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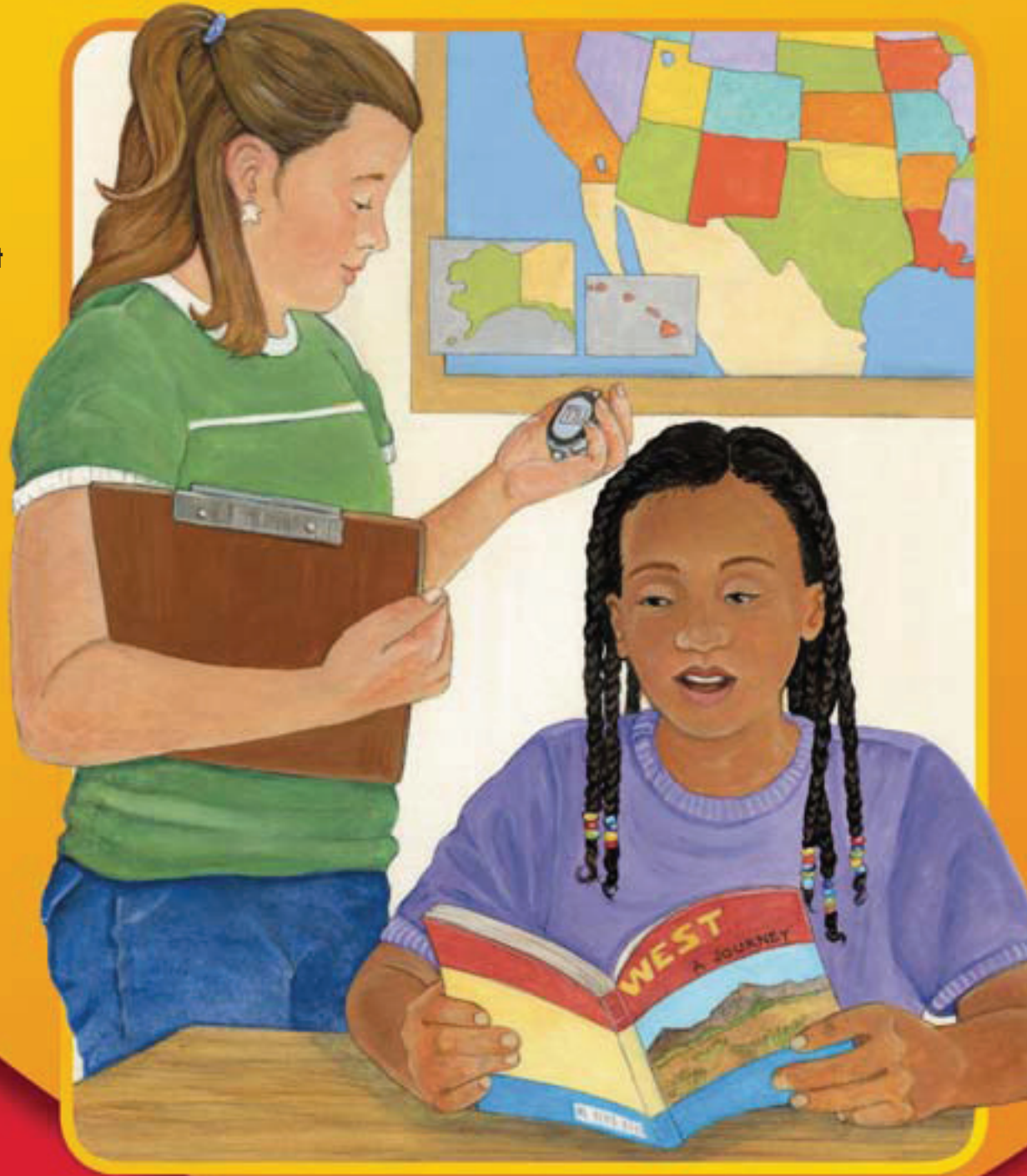
Language Arts

Grade 5

# Reading for Every Child Fluency



- Based on Reading First Research
- Activities for Fluency Development
- Includes Assessments and Rubrics





# Reading for Every Child **Fluency**

Grade 5

by  
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# Reading First

The Reading First program is part of the No Child Left Behind Act. This program is based on research by the National Reading Panel that identifies five key areas for early reading instruction—phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.

## **Phonemic Awareness**

Phonemic awareness focuses on a child’s understanding of letter sounds and the ability to manipulate those sounds. Listening is a crucial component, as the emphasis at this level is on sounds that are heard and differentiated in each word the child hears.

## **Phonics**

After students recognize sounds that make up words, they must then connect those sounds to *written text*. An important part of phonics instruction is systematic encounters with letters and letter combinations.

## **Fluency**

Fluent readers are able to recognize words quickly. They are able to read aloud with expression and do not stumble over words. The goal of fluency is to read more smoothly and with *comprehension*.

## **Vocabulary**

In order to understand what they read, students must first have a solid base of vocabulary words. As students increase their vocabulary knowledge, they also increase their comprehension and fluency.

## **Comprehension**

Comprehension is “putting it all together” to understand what has been read. With both fiction and nonfiction texts, students become active readers as they learn to use specific comprehension strategies before, during, and after reading.

# Getting the Facts on Fluency

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 supports research-based practices in five key areas of instruction: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. **Reading fluency is the ability to read material quickly, accurately, and with understanding.**

Is reading the newspaper one of your favorite ways to spend a chilly weekend morning? Do you like to curl up on the couch with a favorite novel or magazine at the end of the day? One of the reasons you enjoy reading is that you are a *fluent* reader. The ability to read text fluently is an important skill. Students with a high level of fluency are more likely to enjoy reading. Why? Because fluent readers comprehend what they read. Students who are not spending all their time decoding words can think about the content and meaning of what they are reading.

Your fifth-grade classroom probably has quite a few fluent readers. There also may be some struggling readers in your classroom. Many of them think they just don't like to read. Your challenge as their teacher is to help them to develop the skills they need to develop fluency. Chances are good that they will start to like reading when they become fluent readers. So how do you begin?

## Defining Fluency

A good place to begin talking about fluency is to define it. The National Institute for Literacy (NIFL) funded a document titled *Put Reading First*, which was published by the Partnership for Reading. The findings and conclusions were drawn from the National Reading Panel's report in 2000. *Put Reading First* defines fluency as "the ability to read a text accurately and quickly." Fluency involves accuracy, expression, phrasing, speed, and automaticity (fast, effortless word recognition). When reading aloud, fluent readers sound as if they were engaged in conversation.

Fluency provides a bridge between word recognition and comprehension. Fluent readers are not focused on decoding. Their attention is on making connections between the text and their own prior knowledge. They are making meaning from print; they are comprehending it. As you are reading right now, you are decoding words automatically while comprehending the text. Two or more complex tasks are being performed simultaneously. Less fluent readers are focused on decoding (word recognition) to such a degree that little attention is left to make meaning and comprehension suffers. You can hear their word-by-word laborious reading as they move through the text with little expression or understanding. Even one task in addition to word recognition is difficult for this reader.

Fluency is a benchmark in most Academic Content Standards for the English Language Arts. Fifth-grade fluent readers should be able to increase their rate of oral reading, increase sight vocabulary, read more demanding text with greater ease, show appropriate pause, pitch, stress, and intonation, and increase proficiency in silent reading.

### **What Makes a Fluent Reader?**

Fluency can change in certain situations. A very effective fluent reader can become less fluent if presented with a highly technical text containing unfamiliar words and ideas. In that situation, reading becomes slow, labored, and very focused on word recognition as the reader struggles along. Reading with meaning would certainly be compromised. Knowing that any fluent reader can become less fluent when reading difficult or unfamiliar texts makes us aware of the necessity for providing texts at appropriate levels—even easy levels—for the purpose of teaching fluency.

Fluent readers read faster, more accurately, with intonation and in phrases. Reading rate is a general measure of fluency. As children progress, the number of words read per minute (wpm) increases. Even though slower readers may spend more time on task, they probably comprehend less. Struggling readers are frequently given the pronunciation and meaning a word they don't know, and they learn to anticipate that this will be done for them. This behavior fosters more word-by-word reading as they await reassurance from another reader.



## **Struggling Readers**

Struggling readers read less than more successful readers because they often cannot read the classroom basal text or engage in reading other text independently. This situation serves to widen the gap between readers. All readers need to practice reading at a level where they feel safe and comfortable with text. Increased independent reading results in increased word recognition. Increasing word recognition leads to more fluent reading and improved comprehension. Conversely, if a child's energy is spent identifying words, his or her comprehension and response to the text is hindered. According to Nathan and Stanovich (1991), "When processes of word recognition take little capacity (are fluent), most of the reader's cognitive capacity can be focused on comprehending the text, criticizing it, elaborating on it, and reflecting on it—in short, doing all the things we know good readers do" (p. 176).

## **Acquisition of Fluency**

There are many factors that contribute to the acquisition of fluency. Some children come from homes where stories, nursery rhymes, and poems are read to them from the moment they arrive at home from the hospital and sometimes even before that! Lap reading is extremely important in developing knowledge of print and in hearing fluent reading modeled. Children who come from homes that are "print rich" are exposed to multiple experiences with good modeled reading and many opportunities to recite familiar text. Have you listened to young children who memorize a favorite book and "read it" aloud? They have many occasions to reread the same passages. Reading with expression is learned by mimicking the way an experienced reader reads a story.

Technology has allowed for the creation of many types of electronic books. For struggling readers, listening to stories read aloud provides a model of fluent reading while the student follows along with the written text. When students access individual words on demand, the supported text acts as if a fluent reader were assisting the reader. Materials at the listening level can be read easily. Fluency, sight word vocabulary, and comprehension can all increase from repeated use of audio texts.



## Developing Fluency

The passages, poems, scripts, and real-life reading activities included in this book are designed to help improve fluency—which will lead to improved comprehension as well. The book includes different methods of reading and different skills to help build fluency. Each of these will be discussed on the following pages.

### Methods of Reading

- repeated reading
- modeled reading
- partner reading
- echo reading
- choral reading

### Skills for Fluency

- speed (words per minute)
- vocabulary
- comprehension
- expression

## Repeated Reading

One of the simplest ways to increase your students' fluency is to have them read out loud again and again and again. The more often they read a text, the more comfortable they become with the language. The more comfortable they become with the language, the more likely they will be able to attend to the *meaning* of what they read.

## Modeled Reading

In modeled reading, the teacher (or other adult helper) works one-on-one with the student, usually sitting side by side. Ideally, both teacher and student will have a copy of the same text. The teacher reads the text first. The student follows along in his or her copy of the text by moving an index card along each line. Then the student reads the text solo back to the teacher. When the student stumbles on a word, the teacher immediately steps in and says the word or phrase, gives a brief definition, and has the student repeat it before continuing with the reading.

## **Partner Reading**

Working with a partner is a great way for students to build fluency. You can pair a stronger reader with a struggling one, or pair two struggling readers with an aide or adult helper. Partner reading gives students the chance to work on the same text as they try to improve their speed, expression, and comprehension of that text. Having a fellow student to work with may be less threatening for some students than working one-on-one with a teacher.

## **Echo Reading**

Echo reading can be done with the teacher and one student or the teacher and group of students. It should not last more than twenty minutes at a time. The teacher and the student must have a copy of the material being read in front of them. Ideally, the reading material should be slightly above the reader's ability level. The teacher starts by reading one sentence fluently, using good speed and expression. The teacher may read the one sentence several times before the students read the sentence back to the teacher imitating the same fluency, expression, and speed.

## **Choral Reading**

In choral reading, the teacher starts by reading a passage, paragraph, or page from the text in its entirety. The readers follow along in their copy of the text using an index card to track line by line. Then the teacher and students read the text out loud together, with the student imitating the teacher's fluency, speed, and expression.

When students are reading, they may simply omit words that give them a lot of trouble. This will not be noticeable in a large group (unless everyone struggles with the same word!), so it is a good way to get all students to practice reading out loud without the pressure of a one-on-one session where they are the only reader. The number of words students omit should decrease the more often they read the passage.



## Poetry for Fluency Practice

Poetry lends itself well to choral reading and also repeated oral readings. It is a great way to expose students to good descriptive writing, metaphors, similes, rhythm, and the power of words. Have students bring in favorite poems to share, write poems on their own, and locate poems about specific subjects that you are studying in your classroom. I feature a “Poem of the Week” each week during the school year to improve reading fluency.

At the beginning of the year, I have each student create a “poetry folder.” Students are responsible for keeping a copy of the “Poem of the Week” in the folder. We read our featured poem every day when we are moving between math and reading. I have found that reading a poem during the same time helps make the transition easier. Repeating the poem on a daily basis also improves fluency, and an added bonus is that many students will begin to memorize the poem after several readings.

At the beginning of the year, the poems were fairly short and selected by me, but by the end of the year many of our poems were selected by the students. I start by reading the poem out loud to students (read aloud) and then we read the poem several times as a class (choral reading). I make sure that I have a transparency of the poem so that I can model following along with the text of the poem as we read it. After we read the poem several times, I ask students some comprehension questions about the poem to be sure they are reading with understanding.

