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***“PROGRAMA DE APOYO PARA ALUMNOS DE NUEVO  
INGRESO A LA SECUNDARIA PARTICULAR ESCUELA  
DE LAS LOMAS, S. C., CHAPULTEPEC HEIGHTS  
SCHOOL”***

TESINA PARA OBTENER EL TÍTULO DE LICENCIADA EN  
ENSEÑANZA DE INGLÉS COMO LENGUA EXTRANJERA  
QUE PRESENTA:

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## Introducción

El objetivo del presente proyecto es aplicar los conocimientos adquiridos a lo largo de la Licenciatura en Enseñanza de Inglés como Lengua Extranjera (LICEL) para la solución de un problema real detectado en una secundaria particular ubicada en Atizapán de Zaragoza –Escuela de las Lomas, S. C., *Chapultepec Heights School*; en este caso, se hace la crítica a un programa de apoyo existente y se presenta una propuesta de mejora para dicho programa.

En esta institución se detectó el inconveniente de que muchos de los alumnos de nuevo ingreso no contaban con el mismo nivel de inglés que sus compañeros de grupo, quienes habían cursado previamente la educación primaria en dicha escuela. Esto les generaba frustración, miedo y desgano; eventualmente, esto creaba un filtro afectivo – según Krashen, el filtro afectivo es un bloqueo mental de naturaleza emocional (Da Silva y Signoret, 2005)- que no permitía un desarrollo adecuado en clase y por lo tanto, su aprendizaje se veía truncado.

Por ello, en una primera etapa, se decidió que era necesario crear un programa de apoyo para estos alumnos. La limitación de este programa fue su carácter intuitivo, es decir, no tenía sustento teórico, por lo tanto, carecía de bases firmes para ser aplicado con éxito.

Partiendo de esta experiencia, gracias al conocimiento adquirido en la LICEL, ahora se pretende ofrecer una propuesta formalmente elaborada que seguramente brindará mejores resultados para los alumnos de la Escuela de las Lomas, *Chapultepec Heights School*.

El presente trabajo está estructurado de la siguiente manera:

En el primer apartado se presenta el contexto en el cual se desenvuelven los alumnos: las características de la escuela, sus compañeros, el material, equipo e instalaciones los cuales de una u otra manera, influyen en el desarrollo de la lengua extranjera en los alumnos.

Después, se describe a mayor detalle en qué consiste la problemática encontrada.

Posteriormente, se enumeran las características del programa de apoyo en su primera etapa, es decir, la etapa de desarrollo intuitivo.

En el siguiente apartado se desarrolla el sustento teórico que nos permitirá sentar las bases para sugerir el nuevo programa.

Por último se presenta el nuevo programa de apoyo para alumnos de nuevo ingreso, mismo que pretende ser una guía para todos aquellos maestros de inglés que presten sus servicios en Escuela de las Lomas, S. C. *Chapultepec Heights School*, en la sección secundaria.

Es importante recalcar que para efectos del presente proyecto, cuando mencionamos el término *programa*, nos referimos al documento en que un profesor comunica lo que pretende lograr en un curso, la forma en que va a intentarlo y los criterios que utilizará para evaluarlo; un programa es el producto de estudios, análisis y decisiones tendientes a optimizar los beneficios de una tarea educativa. (Gago Huguet, 1977:40)

## **Primera etapa: Desarrollo empírico del curso de apoyo**

### **1. Contexto**

#### **1.1 Características de la institución.**

La institución Escuela de las Lomas, S. C., *Chapultepec Heights School* donde se detectó la problemática y en la que se desea aplicar una propuesta de diseño de un programa de nivelación -objeto de este trabajo- es una escuela secundaria laica, mixta, particular, ubicada en Atizapán de Zaragoza, Estado de México. Actualmente cuenta con seis grupos, dos por grado, con un promedio de dieciocho alumnos por grupo. Pretende formar a los alumnos en valores como el amor, compromiso, respeto y verdad.

La institución tiene otras dos secciones: preescolar y primaria. En preescolar, los alumnos toman clases en las que se les habla totalmente en inglés y manejan libros de editoriales estadounidenses. Por su parte, en la sección de primaria, los alumnos ocupan la mitad de su estancia escolar en clases de lengua extranjera, donde llevan materias como *Reading, Vocabulary, Grammar, Spelling, Conversation* y *Cultural Activities*. También utilizan libros de editoriales estadounidenses.

Al llegar a secundaria, la mayoría de los alumnos son capaces de leer y entender textos en inglés, siempre que éstos no contengan tecnicismos y cuyos temas sean adecuados para su edad.

Actualmente, sólo existe un programa de apoyo para alumnos de nuevo ingreso -que se describirá en el siguiente apartado- pero como se explicará más adelante, ha sido insuficiente.

#### **1.2 Recursos con los que se cuenta**

Para efectos del programa de apoyo para alumnos de nuevo ingreso con un nivel de inglés menor que el de sus compañeros, se puede utilizar un salón que cuenta con pizarrón y grabadora.

En cuanto al tiempo, se puede llegar a un acuerdo con los alumnos para que después de clases, se queden aproximadamente 50 minutos – de 14:10 a 15:00 hrs. Se calcula que el curso constará de 32 sesiones –una clase a la semana. Dada la experiencia obtenida en años anteriores con el programa en su primera etapa, se considera a estos elementos y tiempo, suficientes; sin embargo, dependiendo del caso de cada alumno, se puede recurrir a más tiempo y a otros materiales de apoyo.

Actualmente se utilizan fotocopias del material con el que se trabaja del cual se pueden ver algunas muestras en lo anexos 6.3 y 6.4. En un inicio, con la presente propuesta, se pretendía mejorar este material, sin embargo, a lo largo del desarrollo de este trabajo se hizo evidente que la elaboración del material es tema de otro trabajo.

### **1.3 Características de los alumnos**

En general, la edad de los alumnos oscila entre los 11 y los 16 años. Están atravesando la adolescencia que de acuerdo con Hargreaves, A., Earl, L., & Ryan, J. (1988:25-37) es la etapa de la vida en la que el desarrollo se da más rápido que en ninguna otra; los adolescentes descubren los cambios espectaculares en sus cuerpos además de que empiezan a utilizar capacidades mentales más avanzadas y que se hacen conscientes de sus relaciones interpersonales. En este periodo, muestran poca capacidad de concentración, sin embargo les resulta más fácil centrar su atención durante largos periodos de tiempo en aquellos temas que les resultan interesantes. Los adolescentes necesitan cada vez más pertenecer a un grupo de iguales, por lo tanto su atención se centra de forma primordial en los amigos. Es importante recordar que el desarrollo durante la adolescencia no se da de la misma manera ni al mismo tiempo en todos los individuos, por lo que alumnos de la misma edad no necesariamente están atravesando por la misma etapa.

Es bien sabido que los temas en cualquier programa deben ser de interés para los aprendientes ya que los motiva y los involucra en el uso directo de la lengua. En este caso, como ya se mencionó, la mayoría de los aprendientes está



atravesando la etapa de la adolescencia, lo cual requiere que los temas y las actividades que se traten sean sobre música, amistades, fiestas, comida, tiempo libre o vacaciones pues de lo contrario, su atención fácilmente se dispersará.

También, ya que los adolescentes fácilmente pierden la concentración es conveniente repasar los temas tanto del programa regular, como del programa de apoyo.

En su mayoría, son de clase media, aunque también algunos provienen de familias de un menor nivel socioeconómico, por lo tanto, difícilmente podrían costear clases particulares para su regularización. Por ello, el programa se imparte de manera gratuita.

Como ya se mencionó, el programa de apoyo se aplica a alumnos de nuevo ingreso -principalmente primero de secundaria, aunque, en su primera etapa, se aplicó a alumnos que ingresaron a segundo o tercero de secundaria- cuyo nivel de inglés era menor al de sus compañeros y por lo tanto presentaban dificultad para desenvolverse en clase y muestran un aprovechamiento deficiente.

