

ENGLISH

FLUENCY SUPPLEMENT



GRADES 4-5

EDITION 1

Grades 4 and 5

Fluency Supplement

Teacher Guide

Acknowledgement:

Thank you to all the Texas educators and stakeholders who supported the review process and provided feedback. These materials are the result of the work of numerous individuals, and we are deeply grateful for their contributions.

Notice: These learning resources have been built for Texas students, aligned to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills, and are made available pursuant to Chapter 31, Subchapter B-1 of the Texas Education Code.

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Introduction

Research demonstrates that fluency practice produces gains in reading comprehension. The program's fluency instruction includes modeled reading, assisted reading (such as choral or paired reading), independent reading, along with breadth of text encounters and extended deep reading of selected texts. This multi-faceted approach ensures that students receive low-stakes practice along with engaging, authentic fluency tasks, such as performances.

This fluency packet was created to accompany the program's Grade 4 and 5 materials. It consists of poetry, folklore, and fables. These additional text selections provide opportunities for students to practice reading with fluency and prosody (expression), including phrasing and intonation.

The fluency routine outlined below provides a structured approach that equips students to read passages accurately and with expression. As they gain accuracy and confidence, they will naturally begin to read more quickly. However, it's important not to pressure students to race through the text or read with undue speed. In addition, it is not a memorization drill—students should read the text as they perform even if they have memorized the words. The goal is to read smoothly, accurately, and with prosody.

At the beginning of the week, you should make sufficient copies of the week's selection for each student. You should model reading the selection aloud to all students. When time allows, have students spend time practicing reading the passages aloud each day and encourage additional practice at home. During classroom practice, you should circulate around the room and provide students with corrective feedback. The expectation for all students should be that they are prepared to read the selection fluently and with prosody by Friday.

Note to Teacher

Passage 23, "Protecting the Environment Part III" on pages 93-94 discusses power outages. If this topic is sensitive for any of your students after the winter storm in February of 2021, we recommend you skip that passage.

The five-day fluency performance routine below includes the following components:

Day 1: Introduce the text and read it aloud several times, modeling different tones or inflections, phrasing, and expression, and encouraging students to reflect on each one.

For example, if you read in a monotone, students should realize that this is not a stellar reading; they may suggest better approaches, such as reading in a happy tone, an excited tone, a nervous tone, or other tone appropriate to the selected text. Discuss with students that text features, such as punctuation, and sentence structure can help them know when to read text with phrasing, intonation, and expression (prosody). After modeling, invite students to read aloud sample sentences from the text.

Students are encouraged to start reading the target text aloud at home. They may use reading logs to record each session, if desired.

Day 2: Students practice reading the text chorally, with varying inflection or tone, phrasing, intonation, expression, or other elements.

Day 3: Students practice both choral and paired readings, continuing to develop tone, inflection, phrasing, intonation, and expression. Listen to students practice reading and provide corrective feedback where necessary.

Day 4: Students continue practicing paired readings in preparation for the following day's performance. Circulate around the room and provide paired students with corrective feedback where necessary.

Day 5: Student pairs perform their reading.

Differentiation Options: Students who are ready for a challenge may be prepared to perform the text independently, while students who require additional support may read the text chorally in groups rather than pairs.

If you choose to evaluate students' performances, you may use the Fluency Passage Performance Rubric to evaluate each performance.

Fluency Passage Performance Rubric			
	Advanced	Proficient	Basic
Accuracy	Reading contains no errors in pronunciation.	Reading contains minimal errors in pronunciation.	Reading contains numerous errors in pronunciation.
Rate	Reading is conversationally paced or paced to show appropriate emphasis and inflection.	Reading is uneven, with interspersed periods of speed and sluggishness.	Reading is labored and slow.
Expression (Prosody)	Expression is strong throughout the reading. While the tone and volume may vary, they do so in keeping with the student's understanding of the piece.	Reading generally sounds like everyday speech, with possible lapses into expressionless speech.	Words are pronounced, but they are not spoken in a manner that indicates an understanding of their meaning.

These selections may also be used to assess students' performance in fluency and expression (prosody). We recommend asking a student to read a passage aloud for a set amount of time, such as one minute. During that time, the student will read from their copy, while you use an additional copy of the text to mark any words the student misses during the allotted time and to record student's use of expression (prosody), including phrasing and intonation. At the conclusion of the allotted time, calculate the words read correctly to get an estimate of the student's fluency rate. Provide the student with feedback and work together to set achievable goals to support each student in reading smoothly, accurately, and with prosody. This activity may be repeated throughout the year with different texts in order to measure student progress in fluency.

Dear Family Member,

Throughout the school year, your student will be bringing home short text selections on a weekly basis to practice reading. Your student should read the selection aloud each night to help them become increasingly fluent and able to read without hesitation. You or another family member may want to read the selection aloud first to model reading with fluency and expression.

At the end of the week, your student may be called upon to practice reading the selection aloud in class.

Repeated readings of text help build reading fluency, which includes automatic word recognition, expression, accuracy, and speed. The goal of using these short text selections is to help your student continue to strengthen their reading skills.

1. “The Arrow and the Song”

by Henry W. Longfellow

I shot an arrow into the air,	7
It fell to earth, I knew not where;	15
For, so swiftly it flew, the sight	22
Could not follow it in its flight.	29

I breathed a song into the air,	36
It fell to earth, I knew not where;	44
For who has sight so keen and strong	52
That it can follow the flight of song?	60

Long, long afterward, in an oak	66
I found the arrow, still unbroke;	72
And the song, from beginning to end,	79
I found again in the heart of a friend.	88

Word Count: 88

NAME: _____

QUESTIONS

DATE: _____

Comprehension Questions

“The Arrow and the Song”

Assess each student’s comprehension of the selection by asking him or her to respond orally to the following questions one on one with you:

1. **Literal** What two things did the author put out in the air?
» an arrow and a song
2. **Inferential** Why did the author lose these things?
» The arrow flew away too fast to follow it with sight. Nobody can see a song to follow where it goes.
3. **Literal** Where did the author find the arrow?
» The arrow was found unbroken in an oak (tree).
4. **Inferential** What happened to the song?
» The author found it in a friend’s heart, meaning a friend knew the song.

2. “It Couldn’t Be Done”

by Edgar A. Guest

Somebody said that it couldn’t be done, 7
But he with a chuckle replied 13
That “maybe it couldn’t,” but he would be one 22
Who wouldn’t say so till he’d tried. 29
So he buckled right in with the trace of a grin 40
On his face. If he worried he hid it. 49
He started to sing as he tackled the thing 58
That couldn’t be done, and he did it. 66

Somebody scoffed: “Oh, you’ll never do that; 73
At least no one ever has done it’; 81
But he took off his coat and he took off his hat, 93
And the first thing we knew he’d begun it. 102
With a lift of his chin and a bit of a grin, 114
Without any doubting or quiddit, 119
He started to sing as he tackled the thing 128
That couldn’t be done, and he did it. 136

There are thousands to tell you it cannot be done, 146
There are thousands to prophesy failure; 152
There are thousands to point out to you one by one, 163
The dangers that wait to assail you. 170

But just buckle in with a bit of a grin,	180
Just take off your coat and go to it;	189
Just start to sing as you tackle the thing	198
That “cannot be done,” and you’ll do it.	206

Word Count: 206

NAME: _____

QUESTIONS

DATE: _____

Comprehension Questions

“It Couldn’t Be Done”

Assess each student’s comprehension of the selection by asking him or her to respond orally to the following questions one on one with you:

1. **Inferential** Why did the first person state he had to try it before saying it couldn’t be done?
 - » He thought it would be wrong to say that something couldn’t be done until he tried it out to see whether or not it could actually be done. If he tried it and he couldn’t do it, then he could truthfully say it couldn’t be done because he would know from experience.
2. **Literal** What did the second person do?
 - » something that someone said no one has ever done and he did it
3. **Evaluative** What is the message of this poem?
 - » Don’t listen to people who warn you something can’t be done. Try it for yourself. Once you get started and work to do it, you’ll find that it can likely be done.