### Some Fun Reads for Developing Fluency

- lyrics to favorite songs
- choruses to favorite songs
- poetry
- parts of short stories or novels
- short rhymes or riddles
- jokes
- picture books

## **Speed (Words per Minute)**

One of the goals of fluency is to read smoothly, at a manageable speed. Readers who are fluent do not stumble over each word, stopping to read and reread sections of the text. The section on assessing fluency (beginning on page 12) will give you some ways to evaluate your students' words per minute. Remember, however, that the goal of fluency is not simply to read faster and faster. It is to read *with understanding*.

## **Vocabulary**

In order to read at a manageable speed, students must have a full base of vocabulary words to draw from. The more words students know, the less they will trip up as they are reading. If you spend time picking apart a particular passage and focusing on each word that the student does not know, you will most definitely see improvements in fluency on each repeated reading. The more students hear *you* say a word and the more they hear that word *in context*, the more comfortable they will be when they see that word in text.

## **Expression**

One of the goals of fluency is also to read with style. Readers who speak every word monotone—even if they do so with good speed and understanding—are not particularly fun to listen to! The activities in this book focus on character voices and the readers' theater scripts are great ways to get your students to read with expression. Often the expression with which someone reads a text can be another way to unlock comprehension for students as they note the words or phrases that are emphasized a certain way.

## **Comprehension**

In the end, comprehension is the goal of fluency. The goal of reading is to understand what has been read. Fluent readers are able to make meaning from what they read almost right away *as they read*. Because they do not struggle over individual words (or at least not too many of them!), they are able to focus attention on what the text is saying.



# Assessing Fluency

One of the best and easiest ways to assess students' reading fluency is to listen to each child in your class read. You can take timed samples of students' reading. Set your stopwatch, and ask students to read one of the passages on pages 16–21. Time students for one minute. Make a mark to show where they stopped. As they read, note any places read with particularly notable expression or where they stumble over words. After students read the passage, they should be able to answer the comprehension questions that follow each passage. Use the table below to help you interpret the results.

<b>Median Oral Reading Rates for Students in Grade 5 (Words per Minute)</b>			
<b>Percentile</b>	<b>Fall WPM</b>	<b>Winter WPM</b>	<b>Spring WPM</b>
75	126	143	151
50	105	118	128
25	77	93	100

From Jerry L. Johns, *Basic Reading Inventory, 8th Edition*. Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall/Hunt Publishing, 2001, p. 38.

If you find students who are below where they need to be, repeated practice using the activities in this book will help them gain fluency. Keep a record of words per minute (WPM) and the date so students have a tangible way to track their progress.

Another way to improve fluency is to use rubrics. By providing a clear statement of what makes fluent reading and giving students frequent practice using those criteria, you will increase their ability to self-assess and correct errors. Pages 13–15 contain rubrics for both teacher and student use.

# NAEP Oral Reading Fluency Scale

<b>Level 4</b>	Reads primarily in larger, meaningful phrase groups. Although some regressions, repetitions, and deviations from text may be present, these do not appear to detract from the overall structure of the story. Preservation of the author's syntax is consistent. Some or most of the story is read with expressive interpretation.
<b>Level 3</b>	Reads primarily in three- or four-word phrase groups. Some smaller groupings may be present. However, the majority of phrasing seems appropriate and preserves the syntax of the author. Little or no expressive interpretation is present.
<b>Level 2</b>	Reads primarily in two-word phrases with some three- or four-word groupings. Some word-by-word reading may be present. Word groupings may seem awkward and unrelated to larger context of sentence or passage.
<b>Level 1</b>	Reads primarily word-by-word. Occasional two-word or three-word phrases may occur, but these are infrequent and/or they do not preserve meaningful syntax.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. *Listening to Children Read Aloud*, 15. Washington, D.C.: 1995.



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

Partner Name \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Passage \_\_\_\_\_

## Partner Rubric

Listen to a friend read a passage or short section of a book. Then answer the following questions. Go over this rubric with your partner.

1. My partner paused when he/she saw periods in the text.

always      most of the time      not very often      never

2. My partner recognized all punctuation marks (commas, semicolons, exclamation points, question marks).

always      most of the time      not very often      never

3. My partner read each word in the passage smoothly and without stumbling.

always      most of the time      not very often      never

4. My partner read with expression.

always      most of the time      not very often      never

5. My partner grouped words appropriately.

always      most of the time      not very often      never

6. My partner is able to answer questions about the passage.

always      most of the time      not very often      never



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

Name of Passage \_\_\_\_\_

# Fluency Self-Assessment

Answer the following questions after you read a passage and/or section of a book.

1. I stopped at all periods.

yes      sometimes      no

2. I noticed and attended to all punctuation marks (commas, semicolons, exclamation points, question marks).

yes      sometimes      no

3. I read different voices (characters) using different tones.

yes      sometimes      no

4. I read the passage with expressiveness. (The passage would be fun and entertaining for someone else to listen to.)

yes      sometimes      no

5. I recognized most words in the passage.

yes      sometimes      no

6. I had to sound out quite a few words in the passage.

yes      sometimes      no

7. I was able to go back quickly and reread parts of the passage that were confusing.

yes      sometimes      no

8. I was able to group words together in a way that made sense.

yes      sometimes      no



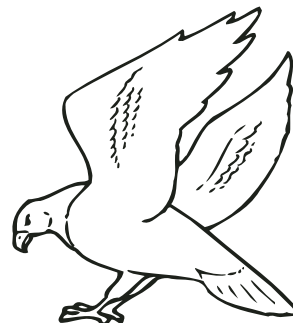
# Summer on Fire Island

**Directions:** See how much of the passage below you can read in one minute. Have a partner time you. Put a mark to show where you stopped. Then answer the questions on page 17.

The last thing Marty wanted to do was spend the month of July with her dad on Fire Island. The island, located sixteen miles off the coast of Portland, Maine, could be described only one way—boring! Her dad lived in a small two-room cabin on the beach with no television! It wasn't like Fire Island was filled with things to do, either.

"You have got to be kidding!" Marty had shouted when she first learned that one month of her summer vacation would be spent isolated on the island. No restaurants, no movie theater, and one little grocery store—not exactly Marty's idea of fun. A ferry brought mail and groceries to Fire Island every other day and transported islanders back and forth to the mainland for a small fee. Marty pictured herself riding the ferry to Portland every time it arrived.

Much to Marty's surprise, her month on the island turned out much better than she expected. The first week, her dad taught her to kayak. She found riding the ocean waves and kayaking down long open stretches of water very peaceful. The only sounds were the gentle splash of waves and the cheery squawks of seagulls. The only grocery store in town made the best cucumber and cream cheese sandwiches Marty had ever tasted and the gooiest cinnamon rolls anywhere. Marty met three girls just her age who loved to spend the morning swimming and jumping the waves. The ferry brought over a large selection of movies twice a week that the girls could browse through. They would select several to watch on hot summer evenings after their wonderful days at the beach. When the month of July ended, instead of hating Fire Island, Marty found herself asking, "May I stay for the month of August, too?"





# Summer on Fire Island

**Directions:** Use the passage on page 16 to answer the questions.

1. Find the place where you stopped reading. Count all of the words that come *before* that mark. This tells you how many words you read in one minute, or your **words per minute**. Write the number below.

words per minute (first reading) \_\_\_\_\_

2. Go back to the passage. Read all the way from the beginning to the end. Underline any words you do not know. Then look up each word in a dictionary and write its meaning beside it. Reread the passage, then answer the questions below.
3. Why did Marty think she would hate spending the month of July on Fire Island?

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4. Based on the clues in the passage, what does the word *isolated* mean?

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5. List three things that Marty ended up liking about Fire Island.

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6. Read the passage out loud again while someone times you for one minute. Now how many words per minute did you read? Did your reading fluency improve?

words per minute (second reading) \_\_\_\_\_



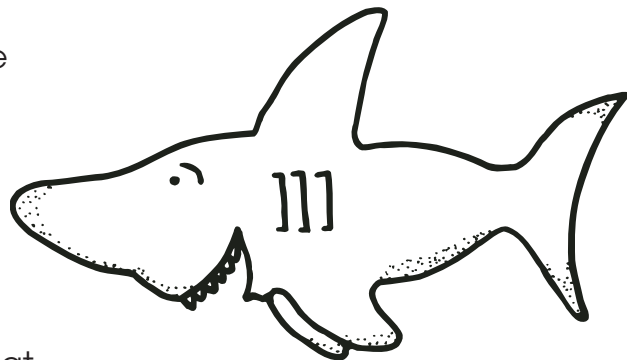
# The Great White Shark

**Directions:** See how much of the passage below you can read in one minute. Have a partner time you. Put a mark to show where you stopped. Then answer the questions on page 19.

Have you seen the movie *Jaws*? *Jaws* is a story about a great white shark. There are about 370 different types of sharks, some very small and some very large, but probably the most famous is the great white shark. Great white sharks can live in any ocean but usually prefer cooler, deeper waters to warmer water. However, if the water gets *too* cold they are likely to move to warmer waters. When people are swimming in the ocean, some worry about seeing a great white, but the chances of that are quite slim. Many scientists believe that there are fewer than ten thousand great white sharks in the entire world. Australia recently added the great white shark to its list of endangered animals.

Why are people so scared of great white sharks? The movie *Jaws* is probably one of the reasons, but another reason is the shark's size. Great white sharks frequently measure about fifteen feet in length and can weigh about fourteen hundred pounds. Because of the great white's size, it usually preys on large animals like sea lions or seals.

Great white sharks do not have particularly good eyesight—it is especially difficult for them to see long distances. One of the reasons they will occasionally prey on humans is that they mistake a human being for one of the large sea animals they like to eat.



A keen sense of hearing is probably the most helpful sense to a great white shark as it is hunting. They can hear their food from miles away. Great white sharks consume about eleven tons of food during the year.



# The Great White Shark

**Directions:** Use the passage on page 18 to answer the questions.

1. Find the place where you stopped reading. Count all of the words that come before that mark. This tells you how many words you read in one minute, or your words per minute. Write the number below.

words per minute (first reading) \_\_\_\_\_

2. Go back to the passage. Read all the way from the beginning to the end. Underline any words you do not know. Then look up each word in a dictionary and write its meaning beside it. Reread the passage, then answer the questions below.

3. Why might people be afraid of great white sharks?

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4. What sense is most likely to help a great white shark catch its prey?

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5. Based on the clues in this passage, what is the meaning of the word *keen*?

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6. Read the passage out loud again while someone times you for one minute. Now how many words per minute did you read? Did your reading fluency improve?

words per minute (second reading) \_\_\_\_\_



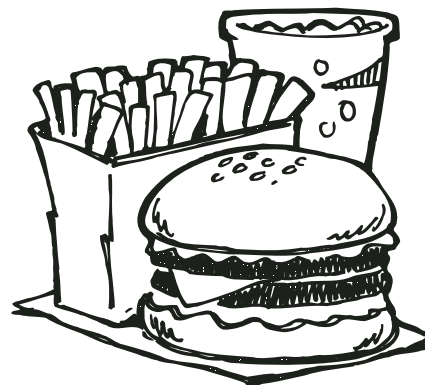
# Cafeteria Food

**Directions:** Read this passage three times. Record the amount of time it takes you to read this passage each time. Ask a partner to set a stopwatch. Did your fluency and the amount of time it took you to read this passage change each time you read it? Why or why not?

Jeremy and Liz were tired of their school’s cafeteria food. They felt like the same foods were offered day after day and week after week. “What should we do?” Jeremy asked his dad one day after school. Jeremy’s dad was an excellent cook with good ideas about a lot of things. “Why don’t you ask other students at your school what they think about the food that is being served now and see what different foods they might like to have served,” his dad suggested. Jeremy told Liz the idea; they decided to do it. They set up a questionnaire for their classmates asking them to answer questions about cafeteria food.

The questionnaire was a big success. Almost all the students at school filled one out. Jeremy and Liz compiled all the information and set up a meeting with the cafeteria staff. They started by complimenting the staff for the students’ favorite meals. Then they talked about some of the changes they thought might help the cafeteria. The cafeteria staff was impressed with Jeremy and Liz’s hard work. They promised to take two meals that many students complained about and cut them off of the menu. They also decided to make one day of the week “Student’s Choice.” The lunch menu for that day would feature a dish that was suggested by one or more students.

One year later, Jeremy and Liz asked their peers to fill in a second survey about cafeteria food. The cafeteria got much more favorable comments and almost every student mentioned how much they liked “Student Choice” day. Jeremy and Liz were proud that they had made a difference.





# Keep in Touch

**Directions:** See how much of this passage you can read in one minute. Ask a partner to time you. Make a star next to the place you stop. Now, read the passage again. Make a small dot showing where you get the second time. Look up any words you do not know. Read the passage a third time. Were you able to read more of the passage the first, second, or third time? Why? Make notes of your observations on the back of this sheet.