#### **1.4 Motivación del docente para diseñar el programa de apoyo**

El docente, creador del programa de apoyo en su primera etapa y diseñador del nuevo programa en su segunda etapa, cuenta con pleno conocimiento del plan regular que se maneja en secundaria, pues lleva doce años laborando en la institución, por lo tanto, sabe de las necesidades académicas de los alumnos para poder desempeñarse mejor en el programa regular.

Puesto que el docente cotidianamente enfrenta la problemática en dicho programa regular, es la primera persona interesada en buscar una solución que pueda ser benéfica para todos: los alumnos directamente afectados, el resto del grupo (pues en ocasiones deben atrasar un poco su desempeño en espera de que sus nuevos compañeros alcancen la comprensión de algunos temas o lecturas) y el docente, pues debe desfasar la enseñanza impartida a sus diversos alumnos.

## 1.5 Características del programa regular

Es pertinente describir el programa regular porque el programa de apoyo está basado hasta cierto punto en el primero.

En cuanto al enfoque y metodología, el programa regular es un tanto ecléctico ya que incluye un poco de la gramática tradicional y del enfoque comunicativo, por las siguientes razones:

- Se maneja un enfoque de gramática deductiva (se les proporcionan las reglas gramaticales) porque los alumnos ya conocen y utilizan muchas estructuras, pero no son del todo conscientes de ellas, por lo que algunas veces tienen algunos errores que se busca disminuir al mínimo.

- Se hace énfasis en la precisión en cuanto a la corrección lingüística porque se les prepara para presentar el examen TOEFL Institucional en tercero de secundaria, por lo que para encontrar errores en la parte gramatical, es necesario que además de la intuición, concienticen los mismos y que tengan cierto manejo de la gramática descriptiva; también se practican ejercicios de comprensión auditiva y lectora. Además, dado que entre los alumnos que no optan por un bachillerato en institución pública, la mayoría elige el Tecnológico de Monterrey o el Instituto Indoamericano para continuar sus estudios, se pretende prepararlos para que tengan acceso al sistema bicultural (520 puntos en el examen TOEFL institucional) en el primero, o el sexto nivel (de siete) en el segundo. De manera general, se puede decir que se pretende que al graduarse de secundaria, en su mayoría, los alumnos estén en el nivel B1 del Marco Europeo de Referencia (ver anexo 6.2)

- Por otro lado, se maneja un enfoque comunicativo, pues se les dan herramientas para que los alumnos sean capaces de comunicarse adecuadamente de forma oral y escrita. Estas herramientas consisten en dotar a los alumnos de conocimientos y práctica en cuanto a las nociones, funciones y pragmática. De igual manera, se llevan a cabo prácticas orales en las que se crean contextos imaginarios donde los alumnos deben solucionar problemas u ofrecer alternativas.

## **2. Descripción de las actividades realizadas**

En este apartado se describe lo que se realizó de manera intuitiva, es decir, desde que se detectó el problema hasta la evaluación de los resultados obtenidos. En esta parte del trabajo empieza la crítica al trabajo previamente llevado a cabo.

### **2.1 Problemática detectada.**

Como ya se mencionó anteriormente, es común que muchos de los alumnos de nuevo ingreso no cuenten con el mismo nivel que los compañeros que ya han estudiado en la institución. Se pudo observar que al sentirse en desventaja, la situación provocaba frustración, desgano, incluso rechazo a la materia, lo que ocasionaba que la mejora en el aprovechamiento fuera casi imposible. Da Silva y Signoret (2005:203) explican que “para desarrollar una segunda lengua o una lengua extranjera se necesita algo más que simplemente un buen oído, una buena experiencia, una inteligencia verbal y una aptitud favorable, se necesita tener además una variable socioafectiva positiva”. Un sector de los alumnos, que habían ingresado a la institución y se daban cuenta de que su nivel de inglés no era el mismo que el del resto de sus compañeros y que por lo tanto, su desempeño en clase y evaluaciones era bajo, tendían a construir un filtro afectivo, que les impedía un buen desempeño en clase. A esto podemos añadir que los aprendientes en cuestión no eran los únicos rezagados, también el resto del grupo se veía afectado por el retraso y por el entorpecimiento del aprendizaje que generaba el hecho de que no todos pudieran ir al mismo ritmo.

Por lo tanto, el docente a cargo de la enseñanza de inglés en los grupos de secundaria, decidió que era pertinente crear un programa de apoyo para que estos alumnos no se sintieran tan en desventaja y desalentados. Este programa debería ayudarlos en la nivelación académica y les daría herramientas para desenvolverse mejor en el salón de clases; les aportaría vocabulario, estructuras, prácticas; se les aclararían dudas que no hubieran sido resueltas en la clase del programa regular. Además, el objetivo no era simplemente dotarlos de más horas de práctica, sino también, darles seguridad, que ellos pudieran ver que sí podían mostrar progreso en su aprendizaje. Esto se lograría con un material que los

llevara de ejercicios con textos simples e instrucciones sencillas, a otros que poco a poco se convirtieran en ejercicios más complejos. Por ejemplo, en los primeros ejercicios se pide que coloreen una ilustración de acuerdo a las oraciones que aparecen en el texto; posteriormente, los ejercicios piden elegir cuál será el título adecuado para el texto; en ejercicios más avanzados, además de que las lecturas son más largas y que exigen un vocabulario más amplio, al igual que contienen estructuras un poco más complejas, les piden utilizar organizadores, hacer inferencias sobre lo que sucederá después o les piden diferenciar un hecho de una opinión. Además, a diferencia del programa regular, en el de apoyo se utilizaba la lengua materna para dar instrucciones o explicaciones. Da Silva y Signoret, (2005: 210) opinan que “dado que el éxito o el fracaso en la adquisición pueden generar actitudes, habrá que promover también el desarrollo exitoso de LE (con instrucciones claras, con materiales adecuados al nivel lingüístico y cultural del alumno.)” Esto tal vez vaya en contra del enfoque comunicativo en el sentido de que no fomenta la negociación de significados, sin embargo, a veces ayuda a reducir la ansiedad en el alumno.

Para esto se decidió que era pertinente la creación de un programa de apoyo, en el cual ellos pudieran expresar sus dudas sin sentirse abrumados porque los demás seguramente sabrían la respuesta; donde las instrucciones fueran más sencillas y de ser necesario, en español.

En una primera etapa, que a continuación se describe, no hubo base teórica alguna; el proyecto se llevó a cabo básicamente de manera intuitiva.

## **2.2 Primeras estrategias de solución**

Una vez detectado el problema y dado que algunos alumnos comenzaron a pedir ayuda, ésta se les brindaba ocasionalmente. Sin embargo, poco a poco se fue implementando como una asesoría semanal. Posteriormente, quedó establecido como un programa de apoyo pero, como ya se mencionó con anterioridad y como se explicará a continuación, este programa tuvo ciertas deficiencias en su primera etapa.

### 2.2.1 Contenidos a abordar

Uno de los problemas que se observaron en esta primera etapa, es la base empírica de planeación y organización. A pesar de ser un programa bien intencionado, no está estructurado adecuadamente. Tras la observación y la revisión y comparación de las evaluaciones diagnósticas realizadas al inicio de cada ciclo escolar, se analizaron los problemas y necesidades existentes en los alumnos, pero no se diseñó un programa formal, es decir, la intervención didáctica se llevó a cabo de manera intuitiva.