3. “Rain in Summer”

by Henry W. Longfellow

How beautiful is the rain!	5
After the dust and heat,	10
In the broad and fiery street,	16
In the narrow lane,	20
How beautiful is the rain!	25
How it clatters along the roofs,	31
Like the tramp of hoofs!	36
How it gushes and struggles out	42
From the throat of the overflowing spout!	49
Across the window pane	53
It pours and pours;	57
And swift and wide,	61
With a muddy tide,	65
Like a river down the gutter roars	72
The rain, the welcome rain!	77

In the country, on every side,	83
Where far and wide,	87
Like a leopard's tawny and spotted hide,	94
Stretches the plain,	97
To the dry grass and the drier grain	105
How welcome is the rain!	110

Word Count: 110

NAME: _____

QUESTIONS

DATE: _____

Comprehension Questions

“Rain in Summer”

Assess each student’s comprehension of the selection by asking him or her to respond orally to the following questions one on one with you:

1. **Literal** When is the rain welcome?
 - » after the dust and heat
2. **Literal** Where does the rain fall?
 - » in the street, in the lane, along the roofs, through a spout, across a window pane, down the gutters
3. **Inferential** If the rain is falling in the country in the last part of the poem, where is the rain falling in the first part of the poem? How do you know?
 - » in a city or town; the places the rain falls are found in a city or town—street, roofs (of multiple homes/buildings), gutters

4. “The Fir Tree”

by Hans Christian Andersen
(Adaptation)

Out in the woods stood a nice little Fir Tree. The sun shone on him, there was fresh 18
air, and around him grew many large-sized trees. But the little Fir wanted so very much to 35
be a grown-up tree. At the end of a year he had shot up a good deal, and after another year 56
he was another bit taller. 61

“I wish I was as big as the other trees,” he sighed. “Then I could spread out my 79
branches with the tops to look into the wide world! The birds would build nests among 95
my branches.” 97

Neither the sunbeams, nor the birds, nor the clouds which sailed above him, gave the 112
little Tree any pleasure. 116

In winter, when the snow lay on the ground, a rabbit would often come along and 132
jump right over the Tree. That made him so angry! But after two more winters, the Tree 149
was so large that the rabbit had to go round it. “To grow and grow, to get older and be tall,” 170
thought the Tree, “that is the most best thing in the world!” 182

In autumn the woodcutters always came and chopped down some of the largest trees. 196
This happened every year, and the young Fir Tree trembled at the sight. The magnificent 211
great trees fell to the earth with great noise and cracking. The branches were lopped off 227
and the trees looked long and bare. 234

In spring, when the swallows and the storks came, the Tree asked them, “Don’t you 249
know where the trees have been taken?” 256

The swallows did not know anything about it, but the Stork nodded his head. “Yes, 271
I think I know. I met many ships as I was flying around. The ships had large masts, and I 291
think they that smelled of fir.” 297

“Oh, I would love to fly across the sea! What does the sea look like?” 312

“That would take a long time to explain,” said the Stork, and with these words off he 329
went. 330

“Rejoice in your growth!” said the Sunbeams. And the Wind kissed the Tree, and the 345
Dew wept tears over him. The Fir did not understand and was still unhappy. 359

Word Count: 359

NAME: _____

QUESTIONS

DATE: _____

Comprehension Questions

“The Fir Tree”

Assess each student’s comprehension of the selection by asking him or her to respond orally to the following questions one on one with you:

1. **Literal** What did the Fir Tree want so very much?
 - » to be a grown-up tree
2. **Inferential** Why did the Fir Tree tremble each autumn when he saw the woodcutters chopping down some of the largest trees?
 - » He was afraid because he saw the great trees fall to the earth and their branches chopped off, leaving them bare; he also didn’t know where the trees were taken. He also knew one day he would be a large tree so he might get chopped down as well.
3. **Inferential** How did the Stork make the Fir Tree feel better about where the trees went?
 - » The Stork said he had met many large ships as he was flying around. This made the Fir Tree happy because he said he would love to fly across the sea just as the stork does.

5. “Grandfather Frog’s Big Mouth Gets Him in Trouble”

by Thornton W. Burgess

(Adaptation)

Grandfather Frog has a great big mouth. He learned a long time ago that a big mouth 17
is handy for catching foolish green flies. But once in a while his big mouth gets him into 35
trouble. It holds so much that it makes him greedy sometimes. He stuffs it full after his 52
stomach already has all that it can hold, and then he can’t swallow. Then Grandfather Frog 68
looks very foolish and silly. 73

One morning Grandfather Frog had a very good breakfast of foolish green flies and 87
didn’t need another thing to eat. Little Joe Otter came along. He had been fishing and had 104
eaten all he could. Now he was taking the rest of his catch to a secret hiding place. 122

Now Grandfather Frog is very fond of fish, and when he saw those that Little Joe 138
Otter had, his eyes glistened, and in spite of his full stomach his mouth watered. 153

“Good morning, Grandfather Frog! Have you had your breakfast yet?” called Little 165
Joe Otter. 167

Grandfather Frog wanted to say no, but he always tells the truth. “Yes,” he replied. “I 183
have.” 184

“Ok. I thought that if you hadn’t, you might like a fish. But since you have already 201
eaten, of course you don’t want one,” said Little Joe, his eyes beginning to twinkle. He held 218
the fish out so Grandfather Frog could see just how plump and nice they were. 233

“Chugarum!” exclaimed Grandfather Frog. “Those certainly are very nice fish. It is 245
very nice of you to think of a poor old fellow like me. I might find room for just a little 266
teeny one, if you can spare it.” 273

Little Joe Otter knows all about Grandfather Frog’s greediness. He looked at 285
 Grandfather Frog and saw how he was already stuffed full. The twinkle in his eyes grew 301
 more mischievous than ever as he said, “Of course I can. But I wouldn’t think of giving 318
 such an old friend a teeny, weeny one.” 326

Little Joe picked out the biggest fish he had and tossed it over to Grandfather Frog. It 343
 landed close by his nose with a great splash. It was almost half as big as Grandfather Frog 361
 himself. It was plump and looked so tempting that Grandfather Frog forgot all about his 376
 full stomach. He even forgot to be polite and thank Little Joe Otter. He just opened his 393
 great mouth and grabbed the fish. The fish had started down Grandfather Frog’s throat 407
 head first. 409

Grandfather Frog has no teeth, so he cannot bite things in two. He has to swallow 425
 them whole. That is just what he started to do with the fish. It went all right until the 444
 head reached his stomach. But you can’t put anything more into a thing already full, and 460
 Grandfather Frog’s stomach was packed as full as it could be of foolish green flies. There 476
 the fish stuck, and gulp and swallow as hard as he could, Grandfather Frog couldn’t make 492
 that fish go a bit farther. Then he tried to get it out again, but it had gone so far down his 514
 throat that he couldn’t get it back. Grandfather Frog had a fish stuck in his throat and he 532
 couldn’t do anything about it. 537

Word Count: 537

NAME: _____

QUESTIONS

DATE: _____

Comprehension Questions

“Grandfather Frog’s Big Mouth Gets Him in Trouble”

Assess each student’s comprehension of the selection by asking him or her to respond orally to the following questions one on one with you:

1. **Literal** Why did Grandfather Frog’s mouth water even though his stomach was full when he saw Little Joe Otter carrying fish?
» Grandfather Frog was very fond of fish.
2. **Inferential** Why did Grandfather Frog want to tell Little Joe Otter he hadn’t had his breakfast yet?
» Grandfather Frog hoped Little Joe Otter would give him some fish, since he liked fish so much, if he told Little Joe Otter he hadn’t had breakfast yet.
3. **Inferential** Why did Little Joe Otter give Grandfather Frog the biggest fish instead of a teeny, weeny one, as Grandfather Frog had asked for?
» Little Joe Otter knew how greedy Grandfather Frog was so he thought he’d teach Grandfather Frog a lesson by giving him a big fish, thinking Grandfather Frog wouldn’t be able to eat it.
4. **Literal** What happened when Grandfather Frog tried to eat the fish?
» The fish got stuck in his throat because it couldn’t go down any farther with his stomach full of flies.

6. “Grandfather Frog Starts Out to See the Great World”

by Thornton W. Burgess
(Adaptation)

Grandfather Frog looked very serious as he sat on his big green lily pad. A foolish
green fly actually brushed Grandfather Frog’s nose and he didn’t even notice it. Ever
since he had fought with his cousin, old Mr. Toad, about going out into the Great World,
Grandfather Frog had been thinking.