What would your life be like without e-mail, a cell phone, or access to the Web? Fifteen years ago, many people had never heard of e-mail or the Internet. Mobile phones were much less common and were usually quite large. Before these advances in technology, people communicated via telephone or letters. When students went away to college, it was much more difficult for them to stay in close contact with their friends. They might see them over holiday break or send a letter during the semester, but often that was the only contact they had. Long-distance calls could get expensive. This type of communication was used in the business world as well. If a technician was doing research in a lab and he needed to make contact with another lab across the country, he would have to pick up the phone and make a long-distance call.



Life today is very different. People all around the globe are much more connected. E-mail and instant messaging make it so people can communicate instantly across the miles. Many cell phone plans are set up so the charges are no different for calling your next-door neighbor than they are for calling your Aunt Louise six states over. These days, many people are able to *telecommute*, or work from home, since they are able to stay in touch throughout the day via e-mail and cell phones. People are getting more and more in touch. One of the newest gadgets is a cell phone with a map that shows the caller on the other end of the phone your exact location. Now, how is that for keeping in touch?



# Summer Camp in Context

**Directions:** Read the passage below. Pay careful attention to the words in bold. On the first line next to each word, guess what you think each word means based on its context. Then look each word up in the dictionary. On the second line, write the dictionary meaning of each word. Now read the passage again. Did knowing the meaning of the words in bold improve your fluency? Why or why not?

Each summer Jahan spent three weeks at overnight camp in upstate New York. He always looked forward to this escape from the city noise. There were no cell phones ringing, sirens **blaring**, or subways rumbling at camp. Rather than spending most of his day inside at school, Jahan spent **countless** hours outside kayaking, swimming, and hiking. He **bonded** with his "summer friends," people he saw only during those three weeks of camp every year. Because he spent such an **immense** amount of time with them doing such adventurous things, he considered many of them his best friends. The first year going away for camp had been terrifying, but now it was something Jahan looked forward to with **anticipation** rather than **dread**.



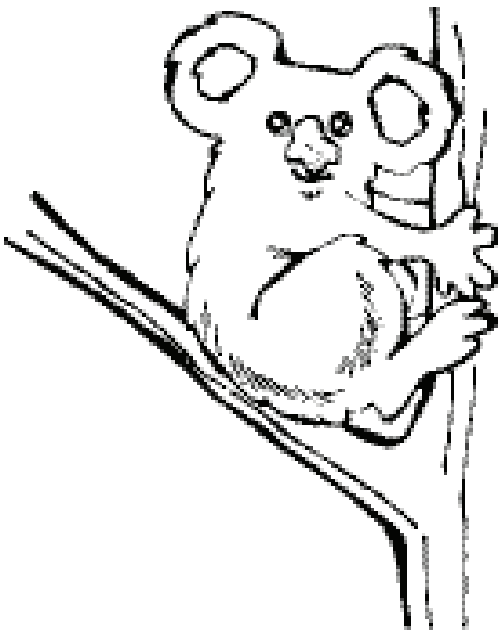
1. blaring \_\_\_\_\_
2. countless \_\_\_\_\_
3. bonded \_\_\_\_\_
4. immense \_\_\_\_\_
5. anticipation \_\_\_\_\_
6. dread \_\_\_\_\_





# Koalas in Context

**Directions:** Read the passage and underline all the words that you do not know. What do you think each word means based on the clues in the passage? Now, look up each word in the dictionary. Were you right? What sorts of clues in the passage helped you guess the meaning of each word? Read the passage again. Did your fluency improve once you knew the meaning of all the words in the passage? Why or why not?



Do you like koala bears? Their teddy-bear appearance makes them a favorite among animal lovers. Where are you most likely to find a koala bear? In Australia, munching on eucalyptus leaves. Even though there are about eight hundred different types of eucalyptus trees, koala bears are very picky eaters. They only like to eat the leaves from about thirty-five of the different tree species. Koala bears smell individual leaves on eucalyptus trees to determine if the leaf is one of the species they like to eat. Koala bears not only eat eucalyptus leaves, they also live in eucalyptus trees. Their curved claws make them particularly good at climbing around in their habitat. Their paws also enable them to grasp tree branches and swing between trees that are close together.

**Words I Do Not Know****What They Mean**


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# Words in Context

**Directions:** Read each sentence. Write the meaning of each word in **bold** on the line. Can you figure out the meaning of each word using context clues? Why or why not?

1. Yolanda **anticipated** with excitement the arrival of her baby cousin. She could hardly wait to introduce her cousin to her friends in the neighborhood.

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Maria's mom was being **recruited** by a large ad agency in Boston. The job seemed appealing, but Maria and her mom were not sure if they wanted to move to a new city.

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Leroy's **discontent** was obvious. He almost never smiled and seemed to dread waking up in the morning to go to school.

\_\_\_\_\_

4. When the Johnsons went on vacation, they always **boarded** their dog at the kennel so she would have a safe, warm place to sleep and be fed and walked properly.

\_\_\_\_\_

5. The van was designed to be handicap **accessible** so the Lane's wheelchair was able to move easily in and out of the vehicle.

\_\_\_\_\_

6. The game was delayed for several hours because of **inclement** weather. The rain was so hard and steady that the other team was having difficulty even getting to the field.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



# Getting Along

**Directions:** Ask a partner to read this passage to you. Circle all the words that you do not recognize when your partner is reading. Then you take a turn reading the passage while your partner circles words he or she does not recognize. Go over each of the word(s) you and your partner circled. Use a dictionary to find the meanings. Then take turns reading the passage a second time and discuss the questions that follow.

Have you ever had a fight with a friend? Fights are a natural part of knowing someone well, but they can hurt feelings and harm a friendship if you're not careful. Friends fight for many reasons. They might fight because they disagree about something. Disagreeing about things is natural. Disagreeing can even be good for friends since having a friend that sees something differently than you do allows you to see the other side of an issue or a problem.



Friends might also fight because one friend does something that annoys the other. For example, one friend might tell and retell a story that the other friend starts to find both boring and uninteresting. So what should you do if you have a fight with a friend? Your best bet is to talk it over and see if you can come up with a solution. Sometimes the best thing to do is apologize. Tell your friend you are sorry and will try not to make the same mistake again. Good friends are well worth the extra effort of working through a fight.

1. List three things that might cause you to get in a fight with a friend.

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2. How can disagreeing be good for friends?

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# Babysitting

**Directions:** Read this passage to a partner. Concentrate on reading with fluency and expression. Underline any words or phrases that are hard for you to read. After you read the passage, use a dictionary to determine the meanings of words you did not know. Write the meaning of each word in the margin. Then read the passage again.



Have you ever babysat for any of your neighbors or friends? Babysitting is an important job. It involves taking care of children while their parents are occupied or away from home. Babysitting is a good way to earn extra money. Most babysitters are paid by the hour, usually at a rate of five to ten dollars an hour depending on age and experience.

There are many traits good babysitters should possess. First, it is important to have a genuine love of children. If you enjoy being around children, you will have less trouble handling the difficult moments. Patience is also an important characteristic of a good babysitter. It can take several tries to get children to cooperate with what they need to do. It is also important that a babysitter be both responsible and trustworthy. You should always follow the rules set by the people who hired you. As you play with the children, you should try to keep the house in reasonable order and make each child's safety your top priority. Part of ensuring safety is to have a back-up number to call if you need extra assistance. The ability to stay calm in many different situations is also important for safety. You must be calm to make good decisions. A calm babysitter creates an environment where the children feel safe.

Does babysitting still sound like a good job for you? If it does, try posting a sign in your neighborhood advertising your skills and availability. Let your neighbors and friends know that you are looking for work. Babysitting can be a fun and rewarding job and is a good way to make extra money.

# Tips

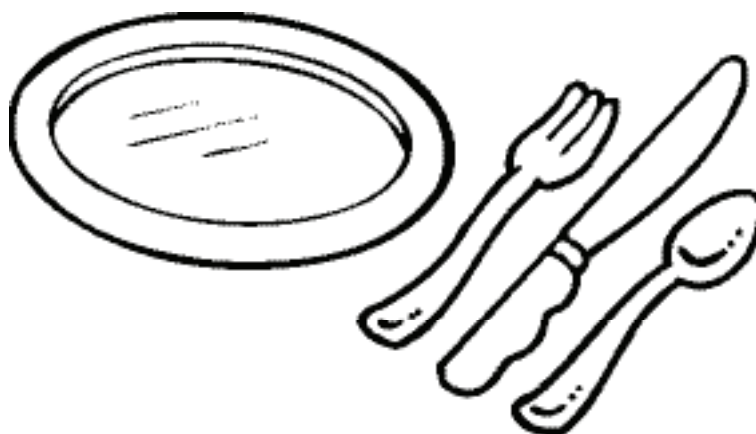
**Directions:** Try reading this passage out loud very fast to a partner. Then see if your partner can figure out what a 15 percent tip would be for a bill of \$15.50. Read the passage at a slower pace. Trade roles. Is it easier to understand something when a person reads slowly or quickly?

**Remember:** The goal of fluency isn't to read *faster*, it is to read smoothly and *with understanding*.

When you go out to eat at your favorite restaurant, chances are you leave your server a tip. Tips are important to waiters and waitresses because they make only a small amount of money per hour and rely heavily on tips to supplement this income.

How much should you tip your server? The general rule is 15 percent, assuming they do a decent job. If you make a large mess or require a lot of extra attention, you should probably tip 20 percent. So how do you determine 15 percent of your bill? There are several easy ways. Some people carry around a "tip calculator" card that gives a chart with different dollar amounts, along with the suggested tip amount for 15 and 20 percent. Other people multiply the cost of the meal by 0.15. Still others estimate what 10 percent of the bill is and then add half that amount again to come up with the tip.

Leaving the right tip shows your server that you appreciate good service and hard work.





# Directions

**Directions:** Have you ever read directions out loud while someone else tries to put together a new bike or some other item? Being able to read directions with fluency is an important lifelong skill. Pull out the directions for your favorite game, microwave snack, or piece of electronic equipment (such as a TV or CD player). Choose two different sets of directions. Read each one out loud. Then answer the following questions.



1. Which set of directions were you able to read with the most fluency? Why?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Why do you think you might pause frequently when reading directions? Why do you think this is of particular importance when you are reading directions?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. After reading the directions, do you think you could play the game or complete the task? Why or why not? (Knowing how to pronounce all of the words doesn't always mean you *understand* what you have read!)  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Which set of directions was the most difficult to understand? Choose one set of directions and rewrite it so it is easier to read. Then try reading the directions you have written out loud. Were you able to read them with more fluency than the original directions? Why or why not?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



# Say What?

**Directions:** The sentences below are written with the same words, but they may have very different meanings depending on where you put the emphasis when you read them. Say each sentence out loud, putting emphasis on the word in bold. Then match each letter to the correct situation below. The first one is done for you.

- Would** you like another glass of lemonade?
- Would you like another **glass** of lemonade?
- Would you like another glass of **lemonade**?

- \_\_\_ **b** \_\_\_ You can't drink it in a pitcher, but .
- \_\_\_ I thought you were joking, but . . .
- \_\_\_ I don't have any iced tea, but . . .



- My** birthday is tomorrow!
  - My **birthday** is tomorrow!
  - My birthday is **tomorrow**!
- \_\_\_ You are running out of time.
  - \_\_\_ Jordana birthday is next month, but . . .
  - \_\_\_ We can't go to Aunt Sarah's house then!





# The Visit

**Directions:** Read the passage below. Underline any words you do not know. Look them up in a dictionary and write the meaning in the margin near each word. Then read the letter out loud to a partner, using your best expressive voice. Use the punctuation to help you know how to read.

**period (.)**—pause

**comma (,)**—pause

**question mark (?)**—voice goes up slightly at end of sentence

**exclamation mark (!)**—emphasis or excitement

Dear Mario,

I am excited about visiting you in New York City next week. Thanks so much for the invitation! I will be on train number 971, arriving at Penn Station at 5:12 P.M. I plan to wear jeans and a red T-shirt, so I should be easy to spot. Will we take a subway or walk to your apartment? Thanks so much for meeting me. I do not want to get lost on my way!

What should I bring to wear to the play on Friday night? I am glad you were able to get tickets. Even though they were expensive, this is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. Sitting in the front row at a Broadway musical should be an incredible experience! I will reimburse you for both tickets when I arrive. Since you are hosting me in New York, the least I can do is buy your ticket to the play. Please e-mail me in the next day or so to let me know what I should wear. One thing I am definitely planning to bring—my Frisbee! I can't wait to play with you and your friends in Central Park.

Thanks again for planning the fun. I look forward to seeing you and your family soon.

Your friend,  
Jacob







# Wake Up!

**Directions:** How does your voice change when you ask someone a question? Read the following passage and underline each question. Then read the passage out loud. Pay attention to how your voice sounds when you read the underlined sentences. Then answer the questions that follow.