Se dice que es de manera intuitiva porque no se explicitan los objetivos, ni los criterios de estructuración y graduación de contenidos; el material no fue evaluado formalmente, las actividades fueron relativamente improvisadas. Se dispone de una batería de ejercicios, pero simplemente llevan a la mecanización de contenidos gramaticales; no se analizaron ni las funciones lingüísticas, ni se aplicaron de los temas de manera más comunicativa.

En evaluaciones diagnósticas y en observaciones dentro de las sesiones del curso regular, se encontró que los alumnos en cuestión, presentaban ciertas dificultades de las cuales se hizo una selección –tomando en cuenta las que se daban con mayor frecuencia- para trabajar esos temas en el programa de apoyo. A continuación se presenta una lista de algunos de los temas que se trataban:

- Tiempos gramaticales: presente, pasado, futuro, presente perfecto, pasado perfecto, futuro perfecto, presente progresivo, pasado progresivo, futuro progresivo, presente perfecto progresivo, pasado perfecto progresivo y futuro perfecto progresivo. Lo que básicamente se abordaba era la estructura; a pesar de que a los alumnos se les explicaba el significado, pocas veces se practicaba su uso real; lo más importante era que la estructura se produjera de manera correcta.
- Adjetivos y adverbios: se revisaba la definición y el uso correcto; principalmente el tratar de evitar que confundieran los adjetivos con los adverbios.
- Comparativos y Superlativos de adjetivos y adverbios: se enfatizaba la ortografía correcta y la discriminación entre *more/most* antes del modificador o las terminaciones –*er/-est*.

➤ Verbos regulares e irregulares: Se estudiaban las reglas para formar el pasado y pasado participio de los verbos regulares y se practicaba con algunos; en el caso de los irregulares, en el programa regular se maneja una lista; entonces los alumnos hacían repeticiones de los verbos en esta lista y escribían algunas oraciones.

➤ *Fragments/run-on sentences*. Se les daban ejercicios en los cuales ellos debían identificar cada una –es decir, debían decir si el conjunto de palabras era un fragmento, un grupo de oraciones “de corrido” o una oración correcta- y corregirla en caso de ser necesario para que fueran oraciones correctas.

Como se puede apreciar, en la primera etapa del curso de nivelación se carece de contexto o intención comunicativa; se enfatiza la estructura.

### **2.2.2 Material didáctico seleccionado**

No hubo una selección formal del material, es decir, no se realizó una evaluación del mismo, sin embargo, se hizo un análisis del desempeño general de los alumnos de nuevo ingreso por medio de observaciones y evaluaciones diagnósticas escritas diseñadas y llevadas a cabo por el docente durante las primeras semanas del curso regular. Los problemas más relevantes se encontraban en su comprensión lectora y en la elaboración correcta de enunciados –ya fuera de manera oral o escrita- por lo tanto se optó por utilizar el siguiente material:

➤ *Reading Comprehension: Test Taking Practice and Test Taking Tips*.<sup>1</sup>

Este manual, además de proporcionar una práctica en cuanto a estrategias y habilidades lectoras, daba cierto apoyo para el manejo de vocabulario según el caso. Había alumnos que necesitaban aprender desde los colores, nombres de animales, números, etc. Otros simplemente practicaban su lectura oral y en silencio, siendo lo más importante la comprensión y las estrategias utilizadas para lograr la misma.

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<sup>1</sup> *Taking Practice and Test Taking Tips* es una compilación de cuatro libros con el mismo título que van del grado 1 al 4(ver bibliografía).

El motivo por el que seleccionó este material fue que seguía una graduación en la comprensión de oraciones sencillas a la comprensión de textos un poco más complejos. Incluye variados tipos de ejercicios: relacionar columnas, opción múltiple, subrayado de la idea principal en el texto, elaboración de diagramas de Venn, falso o verdadero, ordenar eventos según la secuencia en la fueron presentados, etc. Los temas son diversos: animales, amigos, presidentes de Estados Unidos, personajes importantes en el mundo, ecología, etc.

➤ Para la otra parte del programa el docente del programa regular elaboró un pequeño manual, que manejaba básicamente gramática del primer grado de secundaria. En este manual se incluían ejercicios de apoyo para los temas vistos en clase: tiempos verbales, verbos regulares e irregulares, el uso correcto de adjetivos y adverbios, comparativos, tipos de oraciones, fragmentos de oraciones, oraciones correctas –descritos en el apartado anterior.

En las producciones de los alumnos, ya sean orales o escritas, se revisaba básicamente la estructura, la forma, pero no el contenido.

### **2.2.3 Ejercicios elaborados**

En cuanto a los ejercicios de gramática, no tenían objetivos bien definidos con base en una intención comunicativa concreta; simplemente se trataba de repeticiones, completamiento de tablas pero no estaban respaldados por un contexto donde el alumno pudiera ver su aplicación real.

En el caso de los ejercicios de lectura, se revisaba el vocabulario; si era necesario, se estudiaban más palabras relacionadas y se procedía a resolver el ejercicio.

En algunas ocasiones, la tarea era escribir oraciones o una pequeña historia con las nuevas palabras de vocabulario que se hubieran revisado; se les recomendaba a los alumnos que tuvieran cuidado en el uso correcto de estructuras y verbos en sus oraciones o historias.

Además de las debilidades anteriormente mencionadas, también puede observarse (Ver anexo 6.3) que este manual carece de instrucciones claras y ejemplos.

### **2.3 Resultados obtenidos.**

Pese a las carencias del programa en esta primera etapa, se han podido obtener resultados bastante favorables. Algunos alumnos realmente han llegado a adaptarse a la dinámica de la clase del programa regular, se han vuelto más participativos y definitivamente han mostrado un avance en el manejo del inglés. También ha sido notoria la mejoría en calificaciones por parte de varios de los estudiantes.

Sin embargo, un programa de apoyo bien estructurado ayudaría de diferentes maneras ya que la planeación por parte del docente se vería beneficiada y por consiguiente el proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje. Además, dicho programa sería aplicable por cualquier otro docente, en ausencia del actual titular.

### **2.4 Reflexiones sobre la experiencia.**

A pesar de los buenos resultados, es preciso mejorar el programa de apoyo. Ahora, al término de los estudios de la licenciatura en enseñanza de lenguas (LICEL) y tras una reflexión mejor sustentada, es posible, para el autor del presente estudio, hacer la crítica y mejora pertinente. Si éste ha reportado buenos resultados, un programa de apoyo bien elaborado, con objetivos claros, material bien seleccionado y actividades enfocadas a mejorar el manejo de la lengua y el desarrollo de una habilidad comunicativa en los alumnos, podría ser más efectivo.

Las deficiencias son evidentes: No existen objetivos claramente establecidos; no hay fundamento teórico; falta estructura, graduación adecuada, material, etc. Conjuntando los conocimientos adquiridos en los diversos cursos de la LICEL – Diseño de Cursos y Programas, Diseño de Materiales, Psicopedagogía, Didáctica General, Psicolingüística, etc.- se tiene una visión más completa de lo que un programa debe tener y obtener. De ahí que nuestro siguiente paso será elaborar la



fundamentación teórica en la que se basará el nuevo programa de apoyo y establecer de manera precisa los objetivos de aprendizaje a lograr. Al final se diseñará la propuesta para el nuevo programa de apoyo.

## **Segunda Etapa: Diseño de un programa apoyo con sustento teórico**

### **3. Marco teórico metodológico**

Después de un análisis detallado de las necesidades de los alumnos - mismas que fueron detectadas tras una observación realizada durante diez años, a través de evaluaciones diagnósticas (instrumentos escritos como se muestra un ejemplo en el anexo 6.1 y observaciones hechas en clase), se encontró que los errores más comúnmente presentados por los alumnos en ejercicios, exámenes y la comunicación diaria no eran cubiertos por el programa de apoyo existente. Por tanto, los inconvenientes del programa de apoyo en su primera etapa son los siguientes:

- Falta de énfasis en el uso funcional y pragmático de las estructuras gramaticales, es decir, los alumnos deben obtener algo más que simples estructuras gramaticales; es preciso apoyarles en el significado de lo que los alumnos quieren expresar o interpretar y de los momentos y circunstancias adecuadas para el uso de cierto vocabulario.
- Poco contexto en el cual el alumno pueda revisar y practicar el uso real de estructuras y/o vocabulario.
- Carencia de un enfoque más comunicativo casi nulo en los temas impartidos a los alumnos para que sean más fáciles de aprender y aplicar.