When Farmer Brown’s boy appeared, Grandfather Frog had hid under a lily pad. He
watched old Mr. Toad sit and grin, for he wasn’t afraid of Farmer Brown’s boy. In fact, he
had said that they were friends. When he saw Farmer Brown’s boy tickle old Mr. Toad
under his chin with a straw, he knew that it was true.

Grandfather Frog had not come out of his hiding place until after old Mr. Toad and
Farmer Brown’s boy had left. Then Grandfather Frog had climbed back on his big green
lily pad and had sat there thinking very hard. And now, on this bright morning, he was
still thinking.

The fact is Grandfather Frog was beginning to wonder if perhaps, after all, Mr. Toad
was right. If the Great World had taught him how to make friends with Farmer Brown’s
boy, there really must be some things worth learning there. Not for the world would
Grandfather Frog have admitted to old Mr. Toad or to any one else that there was anything
for him to learn. But right down in his heart he was beginning to think that there were
things he couldn’t learn in the Smiling Pool. So he sat and thought and thought. Suddenly
he made up his mind.

“Chugarum!” said he. “I’ll do it!”

“Do what?” asked Jerry Muskrat, who happened to be swimming past.

“I’ll go out and see for myself what this Great World old Mr. Toad talks about is like,” 299
replied Grandfather Frog. 302

“Don’t you do it,” said Jerry Muskrat. “Don’t you do anything so foolish! You’re much 317
too old, Grandfather Frog, to go out into the Great World.” 328

Few old people like to be told that they are too old to do things. “You just mind your 347
own business!” he said sharply. “I know what is best for me. If my cousin, old Mr. Toad, 365
can take care of himself out in the Great World, I can. I’m going, and that is all there is 385
about it!” 387

With that Grandfather Frog dove into the Smiling Pool, swam across to a place where 402
the bank was low, and without once looking back started across the Green Meadows to see 418
the Great World. 421

Word Count: 421

NAME: _____

QUESTIONS

DATE: _____

Comprehension Questions

“Grandfather Frog Starts Out to See the Great World”

Assess each student’s comprehension of the selection by asking him or her to respond orally to the following questions one on one with you:

1. **Literal** What made Grandfather Frog think he should go out to see the Great World?
 - » Grandfather Frog thought if the Great World had taught old Mr. Toad how to make friends with Farmer Brown’s boy, then there were things worth learning there.
2. **Literal** Why did Jerry Muskrat say Grandfather Frog shouldn’t go out in the Great World?
 - » Jerry Muskrat said Grandfather Frog was too old to go out in the Great World.
3. **Inferential** Why does Grandfather Frog think he can go out in the Great World?
 - » Grandfather Frog said if his cousin old Mr. Toad can take care of himself out in the Great World, he can take care of himself there, too.

7. “Grandfather Frog Loses Heart”

by Thornton W. Burgess
(Adaptation)

Look before you leap; the water may be deep. 9

That is very good advice, but most people find that out when it is too late. 25
Grandfather Frog did. He had heard that verse all his life. But Grandfather Frog seemed to 41
have left all his wisdom behind him when he left the Smiling Pool to go out into the Great 60
World. Grandfather Frog had been getting into scrapes ever since he started out on his 75
foolish journey, and now here he was in still another. He had landed in it head first, with a 94
great splash. 96

When he had seen the cool, sparkling water of the spring, he couldn't wait another 111
second to get into it. He was so hot and dry and thirsty and uncomfortable. Grandfather 127
Frog didn't look at all before he leapt. He just dove in with a great long jump. That water 146
felt so good. For a few minutes he couldn't think of anything else. Grandfather Frog just 162
closed his eyes and floated there in pure happiness. 171

He opened his eyes to look around. Then he blinked them rapidly for a minute or so. 188
He rubbed them to make sure that he saw things correctly. His heart seemed to sink way, 205
way down towards his toes. “Chugarum,” exclaimed Grandfather Frog, “Chugarum.” And 216
after that for a long time he didn't say a word. 227

All around him rose perfectly straight smooth walls. He could look up and see a little 243
of the blue sky right overhead and whispering leaves of trees and bushes. Over the edge of 260
the smooth straight wall grasses were bending. But they were so far above his head. There 276
wasn't any place to climb out. Grandfather Frog was in a prison. 288

A long time ago, Farmer Brown had cleared away all the dirt around the spring. Then 304
 he had knocked the bottom out of a nice clean barrel and had dug down where the water 322
 bubbled up out of the sand. He set the barrel down in this hole and filled in the bottom 341
 with clean white sand for the water to bubble up through. About half-way up the barrel 357
 he had cut a little hole for the water to run out as fast as it bubbled in at the bottom. The 379
 water never could fill the barrel because when it reached that hole, it ran out. This left a 397
 straight, smooth wall up above, a wall altogether too high for Grandfather Frog to jump 412
 over from the inside. 416

Poor old Grandfather Frog. He wished more than ever that he never thought of 430
 leaving the Smiling Pool to see the Great World. Round and round he swam, but he 446
 couldn't see any way out of it. The little hole where the water ran out was too small for 465
 him to squeeze through, as he found out by trying and trying. So far as he could see, he 484
 just had to stay there all the rest of his life. Worse still, he knew that Farmer Brown's boy 503
 sometimes came to the spring for a drink, for he had seen him do it. That meant that the 522
 very next time he came, he would find Grandfather Frog because there was no place to 538
 hide. When Grandfather Frog thought of that, he just lost heart. Yes, Sir, he just lost heart. 555
 He gave up all hope of ever seeing the Smiling Pool again, and two big tears ran out of his 575
 big eyes. 577

Word Count: 577

NAME: _____

QUESTIONS

DATE: _____

Comprehension Questions

“Grandfather Frog Loses Heart”

Assess each student’s comprehension of the selection by asking him or her to respond orally to the following questions one on one with you:

1. **Evaluative** Why is the saying *Look before you leap; the water may be deep* good advice?
 - » Answers may vary, but should include: you should investigate what you are getting yourself into before you just start something new without knowing anything about it because you may get yourself into something that you can’t handle and can’t figure out how to get out of.
2. **Literal** What does it mean that Grandfather Frog lost heart?
 - » He gave up all hope of getting out and seeing the Smiling Pool again.
3. **Inferential** Why did Grandfather Frog lose heart?
 - » He couldn’t get out of the spring, which was in a barrel with walls that Grandfather Frog couldn’t jump over. He couldn’t squeeze through the hole to get out either. He knew when Farmer Brown’s boy came to get a drink from the spring, he would find Grandfather Frog and hurt him.
4. **Literal** What happened when Grandfather Frog lost heart?
 - » Two big tears ran out of his big eyes.

8. “The Dear Old Smiling Pool Once More”

by Thornton W. Burgess
(Adaptation)

Black Cat was having a good time. But Grandfather Frog wasn't. It was great fun for 16
Black Cat to slip a paw under Grandfather Frog and toss him up in the air but it was a 36
dreadful time for Grandfather Frog. He was terribly frightened. Black Cat didn't always 49
cover up her claws, and they pricked right through Grandfather Frog's white and yellow 63
skin and hurt. 66

At last Black Cat grew tired of playing, so catching up Grandfather Frog in her mouth, 82
she started along the path from the spring to Long Lane. 93

“It's all over, and this is the end,” moaned Grandfather Frog. “I'm going to be eaten 109
now. Why did I ever leave the Smiling Pool?” 118

Just then, Grandfather Frog heard a familiar sound. It was the whistle of Farmer 132
Brown's boy. A little bit of hope began to stir in the heart of Grandfather Frog. He had 150
been afraid of Farmer Brown's boy, but now if the boy should take him, he might be able to 169
get away. He was very sure that he would never get away from Black Cat. The whistle drew 187
nearer. Black Cat stopped. 191

“Hi, Black Cat! Have you been hunting? Come show me!” cried a voice. 204

Farmer Brown's boy stooped down to see what she had in her mouth. 217

“Why,” he exclaimed, “I do believe this is the very same frog that got away from me! 234
You don't want him. I'll just put him in my pocket and take him up to the house.” 252