Do you like to sleep late or wake up when the sun rises? Everyone is different. Some people like to stay up into the wee hours of the night and wake up late in the morning. Others like to go to bed when the clock strikes nine and get up as soon as the sun rises. Can you imagine someone loving to stay up late *and* get up early? Probably not. Few people can do both since most bodies need about eight hours of sleep to function well. Whether you stay up late or wake up early depends on when you feel most active. Most people have certain times of day (or night!) when they feel most alert and ready for action. What time of day are you usually the most energetic?

It is useful to figure out if you are a morning person or an evening person. If you know your sleep habits, planning may be easier. Are you an early riser? Plan to get your homework done before



it's too late at night. Do you prefer to stay up late in the evening? If it is a school night, make sure that you get eight hours of sleep so you will be alert during the morning hours. Each body is unique. If you listen to your body, you are more likely to function at your best. What is your body telling you?

1. How does your voice change when you read a question? What did you notice?

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2. How could knowing your most energetic times of day help you do better at school?

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# Go Mom, Go!

**Directions:** Read this story out loud to yourself. Mark the places where you pause or say things with emphasis. Then read the story aloud to a partner. Did you like the sound of your voice as you were reading? Was the passage easy for your partner to understand? Perfect your expression and then read the passage aloud again.

Zach and Ellie carefully added star stickers and a giant smiling face to their large poster. “Grab your jackets, kids. It’s off to the race!” their dad shouted as he headed out the door. Zach and Ellie were close behind. They couldn’t wait to get to the sidelines and watch their mom in action. She had been training for the race, getting up early four mornings a week to run with a neighbor. Three miles, five miles, ten miles, twenty miles—the mileage just seemed to grow and grow. The time their mom was gone on Saturday mornings had grown, too. At the beginning, she was gone an hour. Then it was two. Today her goal was to finish the marathon in four-and-a-half hours. Four-and-a-half hours *running*—Zach and Ellie could hardly believe it!

The race was twenty-six miles long. The path the runners followed passed through the suburbs, circled around downtown, and ended in the middle of the city. At the end of the race, the runners were treated to a big party featuring a band, lemonade, and all sorts of good things to eat. Zach and Ellie had cheered their mom at the start of the race and followed a short distance. Now they were waiting at the end of the path. They could barely contain their excitement as they waited for their mom to pass. They held up their sign, “Go Mom, go!” and looked in the crowd of runners go by.

“I see her! I see her!” their dad shouted. Sure enough, down the road came their mom. Zach and Ellie smiled at each other and shouted together, “Go Mom, go!” as she ran by. She waved and blew them a kiss just before she crossed the finish line.





# Barn Owls

**Directions:** Read this passage silently two or three times. Then try reading it aloud. Imagine you are reading to a group of younger children. How can you change your voice to keep them interested in what you are reading? Underline certain sentences you want to emphasize. Then try out your best expressive reading by finding some younger kids to be your audience.



Name one place where you think you might find a barn owl. If you said a barn, you are exactly right! Barn owls frequently live in barns, hollow trees, the side of cliffs, and old houses. Barn owls are the most common type of owl in the world. They can be found all over the place, including many areas where humans live.

Barn owls can lay up to ten or eleven eggs at a time, but it is more common for them to lay between three and six eggs. The female barn owls sits on her eggs for about one month while the male barn owl brings her plenty of food, making sure that she is well fed. When baby barn owls hatch, they weigh less than an ounce. They depend totally on their mom and dad to take care of them. Barn owls work hard keeping their babies warm, safe, and well fed.

At about two weeks old, baby barn owls become a little more independent and they no longer need the constant attention of their parents. Their excellent eyesight and hearing are developed by the time they are one month old. At about this age, baby barn owls begin to fly. By the time barn owls are about a month or two old, they weigh as much as their parents. It will still be several months before the babies are able to leave the nest and live completely on their own.

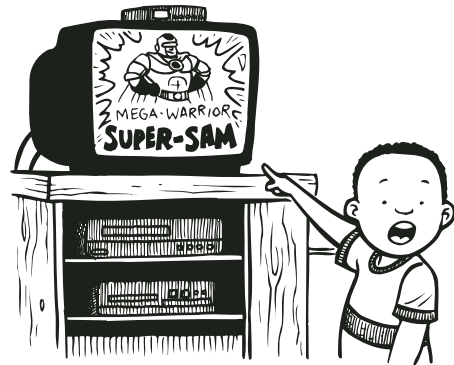


# Commercial Time

**Directions:** Take turns reading the passage while a partner times you. You will read the passage a total of three times. After each reading, record your results and answer the questions below.

Commercials try to convince you to buy things. They may try to get you to buy a specific brand of something that you need, like toilet paper. Or they may try to get you to buy something that you do not need at all, like an expensive video game. The people who make commercials try to make the item look like so much fun you start to think that you can't live without it.

Companies buy time on television by paying money to the television show or station that will run their commercial. Some television spots are more expensive than others. For example, a commercial during popular prime-time shows on a Thursday night would be much more expensive than a commercial at 4 A.M. on a Monday morning. Why? Since more people are watching television on a Thursday at 8 P.M. than on a Monday at 4 A.M., the commercial will reach a lot more people. Commercials can be fun to watch, but be careful that you are not swayed to buy an item that you don't really want or need!



**First reading** \_\_\_\_\_ minutes

Discuss words or phrases you had difficulty understanding.  
Look up any unknown words.

**Second reading** \_\_\_\_\_ minutes

Discuss the meaning of what you read. How do commercials affect the people who see them? Why do companies spend so much money on commercials?

**Third reading** \_\_\_\_\_ minutes

How did your speed and understanding improve after three readings?

# Getting Along

**Directions:** Read this passage out loud three times. After each reading, answer the questions below.

People who spend a lot of time together are bound to disagree every now and then. So what should you do if you get in an argument with a friend? There are three things that might help:

- (1) Try to talk it out with your friend. Explain how your feelings have been hurt and see if the two of you can resolve your problem.
- (2) Do something nice for your friend—apologize. Tell your friend you are sorry for what happened. Then explain how and why your feelings were hurt.
- (3) Ask a teacher, parent, or another grown-up for help solving your problem.

It is natural for friends to disagree, but it is important to learn how to talk in a way that can help you solve the problem instead of making things worse. Then you can go back to what the two of you do best—being friends!

## First reading

Mark any words or phrases you had difficulty understanding. Look up any unknown words.

## Second reading

Think about the meaning of what you read. What is the best way to fix a disagreement with a friend? Why is it important to deal with it right away?

## Third reading

How can you change your expression as you read to make this passage more interesting to a listener? Find a friend and try it out!





# Looking for Summer Employment

**Directions:** Take turns reading this passage out loud three times with a partner. After each reading, answer the questions below.

Luis was hoping to earn some money over summer vacation. He made a flyer with different jobs he would like to do and delivered them to fifty apartments in his building. He also posted signs at the local deli and the subway station. He waited three days before he received his first phone call.



Mrs. Michaels, his neighbor in apartment 5F, wanted him to pick up her newspaper and mail for two weeks while she was visiting her sister in Alabama. Soon Luis received a call from another neighbor, Mr. Ramirez. He wanted Luis to pick up groceries for him since he had a hard time getting around with his walker. Luis added a new job to his calendar every week and he stayed very busy. At the end of the summer, he had earned \$514 to deposit in his savings account. He decided to keep his business running, on a smaller scale, during the fall.

## First reading

Which places did your partner notice you stumbling over words? Mark any words or phrases you had difficulty understanding. Look up any unknown words.

## Second reading

Discuss the meaning of what you read with your partner. How did Luis show initiative and responsibility?

## Third reading

Imagine you were reading this passage to persuade a group of friends to start a summer business with you. How can you change your expression as you read to keep them interested in the story?



# Honking Horns

**Directions:** Try reading this passage aloud three times in a row. Did your fluency improve each time that you read it? Use the questions below to assess your progress. If you use a different color pen or pencil each time, you can see how your answers changed from the first reading to the last reading.

Imagine that you could drive a car. How would you decide when to honk your horn? You might honk your horn if a driver started to pull over into your lane. In this situation, honking your horn could prevent a car accident. You might also decide to honk your horn if someone talking on a cell phone did not notice when the light turned green. Your honk signals that it is time for them to go. You might honk to get someone's attention. Maybe you saw someone you know and wanted them to notice you were nearby. There are many reasons to honk your horn, but please don't use it too frequently! If people honked their horns for every little thing, the streets would be quite loud, after a while, no one would pay attention to the sound of a horn any more.



1. I noticed and attended to all punctuation marks (commas, semicolons, exclamation points, question marks).

yes            sometimes            no

2. I read the passage with expressiveness. (The passage would be fun and entertaining for someone else to listen to.)

yes            sometimes            no

3. I understood most of the words in the passage.

yes            sometimes            no

4. I was able to group words together in a way that made sense.

yes            sometimes            no



# A Bumpy Ride

**Directions:** Take turns reading the passage while a partner times you. You will read the passage a total of three times. After each reading, record your time and answer the questions below.

When we first climbed into the car and strapped on our safety belts, I wasn't very nervous. I was sitting right next to my big brother and he had done this many times before. As we started to climb the hill, however, I could feel the anticipation growing inside me. My stomach lurched.

"Brian?" I asked nervously. "Is this supposed to be so noisy?"

"Sure, Matthew," Brian answered confidently. "It always does that."

A minute later, we were going so fast down the hill I didn't have time to think. A twist and a loop and a bunch of fast turns caused everyone on board to scream in delight. No wonder this was one of the most popular rides in the park. By the time the car pulled into the station and we got off the roller coaster, I was ready to do it again!



**First reading** \_\_\_\_\_ minutes

Discuss words or phrases you had difficulty understanding.  
Look up any unknown words.

**Second reading** \_\_\_\_\_ minutes

How could you read this story with expression that builds suspense for your listeners?

**Third reading** \_\_\_\_\_ minutes

How did your speed and understanding improve after three readings?



# Peanut Butter

**Directions:** Ask your teacher or other adult to read the following passage to you. Have your partner hold the paper so you can follow along in the text as he or she reads. When your partner finishes reading, discuss the questions below. Then you take a turn reading the passage.

What is in your lunch today? Chances are you or someone you know will have a peanut butter and jelly sandwich in their brown paper bag (or maybe peanut butter and marshmallow fluff or peanut butter and honey!). Would you believe that peanut butter is eaten by more than twenty million kids every day? People eat peanut butter all sorts of ways—in sandwiches, in cookies, in milkshakes, and even just by the spoonful!



Peanut butter was invented more than one hundred years ago, in 1890, by a doctor who was looking for something high in protein that would be easy for his patients to digest. Since peanut butter is made from at least 90 percent peanuts, it is very high in protein. Protein is important because it gives your body energy. It also helps you grow. You can get the same amount of protein from two tablespoons of peanut butter as you can from an egg or a glass of milk. Just as it was back in 1890, peanut butter continues to be a popular, easy to digest, “quick” protein fix.

1. Were there any words or phrases you did not understand? Talk about them with your partner.

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2. What do you think is the main reason that peanut butter is so popular?

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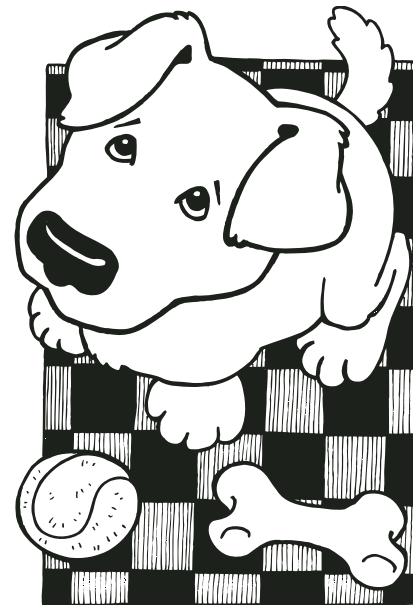


# Taking Care of a Dog

**Directions:** Listen to your teacher or another adult read this passage three times. See the directions below for what you should do while your partner reads. When your partner is finished, read the passage several times on your own.

Tyrone was thrilled about his new pet. Picking up his new dog, Ruff, was one of the most exciting days in his life. His parents kept reminding him what a big responsibility this was, but he didn't mind at all. He had wanted a dog for so long. He knew the daily rhythm of his life would change a bit. After all, he would have to walk Ruff between two and three times a day. He would have to make sure Ruff had food and water, the medication the vet wanted Ruff to take, and enough baths to keep him clean.

Despite all these responsibilities, Tyrone loved being a pet owner from the very first day. Ruff seemed to wag his tail nonstop. He barked and got excited every time Tyrone walked in the door of their apartment. He kept Tyrone company at night by sleeping at the end of his bed. The daily walks were even enjoyable. Tyrone was in the elevator so often he was seeing a lot more of his neighbors, and being out in the fresh air was invigorating. The only thing Tyrone hadn't liked about having a dog so far was when Ruff had an accident on the tile in the guestroom and he had to clean it up. Yuck! Being a pet owner might not always be glamorous, but Tyrone knew Ruff was worth it.