#### **3.1 Constructivismo pedagógico**

Para prevenir los problemas anteriores, es preciso que el programa tuviera las siguientes bases:

##### **1. Constructivista**

Antes de explicar esta selección constructivista, cabe definir lo que es el constructivismo. En Díaz-Barriga (Díaz-Barriga, 2007:30) encontramos una definición por Mario Carretero que dice lo siguiente:

“Básicamente puede decirse que es la idea que mantiene que el individuo tanto en los aspectos cognitivos y sociales del comportamiento

como en los afectivos no es un mero producto del ambiente ni un simple resultado de sus disposiciones internas, sino una construcción propia que se va produciendo día a día con resultado de la interacción entre esos dos factores. En consecuencia, según la posición constructivista, el conocimiento no es una copia fiel de la realidad, sino una construcción del ser humano. ¿Con qué instrumentos realiza la persona dicha construcción? Fundamentalmente con los esquemas que ya posee, es decir, con lo que ya construyó en su relación con el medio que le rodea.

Dicho proceso de construcción depende de dos aspectos fundamentales:

- De los conocimientos previos o representación que se tenga de la nueva información, o de la actividad o tarea a resolver.
- De la actividad externa o interna que el aprendiz realice al respecto.”

Sin embargo, no es tan fácil acotar lo que es el constructivismo. Díaz-Barriga (2007:25) lo expone así:

Hoy en día no basta con hablar del “constructivismo” en singular, es necesario decir a qué constructivismo nos estamos refiriendo. Es decir, hace falta aclarar el contexto de origen, teorización y aplicación del mismo. En realidad, nos enfrentamos a una diversidad de posturas que pueden caracterizarse genéricamente como constructivistas, desde las cuales se indaga e interviene no sólo en el ámbito educativo, sino también en la epistemología, la psicología del desarrollo y la clínica, o en diversas disciplinas sociales.

Por ello es importante establecer de una manera general lo que en este trabajo entendemos por constructivismo y posteriormente cuál es la implicación pragmática del constructivismo que nos ha influido para la toma de decisiones.

De la definición anterior tomamos básicamente tres aspectos relevantes:

1. El alumno necesita el ambiente adecuado para llevar a cabo la construcción del conocimiento. Este ambiente debe ser preparado por el docente.

2. El estudiante recurrirá a los conocimientos previos que posee y corresponde al maestro estar al tanto de ellos.

Las actividades que se realicen en cada sesión son determinantes en el proceso de construcción, pero el maestro únicamente podrá controlar las actividades externas. Esta parte del constructivismo es explicada por Coll (en Díaz-Barriga, 2007:30) de la siguiente manera:

La concepción constructivista del aprendizaje escolar se sustenta en la idea de que la finalidad de la educación que se imparte en las instituciones educativas es promover los procesos de crecimiento personal del alumno en el marco de la cultura del grupo al que pertenece. Estos aprendizajes no se producirán de manera satisfactoria a no ser que se suministre una ayuda específica mediante la participación del alumno en actividades intencionales, planificadas y sistemáticas, que logren propiciar en éste una actividad mental constructivista. Así la construcción de conocimiento escolar puede analizarse desde dos vertientes:

- a) Los procesos psicológicos implicados en el aprendizaje.
- b) Los mecanismos de influencia educativa susceptible de promover, guiar y orientar dicho aprendizaje.

Diversos autores han postulado que es mediante la realización de aprendizajes significativos que el alumno construye significados que enriquecen su conocimiento del mundo físico y social, potenciando así su crecimiento personal. De esta manera, los tres aspectos clave que debe favorecer el proceso instruccional serán el logro del aprendizaje significativo, la memorización comprensiva de los contenidos escolares y la funcionalidad de lo aprendido.

A partir de lo expresado por Coll, vemos un punto clave de lo que es el cambio fundamental que nuestro programa de apoyo debe contener. En el primer programa de apoyo lo que importaba era la corrección estructural, pero si no hay aprendizaje significativo, memorización comprensiva de los contenidos ni funcionalidad de lo aprendido, el alumno no logrará progresar en la utilización de la lengua extranjera. Por eso, en esta propuesta para un segundo programa de apoyo, el enfoque comunicativo cobra relevancia como tal. Como Díaz-Barriga lo resume cuando dice que debemos enseñar a pensar y actuar sobre para integrar lo estudiado con la experiencia.

De una manera más particular, el paradigma constructivista sociocultural, establece que el aprendizaje ocurre básicamente por la construcción del conocimiento que se lleva a cabo en la interacción con otros. En Hernández (1998: 237,238.) podemos encontrar que

“Vigotsky siempre sostuvo que el aprendizaje específicamente humano es un proceso en esencia interactivo. ...En este paradigma se pone un énfasis particular en lo externo (sociocultural) y se señala que el desarrollo ocurre siguiendo una trayectoria esencial de “afuera hacia adentro”

En este sentido, es importante que el docente cree el ambiente necesario para que se genere el aprendizaje y que el alumno interactúe haciendo uso de la lengua meta, el inglés, con otros compañeros y con el docente.

Otra de las características importantes en este paradigma es que se pretende que el alumno poco a poco vaya obteniendo autonomía y se convierta cada vez en alguien más responsable de su aprendizaje, mientras que el maestro debe ser un mediador entre el conocimiento y el alumno.

Por lo tanto, dado el contexto de los alumnos, donde ellos ya empiezan a prepararse para el futuro cercano, el cual les exige un mayor grado de independencia en cuanto a su aprendizaje –en bachillerato- es importante que empiecen a hacerse responsables del mismo. Por ello, consideramos que el método de enseñanza debe inspirarse en un enfoque constructivista mediante el cual los estudiantes serán orientados a participar más activamente en el

aprendizaje del inglés. Además, basándonos en el paradigma constructivista, procuraremos que el programa de apoyo incluya las características que a continuación se describirán, a fin de apoyar un mejor aprendizaje en los alumnos.

Onrubia (Hernández, 1998: 249-242) considera los siguientes criterios del paradigma sociocultural como relevantes para que el andamiaje<sup>2</sup> desemboque en un verdadero aprendizaje significativo:

a) Las actividades de los alumnos en situaciones de ZDP<sup>3</sup> deberán presentarse dentro de un contexto y no de forma fragmentada.

Definitivamente, este es un cambio que se debe llevar a cabo. La gramática se estudiaba como un grupo de estructuras aisladas; si de este modo las insertamos en un contexto en el cual los alumnos puedan ver su uso real, será para ellos más fácil apropiarse de las mismas.

b) El docente deberá procurar que, aún en sus etapas tempranas, los alumnos participen observando críticamente, actuando y dialogando.

Dado que se pretende que los alumnos sean más responsables de su aprendizaje, es necesario que éstos participen activamente y se comprometan aún cuando su nivel de inglés sea bajo. Lo anterior se puede lograr mediante un análisis de necesidades –encuestas, observaciones e instrumentos de evaluación– para identificar algunas posibles características y gustos generales de los adolescentes a través de la aplicación a un grupo muestra, el cual puede ser incluido en el nuevo programa. De manera individual, también se puede involucrar a los alumnos, tratando de hacerlos más conscientes de sus necesidades y de lo que requieren para cubrir esas necesidades; de manera adicional, ellos podrán sugerir actividades que no estén contempladas en el programa de apoyo, pero que

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<sup>2</sup> Bruner, Woods y colaboradores, citados en Hernández (1998) lo describen como un sistema de ayudas y apoyos (relacionado a la Zona de Desarrollo Próximo de Vigotsky) necesarios estratégicamente elaborados para que el alumno vaya haciendo las construcciones necesarias para aprender los contenidos.

