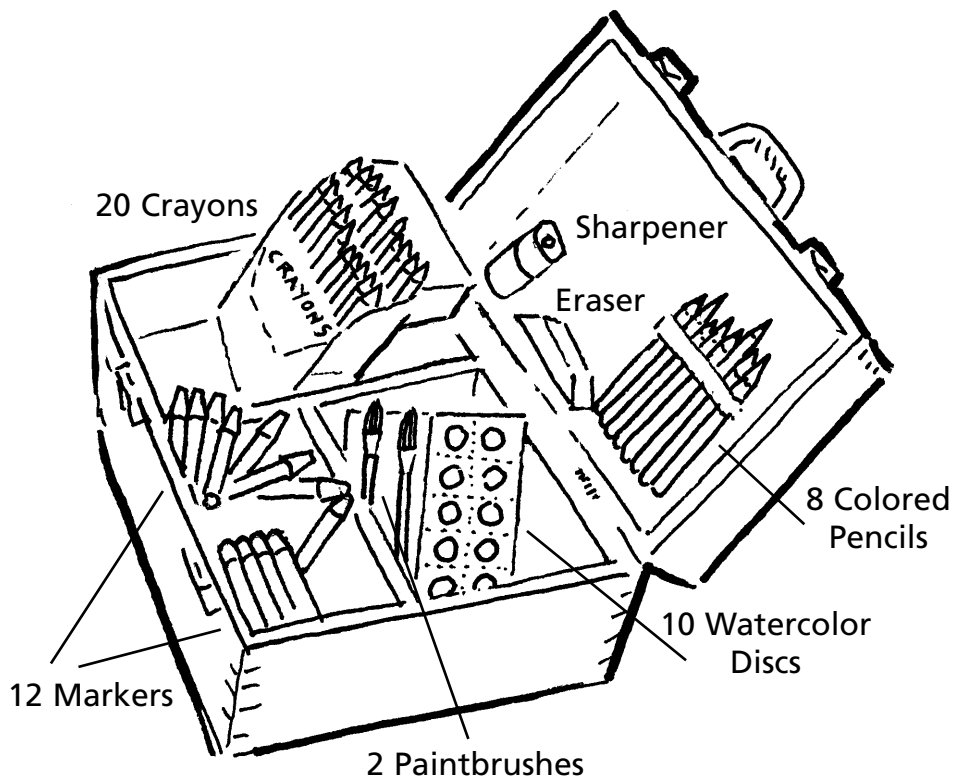
# For the Artist in You

Let our Super Art Box bring out the artist in you.

All you need are the ideas.

The Super Art Box supplies the rest.

Together, we'll make beautiful pictures!



You can buy the **Super Art Box** for the low, low price of just \$12.95. You won't find a better deal than the Super Art Box! Get yours today at the BMJ Pharmacy or Value Mart nearest you!

**1. Which of these is included in the Super Art Box?**

- Ⓐ paste
- Ⓑ paintbrushes
- Ⓒ stickers
- Ⓓ ideas for projects

**2. To use most of the items in the Super Art Box, you would need —**

- Ⓕ paper.
- Ⓖ glue.
- Ⓗ scissors.
- Ⓙ tape.

**3. How many markers come with the Super Art Box?**

\_\_\_\_\_

**4. What items in the Super Art Box can the sharpener be used with?**

\_\_\_\_\_

**5. Where can you buy the Super Art Box?**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**6. What is the main purpose of this advertisement?**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



**Text 24** *Why do turtles have shells?*

# The Lives of Turtles

There are about 250 kinds of turtles. Most turtles live near fresh water. They spend part of their time swimming in the water and part of it on land. Not all turtles live this way, though. Land turtles, also known as *tortoises*, do not swim at all. Sea turtles live nearly their whole lives in salt water.

**Tortoises** Tortoises are slow and steady. They have short, thick back legs. Their flat front legs are built like shovels and are very good for digging. Tortoises have high, rounded shells, too. Many tortoises can pull their heads, legs, and tails inside their shells. They quickly do so at any sign of danger. Their strong shells protect them from animals that might want to eat them.

Turtles have no teeth. Instead they have strong beaks that can cut food like a pair of scissors. Unlike most other turtles, tortoises eat only plants.