## While Your Partner Reads

- The first time that your partner reads, just listen. Follow along in the text.
- The second time, circle any words that you do not know.
- The third time, join in reading when your partner reaches the words that you have circled (your "trouble" words). This will give you practice saying your "trouble" words before you try reading the passage on your own.

# Japan

**Directions:** First, listen to your teacher read this passage, following along with an index card. Then read the passage by yourself. Your teacher will help you with words that you don't recognize.

Japan is an island located in the Pacific Ocean. Four main islands make up 95 percent of the country of Japan and about three thousand smaller islands make up the remaining 5 percent. About 80 percent of Japan is covered in mountains. Most of the people live in the lowlands around the mountains and by the coasts. Japan is very densely populated, meaning a large number of people live in a small area, making Japan feel very crowded. One of the most populous cities in Japan is Tokyo. Tokyo is also the capital of Japan.

Almost everyone in Japan speaks Japanese. A high value is placed on both education and work in Japan and most people strive to do their best at everything. In fact, school-age children in Japan attend school for many more hours a day during the week than American schoolchildren. They even go to school on Saturdays! Income levels in Japan are generally high. Japan produces many cars, computers, cameras, and televisions that are widely known to be among the best on the market.



**Words I Do Not Know**

**What They Mean**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

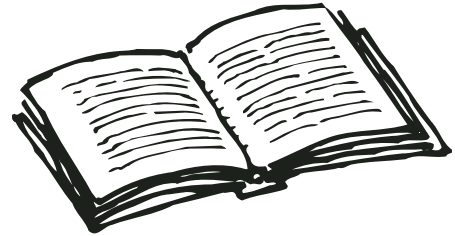
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# Novel Reading

**Directions:** Share the novel that you are reading with your teacher. Select a favorite page in your novel. Your teacher will read the page first. Follow along with an index card. Then you read the page to your teacher. Answer the following questions after you read the selection aloud.



**Title of Book** \_\_\_\_\_

**Author** \_\_\_\_\_

1. How did I feel when I was reading the page from my novel?

\_\_\_\_\_

2. What did I do well when I was reading?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. What words did I have difficulty reading?

\_\_\_\_\_

4. What different expressions, voices, or speeds did I use while I was reading? Why?

\_\_\_\_\_

5. Write several sentences explaining what happened in the story on the pages that you read aloud.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



# Supper Surprise

**Directions:** First, listen to your teacher read this passage. Follow along with an index card as your teacher reads. Underline any words that you think might give you trouble. Pay special attention as your teacher reads each of these words. After listening to your teacher read this passage several times, try reading it (or cooking the meal!) on your own.



Sarah and Alison decided to surprise their mom and dad by making supper. They looked through the family recipe book and decided to make a dish called "Spinach Florentine." Since everyone in their family loved spinach, they thought this would be a good choice. First, they gathered the ingredients—spinach, tomato sauce, large pasta shells, shredded mozzarella cheese, and cottage cheese. Then they followed the recipe below to make dinner for their family. Their mom and dad were thrilled with the result!

## Ingredients

10 ounces frozen spinach, thawed  
1 package of large pasta shells  
1 can of tomato sauce  
1 bag of shredded mozzarella cheese  
10 ounces of cottage cheese

## Directions

Cook the shells as directed on the package. Drain and let cool. Then mix the spinach, cottage cheese, and mozzarella cheese. Fill the shells with your spinach and cheese mixture. Pour the tomato sauce over the shells. Cook for 45 minutes at 375°F. Enjoy!



# Oprah Winfrey

**Directions:** Read this passage to a partner. Then ask your partner to read the passage back to you. When you are listening to your partner, follow along by looking at the text. After you have both read the passage, discuss the questions below.

Oprah Winfrey is a famous talk-show host and speaker. Thanks to hard work and determination, she has been very successful. Her life, however, has not been easy. She was born in January 1954 to a single mother. Her mother went to work cleaning people's houses in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and sent Oprah to live with her grandparents. Oprah's grandparents were loving, but strict. They taught her to read before she even went to school. Oprah spent almost all day Sunday at church.

Before her teenage years, Oprah left her grandparents and went to live with her mother. Living with her mother proved difficult. Oprah started to get into trouble at school. During a particularly rough time at the beginning of high school, Oprah went to live with her father. Her father had high standards and he expected her to live up to them. This was good for Oprah. She became an extremely successful student and won numerous awards, including a partial scholarship to Tennessee State University.

Oprah was offered her first television job when she was only twenty years old. She worked as a newscaster for several stations before working on a talk show. Eventually, she became the first woman to own and produce her own talk show. *The Oprah Winfrey Show* has been running almost twenty years and remains popular today.

1. What struggles did Oprah have to overcome?

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2. What can you learn from how Oprah handled these challenges?

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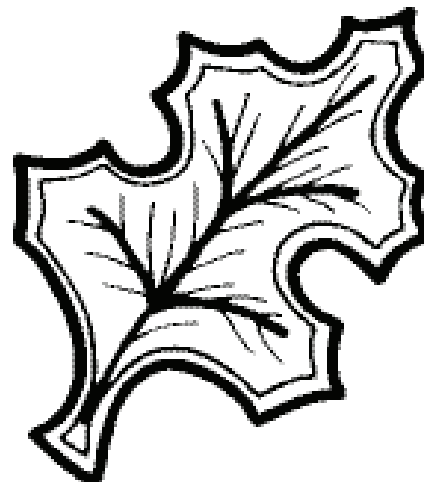
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# Changing Leaves

**Directions:** Take turns reading this passage with a partner. While you are listening, add two lines (//) throughout the passage to show where the reader paused. If you or your partner paused because you didn't know a word, circle those words. Go back and make a list of the circled words. Look the words up in a dictionary to find the meaning. Then reread the passage out loud again. Use a different color pen or pencil to mark pauses this time. How did knowing the meaning of words change the way you read?

During the fall, leaves change colors. Many people make pilgrimages called "color tours" to witness the beauty of the fall foliage. So how does this phenomenon happen? The process is really quite simple.

Leaves take gas from the air and water from the soil and change them into food for the tree. Sunlight helps the tree change air and water into food; this process is called photosynthesis. Chlorophyll is the chemical inside the leaves that makes photosynthesis happen. During the hot summer months when there is a lot of sunlight, there is a lot of chlorophyll, so the leaves are all very green. During the fall, the weather gets cooler and there is less sunlight, so the chlorophyll fades. That is when we see gold, yellow, and orange colors in the leaves.



**Words I Do Not Know**

**What They Mean**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_



# Book Club

**Directions:** Take turns reading this passage with a partner. Make a mark to show each place your partner pauses or stumbles over a word. Go back and look at those places together. Look up words if you need to. Then take turns reading the passage again.

Since Natasha and Jason both love to read, they decided to form a book club. They planned to select the first book themselves, but after that they hoped to have the book club vote on the book that they wanted to read—a book club based on the principles of democracy! Natasha and Jason thought that the person who suggested the book could be responsible for coming with questions to get the discussion going.

Trying to find a time for the club wasn't easy. Most of their friends were in sports or other after-school activities, so late afternoon was out. Parents didn't want kids to be out at night, so late evenings were out also. Natasha and Jason decided the club would meet once a month sometime after dinner, maybe around seven o'clock. Each person would bring a dessert or a beverage to share with the group. Natasha graciously volunteered to host the first book club at her house.

Once the details were in place, both friends were really enthusiastic about starting their book club. They sent out eight invitations to their first meeting and were thrilled by the response. Almost everyone they invited said had they wanted to be involved in a book club but were too busy to start one of their own. The book club turned out to be a huge success, and Natasha and Jason were pleased that all their hard work paid off.





# Choosing a Career

**Directions:** Read this passage with a partner. Set a stopwatch for one minute. See how many words your partner can read during the first minute. Time your partner several times. Does the number of words he or she reads per minute improve after reading the passage several times? Now you take a turn reading and have your partner time you.

Choosing a career can be a daunting task. There are so many different jobs to do in the world. Which one would fit you best? There are several things you can do to try to figure this out. One way is to explore different jobs by visiting people at work. If you think you might be interested in becoming a veterinarian, you could volunteer at a pet hospital. If you think you want to be a firefighter, you could visit a fire station. You can also read books about careers that interest you. Maybe you hope to be a doctor, a lawyer, an architect, or a plumber; read books about different careers. What sort of education do you need to meet your career goals? Talking with people is also helpful. Do you want to be principal of an elementary school? Talk to your principal and find out what he or she likes and dislikes about the job. There is a job that is just right for you. All you need to do is spend time figuring out what it is.



**First reading** \_\_\_\_\_ minutes

**Second reading** \_\_\_\_\_ minutes

**Third reading** \_\_\_\_\_ minutes



# The Family Boat Trip

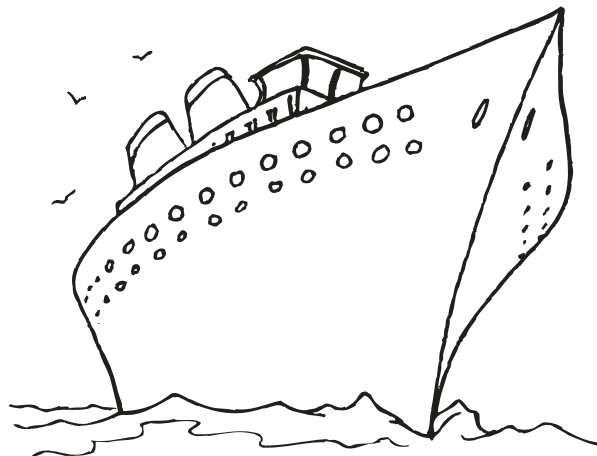
**Directions:** Read this passage with a partner. Take turns reading every other paragraph. Make a mark each time your partner pauses or stumbles over a word. Go back and look at these places together. Then take a turn reading the paragraphs your partner read the first time.

The truth was Abby was dreading the trip. Two weeks on a boat with her mother, father, and brother—what could be worse? It seemed like she fought with her brother every time that they were in the same room for more than five minutes. How would she endure him on a boat for two weeks? Unfortunately, there was no getting out of it. She had tried. She was going and she knew it.

The first day on the boat Abby mainly felt seasick. Her stomach was queasy and she couldn't eat a thing. How was she going to make it two weeks on the boat? This trip was a total disaster. Abby spent most of the day in her bed.

To her surprise, things seemed better by the second day. She started to feel more at home on the water and her stomach settled down. Besides that, her parents and brother were a bit easier to get along with now that they were more relaxed away from the hustle and bustle of everyday life.

On the third day, Abby actually found herself laughing with her brother. The family fished together, ate long meals together, and spent time swimming in the deep, blue ocean. Despite what she had originally feared, Abby discovered that the trip turned out to be a lot of fun!



# Pick a Passage

**Directions:** You and your partner should each select a few paragraphs from a favorite book to read aloud. Take turns reading and listening. After your partner reads, answer the questions below about what they read.

**Title of Book** \_\_\_\_\_

**Author** \_\_\_\_\_



1. What did your partner do well when he or she was reading?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. What words did your partner have difficulty reading?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. What different expressions, voices, or speeds did your partner use while he or she was reading?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. Write several sentences summarizing what your partner read.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_


5. Complete this sentence: To help me understand the passage better, my partner could have . . .

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

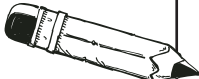


# Homework


**Directions:** First, your teacher will read a stanza of the poem to you. Then you will read that same stanza back to your teacher. Listen carefully to your teacher's speed and expression while he or she is reading this poem. Notice how punctuation can help you understand a poem by telling you when to stop (at a period) and when to keep going (at a comma). Sometimes a sentence in a poem continues over several lines. In those cases, you should not stop after each line.



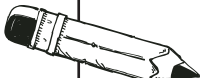
Heavy in my backpack,  
Making me so blue,  
Instead of running out to play,  
It's what I have to do—  
Homework, homework, homework.



Dad says I must do it.  
He will not give me a break.  
I guess I'll be stuck in my room  
With that burden I can't shake—  
Homework, homework, homework.



I dive into the workbook  
And work each task I see.  
It's not too long and then I'm done.  
The rest of today I'm totally free.  
No more homework for me!



# The Season

**Directions:** First, your teacher will read a stanza of the poem to you. Then you will read that same stanza back to your teacher. Listen carefully to your teacher’s speed and expression while he or she is reading this poem. Once you have repeated the poem several times after your teacher, read it on your own. Then answer the questions below.

Cooler breezes,  
 School bells ringing,  
 Orange and gold leaves scattered  
 Around my neighborhood.

Fat, round pumpkins,  
 Leaf piles burning,  
 Children laughing on the street  
 Meeting friends.

Roasted turkeys,  
 Pumpkin pies baking,  
 Grateful and thankful  
 Families gathering.



1. What season is described in the poem? Write the words from the poem that gave you clues.

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2. This poem does not rhyme. How does that affect the way you read it? Do you think it sounds better if you stop at the end of each line or not?

---



# Time for School

**Directions:** Listen to your teacher read each short passage about a student getting ready for school in the morning. Notice the speed and expression your teacher uses while reading. After each passage or each sentence, you take a turn reading, echoing the speed and expression used by your teacher. Then answer this question: Which student is most like you? Why?