<sup>3</sup> Vigotsky define la ZDP como: *la distancia entre el nivel real de desarrollo, determinado por la capacidad de resolver independientemente un problema, y el nivel de desarrollo potencial, determinado a través de la resolución de un problema bajo la guía de un adulto o en colaboración con otro compañero más capaz* (Hernández, 1998: 227 las cursivas son de Vigotsky)

sean de su interés y que se puedan relacionar con alguno de los temas del programa de estudios.

c) Se requerirá de un sistema de evaluación formativa de las actividades de los alumnos desde que empiezan a participar en la ZDP y de ser necesario, llevar a cabo los ajustes pertinentes.

El programa complementario debe ser flexible ya que cada alumno tendrá necesidades diferentes y progresará de manera individual, por lo tanto, a pesar de que se pretende crear un nuevo programa de apoyo, este será una guía, o columna vertebral, pero lo anterior no significa falta de flexibilidad ya que el proceso de enseñanza requiere de una constante renovación para no perder su validez.

d) Hacer uso explícito del lenguaje para promover las condiciones necesarias de intersubjetividad (del enseñante a los aprendices, así como entre los aprendices) y la negociación de significados en el sentido esperado.

En este sentido, además de negociar significados en la lengua meta, se puede rescatar lo que se hacía en el programa complementario en su primera etapa; se puede seguir utilizando la lengua materna para explicar todo lo que no han podido entender en el programa regular y evitar confusiones. Además, como el mismo Vigotsky lo decía, “donde más éxito tiene el niño es en la resolución de los problemas que están más cerca de los que resuelve por su cuenta” (Vigotsky, 2010:253), es decir, en la interacción con el maestro o los otros compañeros que saben más que él, el alumno podrá resolver problemas más complejos.

e) Establecer relaciones explícitas entre lo que los alumnos ya saben (sus conocimientos previos) y los nuevos contenidos de aprendizaje.

Esto procederá desde el momento en que se lleve a cabo un diagnóstico adecuado y se continúe dándole una graduación adecuada a los contenidos, además debe seguir en cada sesión, con cada alumno, según el caso lo amerite.

f) Promover el uso autónomo y autorregulado de los contenidos por parte de los alumnos.

Esta parte es clave en el programa de apoyo en su segunda etapa. Lo que se pretende es crear el andamiaje adecuado para que los alumnos sean capaces

de manejarse de una manera más autónoma dentro y fuera del salón de clases. Lo anterior en primera instancia, se logrará con la graduación adecuada de los contenidos gramaticales, a fin de que para pasar a cierta unidad, se debe tener total control de la previa; el vocabulario será reutilizado por lo que al avanzar progresivamente creará este andamiaje.

g) Para crear ZDP, es importante que se promueva la interacción en situaciones cooperativas con otros compañeros (andamiaje entre el guía-experto y el alumno).

Esto se llevará a cabo en la medida en la que la cantidad de alumnos que tomen el curso de apoyo, lo permita; pues a veces no todos los alumnos coinciden en la disponibilidad en los días programados y puede haber un solo alumno durante la sesión; sin embargo el docente puede, hasta cierto punto, ocupar el lugar de los otros compañeros para la negociación de significados en la comprensión de textos orales o escritos. Por otro lado, no hay que olvidar que el alumno interactuará con sus compañeros del curso regular que poseen un mejor nivel, y que por lo tanto, fungirán como los guías-expertos.

Como pudimos ver, estos criterios no solamente nos dan un perfil de lo que es el andamiaje, sino que nos dan una idea más clara de lo que es el paradigma sociocultural-constructivista.

## 2. Maestro

Para el constructivismo, el papel del maestro es de gran relevancia. Según Hernández (1998:234)

El profesor debe ser entendido como un agente cultural que enseña en un contexto de prácticas y medios socioculturalmente determinados, y como un *mediador* esencial entre el saber sociocultural y los procesos de apropiación de los alumnos (véase Medina 1996). Así, a través de actividades conjuntas e interactivas, el docente procede promoviendo zonas de construcción



Por lo tanto, el maestro debe ser el experto, el que conoce hacia dónde y cómo será dirigido el proceso educativo durante la aplicación del programa complementario; será el mediador, el que cree las condiciones y ofrezca el contexto necesario para que se lleve a cabo el andamiaje

Hernández (1998:234) recuerda que Baquero propone que para que este andamiaje creado por el maestro sea efectivo, debe tener tres características: ajustable, temporal y explicitado-tematizado. Esto quiere decir, en primer lugar, que no será rígido; el programa de apoyo se adaptará a las necesidades de cada estudiante. En segundo lugar, se pretende que se le prepare al alumno para que llegue el momento en el que el programa de apoyo mismo ya no sea necesario. Por último se refiere a que se le debe concientizar al alumno de su progreso y que dicho proceso fue el producto de un trabajo colaborativo entre el enseñante y el aprendiz.

Por lo tanto, cabe destacar que el maestro debe ser flexible, al igual que el programa de apoyo, y que el maestro requiere de buscar además estrategias diferentes que le permitan brindar un verdadero andamiaje que sea útil para los alumnos. Pero estos últimos, también tienen un papel importante que desempeñar, mismo que será descrito a continuación.

### 3. Alumno

El alumno de ninguna manera puede ser pasivo. Para que el paradigma sociocultural funcione adecuadamente, el alumno debe ser copartícipe del proceso enseñanza-aprendizaje a la vez que interactúa con el maestro y sus compañeros. Hernández (1998:232) comenta que

...el alumno reconstruye los saberes, pero no lo hace solo, porque ocurren procesos complejos en lo que(...) se entremezclan procesos de construcción personal y procesos auténticos de co-construcción en colaboración con los otros que intervinieron, de una o de otra forma, en ese proceso.

En este paradigma, el alumno es un ser social, por lo tanto, la interacción con otros durante la aplicación del programa de apoyo es de gran importancia. En consecuencia, a diferencia del programa en su primera etapa, se tratará de poner más énfasis en la posibilidad de que más de un alumno asista a cada sesión y en la interacción intensiva entre los alumnos en el programa regular.

#### 4. Material

El material o los recursos pedagógicos dependerán también del enfoque metodológico –el cual se analizará en el siguiente apartado- sin embargo se puede afirmar que dadas las características mencionadas anteriormente, es importante que el material ayude al docente a crear el andamiaje pertinente para que el alumno pueda relacionar los conocimientos previos con los nuevos y para que se vuelva cada vez más autónomo en el manejo de la lengua extranjera. Para esto se requiere la graduación adecuada de los contenidos y de las actividades, a fin de que poco a poco el alumno vaya manejando la lengua extranjera.

### **3.2 Enfoque metodológico seleccionado para la enseñanza de lenguas extranjeras**

Dado que lo que se pretende es que el alumno logre comunicarse efectivamente y de una manera correcta a través de la lengua extranjera, el enfoque metodológico que ha sido seleccionado es el comunicativo. Littlewood (en Richards y Rodgers, 1998:69) dice “Una de las características de la enseñanza comunicativa de la lengua es que se preocupa tanto de los aspectos funcionales de la lengua como de los estructurales.” Además varias de sus características empatan con el constructivismo –expuestas en el apartado 3.1. A continuación se describe cómo propone este enfoque cada uno de los aspectos que se analizaron al revisar el constructivismo.