With that he dropped Grandfather Frog in his pocket. He patted Black Cat and 266
started on his way, whistling merrily. It was dark and rather close in that pocket, but 282

Grandfather Frog didn't mind. It was a lot better than feeling sharp teeth and claws. After 298
a while, he felt himself swung through the air, and he landed on the ground with a thump. 316
Farmer Brown's boy had taken off his coat and thrown it down. 328

The whistling stopped. Everything was quiet. Grandfather Frog waited and listened, 339
but not a sound could he hear. Then he saw a little ray of light creeping into his prison. He 359
squirmed and pushed, and all of a sudden he was out of the pocket. The bright light made 377
him blink. As soon as he could see, he looked to see where he was. Then he rubbed his 396
eyes with both hands and looked again. He wasn't at Farmer Brown's house at all. He was 413
right on the bank of the Smiling Pool, and a little way off was Farmer Brown's boy fishing! 431

"Chugarum!" cried Grandfather Frog, and it was the loudest, gladdest chugarum that 443
the Smiling Pool ever had heard. "Chugarum!" he cried again, and with a great leap he 459
dove with a splash into the dear old Smiling Pool, which smiled more than ever. 474

And never again has Grandfather Frog tried to see the Great World. He is quite 489
content to leave it to those who like to dwell there. And since his own wonderful 505
adventures, he has been ready to believe anything he is told about what happens there. 520

Word Count: 520

NAME: _____

QUESTIONS

DATE: _____

Comprehension Questions

“The Dear Old Smiling Pool Once More”

Assess each student’s comprehension of the selection by asking him or her to respond orally to the following questions one on one with you:

1. **Literal** What was Black Cat doing with Grandfather Frog at the beginning of the selection?
 - » Black Cat was slipping a paw under Grandfather Frog and tossing him up in the air.
2. **Literal** How did Grandfather Frog get back to the Smiling Pond?
 - » Farmer Brown’s boy took Grandfather Frog from Black Cat and put him in his pocket. Farmer Brown’s boy threw his coat on the ground, with Grandfather Frog still in the pocket. When Grandfather Frog pushed his way out of the pocket, he saw Farmer Brown’s boy off fishing. Grandfather Frog was on the bank of the Smiling Pool and he dove in.
3. **Inferential** What does Grandfather Frog mean by saying he is *quite content to leave the Great World to those who like to dwell there*?
 - » Grandfather Frog is happy to let those who live in the Great World deal with the Great World as he is done with it; he’d rather be in the Smiling Pool instead of out in the Great World.

9. “I Wonder Part I”

by Kate Douglas Wiggin and Nora Archibald Smith
(Adaptation)

Once upon a time there was a man who had three sons. Their names were Peter, Paul, 17
and they called the youngest brother Youngling. The man didn’t have one penny to rub 32
against another. He told his sons that they must go out into the world and try to earn their 51
bread. 52

Nearby the poor man’s cottage was the King’s palace. Against the windows of the 66
palace, a great oak tree had sprung up and it took away all the light. The King said he 85
would give treasure to the man who could chop down the oak tree, but no one could do it. 104
As soon as one branch of the oak’s trunk flew off, two grew in its place. 120

The King desired a well to hold water for the whole year. So the King said he would 138
give both money and goods to anyone who could dig him a well that could hold water for 156
a whole year, but no one could do it. The palace lay high, high up on a hill, and they could 177
only dig a few inches before they came upon rock. 187

The King was set on having these two things done. He had sent out the word far and 205
wide that whoever could cut the big oak in the King’s courtyard, and get him a well that 223
would hold water the whole year round, should have half the kingdom. 235

Well! You may easily know there were many men who came to try their luck. All their 252
hacking and digging did not work. The oak tree grew taller at every stroke of the axe, and 271
the rock grew no softer. 275

So one day the three brothers thought they’d set off and try, too. Their father didn’t 291
stop them. When the brothers said they thought of going to the palace, their father said 307
“Yes,” at once, and Peter, Paul, and Youngling went away from their home. 320

They had not gone far before they came to woods with fir trees. Up along one side of	338
the woods rose a steep hillside, and as they went they heard something chopping away.	353
“I wonder what is making that chopping sound,” Youngling said.	363
Youngling decided to go see what was making the chopping sound. Peter and Paul	377
teased him for going. But Youngling didn’t care what they said. He climbed the steep	392
hillside toward where the noise came, and when he reached the place, what do you think	408
he saw?	410
Why, an axe that stood there chopping away, all by itself, at the trunk of a fir tree.	428

Word Count: 428

NAME: _____

QUESTIONS

DATE: _____

Comprehension Questions

“I Wonder Part I”

Assess each student’s comprehension of the selection by asking him or her to respond orally to the following questions one on one with you:

1. **Inferential** Why did the man tell his sons they had to go out in the world and try to earn their bread?
 - » He didn’t have a penny to rub against another, which means he didn’t have any money, so his sons had to go out and find a way to get what they needed.
2. **Literal** What two things did the King want to have done?
 - » He wanted someone to chop down the oak tree growing against the palace windows and dig a well to hold water for a whole year.
3. **Literal** What made it difficult for men to complete the things the King wanted done?
 - » Every time a branch was cut off the tree, two more grew in its place. The castle was high on a hill and every time men tried to dig a well, they hit rock.
4. **Literal** What does Youngling discover when he goes off on his own?
 - » an axe chopping a tree all by itself

10. “I Wonder Part II”

by Kate Douglas Wiggin and Nora Archibald Smith
(Adaptation)

“Good day,” said Youngling to the axe. “So you stand here all alone and chop?”	15
The axe said he had been chopping and hacking and waiting for Youngling for a long time. Youngling took the axe apart and placed it in his bag. He walked back down the hill to his brothers.	31 49 52
When the brothers had gone a bit farther, they came under a steep wall of rock, and up above they heard something digging and shoveling.	69 77
“I wonder,” said Youngling, “what it is digging and shoveling up at the top of the rock? I think it would be a piece of fun just to see what it really is.”	94 110
And so off he set to climb the rock, while his brothers laughed and teased him. When he got near the top, what do you think he saw? Why, a shovel that stood there digging away.	127 145 146
“Good day,” said Youngling. “So you stand here all alone and shovel?”	158
The shovel said he had been shoveling and waiting for Youngling for a long time. Youngling took the shovel, put it in his bag, and climbed down again to his brothers.	173 189
So they went on again a good bit until they came to a brook. They were all thirsty after their long walk, and so they lay down beside the brook to have a drink.	207 223
“I wonder where this water comes from,” Youngling said. So up alongside the brook he went, in spite of all that his brothers shouted after him. Nothing could stop him. On he went.	238 256

And as he went up and up, the brook grew smaller and smaller, and at last, a little way farther	276
on, what do you think he saw? Why, a great walnut, and out of that the water trickled.	294
“Good day,” said Youngling again. “So you lie here and trickle, and run down all	309
alone?”	310
The walnut said he had been trickling and waiting for Youngling.	321
Youngling took a lump of moss and plugged up the hole in the walnut so the water	338
wouldn’t run out. Then he put the Walnut into his wallet, and ran down to his brothers.	355
“Well, now,” said Peter and Paul, “have you found out where the water comes from? A	371
rare sight it must have been!”	377
“Oh, after all, it was only a hole it ran out of,” said Youngling, and the others laughed	395
and made fun of him again, but Youngling didn’t mind that a bit.	408

Word Count: 408

NAME: _____

QUESTIONS

DATE: _____

Comprehension Questions

“I Wonder Part II”

Assess each student’s comprehension of the selection by asking him or her to respond orally to the following questions one on one with you:

1. **Literal** What two things did Youngling find and take with him?
 - » a shovel that digs and a walnut that trickles water
2. **Literal** What did the two things tell Youngling they had been waiting for?
 - » They both said they had been waiting for Youngling for a long time.
3. **Evaluative** Why do you think Youngling didn’t tell his brothers about the walnut he found?
 - » They teased him about going off before to find out about things, so perhaps he just thought they would tease him more or not believe what he had to say.