## Troy

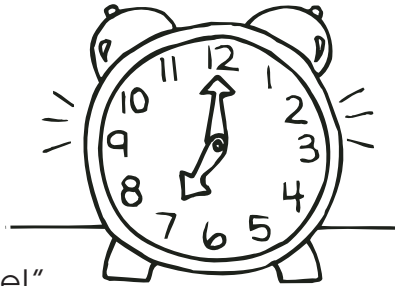
"Dad, where is my green shirt?"

"Try the laundry room," Troy's dad yelled back, trying to sound patient.

"I already looked and I can't find it in there!"

"Maybe it's dirty," Troy's father suggested.

As Troy continued to search, he caught sight of the time. "Arrggh!" Troy shouted. The clock next to his bed read 7:36. He had exactly nine minutes to get to the bus stop. Toast was his only breakfast option—again.



## José

The alarm sounded early. José wanted to pull the covers over his head and go back to sleep, but he knew his coach was counting on him. He jumped up and pulled on his sweats and running shirt. Yikes! It was cold inside. José shuddered to think how cold it was outside. The poster on his wall said one word, "Dedication." José knew he had it. He would arrive to run with his teammates at 5:30 A.M., two hours before the first bus full of his classmates arrived. He grabbed a banana on his way out the door.

## Isabelle

"Stop torturing me!" Isabelle shouted. Her brother loved to wake her up by throwing stuffed animals at her bed. Once Tom ran out of her room, Isabelle dragged herself out of bed and yawned. She would finish up the last page of her math homework while she ate breakfast. Isabelle's mom had made her favorite breakfast—scrambled eggs and a bagel. Should she walk to school today or ride her bike? She had plenty of time to decide. She wouldn't even get dressed for another thirty minutes.



# Five a Day

**Directions:** Follow along while your teacher reads this passage. Then read it back to your teacher with all of your classmates reading together. All of you should try to use the same speed and expression that your teacher used. As you read, underline the words that give you trouble and listen to how others read them. You can skip them the first time you read through the paragraph, but try to add them in when you become comfortable with their pronunciation.

How many times have your parents told you to eat your fruits and vegetables? Probably quite a few. Why? Eating fruits and vegetables is an important part of a healthy diet. There are so many different ones to choose from that it should be easy to find at least a few that you like: avocados, blueberries, blackberries, strawberries, kiwis, carrots, celery, tomatoes—take your pick.

There are all sorts of creative snacks you can make using fruits and vegetables. What about some peanut butter smeared on a stick of celery or some carrot sticks dipped in ranch dressing? You can mix a little lime, salt, and seasoning with two avocados to make delicious guacamole. Salsa is made with tomatoes and cilantro. Paired with some corn chips or tostados, it makes a good, crunchy snack. Applesauce or peaches work great on top of vanilla yogurt. These are all snacks that taste good and are good for you.

Your parents are right—eating fruits and vegetables is good for you and your body. Start counting—do you eat five servings of fruits and vegetables a day?





# Serious Sentences

**Directions:** Listen to your teacher read the sentences below. Then read the sentences back to your teacher. Your whole class should read out loud together at the same time. Try to follow the same speed and expression that your classmates use.

1. Riding the carousel at the fair was always Carla’s favorite. She loved the rhythm of the music and the way the colorful horses went up and down and around. Still, part of her always worried—what if they didn’t stop?
2. The thunder and the lightning were loud and bright and fierce, showing no sign of letting up. “Flooding and high waters expected through midnight tonight,” the radio announcer reported calmly.
3. “Please, please, please—everybody is going,” Madeline pleaded with her mom. The dance started at seven and she desperately wanted to go. Despite her pleas, Madeline’s mom remained firm. “It’s your dad’s birthday, and our family is going out to dinner.”
4. Tony nervously gripped the handle of his coffee cup. He was scheduled to meet with his boss at noon. He had been working with the company for five years but it was time for him to move on. He knew his boss would not take the news well.
5. “You will make a wonderful big sister,” her dad said calmly, “and we have always dreamed of a big family.” Theresa could hardly believe it. She had been the baby of the family for ten years and now she wouldn’t be. She already had four older brothers. Wasn’t that enough?







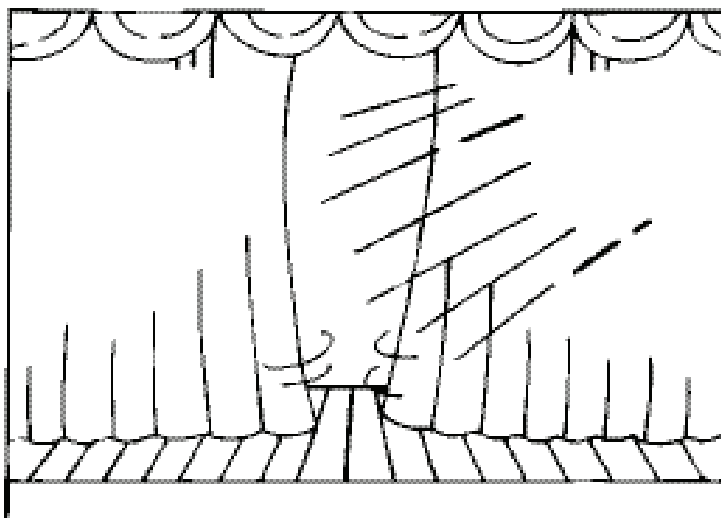
# Opening Night Jitters

**Directions:** Listen to your teacher read the following passage, noting the speed and expression of the reading. Underline the words and phrases that you think might be difficult for you. Pay special attention when your teacher reads these words and phrases. Then read the passage aloud as a group with your classmates, matching your speed to theirs.

Anisha was scared. She couldn't help it. Despite the countless hours spent learning her lines and practicing with the drama club, she still felt nervous. It was opening night. The crowd was arriving—and it was a big crowd. Anisha could hear all sorts of commotion in the gym.

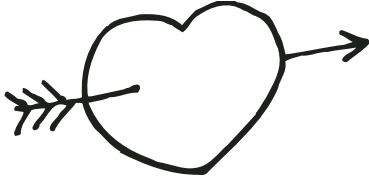
The stage had been transformed into another place and time. She was dressed in her costume, and, suddenly, being the lead in the play didn't seem so great. Then, the lights dimmed, the curtain opened, and there she was—on stage! Instead of feeling terrified, she felt at ease. She knew her lines, she knew the stage, and she loved this play. It was good. They had practiced. They had perfected it. Nobody would leave the gym disappointed.

The thunderous applause at the end of the play proved that Anisha was exactly right. The crowd had loved it. The play had gone off without a hitch. Anisha was ready to do it again, and she would—tomorrow night. She wondered if she would have the same preperformance jitters then.





# Everyone Loves a Story



**Directions:** You're never too old for a great story! Select a favorite picture book. Write the title and author of the book on the lines below. Ask your teacher, your class tutor, or a classmate to read the book out loud to you. Listen to the reader, paying special attention to the speed and expression of the reading. Now read the book aloud along with the reader. Then answer the following questions.

**Title** \_\_\_\_\_

**Author** \_\_\_\_\_

1. Did you pause after reading each page in the book? Why or why not?

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Were there any words in this book that you did not recognize? What did you do when you came to them?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Did you use more than one tone of voice when you were reading this book? Why or why not?

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Why did you select this particular book?

\_\_\_\_\_

5. Try out your skills by reading this book aloud to a child from a younger grade.

# Family

**Directions:** First, listen to your teacher read this poem. Pay careful attention to the expression and speed of the reading. Then read the poem on your own.

It might be two,  
 It might be four, or maybe more,  
 Family.

Support and love—  
 That’s what I think of,  
 And sometimes a fight or two.  
 Taking a walk with you,  
 Helping you if you’re feeling blue,  
 Family.

All different,  
 Yet the same,  
 Loving one another,  
 Family.

Brother, sister,  
 Mother, father,  
 Grandmother, grandfather  
 Aunt, uncle,  
 Special friend,  
 Family.





# Morning

**Directions:** Find a partner. Ask your partner to time your reading. Can you read the following poem in one minute? Try reading the poem several times. Record your time on the lines below. Does your speed and expressiveness improve each time you read the poem? Why or why not? After you read, time your partner.

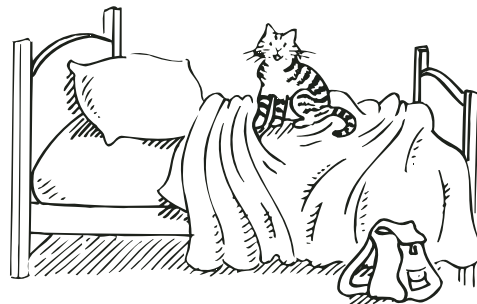
As dawn breaks,  
The clock ticks,  
Shadows shift.  
No one is up.  
The house is  
Silent.

The people sleep.  
The floors creak.  
The wind howls.  
The covers rustle.  
The house is  
Silent.

The cat jumps down  
And curls up in a ball.  
Before the light dawns,  
Before the people wake,  
The house is  
Silent.

The street sleeps,  
Without a car,  
Without a bike.  
A raccoon runs.  
A dog barks,  
The house is  
Silent.

An alarm sounds,  
A person moves,  
A hand reaches.  
Water runs,  
People mumble,  
Cereal rustles.  
The house is  
Waking.



**First reading** \_\_\_\_\_ minutes

**Second reading** \_\_\_\_\_ minutes

**Third reading** \_\_\_\_\_ minutes

# Newspaper Reading

**Directions:** Select two articles from the newspaper. Choose one article from the front page, your state section, or the sports page. Choose the second article from the editorial section (for example, an opinion piece or a letter to the editor). Circle every punctuation mark, including quotation marks, in each article. Read each article out loud three times. Then answer the following questions.



1. Which piece required more expressive reading? Why?

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2. Do certain words or phrases give you a hint about the feelings of the person who wrote the article? List them here.

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3. Did you change your voice when you read words or sentences in quotation marks?

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4. Did you pause throughout each article to help you better understand what you were reading?

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5. Summarize one of the articles you read in a few sentences.

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# Signs of the Times

**Directions:** Read each statement below to a partner. Some are from street signs and some are from signs posted in an office. Then have your partner read each statement back to you. Talk about the expression you think each one warrants. Why did you choose to read each one the way that you did?

1. Stop!

2. Pedestrian Crossing

3. Right Turn Permitted on Red

4. One Way

5. School Zone: Do not exceed 20 mph during posted hours.

6. Left Turn Only

7. Holiday Party! This Sunday 5–8. Bring your family and a dish to share.

8. Do not print on this printer without seeing Doug. Absolutely NO exceptions!

9. Monday morning meeting, 8 A.M. Prompt attendance is required.

10. Leftover birthday cake—please help yourself!





# How Do You Feel?

**Directions:** Look at the three feeling words below. Read the sentences following each word silently at least twice. Then, try to show that feeling as you read the sentences aloud.

## Angry

"If your room isn't cleaned up in the next five minutes, you are NOT going to the party at all!"

"I told you I meant what I said and I was NOT kidding."

"My car was stopped and *you* ran into *me*—the police have to be called this instant!"

"I'm sick and tired of this lousy service. I want to talk to the manager and I mean now."

## Annoyed

"This is my third call and I want to talk to someone who knows what's going on."

"That really hurt! Please be more careful with your grocery cart."

"For the fifth time, I already finished my homework."

"I asked you not to play with my favorite dish because I was afraid it would get broken. Now it is broken."

## Excited

"I got the part! I got the part! You were right—practice does pay off!"

"You are kidding—I won the contest? I can hardly believe it!"

"A perfect score—I have to call my parents. They are going to be so proud of me."

"You always said good things come in threes and you were right—this is the third good thing that has happened to me today!"





# Feelings

**Directions:** Look at the feeling words below. Read the sentences following each word silently at least twice. Then, try to show that feeling as you read the sentences aloud. When you are finished, answer the questions at the bottom of the page.

## Disappointed

"I know I ran a good race. I guess you can't win them all."

"I spent so much time on my report. I can't believe Mr. Murphy didn't appreciate it. He never thinks I do a good enough job."

"Yes, I understand. I know you had many applicants for the job. I appreciate your keeping my resume on file."

"I'm sorry to hear you aren't feeling well. I was really looking forward to spending the afternoon together. Oh, I know we'll do it again soon."

## Surprised

"He said what? You're kidding, right?"

"Oh, my gosh! I can't believe it. I won! I won!"

"Thank you—it's just what I wanted. I can't believe your thoughtfulness!"

"When? Where? You saw whom? That is totally amazing!"



1. Did knowing the emotion before you read the sentences help you understand the meaning? Why or why not?

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2. Were some emotions easier than others to express when you were reading? Which ones?

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# Let Down

**Directions:** Read the story silently, and then take turns reading it aloud with a partner. Use different voices for the different characters as you read. You can also read it with one of you playing Sharon and one of you playing Mrs. Carpenter. Take turns reading the narration.