#### a. Maestro

Breen y Candlin (en Richards y Rodgers, 1998:80) nos describen el papel del profesor de la siguiente manera.

“El profesor tiene dos papeles fundamentales: el primero es facilitar el proceso de comunicación entre todos los participantes en la clase y entre estos participantes y las distintas actividades y texto. El segundo es actuar como participante independiente dentro del grupo de enseñanza-aprendizaje. Este papel se relaciona estrechamente con los objetivos del primero y surge como consecuencia. Estos papeles implican un conjunto de papeles secundarios: en primer lugar, como organizador de recursos, siendo él mismo un recurso; en segundo lugar, como guía en los procedimientos y las actividades de la clase...Un tercer papel es el de investigador y alumno, con muchas posibilidades de contribuir con su conocimiento, habilidades y experiencia sobre la naturaleza del aprendizaje y las capacidades organizativas.

El profesor también asume los papeles de analista de necesidades, consejero y gestor del proceso del grupo.”

Como podemos observar, el papel se parece al del mediador en el paradigma sociocultural; aunque, tal vez, un poco más activo. En el nuevo programa se propone que el maestro facilite el contexto, el material, las estructuras y medie la negociación de significados con los alumnos; también se requiere que ayude a que todo esto se lleve a cabo entre ellos.

#### b. Alumno

Breen y Candlin (en Richards y Rodgers, 1998: 80) describen al alumno de la siguiente manera:

“El papel del alumno como negociador –entre él mismo, el proceso de aprendizaje y el propósito de aprendizaje- surge a partir de (y se relaciona con) su papel como negociador dentro del grupo, de los procedimientos del aula y de las actividades que se realizan conjuntamente. La implicación para el alumno es que debería contribuir en la misma proporción en que recibe y por tanto, aprender de una forma interdependiente.”

Esto está claramente relacionado con lo que menciona el paradigma sociocultural, por lo tanto, una vez más conviene enfatizar la importancia que tendrá la asistencia de más de un alumno a cada sesión para así motivar la interacción entre los alumnos y que su aprendizaje sea más efectivo. De igual manera, día a día podrá practicar la negociación de significados e interactuar más activamente durante el programa regular, mismo que incluye el uso de las nuevas tecnologías –como el uso de *Facebook* por ejemplo. Por otro lado, en Richards se menciona que “se reconoce, en algunas versiones de este enfoque, que los alumnos traen al aula sus propias ideas de cómo debería ser la enseñanza y el aprendizaje.” (Richards y Rogers, 1998: 80.) Nuevamente, esto nos remonta al constructivismo, y como se mencionó en el apartado anterior, el programa de apoyo en su segunda etapa, será flexible y promoverá la participación de los alumnos, es decir, ellos podrán sugerir actividades –ideas implícitas- a realizar o temas a revisar –adicionalmente a los incluidos en el programa complementario.

c. Material

El tema del material, puede ser hasta cierto punto controversial pues según Richards y Rodgers (1998:80)

“Normalmente no hay texto, no se presentan las reglas gramaticales, no hay una organización de aula impuesta; se supone que los alumnos se relacionan principalmente entre ellos más que con el profesor y no hay (o hay muy poca) corrección de errores. Por otra parte, el carácter cooperativo del aprendizaje promovido por el Enfoque comunicativo también resulta desconocido para aquellos alumnos acostumbrados a un tipo de aprendizaje más individualizado.”

Sin embargo más adelante puntualizan

"Tienen el papel fundamental de promover el uso comunicativo de la lengua. Vamos a considerar tres tipos de materiales que se usan actualmente dentro de este enfoque: materiales centrados en el texto, materiales centrado en la tarea y materiales auténticos." (Richard y Rodgers, 1998:82)

En este sentido, para poder seleccionar o crear el material, es importante que se decidan los contenidos que se van a tratar, para posteriormente proceder a la graduación de los mismos. De hecho se pretende llevar a cabo la elaboración del material que apoye el nuevo programa, pero eso será tema de otro proyecto.

## **4. Descripción del programa**

En este apartado se pretende describir a fondo lo que será el nuevo programa de apoyo.

### **4.1 Objetivos generales**

Dadas las condiciones que se han descrito a lo largo del presente proyecto, los propósitos o metas del programa de apoyo se dividen en dos, con el mismo número de secciones complementarias. Esto se hace con la finalidad de cubrir las metas básicas con los alumnos objeto de estudio del presente trabajo. En primer lugar, se pretende que los alumnos desarrollen una competencia comunicativa que les permita hacer uso de la lengua dentro y fuera del salón de clases. Y por otro lado, también es imperante evitar que -dado su bajo nivel de partida- su desempeño inmediato en el programa regular sea bajo. El programa de apoyo se ocupará en primera instancia de la competencia comunicativa de los alumnos y adicionalmente, se enfocará a brindar asistencia en temas directamente relacionados con el programa regular, es decir, la nivelación requerida con explicaciones y prácticas más profundas sobre los temas vistos en el programa regular, especialmente las dos semanas anteriores a sus evaluaciones bimestrales, pues, sin dejar de lado la importancia que tiene el que los alumnos mejoren sus habilidades en el uso de la lengua extranjera, no debemos menospreciar la relevancia que tiene el hecho de que ellos acrediten el programa regular. Con base en el programa de la signatura, los objetivos de cada una de las secciones serán los siguientes:

#### **Primera parte –Comunicativa**

- El alumno describirá personas, cosas y lugares relacionados con su entorno cercano.
- El alumno referirá la información principal de textos orales o escritos de manera oral o escrita con coherencia y cohesión.
- El alumno fortalecerá su confianza para desenvolverse dentro y fuera del salón de clases al utilizar el inglés.

Segunda parte –Apoyo al programa regular

➤ El estudiante empleará correctamente las estructuras lingüísticas adecuadas a las distintas situaciones comunicativas previstos en el programa de estudios.

#### **4.2 Contenidos**

Como vimos en el apartado 2.2.1 la lista de contenidos del programa de apoyo en su primer diseño era muy extensa ya que no se profundizaba en los temas. Puesto que se pretende hacer una mejora en este sentido, los contenidos no pueden ser los mismos. Por lo tanto, se ha decidido hacer una selección de los temas gramaticales y el contenido de vocabulario centrales mínimos que se abordarán en el programa de apoyo en su segunda etapa, considerando las necesidades de aprendizaje inmediatas de los alumnos y la competencia comunicativa dentro del salón de clases, expresar gustos, necesidades básicas, etc.

Por otro lado, es importante tener en cuenta que los contenidos se presentarán en dos tablas descriptivas, pues los contenidos están divididos en dos partes, ya que se pretende cubrir dos necesidades generales:

1. La competencia comunicativa
2. La nivelación en el programa regular.

En primer lugar, se debe considerar la revisión de estructuras lingüísticas, ya que es importante analizar si es correcta la introducción de la gramática explícita en el nuevo programa de apoyo o no, ya que como sabemos, es un tema que generalmente provoca controversia. Penny Ur (1996:77) ofrece un elemento de juicio al respecto:

The important question is not whether teaching and learning grammar is necessary and / or sufficient for language learning, but whether it helps or not. And my own opinion is that yes, it does help, provided it is taught consistently as a means to improving mastery of the language, not as an end in itself<sup>4</sup>

Por otro lado, como ya lo analizamos anteriormente, en la primera etapa se le daba mayor énfasis a la precisión de las estructuras gramaticales y no se le daba importancia al significado; Vivian Cook (1992:76) nos dice que es relevante utilizar la gramática como una herramienta para entender o transmitir el significado cuando dice:

Grammar does not only affect how units of language are combined in order to 'look right'; it also affects their meaning. The teaching of grammatical meaning tends, unfortunately, to be neglected in many textbooks in favour of an emphasis on accuracy of form; but it is no good knowing how to perceive or construct a new tense of a verb if you do not know exactly what difference it makes to meaning when it is used.<sup>5</sup>

Ur (1996:73) también nos comenta que “The implication is that the learners need to learn how to make meanings within real contexts, and how to create longer units of language than single sentences.”<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> La cuestión no es si enseñar y aprender gramática es necesario o suficiente para aprender una lengua, sino ver si ayuda o no. En mi opinión es que sí, ayuda si se enseña consistentemente como un medio para mejorar el manejo de la lengua y no como un fin en sí mismo (Ur, 1996:77). Traducción propia.