11. “I Wonder Part III”

by Kate Douglas Wiggin and Nora Archibald Smith
(Adaptation)

When the brothers had gone a little farther, they came to the King’s palace. So many 16
men had come to try their luck. The oak tree was now twice as wide and tall as it had been 37
at first since two branches grew for every one they chopped out with their axes. 52

The King had started to punish those who failed to cut down the oak tree. If a man 70
failed, he was put on an island. But the two brothers were quite sure they could chop down 88
the oak tree. Peter, as he was the oldest, was to try first. When Peter chopped into the tree, 107
two new branches grew where he cut with the axe. So the King’s men seized him and put 125
him out on the island. 130

Now Paul was to try his luck, but the same thing happened to him! When he had 147
swung the axe for two or three strokes, the oak tree began to grow. The King’s men seized 165
Paul and put him out on the island. 173

So now it was Youngling’s turn to try. He took his axe out of his bag and fitted it to its 194
handle. 195

“Chop away!” said he to his axe, and away it chopped, making the wood chips fly, so 212
that it wasn’t long before down came the oak. 221

When that was done, Youngling pulled out his shovel from his bag. 233

“Dig away!” said he to his spade, and so the spade began to dig until the earth and 251
rock flew out in splinters, and he soon had the well deep enough. 264

And when he had got it big and deep, Youngling took out his walnut and laid it in one 283
corner of the well, and pulled the plug of moss out. 294

“Trickle and run,” said Youngling, and so the walnut trickled and ran until the water 309
gushed out of the hole in a stream, and in a short time the well was filled. 326

Since Youngling had chopped down the oak tree and dug a well in the palace yard, he 343
got half the kingdom. It was good that Peter and Paul were on an island so they didn’t have 362
to hear everyone say, “Well, Youngling wasn’t so much out of his mind when he took to 379
wondering about things after all!” 384

Word Count: 384

NAME: _____

QUESTIONS

DATE: _____

Comprehension Questions

“I Wonder Part III”

Assess each student’s comprehension of the selection by asking him or her to respond orally to the following questions one on one with you:

1. **Literal** What happened when Peter and Paul each tried to chop down the tree?
 - » They both failed and were put out on an island.
2. **Literal** What happened when it was Youngling’s turn to cut down the tree and dig a well?
 - » He put together the axe he had found, told it to cut down the tree, and it did. He told the spade he had found to dig a well, and it did. Finally, he put the walnut he had found in the well, pulled the moss plug out, and told it to trickle and run, and it did.
3. **Evaluative** What did people mean when they said *Youngling wasn’t so much out of his mind when he took to wondering about things after all*?
 - » Because Youngling wondered about things, he went to find out about them. He found the axe, the spade, and the walnut due to his wondering about things. Finding things because he wondered allowed him to complete the tasks for the King that nobody else could complete.

12. “Thomas Jefferson”

Our third president, Thomas Jefferson, was a wonderful writer. He wrote about 12
nearly everything, because nearly everything interested him. One time, Jefferson was 23
trying to write a very important paper about liberty. Like his friend George Washington, 37
Jefferson thought the king of England was not being fair to the colonists in America, so 53
it was time to start a new country. Not everyone in the colonies felt that way, though. 70
Jefferson, Washington, and their friends needed to give good, strong reasons to make this 84
big change. Leaders from all over America met to talk about what to say. They chose five 101
people to work on a document explaining the reasons for a new nation, including Thomas 116
Jefferson. 117

John Adams worked with Thomas Jefferson. Jefferson and Adams were great friends, 129
though Adams was as different as he could be from Jefferson. However, they were alike 144
in one thing: they agreed it was time to start a new nation. Since John Adams was older, 162
Jefferson suggested, “John, you should write the paper explaining our ideas.” 173

“No, Thomas,” Adams replied. “I have angered many people by arguing for a new 187
country and some of them do not like me. Everyone likes you, though, so they will be 204
more likely to help. Besides, you are a better writer than I am.” 217

Jefferson wanted to make this document the best thing he had ever written. He would 232
call it the “Declaration of Independence.” Jefferson’s declaration said that every person 244
should feel safe to live, to be free, and to decide what to do in order to be happy. Jefferson’s 264
declaration said that this was the reason to start a new nation: the United States of 280
America. His friend John Adams smiled and said, “I told you, Thomas; you were the man 296
to write it.” 299

Two days after Jefferson finished the Declaration of Independence—on the Fourth of 312
July—the other leaders voted to officially begin our country, independent from England. 325
That is why we call the Fourth of July “Independence Day.” 336

After the new nation was born, Americans read Thomas Jefferson’s document again 348
and again whenever they were deciding how the country should work. People in other 362
countries said, “We want to be free, too,” and followed America’s example by making 376
changes in their countries. Jefferson’s words about liberty changed people’s lives all over 389
the world. 391

Word Count: 391

NAME: _____

QUESTIONS

DATE: _____

Comprehension Questions

“Thomas Jefferson”

Assess each student’s comprehension of the selection by asking him or her to respond orally to the following questions one on one with you:

1. **Literal** What did Jefferson think of the king of England?
 - » that he was not being fair to the colonists in America
2. **Literal** Why did John Adams insist that Jefferson write a paper explaining the Founding Fathers’ ideas?
 - » because he knew Jefferson was a better writer and because he thought more people would listen to Thomas Jefferson because everyone liked him
3. **Inferential** What effect did Jefferson’s Declaration of Independence have on people in America and all around the world?
 - » It served as a guide when Americans were deciding how their new country should work. It changed people’s views of liberty all over the world.

13. “The Home of the President: Washington, D.C.”

The American flag is the symbol of our nation, the United States of America. It has 16
red and white stripes and fifty stars. Each star is a symbol for one of the states in the 35
United States of America. There is one very important city in the United States that is 51
not in any of the fifty states. In fact, it is the nation’s capital. It’s the city where most of the 72
decisions that affect the country are made: Washington, D.C. 81

Men from each of the original colonies helped write the Constitution, a plan for how 96
the new country should be run. We call these men the “Founding Fathers.” The Founding 111
Fathers wanted a leader who would listen to what the people wanted and work hard to 127
get them what they needed. They decided the president would have to be elected by the 143
people. 144

When the Founding Fathers started to think about where the president would live, 157
they started to worry. If the president lived in the state he was from, it would make that 175
state feel more important than all the others. The Founding Fathers were afraid that one 190
of the states would try to take over and be in charge of the others. They decided to write 209
into the Constitution that a special city should be built, no bigger than ten miles wide, 225
which would serve as the nation’s capital. This capital city would not be in any state, so no 243
state could say that it was in charge of the country. This city was to be called Washington, 261
in honor of George Washington, our first president. Eventually, Washington grew into the 274
area we now call the District of Columbia, or Washington, D.C. 285

If you visit Washington, D.C., today, you can see the White House, the house where the 301
president lives. The president moves into this house when he or she becomes president, and 316
then moves out when the next president is elected. But not just presidents live in the White 333
House. Their families, and even their pets, come with them to live in the White House. 349

The president doesn't just live in the White House; he or she works there, too.	364
The part of the White House where the president works is called the West Wing. The	380
president's office has a special name, too: the Oval Office. Sometimes the president signs	394
laws or gives speeches from the Oval Office.	402

Word Count: 402

NAME: _____

QUESTIONS

DATE: _____

Comprehension Questions

“The Home of the President: Washington, D.C.”

Assess each student’s comprehension of the selection by asking him or her to respond orally to the following questions one on one with you:

1. ***Inferential*** Why did the Founding Fathers create the city of Washington, D.C.?
 - » because they wanted a place for the president to live that was not in any state so no state could say it was in charge of the whole country
2. ***Literal*** What important house located in Washington, D.C., does the president live in?
 - » the White House
3. ***Literal*** In what part of the White House does the president work?
 - » the West Wing

14. “The East African Savanna Habitat”

A savanna is another name for grassland, a wide-open, vast stretch of grass-covered land. There are not many trees or bushes. The East African Savanna has very warm weather all year round. It only has two seasons: the very rainy summer, and the very dry winter. The plants and animals that live here have adapted to these two very different kinds of weather.

Grass is the most important plant in the savannas. The grasses can survive the tough conditions of their habitat. The grass has adapted to these conditions by growing very deep roots. Even if the grass above ground is destroyed, the roots underground survive and the grass can grow back. This grass grows very quickly, as much as an inch per day!