Sharon was disappointed. She had spent weeks campaigning to be student-body president and the results were in. She had lost the race by a small margin. Her friend Josephine had won the much-coveted position. Sharon felt defeated and terribly sad. Why hadn't her classmates elected her? She had promised great things—more ice cream sales at lunch, a class dance, and a weekly newspaper. Sharon wanted to walk out the front door of her school and never return.



"Sharon, great race! I'm proud of you for running," Sharon looked up and saw one of her favorite people, Mrs. Carpenter, the art teacher.

Sharon could feel her eyes fill with tears; she dropped her head.

"Why don't we talk a moment," Mrs. Carpenter said. Moments later, Sharon was sitting on the big orange sofa in Mrs. Carpenter's room, with a bottle of water and box of tissues, describing just how upset she was by the results.

"Do you realize what an honor it was to be in the race?" she heard Mrs. Carpenter saying. "You were one of two people that your classmates thought would be a good student-body president. What a compliment!"

Sharon stopped crying. "But I lost the race," she heard herself saying.

"You took part in the race, and that's what is important. You can still be involved—in fact, I know Josephine wants you to be."

"Really? You know, Mrs. Carpenter, you're right. I'm glad I ran in this election. I feel badly that I didn't win, but I did make it a long way. Now I'm ready to help Josephine make our class the best one this middle school has ever seen."

Mrs. Carpenter patted Sharon on the back. "You are one special kid," she said.



# A Letter from Kate

**Directions:** Create a voice for Kate, the writer of this letter. First read Kate's letter silently, highlighting any words you do not know or can't pronounce. Look them up or ask for help with their meanings and pronunciation. Then take turns reading it out loud with a partner. Try to express how you think Kate should sound.

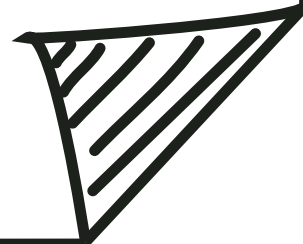
Dear Mary,

I am glad you are coming home to visit this weekend. Believe it or not, as much as we used to argue, I think I actually miss sharing a room with you. It was nice to have someone to share my feelings with at night. I also liked having you around to do stuff more than I thought!

How is college? Do you like your classes? Mom said you have to study a lot. I am studying quite a bit too. Guess who my chemistry teacher is? If you guessed Mr. Bolt, you are right. I can't believe after all the horror stories that you told me I ended up with him. Even though he is a pretty tough teacher, one thing is for sure... you are going to learn something in his class, whether you want to or not!

How is the dorm food? I know you were worried about that. I am sure it cannot compare to Mom's cooking. I know she is so excited you are coming home; she's already planning on cooking all of your favorites! How are your roommates? Mom said you have two. Wow! That seems like a lot in that tiny little room. You guys must be getting to know each other very well. Take care and have a safe ride home. I'll see you Saturday.

Love,  
Kate



# Sibling Rivalry

**Directions:** Create a group of four readers. Each of you should read one part: Nate, Peter, Mom, or the narrator. Read the passage through twice, then trade parts if you want to and read the story again. Then choose one reader to read the entire passage. After the reading is complete, answer this question: Was the passage easier to understand when there was one reader or when there were four readers? Why?

"It's not fair," Peter shouted loudly. "Nobody else has to share a room." It seemed like all his friends had large, spacious rooms they had to share with—nobody. Yet Peter just found out he had to share a small bedroom in his family's new apartment with his younger brother, Nate. "Nate is always in my stuff," Peter tried to reason with his mom.



"Peter, I understand how much you don't want to share a room with your brother, but we really don't have a choice. We only have two bedrooms. You and your brother will just have to learn how to get along."

Peter wasn't really sure what to say. He felt like crying.

"The room will be cool. I promise," his mom said, trying to remedy the situation. "We're going to set up bunk beds, and there is even enough room to set up a little tent. The tent might be a place you could escape for a little privacy."

Peter tried to force a smile. At that moment, Nate dashed in the door.

"Mom! Mom, can I spend the night at Sam's house tonight? Please, please, please!"

"That sounds fine. Let me just give Sam's mother a call to double check the plans."

"Lucky Peter ends up with a room all to himself the first night in the new apartment," said Nate.

Peter smiled. Strangely enough, later that evening he kind of missed Nate and his boundless energy. Maybe sharing a room with his little brother wouldn't be so bad after all.

# Readers' Theater Script: "The Bright Idea"

Based on Aesop's Fables "The Mice in Council"

**Directions:** Since a main goal of readers' theater is to enjoy reading, have fun by experimenting with different voices for your part—should the character speak quickly or slowly, loudly or softly, gruffly or sweetly, or perhaps have an accent? The way you speak will give your characters a distinct personality.

## Cast of Characters

CAT

MOUSE 1

MOUSE 2

MOUSE 3

MOUSE 4

BABY MOUSE

OLD MOUSE

NARRATOR

**Setting** Most of this play takes place in a mouse hole, located in the corner of an old house.

**NARRATOR** Two mice scurry past a napping cat and enter the mouse hole.

**CAT** My stomach is growling—one or two tasty little mice would make a perfect snack. (*yawns*) As soon as I get a bit more shut-eye, I will hunt for my treat.

**NARRATOR** Cat drifts back to sleep. Mouse 1 and Mouse 2 quietly dash past the sleeping cat and slide into the mouse hole.

**MOUSE 1** Whew! We escaped that dangerous Cat again. I think he saw us, but we were lucky. He was too sleepy to slurp us up!

- MOUSE 2** Life seems to be getting scarier and scarier around here. Every time I leave our comfortable home, I find myself eye to eye with that Cat!
- MOUSE 3** I'm with you—life around here is getting more dangerous. We should hold a meeting to come up with a plan of action.
- BABY MOUSE** What's a plan of action?
- MOUSE 4** A plan of action is the way we'll try to get rid of that pesky cat. He seems to have an enormous appetite! And everywhere I want to go, there he is!
- MOUSE 2** A meeting should be scheduled then—right away. Tomorrow, 8 A.M. Let's check with Old Mouse and make sure that the time suits her.
- MOUSE 3** That's a good idea. Let's go find her.
- OLD MOUSE** *(sitting quietly in the corner, reading the newspaper)* I couldn't help overhear your conversation as I was reading. A plan of action sounds like a good idea. Tomorrow, 8 A.M., it is. Good night.
- MOUSE 1, 2, 3, AND 4** *(one at a time)* Good night!
- BABY MOUSE** Sweet dreams!
- NARRATOR** All the mice went to sleep. A plan of action would be made the following morning, and that made everyone's slumber peaceful and their dreams sweet. They would solve this problem once and for all! All the mice were excited when they gathered at 8 A.M. the next morning.
- MOUSE 1** *(holding a gavel, bringing the meeting to order)* Good morning, my rodent friends. It is a pleasure to see each of you this morning. We are gathering today because we have all been troubled by our frequent encounters with this house's new and very dangerous Cat.
- MOUSE 2** Cat surely thinks we are delectable and delicious. We must come up with a plan of action to get rid of this very annoying creature.
- MOUSE 3** It may prove difficult.
- MOUSE 4** He is so big.
- BABY MOUSE** His purr is so noisy.

- MOUSE 3** His ears are so good.
- MOUSE 2** His claws are so long.
- MOUSE 1** Enough about the cat creature—we did not gather at this early hour to discuss his physical traits. Rather, we gathered to discuss how to make ourselves safer.
- MOUSE 2** We could each purchase mouse-size roller skates to increase our speed.
- MOUSE 3** Many of us, including me, do not know how to skate. Plus, I fear the noise would give Cat even more warning and time to catch us.
- MOUSE 4** What if we work as a team to dump out his cat food every day until he decides to move to a new house?
- MOUSE 1** No, food would only result in a hungrier Cat—yikes!
- BABY MOUSE** We could tie him up with that ridiculous ball of string he is always playing with.
- MOUSE 4** That seems like a temporary solution to a permanent problem. We are looking for a way to solve this problem once and for all.
- MOUSE 1** I have an idea! We could attach a bell or two to Cat's collar. The bells will warn us that the dangerous creature is on the way. Advance warning will make us all much safer.
- MOUSE 2** Brilliant!
- MOUSE 3** Fabulous!
- BABY MOUSE** I love it!
- MOUSE 4** No idea could be better!
- OLD MOUSE** I have one question before you all agree that your problem is solved. Which of you, my furry friends, will carry the bells and attach them to Cat's collar? Do I see any volunteers? *(All mice look terrified. The curtain goes down.)*
- NARRATOR** As you can guess, there were no volunteers for this job. The moral of this story is simply this: It is one thing to propose a plan and quite another to carry it out!

# Questions on "The Bright Idea"

**Directions:** Think about the part that you just played in the readers' theater. Then answer the following questions about that part.

1. Write the name of the character you played.

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Describe how you read your character's voice in the play—was your voice high or low? soft or loud? fast or slow? Did you try to use an accent?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Tell why you thought the character should sound that way.

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Did you add gestures or facial expressions to help the audience see the character as you do? If so, write what you did. If not, write what you could do next time.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. Experiment with reading a few of your lines very quickly. Do you like how that sounds?

\_\_\_\_\_

6. Read a few of your lines very slowly. Do you like how that sounds?

\_\_\_\_\_





# Readers' Theater Script: "The Big Move"

**Directions:** Students can work in groups of seven, one for each character in the play. Since you probably don't have a multiple of seven students in your class, you must decide how to group and regroup students so that all get to read at least one part. Some students could read the same parts in several groups, or you can have students regroup several times and read different parts each time.

## Characters

CLAIRE

PETER

MOM

DAD

MRS. MARTIN

LIZ

JAMES

**Setting:** Scenes 1 and 3 take place in Claire and Peter's apartment, and scene 2 takes place at Mrs. Martin's Milkshakes.

## Scene 1

**CLAIRE** *(at a desk in her room, working on her homework)*  
Mom! Mom, would you help me with problem number 4?

*(no response)*

**CLAIRE** Mom! Hey, Mom! Where are you? *(Gets up and wanders toward the kitchen; runs into her brother, Peter, on the way.)* Pete, where's Mom?

**PETER** Something fishy is going on. Dad just got home. Did you get in trouble at school? Mom and Dad are whispering.

**CLAIRE** I didn't get in trouble—did you?



**PETER** I don't think so. I did tackle Juan a little roughly in P.E. but it was an accident. Let's see if we can hear what they are saying. Oh, I hope Ms. Hutchinson didn't call—I'll be dead meat with Mom and Dad!

*(Claire and Peter lean in on the kitchen door trying to hear what is being said.)*

**MOM** No, it's wonderful news! I am excited and proud of you. I think you will like the job so much better.

**DAD** I've wanted this promotion a long time! The only negative is I'm worried about Claire and Peter. I know they'll end up loving Maryland, but they have lived in the city so long, and they have so many friends. How are we going to break the news to them?

**MOM** Moving is never easy, but they will love Maryland. They'll be so much closer to cousins and grandparents. I just loved growing up there. We need to tell them soon. When is our moving date?

**DAD** We'll stay put through May. I think that will make the transition easier for them. We can move at the end of the school year and not interrupt their studies and all the activities that they have going on here.

**MOM** That will be easier on everyone. We'll have some real time to prepare.

*(Peter and Claire exchange stunned looks.)*

**CLAIRE** What are they talking about? Move out of the city? Are they crazy?

**PETER** I may have gotten in a bit of a tiff with Juan today, but I love it here. School, my friends! We've been at Hill since kindergarten. I don't want to move!

**CLAIRE** This is the worst day of my life!

**PETER** Let's go down to Mrs. Martin's. We need a treat. This is a bad day.

**CLAIRE** *(moving away from the door and shouting)* Mom, we're going down to Mrs. Martin's. We'll be back soon.

**MOM** Okay. Be careful! I love you.



*(Peter and Claire head to the bottom floor of their building to Mrs. Martin's Milkshakes)*

**Scene 2**

**MRS. MARTIN** Hey, Peter! Hi, Claire! What will it be?

**PETER** I'll have a small chocolate shake with whipped cream.

**CLAIRE** I'll have a root-beer float, no whipped cream.

**MRS. MARTIN** Why the sad faces?

**PETER** Bad news on the home front.

**MRS. MARTIN** You two look really upset. What's the news?

**CLAIRE** We're moving out of the city—to Maryland!

**MRS. MARTIN** *(reaching over to hug Peter and Claire)* That is bad news. We're going to miss you two.

*(Liz and James enter from side)*

**LIZ** Hey, what's up?

**JAMES** Why all the glum faces?

**CLAIRE** We're moving—our dad is taking a job in Maryland. This is our last semester at Hill.

**LIZ** No! That's terrible! How could they do that to you?

**PETER** That's a good question. *(Mrs. Martin delivers their milkshakes.)*

**MRS. MARTIN** Liz and James, what can I get you?

**LIZ** I'll have a chocolate shake with whipped cream.

**JAMES** A strawberry shake, no whipped. Mrs. Martin, how in the world could their parents make such a major decision without them?