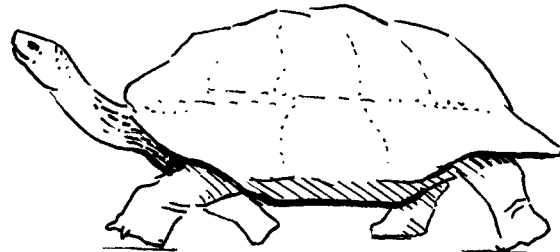
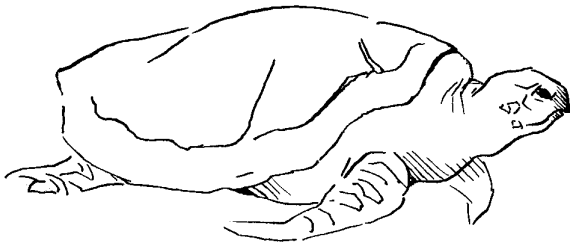
Tortoises hatch from eggs. The female tortoise digs a hole, lays some eggs, and covers them with dirt. When the baby tortoises hatch, they must dig their way out of the hole. They never know their mother. The largest tortoises can grow to four feet long. They may weigh up to 600 pounds.

**Sea Turtles** Like tortoises, sea turtles lay their eggs on land. The female turtle comes out of the ocean onto the beach. She digs a hole, lays her eggs, and returns to the sea. When the baby turtles hatch, they head straight for the water. The trip across the beach can be dangerous! Many animals come to the beach to eat the little turtles as they crawl toward the water. After they reach the water, male sea turtles never return to land. Females return only to lay their eggs.

Sea turtles can swim very fast. Their front legs are built like paddles. They use them like wings to “fly” through the water. Although most turtles can pull their heads and legs inside their shells, sea turtles cannot.

The green sea turtle eats only plants. Other sea turtles eat both plants and animals. The largest of all sea turtles is the leatherback. It can weigh over 1,000 pounds. Its favorite food is jellyfish.

- 1. Use what you learned in the article to label each picture. Which is the tortoise and which is the sea turtle?**



- 2. How are tortoises and sea turtles alike?**

- (A) Both eat animals.
- (B) Both dig holes for their eggs.
- (C) Both move slowly.
- (D) Both have front legs that are good for digging.

- 3. How is the tortoise different from the sea turtle?**

- (F) The tortoise has a shell.
- (G) It has no teeth.
- (H) The tortoise hatches from an egg.
- (J) It does not swim.

- 4. What is the largest kind of turtle, and how much does it weigh?**
- 

- 5. Which statement is true?**

- (A) Most turtles live near fresh water.
- (B) Tortoises are the largest turtles.
- (C) Most turtles live in the ocean.
- (D) All turtles can pull their heads inside their shells.

## Answer Key

### 1. Panda Pair

1. A
2. Example: People loved the pandas, and now people miss them.
3. Example: You would have seen that the walls of their home were covered with letters from children.

### 2. Letter from Vera

1. B
2. F
3. Example: He will visit Vera at her home, and they'll both go bike riding.

### 3. A Star Is Born

1. C
2. Answers should include two of the following facts: Her first album sold 11 million copies; fans snapped up her second album; she won an American Music Award; her songs are heard on the radio; she sings for sold-out crowds; she has received fan mail from Britain's Prince William.

### 4. Peanut Butter Balls

1. C
2. G
3. Roll each peanut butter ball in powdered sugar.

### 5. LuLu to the Rescue

1. A
2. LuLu went to get help for her owner, JoAnne Altsman, when she fell ill.
3. J
4. Answers will vary. The man probably called 911 or in some other way got medical help for JoAnne, help arrived, JoAnne was treated, and she recovered.

### 6. Treasure Hunt

1. D
2. The treasure box contains coupons worth \$300 that may be used at local places.
3. If it rains, the treasure hunt will be postponed; it will be held on June 7 instead.

### 7. Calling All Siegels!

1. B
2. Dayton, Ohio
3. Answers will vary. Students may mention two of these: sharing photographs, sleeping in tents, talking, sharing family news.