Grass is food for many of the larger animals, like elephants, zebras, gazelles, and antelope. They chew on grass all day long. Animals depend on the nutrients in the grass to survive. It would seem that because so many animals eat the grass in the savanna every day, there wouldn't be very much grass left after a while. But, this grass grows back very quickly, so there's usually plenty for the different herbivores, like zebras and antelope, to eat! Plus, different animals are adapted to eat different parts of the grass.

Many animals get their meals from the acacia tree. Giraffes, with their long necks and tongues, eat twigs and leaves from the top of the acacia. Not only are giraffes' tongues long, they are also very tough. The twigs of the acacia tree are covered with sharp thorns that the giraffes eat along with the twigs and leaves! Giraffes eat many of the insects that live on the tree as well.

Acacias have adapted well to their habitat. Acacias have small leaves that don't dry out 301
as quickly as larger leaves would in the dry, hot months. The roots of an acacia grow very 319
deep into the ground, which allows them to collect water from far underground when 333
there is not much rainfall. And, as we already know, their branches are covered by sharp 349
thorns. These help keep some animals from eating too many of them. These trees are right 365
at home in this habitat. 370

Word Count: 370

NAME: _____

QUESTIONS

DATE: _____

Comprehension Questions

“The East African Savanna Habitat”

Assess each student’s comprehension of the selection by asking him or her to respond orally to the following questions one on one with you:

1. ***Inferential*** What does the East African Savanna habitat have a lot of and what is it missing?
 - » It has a lot of grass and wide-open space. It is missing a lot of trees and bushes.
2. ***Literal*** How are giraffes able to eat acacia trees?
 - » They have long necks so they can reach the leaves and twigs at the top and they have tough tongues so they can eat the thorns on the twigs.
3. ***Inferential*** What are the two main food sources for animals in the East African Savanna habitat?
 - » grass and acacia trees

15. “The Tropical Rainforest Habitat”

Tropical places are warm and wet. A rainforest is a thick forest of plants that stay green year-round. There are tropical rainforests in many places around the world close to the equator. One rainforest is in South America, and is the largest tropical rainforest on Earth. It is the Amazon rainforest. The Amazon rainforest is so dense that you can easily get lost in it. It’s hot and very humid. The temperature is always very warm, and it rains heavily all year long. There are between eighty and two hundred forty inches of rainfall here every year. That makes this one of the wettest places you can find on land.

The Amazon rainforest has broadleaf trees. The trees stay green all year long. The evergreen trees replace their leaves gradually throughout the year as the leaves age and fall. The trees always look green and never have bare branches. Because the climate is the same all year round, plants do not need to slow down for cold winter weather. Animals that live here always have a good supply of food all year, too.

The trees in the rainforest are incredibly tall. They grow as tall as thirteen-story buildings, and some grow much taller than that! The trees grow so thickly and so close together that from above, you can see only a canopy of thick green leaves. You can’t see the forest floor at all. Because the sun’s light can’t get through this canopy of leaves, everything under them is really dark.

The plants in the Amazon rainforest have adapted to this climate in many ways. Because it’s so dark in the rainforest underneath the canopy, most plants have large leaves so they can catch as much light as possible. Many of the plants have waxy leaves with ends that are tapered to help the water drip off them, like the water running off an umbrella.

Because the trees are so tall, they often have large roots that help hold them up. Also, 333
their trunks are covered in smooth, thin bark. The trees don't need thick bark to protect 349
them from cold weather. There are even some plants that grow high up on tree trunks and 366
branches so that they can get to the sunlight that doesn't reach the forest floor! 381

Word Count: 381

NAME: _____

QUESTIONS

DATE: _____

Comprehension Questions

“The Tropical Rainforest Habitat”

Assess each student’s comprehension of the selection by asking him or her to respond orally to the following questions one on one with you:

1. **Literal** What is the largest tropical rainforest on Earth?
 - » the Amazon rainforest
2. **Inferential** Why do animals that live in the Amazon rainforest have a good supply of food all year?
 - » The climate is the same all year round so plants don’t need to slow down their growth to adjust to cold weather. Because plants don’t need to slow down their growth, they stay green all year long and gradually replace old leaves. The trees are never bare and thus, animals have food all year long.
3. **Literal** Why can you see only a canopy of leaves from above the Amazon rainforest?
 - » The trees grow so thickly and close together that you can’t see the forest floor.
4. **Literal** How have plants adapted to the rainforest habitat?
 - » growing large leaves to catch light; growing waxy leaves to help water drip off them; growing tall to reach sunlight; large roots to hold up the trees; thin bark on trees because there is no need for protection from cold weather

16. “The Saltwater Habitat”

Saltwater habitats contain lots of salt. This means that we can't use saltwater for drinking. It's hard to imagine, but more of the earth is covered in water than is covered with land. Most of that water is saltwater in oceans and seas. Oceans are huge areas of saltwater that stretch all around our planet, and they are home to almost half of the world's species of animals and millions of different plants. The water in the ocean comes from rain as well as from rivers and streams that flow into the ocean. Seas are smaller areas of saltwater that have land around them or around part of them.	14 31 48 65 80 98 109
The largest ocean is the Pacific. The beach, and any land that runs alongside the ocean, is called the coastline or shoreline. You may think that when you are standing on the land looking at the water that the land stops where the water starts. It certainly looks that way. But there is land is under the water. The land slopes downward the farther you go out into the water, which means the water is getting deeper and deeper.	124 140 157 174 188
The interesting thing about the ocean floor, which is the land under the ocean water, is that it isn't flat. As on land, the earth beneath the ocean waters has both mountains and valleys. This makes some areas of water in the ocean deeper than others.	203 221 234
The Pacific Ocean is full of both plant and animal life, but not all of them share the same space. The conditions under the water are very different in various places. Some parts are deep and some are shallow. There are cool parts and there are warm parts. Some are dark and some are full of light.	252 266 283 291

There are plants and animals in nearly every part of the ocean. Some live way out 307
in the deep, open waters far from the land, and some live in the shallow waters closer to 325
the shore. Some animals, like turtles, jellyfish, and crabs, live closer to the shore where 340
it's shallower and warmer. If you have ever been to the beach and walked in the water 357
splashing on the sand, you've been in this shallow part of the ocean. 370

Word Count: 370

NAME: _____

QUESTIONS

DATE: _____

Comprehension Questions

“The Saltwater Habitat”

Assess each student’s comprehension of the selection by asking him or her to respond orally to the following questions one on one with you:

1. ***Inferential*** Why can’t humans use most of the water on the earth?
 - » because it is saltwater and we can’t drink it
2. ***Literal*** How is the ocean floor similar to land?
 - » It has mountains and valleys.
3. ***Inferential*** Where in the ocean do animals live?
 - » Animals live in all different parts of the ocean; some live in the shallow parts of the ocean near the coastline and others live in deeper parts of the ocean.

17. “The Sonoran Desert Habitat”

There are many deserts all over the world. You know you’re in a desert when it doesn’t rain very much. Many deserts can also be very hot. Because it’s so hot and dry, not too many plants or animals can live there.

The Sonoran Desert is in the southwestern part of the United States and the northwestern part of Mexico. The temperature is quite hot during the day, and it doesn’t rain very much. The heat and lack of rain make it hard for plants and animals to live in the desert. They must all be specially adapted to live in the hot weather and survive with very little rain.

How do they do it? Some plants can save and store water inside their plant parts when it does rain. Other plants grow only in shady areas near mountains or rocks.

Since there are very few plants that can be used as shelter, the animals that have adapted to living in the desert often make their homes underground. Living underground helps them to stay cool when it gets hot, and keeps them hidden from other animals that may want to eat them for lunch!

The saguaro cactus is the world’s largest cactus. Cacti don’t have leaves. They have prickly spines instead. The incredible saguaro lives for up to two hundred years. In that time can grow as high as a house and weigh as much as several cars! The most amazing thing about the saguaro is that it is a habitat in itself. Not only does it manage to thrive in the desert habitat, but it provides food, water, and shelter to many different animals.

It hardly ever rains in the desert, but when it does, the saguaro cactus saves and stores huge amounts of water in its roots and stems. The cactus saves the extra water and uses it to survive during those times when it is very dry and does not rain.