<sup>5</sup> La gramática no solamente afecta cómo se combinan las unidades del lenguaje para “verse bien”; también afecta el significado. La tendencia de enseñar el significado gramatical ha sido desplazado en varios libros de texto a favor de un énfasis en la precisión de la forma; pero no es bueno saber cómo percibir o construir un nuevo tiempo de un verbo si no sabes exactamente qué diferencia tiene su significado cuando se usa (Cook, 1992:76) (Traducción propia)

<sup>6</sup> La implicación es que los alumnos necesitan aprender cómo crear y transmitir significados en contextos reales y cómo crear unidades de lenguaje más largas que simples oraciones. (Traducción propia)



Por lo tanto, podemos concluir que el estudio de la gramática descriptiva en la segunda etapa seguirá siendo necesario, la diferencia será que la estructura ya no será lo más importante; ahora se recurrirá a la estructura conveniente para transmitir el significado adecuado, dándole mayor relevancia a este último.

Una vez decidida la inclusión de la gramática explícita, la cuestión será decidir qué temas y en qué orden serán distribuidos en el nuevo programa.

Con base en los temas estudiados en el programa regular, cuya lista a continuación se presentan, se hizo una selección de aquellos temas que, de acuerdo con la experiencia, le permiten a los alumnos expresarse dentro del salón de clase del programa regular de una mejor manera con el objetivo de fortalecer su seguridad y tranquilidad y de igual manera debilitar el filtro afectivo que pudiese entorpecer su aprendizaje.

#### Temas del curso regular

##### Primer Grado

- *Regular and irregular verbs*
- *Simple present*
- *Simple past*
- *Simple future*
- *Present perfect*
- *Past perfect*
- *Future perfect*
- *Present progressive*
- *Past progressive*
- *Future progressive*
- *Present perfect progressive*
- *Past perfect progressive*
- *Future perfect progressive*

- *Subject-Verb Agreement*
- *Sentence, Sentence Fragments, and Run-on Sentences.*
- *Adjective or Adverb*
- *Comparisons (with modifiers: adjectives and adverbs)*

#### Segundo Grado

- *End marks*
- *Personal Pronouns*
- *Possessive Pronouns*
- *Indefinite Pronouns*
- *Demonstrative Pronouns*
- *Reflexive / Intensive Pronouns*
- *Interrogative / Relative Pronouns*
- *Pronouns and Contraction Mix-ups*
- *Punctuating Dialogue*
- *Reported Speech*
- *Combining sentences*
- *Forming plurals*

#### Tercer Grado

- *Using commas in a series*
- *Infinitive or –ing*
- *Modals*
- *Conditionals*
- *Clauses (Adjective, Adverb, and Noun)*
- *Tag questions*
- *Passive and active voice*

Temas seleccionados.

La selección se basó en las deficiencias en el desempeño de los alumnos; éstas fueron evidentes durante las observaciones hechas durante las sesiones del programa regular. En primer lugar se considera indispensable que el alumno pueda comunicarse dentro del salón de clases, es decir, que pueda pedir permisos, seguir instrucciones, expresar o entender la hora. Posteriormente, comenzará a describir lo que ve, oye o lee, lo que le gusta o no, lo que se hizo la clase anterior, en su vida familiar, con sus amigos, etc.

#### Temas gramaticales seleccionados

- Simple Present
- Modals: Can/May
- Imperative sentences
- There is/ There are
- Adjectives
- Would you like \_\_\_\_\_?
- A/ an
- Countable and uncountable
- Simple past
- The clock
- Modals: can, should
- Simple future
- Positive, comparative, superlative.

### 4.3 Criterios de secuencia y graduación

Para poder proceder ahora a la graduación de los temas, se comenzará por definir este importante proceso y para qué nos sirve.

Nunan (1989:96), retomando a Richards, Platt y Weber, describe la graduación de la siguiente manera:

“Grading has been described in the following way:

the arrangement of the content of a language course or a textbook so that it is presented in a helpful way. Gradation would affect the order in which words, word meanings, tenses, structures, topics, functions, skills, etc. are presented. Gradation may be based on the complexity of an item, its frequency in written or spoken English or its importance for the learner.<sup>7</sup>

La graduación debe ayudar a facilitarle el aprendizaje al alumno, por lo tanto, se deben tomar en cuenta criterios adecuados para llevarla a cabo. Nunan nos sugiere que para llevar a cabo la graduación debemos considerar tres categorías de factores fundamentales: los factores concernientes al input, al alumno y a las actividades.

1. Se empezará con los factores relacionados al input. De acuerdo con Nunan, son diversos los elementos que pueden determinar la complejidad de un texto y, por ende, su graduación.

En primer lugar, Nunan explica que la complejidad del texto depende de la gramática –oraciones simples o complejas-, la longitud del texto –en teoría un texto corto es más sencillo que uno largo-, la densidad –la cantidad de información inserta en el texto-, la cantidad de vocabulario de baja frecuencia que es presentada.

Por otro lado, nos menciona que en el caso de textos orales, la rapidez y el número de hablantes involucrados en la conversación pueden influir para la determinación de dicha complejidad; así mismo, lo explícito de la información, la estructura y claridad del discurso y el orden cronológico de los eventos pueden hacerlo más simple o no.

También el apoyo que el texto ofrezca, como títulos, subtítulos, fotos, dibujos, tablas, gráficas, agregarán o disminuirán la complejidad.

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<sup>7</sup> La graduación ha sido descrita de la siguiente manera:

El arreglo del contenido en un curso de lengua o en un libro de texto de manera tal que esté presentado de una manera útil. La graduación afecta el orden en que las palabras, los significados de palabras, tiempos gramaticales, estructuras, temas, funciones, habilidades, etc. son presentadas. La graduación puede estar basada en la complejidad de un elemento, en su frecuencia en inglés oral o escrito o en su importancia para el aprendiz. (Traducción propia)

Por último, menciona el género; dice que una descripción es más fácil que un instructivo, el cual a su vez es más fácil que una historia o una discusión abstracta. (Nunan, 1989:97-101)

Estos criterios se tomaron en cuenta para la elaboración de la unidad muestra que se presenta en el anexo 5.4. Sin embargo, y a pesar de que no es tema directo de este trabajo, se mencionan con el objetivo de que después de diseñado el programa, la elaboración del material –input- sea la adecuada.

2. En segundo lugar, Nunan presenta los factores concernientes a los alumnos. Nos dice que hay factores externos (mismos que fueron descritos en los factores del input) e internos. Estos últimos dependen de la comprensión por parte del alumno, la construcción de puentes entre lo conocido y lo desconocido, del conocimiento previo; y en cuanto a la tarea a realizar, la confianza, la motivación, la experiencia previa, el ritmo del aprendizaje, la habilidad lingüística, la cultura general, el conocimiento lingüístico, etc.

Concluye este aspecto diciendo que es innegable la interacción entre los factores del input y los del alumno. (Nunan, 1989: 101-104)

3. Por último, Nunan menciona los factores relacionados con las actividades a realizar y nos comenta que dado el aumento en la frecuencia del uso de material real, la dificultad está más dada por las actividades que por el texto en sí. (Nunan, 1989: 104)

Tomando en cuenta lo anterior, en Nunan (1989: 104-109) encontramos que Brindley sugiere ciertos factores que determinan la complejidad de lo que el alumno tiene que hacer:

- Relevancia: Esto se refiere a qué tan significativa puede ser la tarea para el alumno.