### 8. Bye-Bye, Fly

1. in North Carolina's marshes
2. C
3. When an insect touches the hairs on its leaves, the Venus flytrap closes up.
4. It will be eaten by the Venus flytrap.
5. J

### 9. A Painter's Story

1. C
2. She painted a summer scene, or a picture of herself and her dog in a meadow filled with daisies.
3. F
4. The answer may mention two of the following: Lucy's mother praised her wall painting; she cared about what Lucy did in art class at school; she saved all of Lucy's paintings and hung many of them up; she told Lucy that she was talented and should follow her dream.
5. D

### 10. The Statue of Liberty

1. Examples: Brooklyn Bridge, Statue of Liberty, Empire State Building, Ellis Island, Battery Park.
2. C
3. It came from France.
4. The Statue of Liberty is in front of you. An old fort is behind you.

### 11. Animals With Parachutes

1. The parachute slows the speed of the skydiver's fall.
2. C
3. No. A flying squirrel leaps and then glides to the ground because the flaps of skin between its legs act like a parachute.
4. F

### 12. For All Your Stains, Get Wash-Away!

1. D
2. F
3. Wash-Away works better than any other detergent.
4. The pictures show that Wash-Away cleans a dirty shirt better than another detergent.
5. Answers will vary. Examples: how much Wash-Away costs, proof that it works, perhaps the name of the company that makes it.

### 13. A Super Man

1. Examples: blue tights, a blue top, a red and yellow "S" on the top, a long red cape.
2. Reeve made four different Superman movies, so many fans would always think of him in that role.
3. C
4. J
5. Reeve asked the government to give scientists the money they need to find a cure for spinal cord injuries.
6. A

### 14. Pennies Count

1. Matthew's wish was to give money to a poor person.
2. Matthew put penny jars in stores and businesses. He also went on TV to ask people to send in their pennies.
3. Matthew raised even more than his goal. He wanted to raise \$10,000, but he raised more than \$18,000.
4. A
5. J

### 15. Party Time

1. by using a paper punch to punch dots of colored paper
2. B
3. F
4. It falls out of the soda pop bottle.
5. C

### 16. Putting Men on the Moon

1. D
2. H
3. Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin
4. B
5. Answers will vary. *Apollo 11* traveled to the moon in four days. Armstrong and Aldrin left the command ship in the *Eagle* and landed on the moon.

### 17. "Poetry Play" Was a Great Success

1. A
2. J
3. B
4. H
5. He put on a nose and hat; he used a different voice.
6. Answers will vary. Students should give an opinion and at least one reason to support it.



### 18. The New Girl

1. C
2. Mrs. Ramirez is Becky's teacher.
3. G
4. Example: Becky had to stay inside for recess because she bounced a ball indoors, she knocked over a flower pot, and she broke a rule.
5. D
6. Answers will vary but should suggest that Becky is hopeful, or is no longer angry with Sasha; at the end, she says that maybe they can be friends after all.

### 19. Letter to Henry

1. A
2. G
3. Answers will vary but should mention two of the following: helping Henry and his parents build their new home, helping them clear land for their cornfield, giving them a horse and some chickens.
4. C
5. Answers will vary but should mention two of the following: the letter is dated 1871, Henry's journey from Pennsylvania to Missouri took seven weeks, he and his family traveled dusty trails in a covered wagon.

### 20. A Grandmother's Life

1. C
2. Example: She felt even more determined to reach her goal.
3. G
4. He said that she was the best mom a kid could have.
5. Grandmothers can spoil their grandchildren, but mothers don't get to spoil their children.

### 21. Make Albertsville Shine

1. B
2. Its streets and sidewalks are littered with trash.
3. Answers will vary but should include three of the following: picking up litter, trimming bushes, washing sidewalks, planting flowers.
4. Volunteers get to enjoy the beauty of their town and feel proud of themselves for making it a better place to live.
5. J

### 22. Never Say Sick

1. The answer should indicate that Travis never missed a day of school.
2. D
3. H
4. He will probably stay out of school until he feels better.
5. Answers will vary. Students should give their opinions and supporting reasons.

### 23. For the Artist in You

1. B
2. F
3. 12 markers
4. The sharpener may be used with the colored pencils, the crayons, or both.
5. at BMJ Pharmacy or Value Mart
6. Examples: The main purpose is to convince you to buy an art kit, or to show what a good deal the art kit is.

### 24. The Lives of Turtles

1. sea turtle; tortoise
2. B
3. J
4. leatherback; 1,000 pounds
5. A