In the spring, white flowers grow on the saguaro. At night, when the desert cools 339
down, these flowers open to show sweet nectar, which butterflies, bats, and birds feed on 354
before the flowers close the next day when it once again becomes very hot. In the summer, 371
red fruit begins to grow on the saguaro. Many animals eat the fruit of the cactus. 387

Word Count: 387

NAME: _____

QUESTIONS

DATE: _____

Comprehension Questions

“The Sonoran Desert Habitat”

Assess each student’s comprehension of the selection by asking him or her to respond orally to the following questions one on one with you:

1. **Literal** What makes the Sonoran Desert a hard place to live?
 - » heat and lack of rain
2. **Literal** How do plants survive in the Sonoran Desert?
 - » Some plants save and store water inside their plant parts; other plants grow in shady areas near mountains or rocks.
3. **Literal** How do animals survive in the Sonoran Desert?
 - » They live underground.
4. **Inferential** What is unique about the saguaro cactus?
 - » It is a habitat in itself, providing food, water, and shelter to many different animals.

18. “Animals of the Arctic Habitat”

Let’s take a tour of one of the coldest habitats on Earth: the Arctic tundra. In the tundra, there aren’t very many plants. In fact, there are no trees at all. The Arctic tundra is very, very cold. The wind is incredibly strong, which makes the air feel even colder. The ground is frozen and nearly everything is covered in ice. In the winter, daylight lasts only a few hours, and at times the sun does not come out at all. The temperatures are so low that most people and animals would freeze. All of these things make the Arctic tundra one of the least friendly habitats on Earth for plants and animals. Some ice will still be here in the summer, but the top layer of ice melts so that the ground gets wet and muddy.

Some plants and animals can only live in the Arctic tundra in the summer months when the temperature is warmer. Some plants and animals are able to live there all year long. Arctic plants grow very close together and do not grow very tall, which keeps them from being blown away by the Arctic winds. The kinds of plants include mosses and different types of grasses.

The animals that call the Arctic tundra habitat home all year round have adapted to the harsh conditions. This means the animal has changed over the years and now has special things that help it live in that habitat. For example, animals in the Arctic often have heavy fur coats that help them stay warm in the cold temperatures.

One creature that has adapted to the Arctic tundra habitat is called a muskox. It is adapted to the Arctic in several ways. The muskox’s long shaggy coat has an extra layer of hair underneath that keeps it warm when the temperature is frigid. The muskox sheds its extra coat of hair in the warmer, summer months.

Muskoxen travel in herds so they can huddle together for added warmth. They also	333
have hooves specially adapted to this habitat. Their hooves are very wide to keep them	348
from slipping on the snow and ice, and in the winter muskoxen use their sharp hooves to	365
dig under the snow to find plants to eat.	374

Word Count: 374

NAME: _____

QUESTIONS

DATE: _____

Comprehension Questions

“Animals of the Arctic Habitat”

Assess each student’s comprehension of the selection by asking him or her to respond orally to the following questions one on one with you:

1. **Literal** What makes the Arctic tundra one of the least friendly habitats on the earth for plants and animals?
 - » cold; strong winds; frozen ground; little daylight in the winter; little food; low temperatures
2. **Literal** How do Arctic plants keep from blowing away?
 - » They grow very close together and don’t grow very tall.
3. **Evaluative** Why would animals have adapted to the harsh conditions of the Arctic habitat?
 - » so they can continue to live in the habitat despite the harsh conditions

19. “The Freshwater Habitat”

A lake is an area of water that is surrounded by land. There is a lot of water in the world; in fact, water covers most of the earth’s surface. But, only a tiny part of the world’s water is freshwater, the kind of water you can drink.

Freshwater is found in streams, rivers, lakes, and ponds. The water in these streams, rivers, lakes, and ponds comes from rain and from melting ice and snow. Isn’t it amazing to think that the water from the drinking fountain at school or from the faucets in your house all comes from rain?

Freshwater habitats have many kinds of fish, birds, insects, and other animals. Some lakes have water lilies. A water lily is a plant that lives in water near the edges of ponds and lakes. Plants are important in freshwater habitats because they make oxygen for animals to breathe. Plants are also food for the animals to eat, and they can provide shelter to protect animals from their predators. The leaves of the water lily are very large, round, and green, and they float on the surface of the water. The water lily is well adapted for living in this habitat. The lily’s large leaves let it get as much sunlight as it needs for food and energy.

Lilies are also food for many animals. Animals—like deer, porcupines, beavers, and turtles—all eat the leaves, while ducks and geese like to eat their roots. Some animals, like fish and frogs, use the lily leaves as hiding places, and the flowers bring bees and other insects.

Another plant that lives in lakes is called a cattail. This plant gets its name from the unusual way it looks. Cattails have long, thin stems with foot-long, furry, flower spikes at the top that turn from green in the early summer to brown in the fall. The flower spike feels soft and furry and looks a little like a cat’s tail. The plants can reach up to nine feet in height, which lets them get as much sunlight as they need.

As with water lilies, some animals use cattails for food and shelter. Muskrats and geese 362
like to eat the roots of the cattail, and the juicy green shoots are a favorite of moose and 381
elk. Many kinds of birds make their homes among the cattails. Cattails grow so thickly, so 397
it's a good place for birds to build their nests and to lay and hatch their eggs. Predators like 416
snakes and frogs also live among the cattails and search for animals like birds and insects 432
for food. 434

Word Count: 434

NAME: _____

QUESTIONS

DATE: _____

Comprehension Questions

“The Freshwater Habitat”

Assess each student’s comprehension of the selection by asking him or her to respond orally to the following questions one on one with you:

1. **Literal** Where does freshwater come from?
 - » rain and melting ice and snow
2. **Literal** Why are plants important in the freshwater habitat?
 - » They make oxygen for animals to breathe; they provide shelter to animals; they provide food to animals.
3. **Evaluative** Why might the freshwater habitat be described as active?
 - » Many plants and animals live there.

20. “Confucius”

Long ago in China, a baby was born. Known as Confucius, he was born at a time 17
when all of China was experiencing great troubles. China, an enormous country, was 30
divided into small areas ruled by many different leaders. No two leaders agreed with one 45
another. They formed large armies and fought long wars against one another. Robbers 58
rode through the countryside hurting other people. Greedy leaders wanted to conquer all 71
of China for their own selfish reasons. 78

Confucius was born into a poor family more than two thousand years ago. His father 93
died when he was very young. His mother believed that education was important and 107
made sure that he learned from the wise teachers in his village. Confucius also taught 122
himself many subjects. He learned that China had not always been so divided. It had 137
once been a peaceful, united country ruled by wise men who wanted to help their people. 153
Confucius began to dream of a time when people could live in a peaceful land led by wise 171
sages once again. He wanted to spread the word that it was possible to live without wars 188
and confusion. He wanted to give people hope for a better tomorrow. 200

Confucius decided to spend his life educating others and teaching them how to 213
live in a more peaceful way. As he taught his students how to build a peaceful country, 230
Confucius would often begin his lessons by asking them to start with their own families. 245
Confucius reasoned that if people could not get along in small groups, how could they 260
expect their leaders to control the behavior of whole cities and towns? Confucius believed 274
that if people always treated one another with kindness, the world would be a better place. 290
Confucius also believed that if leaders were able to stop all wars, feed the hungry, and 306
make sure that people were safe in their cities and towns, everyone could live in a happier 323
world. 324

In addition, Confucius believed that education was very important. He thought that 336
it was necessary to study and learn all the time. In ancient China, only people with money 353
were allowed to go to school. Confucius thought that this was wrong. He believed that 368
all people, rich and poor, should have equal opportunities to learn. Learning never stops, 382
according to Confucius. 385

Word Count: 385

NAME: _____

QUESTIONS

DATE: _____

Comprehension Questions

“Confucius”

Assess each student’s comprehension of the selection by asking him or her to respond orally to the following questions one on one with you:

1. **Literal** What did Confucius begin to dream of?
 - » a time when people could live in a peaceful land led by wise sages once again
2. **Literal** What did Confucius believe about education?
 - » that all people should have an equal opportunity to learn
3. **Inferential** What was China like when Confucius was born?
 - » troubled and divided, with fighting everywhere

21. “China’s Great Wall”

Long ago, in the cold, northern lands beyond the boundaries of China, a group of nomads lived by raising animals. They rode on horses, herding sheep and goats in search of grass for grazing. Life was hard for these nomadic people. Perhaps that is why they became such fierce warriors. They regularly crossed into China on horseback, stealing food, gold, and animals.