**MRS. MARTIN** Moving is a hard decision to make, but usually when parents decide to do it there is a good reason.

**PETER** I can't think of any good reasons for moving out of the city!

**MRS. MARTIN** Well, my guess is your dad was offered a job he really wants—maybe a job that pays more money. Moving out of the city may even have some advantages—picture a big backyard and learning how to drive a car.

- PETER** Learning how to drive—that's a cool idea!
- CLAIRE** Peter driving a car? Now that's dangerous!
- LIZ** But what about friends and school?
- JAMES** You'll be the newbies.
- MRS. MARTIN** You two are fun, kind, and considerate friends. You will meet plenty of new friends and do well in your new school. Your friends from the city will have fun taking the train to visit you in your new home. I know you're really upset, but you should talk with your parents. They love you both very much and wouldn't do anything to hurt you in the long run.
- JAMES** You sound just like a mom, Mrs. Martin.
- MRS. MARTIN** *(smiling)* I *am* a mom!
- CLAIRE** You've made me feel a little better—thanks, Mrs. Martin. I think we should go talk to Mom and Dad.
- PETER** They don't even know that we know—we overheard them talking about it.
- CLAIRE** *(sarcastically)* They were saying how great, great, great it would be to live near all our cousins and grandparents.
- PETER** All I want is to live near all my friends.
- CLAIRE** Me too.
- MRS. MARTIN** I think you two will feel better if you let your parents know you overheard them and spend some time talking about it.
- PETER** *(finishing milkshake)* Okay. Let's go.  
*(Peter and Claire head upstairs to their apartment)*

**Scene 3**

- MOM** *(meeting them at the door)* I'm glad you two are back. Your father and I have something we want to talk about with you.
- PETER** We already know—and we don't want to go!
- CLAIRE** There is *nothing* good about Maryland!
- DAD** I know it sounds bad—but it won't be so awful. We'll all go to Maryland at the end of the month to look for a place to live.
- CLAIRE** This is the worst day of my life.
- PETER** Mine, too.
- MOM** This job is an opportunity your father has been waiting for for a long time. Just like it is important that you two are happy at school, it is important your dad and I are happy in our jobs. We love you, and we will make sure that we find a good place to live and a good school for you to attend. Remember, the four of us will have each other—whether we move to Maryland or to Mars.
- DAD** Maryland is a train ride away. Your friends can visit. We'll find a house with a big backyard, and we can get a trampoline—
- CLAIRE** A trampoline?
- MOM** And bikes that you can ride to school.
- PETER** Ride bikes to school?
- MOM** Maryland will be very different from the city. There will be many things that you like better, and maybe some things that you don't like as much.
- DAD** We're staying until the end of the school year... we love you and Maryland is going to love you, too. You've got to give it a chance.
- CLAIRE** This is going to be hard.
- PETER** I wish we didn't have to go.
- CLAIRE** I'm glad we'll have each other.

# Questions on "The Big Move"

**Directions:** Write one sentence that describes each of the characters in the play:

Claire \_\_\_\_\_

Peter \_\_\_\_\_

Mom \_\_\_\_\_

Dad \_\_\_\_\_

Mrs. Martin \_\_\_\_\_

Liz \_\_\_\_\_

James \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** Think about the part that you just played in the readers' theater. Then answer the following questions.

1. Write the name of the character you played.

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Describe how you read your character's voice in the play—was your voice high or low? soft or loud? fast or slow? Did you try to use an accent?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Tell why you thought the character should sound that way.

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Did you add gestures or facial expressions to help the audience see the character as you do? If so, write what you did. If not, write what you could do next time.

\_\_\_\_\_

# Resources

## Fluency-Related Research

- Allington, R. L. *What Really Matters for Struggling Readers—Designing Research-Based Programs*. New York: Longman, 2001.
- Calkins, L. M. *The Art of Teaching Reading*. New York: Longman, 2001.
- Hancock, M. R. *A Celebration of Literature and Response*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 2000.
- Hoyt, L. *Revisit, Reflect, Retell—Strategies for Improving Reading Comprehension*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1999.
- McKenna, M. C. *Help for Struggling Readers—Strategies for Grades 3–8*. New York: The Guilford Press, 2002.
- Morrow, L. M., L. B. Gambrel, and M. Pressley. *Best Practices in Literacy Instruction*. New York: The Guilford Press, 2003.
- Opitz, M. F., and T. V. Rasinski. *Good-bye Round Robin*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1998.
- Perfect, K. A. “Rhyme and Reason: Poetry for the Heart and Head,” *The Reading Teacher* 52 (1999): 728–737.
- Rasinski, T. V. “Speed Does Matter in Reading,” *The Reading Teacher* 54 (1999): 146–151.
- Rasinski, T. V., and N. D. Padak. *From Phonics to Fluency*. New York: Addison, Wesley, and Longman, 2001.
- Samuels, S. J. “The Method of Repeated Readings.” *The Reading Teacher*. 50 (1997): 376–381.

## Recommended Poetry Collections

- Bolin, F. S., ed. *Poetry for Young People—Carl Sandburg*. New York: Sterling Publishing Co. Inc., 1995.
- Dakos, K. 1990. *If You’re Not Here, Please Raise Your Hand: Poems About School*. New York: Four Winds Press, 1990.

## **Recommended Poetry Collections (continued)**

Greenfield, E. *Night on Neighborhood Street*. New York: Dial, 1991.

Hopkins, L. B., *Been to Yesterdays*. Honesdale, PA: Boyds Mills Press, 1995.

Nye, N. S., ed. *This Same Sky: A Collection of Poems from Around the World*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1992.

Prelutsky, J., ed. *The 20th Century Children's Book of Poetry*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1999.

Rosenberg, L., ed. *The Invisible Ladder: An Anthology of Contemporary American Poems for Young Readers*. New York: Henry Holt, 1996.

Silverstein, S. *Where the Sidewalk Ends*. New York: Harper & Row, 1974.

Stevenson, J. *Cornflakes*. New York: Greenwillow/Harper Collins, 2000.

Viorst, J. *If I Were in Charge of the World and Other Worries*. New York: Atheneum, 1981.

## **Recommended Resources for Readers' Theater Scripts**

Barchers, S. L. *Scary Readers' Theater*. Englewood: Libraries Unlimited, 1994.

Bauer, C. F. *Presenting Readers' Theater*. New York: Wilson, 1987.

Dixon, N. *Learning With Readers' Theater*. Winnipeg: Pegius, 1996.

Fredericks, A. D. *Frantic Frogs and Other Frankly Fractured Folktales for Readers' Theater*. Englewood: Libraries Unlimited, 1996.

Tanner, F. A. *Readers' Theater Fundamentals*. Topeka: Clark, 1993.

## **Titles for Two or More Readers**

Fleischman, Paul. *Joyful Noise, Poems for Two Voices*. New York: Harper & Row, 1988.

Hoberman, Mary Ann. *You Read to Me, I'll Read to You*. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 2001. (Probably geared toward younger readers, but it is very entertaining.)



## Summer on Fire Island .....pages 16-17

- 1-2. Answers will vary.
3. Marty thought it would be boring.
4. *Isolated* means alone or by yourself, usually far away from others.
5. Marty liked kayaking, cucumber and cream cheese sandwiches (or cinnamon rolls), and hanging out with three girls her own age (swimming, watching movies).
6. Answers will vary. Most students will show an improvement in words per minute.

## The Great White Shark.....pages 18-19

- 1-2. Answers will vary.
3. People might be afraid of great white sharks based on what they have seen in movies or because of the shark's size.
4. The shark's sense of hearing is most helpful for catching prey.
5. *Keen* means sharp or extremely sensitive.
6. Answers will vary. Most students will show an improvement in words per minute.

## Cafeteria Food.....page 20

Answers will vary.

## Keep in Touch.....page 21

Answers will vary.

## Summer Camp in Context.....page 22

1. *blaring*—making a loud noise
2. *countless*—too many to count (a lot)
3. *bonded*—formed a close relationship with
4. *immense*—a great amount
5. *anticipation*—looking forward to something
6. *dread*—to be reluctant or fearful of something

## Koalas in Context.....page 23

Answers will vary.

## Words in Context.....page 24

1. *anticipated*—looked forward to
2. *recruited*—sought out for a particular job
3. *discontent*—unhappiness or state of unrest
4. *boarded*—provided with an alternate place to eat and sleep
5. *accessible*—able to be accessed easily
6. *inclement*—severe

## Getting Along .....page 25

1. Answers will vary.
2. Disagreeing can help friends learn how to solve problems. It can also draw them closer once they have worked through their difficulty.

## Babysitting .....page 26

Answers will vary.

## Tips .....page 27

A 15% tip for \$15.50 would be \$2.33.  
(10% is \$1.55 and 20% is \$3.10)

## Directions .....page 28

1. Answers will vary.
2. Often we pause when reading directions in order to focus on understanding what we have read.
- 3-4. Answers will vary.

## Say What? .....page 29

1. b
2. a
3. c
4. c
5. a
6. b

## The Visit.....page 30

Answers will vary.





**Wake Up! .....page 31**

1. Often our voices rise a bit at the end of a sentence when asking a question.
2. If you know the times of day you are most energetic, you are more likely to plan your day in a way that fits your style.

**Go Mom, Go! .....page 32**

Answers will vary.

**Barn Owls .....page 33**

Answers will vary.

**Commercial Time .....page 34**

Answers will vary.

**Getting Along .....page 35**

First reading—Answers will vary.

Second reading—The best way to fix a disagreement with a friend is to talk it out and be willing to apologize. It's important to deal with it right away so it doesn't make things worse.

Third reading—Answers will vary.

**Looking for Summer**

**Employment .....page 36**

First reading—Answers will vary.

Second reading—Louis showed initiative by making a flyer advertising his services. He showed responsibility by keeping his commitment to all of his customers.

Third reading—Answers will vary.

**Honking Horns .....page 37**

Answers will vary.

**A Bumpy Ride .....page 38**

Answers will vary.

**Peanut Butter .....page 39**

1. Answers will vary.
2. Peanut butter may be so popular because it is high in protein, easy to digest, and there are many different ways to eat it.

**Taking Care of a Dog .....page 40**

Answers will vary.

**Japan .....page 41**

Answers will vary.

**Novel Reading .....page 42**

Answers will vary.

**Supper Surprise .....page 43**

Answers will vary.

**Oprah Winfrey .....page 44**

1. Oprah had to overcome being sent from her mother to live with grandparents and getting into trouble at school.
2. Oprah handled these challenges by persisting through them and finally living up to the high expectations her father set. We can learn that no matter what our beginnings, we can still succeed with determination and hard work.

**Changing Leaves .....page 45**

Answers will vary.

**Book Club .....page 46**

Answers will vary.

**Choosing a Career .....page 47**

Answers will vary.

**The Family Boat Trip .....page 48**

Answers will vary.

**Pick a Passage .....page 49**

Answers will vary.

**Homework .....page 50**

Answers will vary.



**The Season.....page 51**

1. Fall. The poem talks about school, leaves falling, pumpkins, and turkey dinners with families.
2. Answers will vary. Sometimes poems that do not rhyme are more difficult to read; you can emphasize each line by speaking the words slowly or you can follow sentence structure and read through lines until you come to stopping punctuation such as a comma or period.

**Time for School .....page 52**

Answers will vary.

**Five a Day .....page 53**

Answers will vary.

**Serious Sentences.....page 54**

Answers will vary.

**Opening Night Jitters.....page 55**

Answers will vary.

**Everyone Loves a Story .....page 56**

Answers will vary.

**Family.....page 57**

Answers will vary.

**Morning .....page 58**

Answers will vary.

**Newspaper Reading .....page 59**

Answers will vary.

**Signs of the Times .....page 60**

Answers will vary.

**How Do You Feel?.....page 61**

Answers will vary.

**Feelings .....page 62**

Answers will vary.

**Let Down .....page 63**

Answers will vary.

**A Letter from Kate.....page 64**

Answers will vary.

**Sibling Rivalry .....page 65**

Answers will vary.

**Readers' Theater Script:**

**"The Bright Idea" .....pages 66-69**

Answers will vary.

**Readers' Theater Script:**

**"The Big Move" .....pages 70-75**

Claire: Claire is careful—she works hard on her homework, does not like whipped cream on her float, and is cautious about the move. She is excited by the possibility of a trampoline.

Peter: Peter is likely a kid who likes action. He was rough with someone in P.E. class (by accident) and is excited about having a bike in the new town.

Mom: Mom is encouraging. She helps Claire with homework, is supportive of the move, and eager to move closer to her family.

Dad: Dad is excited, concerned not to move too quickly to disrupt the kids, and hopeful about his new job.

Mrs. Martin: Mrs. Martin is like a mom—she is kind and balanced, encouraging Claire and Peter to see the good possibilities of a move and consider the perspective of their parents.

Liz: Liz is very concerned about the changes the move would mean for her, leaving her friends and school.

James: James is surprised that Claire and Peter's parents decided to move without consulting them.