The Chinese thought of many ways to keep the attackers out. All along the northern border of China they built walls of earth, stone, and wood. The materials they used depended upon what was readily available in the areas where they lived. For hundreds of years, the Chinese built many separate walls to keep out northern invaders. But it was not until the rule of China’s “First Emperor” that the decision was made to connect the many walls together into one long wall. That was over two thousand years ago.

Work continued on the Great Wall for another fifteen hundred years! Soldiers, prisoners, and peasants struggled to obey the orders of each new and powerful emperor of China who wanted to finish the wall. It was not an easy task. The wall stretched out across the land, often built on the highest ground, like mountain ridges, to make it even more difficult for invaders to cross. The work was very dangerous, and many workers died in the process.

Spanning four thousand miles across northern China, the Great Wall was built to act like a fort. At places along the way, watchtowers were built. At one time there were nearly twenty-five thousand watchtowers. Soldiers kept watch for invading warriors. If they sensed danger, they used flags and drums to send signals from tower to tower.

With all of that hard work, do you think the Great Wall protected the Chinese as 302
planned? It did for much of Chinese history. There were times, however, when some 316
determined warriors broke through the wall. On two occasions, lasting for hundreds of 329
years each, nomads from Central Asia forced the Chinese people to live under their rule. 344

Word Count: 344

NAME: _____

QUESTIONS

DATE: _____

Comprehension Questions

“China’s Great Wall”

Assess each student’s comprehension of the selection by asking him or her to respond orally to the following questions one on one with you:

1. ***Inferential*** Why did the Chinese begin to build walls?
 - » to keep out the nomads and attackers who were stealing food, gold, and animals
2. ***Literal*** Why was it difficult to build the Great Wall?
 - » because it was very long and was often built on the highest ground
3. ***Literal*** Did the Great Wall protect the Chinese as planned? How do you know?
 - » For much of Chinese history it did. However, there were times when determined warriors broke through the wall.

22. “The History of Writing in China”

Instead of using letters from the alphabet, the Chinese language uses characters. A 13
character is a symbol or picture used in a system of writing to represent spoken words. 29
Each character represents a different spoken word or group of words. There are over 43
fifty-six thousand Chinese symbols, or characters, compared to the twenty-six symbols, 54
or letters, of the English alphabet. Most Chinese use only eight thousand in their everyday 69
lives. 70

The writing system used in China today is very much like the one developed in the 86
Yellow River Valley over three thousand years ago. It is quite remarkable to think that the 102
Chinese are still writing with many of the same characters that their ancestors used many 117
years ago. 119

How do we know that the Chinese writing system has survived all these years? Well, 134
it has to do with a recent discovery of a most unusual writing surface. Today you write on 152
paper. But Chinese farmers, digging in their fields, unearthed writing on a surface quite 166
different from paper. 169

This unusual writing surface is bone! Long before paper was invented, the Chinese 182
used ox bones and the hard protective underbellies of large river tortoises. For thousands 196
of years, the Chinese also wrote on clay pottery, metal vases, silk cloth, wood, and bamboo 212
strips. Bamboo, a woody plant that grows like a weed, was split and scraped to make the 229
smooth, writing surface. 232

The Chinese invented paper! The first paper was made from a rope-like plant. This 246
first paper was very thick and rough. They continued to experiment with other materials, 260
like tree bark, fishing nets, wheat stalks, and cloth rags. They wanted to create a softer, 276
smoother, lighter writing surface. Finally, a man discovered the right combination of 288
materials for a paper that was just right and less expensive to create. 301

After creating a good paper, Chinese inventors came up with a solution for printing 315
more books. Block printing was invented. The text, written on a thin piece of paper, 330
was glued facedown to a wooden block. Then, each character was carved out to make a 346
woodblock printing plate. A separate block was created for each page of the book. If you 362
made a mistake, you had to start all over again! The method wasn't perfect for sure, but 379
the Chinese never gave up. Over the years they developed better methods that spread 393
throughout the world. 396

Word Count: 396

NAME: _____

QUESTIONS

DATE: _____

Comprehension Questions

“The History of Writing in China”

Assess each student’s comprehension of the selection by asking him or her to respond orally to the following questions one on one with you:

1. **Literal** What is a character?
 - » a symbol or picture used in a system of writing to represent spoken words
2. **Literal** What are two writing surfaces historically used in China?
 - » Answers may vary, but should include two of the following: bone; underbellies of large river tortoises; clay pottery; metal vases; silk cloth; wood; bamboo strips
3. **Inferential** Why did the Chinese continue to experiment with other materials for making paper?
 - » The first paper was very thick and rough and the Chinese wanted to create a softer, smoother, lighter writing surface.

23. “The Importance of Silk”

Explorers risked their lives, traveling out from Europe, Asia, and Africa, in search of new lands and people. These explorers were not disappointed by what they found. Their discoveries included new types of clothing, tools, and everyday objects. And, as so often happens when people encounter new things, they wanted what the others had.

Thus, trade began between people from different lands. Over time, people from one area of the world started to take the same paths for trade to other areas of the world. One of the longest and most important trade routes was a web of roads known as The Silk Roads. These roads joined towns and shipping ports along the Mediterranean Sea and East Africa, to towns in the northernmost parts of China. For many hundreds of years, Chinese inventions spread to other continents along the five thousand miles of The Silk Roads.

Silk is a very fine cloth known for its light, strong texture. Silk is often used to make clothing, scarves, neckties, and decorative wall hangings. In fact, the Chinese used silk to send arrows flying on curved wooden bows, for musical instruments, and for fishing lines. Silk is so strong that the early Chinese even used it for paper and money! But silk is not a good material for building roads.

The name “The Silk Roads” has nothing to do with the material used to build the roads. Rather, this long network of roads was named for the beautiful silk fabric, invented by the Chinese. For many years silk was the main item traded on these roads. People wondered how to make this fabric. It had the ability to keep one warm in the winter and cool in the summer. They were willing to travel long distances over dangerous ground to buy and trade goods in exchange for the silk cloth. For many years, the Chinese kept how they made silk a deep secret.

Silk comes from special moths on mulberry trees. The moths are blind and unable to fly. They lay hundreds of tiny eggs, each about the size of a pinhead, on these leaves. When the eggs hatch, caterpillars appear and begin munching on the mulberry leaves. Each fattened caterpillar spins a single long thread around itself, forming a cocoon.

The Chinese discovered how to stop the growth of these caterpillars in order to make the fine, silk thread. Chinese women began collecting the eggs of the silkworms. Placing them in special trays, they fed chopped up mulberry leaves to the newly hatched caterpillars and waited for them to spin their cocoons. Once the spun cocoons rested for nine or ten days, they were baked to kill the caterpillars inside. Then the cocoons were plunged into hot water to loosen the thread so that it could be unwound and woven into fine cloth. This same process is still used in China and other silk-producing countries today.

Word Count: 484

NAME: _____

QUESTIONS

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Comprehension Questions

“The Importance of Silk”

Assess each student’s comprehension of the selection by asking him or her to respond orally to the following questions one on one with you:

1. **Literal** What were The Silk Roads?
 - » a long web of important trade routes, named for silk, the main item traded on these roads.
2. **Literal** What did people use silk to make?
 - » clothes, bows, musical instruments, and fishing line
3. **Inferential** What role do special moths play in the making of silk?
 - » The caterpillars of special moths are important for making silk. Nine or ten days after a caterpillar spins a cocoon, the spun cocoon is baked to kill the caterpillar inside. Then the cocoon is plunged into hot water to loosen the thread so it can be unwound and woven into a fine cloth.
4. **Evaluative** Why might the Chinese have kept the process of making silk a secret for as long as they could?
 - » Answers may vary, but could include that people were willing to travel long distances to buy and trade goods in exchange for the silk cloth. If the Chinese were the only ones who knew how to make this cloth, people would go to great lengths to get the cloth, which would mean the Chinese could trade for other things that may be worth even more than silk.

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