- Complejidad: Qué tan complicadas son las instrucciones o los pasos que requiere la tarea.

- Contexto ofrecido previamente a la tarea; qué tanto conocimiento previo se requiere por parte del alumno.

- Procesamiento del lenguaje en la tarea: Cuál es el lenguaje que se espera que el alumno produzca.

- Ayuda requerida por el alumno: ¿El alumno se podrá apoyar en libros, compañeros, maestro, etc.?

- El grado de precisión y corrección gramatical necesarios para la tarea con base en los objetivos planteados.

- Tiempo requerido por el alumno para llevar a cabo la tarea.

De aquí obtenemos una conclusión importante: podemos graduar los contenidos y también las actividades a desarrollar lo que se puede lograr a través del trabajo por tareas. En un primer momento, para la toma de decisión en cuanto a cómo graduar los contenidos, nos basamos en las primeras tres sugerencias que Nunan nos da:

- Relevancia
- Complejidad
- Contexto

Es decir, con base en las observaciones y en los exámenes de diagnóstico, se tomaron aspectos que se consideraban relevantes para el desarrollo del alumno en el salón de clases; se intentó organizar los contenidos de los más simples a los más complejos, basándonos en el contexto en el que las nociones y funciones pueden ser expresadas a través de las estructuras explicadas en las tablas descriptivas.

Las demás pueden ser consideradas al momento de escoger o elaborar el material de trabajo, al igual que al establecer las actividades que les sean dadas a los alumnos.

Para este efecto, Nunan nos sugiere las siguientes especificaciones para la graduación de actividades. En nuestro caso, se utilizaron básicamente las que se

refieren a “**Beginner**”<sup>8</sup> sin embargo, en algunos casos, podríamos considerar algunas otras –por ejemplo: *write a short imaginative text; distinguish a fact from an opinion*<sup>9</sup>- sin perder de vista, el nivel de desarrollo de nuestros alumnos.

## ESPECIFICACIONES PARA LA GRADUACIÓN DE ACTIVIDADES

### **Principiante**

#### *Sociales e interpersonales*

- Dar, pedir y recibir información personal (nombre, edad, dirección) de manera oral o escrita.

- Expresar y entender capacidad o falta de la misma.

#### Informacionales

#### Instructivas

- Comprender y llevar a cabo instrucciones simples relacionadas con acciones físicas (pararse, sentarse, tocar, señalar, etc); así como dar instrucciones.

- Entender señales como por ejemplo “*Stop!*”

#### Descriptivas

- Escuchar descripciones simples de objetos comunes, personas, etc.

- Pedir el nombre objetos dentro y fuera del salón.

- Describir brevemente objetos familiares y personas.

#### Narrativas

- Escuchar narrativas cortas e identificar palabras claves.

- Comprender el sentido general de una narrativa.

#### Afectivas

- Cantar o recitar pequeños poemas.

Al trabajar por tareas, el alumno es el que impone su ritmo de dificultad según lo que puede hacer o no. Aunque pudiera parecer que esto complica el alcanzar el objetivo de la nivelación, no es así, pues al ir a su propio ritmo, el

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<sup>8</sup> Principiante (Traducción propia)

<sup>9</sup> Escribe un texto imaginario corto; distingue entre un hecho y una opinión (Traducción propia)

alumno fortalece su confianza. Además, sabemos que es imposible nivelar un grupo al cien por ciento, sin embargo los logros que se obtengan, serán muy positivos. Esto va directamente relacionado con el enfoque constructivista y método comunicativo que le estamos dando al programa.

(Núnan, 1989:116)

#### **4.4 Estrategias didácticas**

En Díaz-Barriga (2007:142) encontramos un resumen con algunas estrategias de enseñanza. A continuación enumeraremos, las que nos parecieron más relevantes para su posible uso en el presente programa.

- ❖ **Objetivos:** para que los alumnos entiendan que es lo que se pretende que logren.

- ❖ **Organizadores previos:** Para relacionar la información vista en asesorías previas o en el programa regular.

- ❖ **Analogías:** para la comprensión de cierto vocabulario o estructuras.

- ❖ **Ilustraciones:** (fotografías, dibujos, dramatizaciones, etcétera) para llamar la atención de los alumnos, así como para favorecer la memorización y la asimilación del conocimiento nuevo con el previo.

- ❖ **Preguntas intercaladas:** Para mantener la atención de los alumnos y corroborar que estén comprendiendo.

#### **4.5 Recursos didácticos**

Después de la evaluación realizada al material anterior y dados los nuevos cambios hechos al programa de apoyo, lo que convendrá será la elaboración del material pertinente para que el nuevo programa de apoyo sea desarrollado adecuadamente. Sin embargo eso será objeto de estudio otro trabajo.



#### 4.6 Tabla Descriptiva<sup>10</sup>

Escuela de las Lomas, S. C.  
Chapultepec Heights School  
Inglés  
Secundaria  
Programa de Apoyo para Alumnos de Nuevo Ingreso

Duración	32 sesiones de 50 minutos
Propósito general	Este programa de apoyo tiene como finalidad apoyar a los alumnos de nuevo ingreso, cuyo nivel de inglés sea menor al de los alumnos provenientes de Escuela de las Lomas, para que puedan desenvolverse de mejor manera en el salón de clases y mejoren su desempeño en el curso regular.
Objetivos terminales	<p>Primera parte –Comunicativa</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• El alumno describirá personas, cosas y lugares relacionados con su entorno cercano.</li><li>• El alumno referirá la información principal de textos orales o escritos de manera oral o escrita con coherencia y cohesión.</li><li>• El alumno mostrará confianza para desenvolverse dentro y fuera del salón de clases al utilizar el inglés.</li><li>• Segunda parte –Apoyo al programa regular</li></ul>

<sup>10</sup> Para la elaboración de la carta descriptiva, nos basamos en el modelo propuesto por Antonio Gago Huguet ( 1977)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>El estudiante empleará correctamente las estructuras lingüísticas adecuadas a las distintas situaciones comunicativas previstos en el programa de estudios.</li> </ul>
Evaluación	La evaluación será continua; se manejará a base de rúbricas <sup>11</sup> . Se basará en la participación y actividades realizadas en clase así como en los productos obtenidos de las mismas; dicha evaluación será reportada al director y a los padres de familia. Además se relacionará con el progreso que el alumno muestre en el curso regular.

### First part

TOPIC	OBJECTIVES	FUNCTIONS AND NOTIONS	GRAMMAR / STRUCTURES	VOCABULARY	ACTIVITIES <sup>12</sup>
1. The First Day	Students will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Give / understand personal information while introducing himself or someone else.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Greeting</li> <li>Introducing oneself</li> <li>Introducing somebody else</li> <li>Numbers for expressing age. (Time)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Simple Present</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Good morning; hello; hi</li> <li>My/ His name is ...</li> <li>I'm /He's/She's ... years old.</li> <li>I come from ...</li> <li>Numbers 1-100</li> <li>Alphabet</li> <li>How old are you?</li> <li>This is ...</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> </ul>
2. In the Classroom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Follow /give instructions, ask for permission, and talk about the existence in a classroom.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Following / Giving instructions</li> <li>Asking for permission</li> <li>Talking about existence.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Modals: Can/May</li> <li>Imperative sentences</li> <li>There is/ There are</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vocabulary related to the classroom: Date, title, board, book, notebook, diary, restroom, water, door, window, chair, table, desk, pencil case, pen, pencil, eraser, pencil bag, pencil case, school diary, sheet of paper, scissors, ruler, glue, schoolbag, etc.</li> <li>Activities that take place in</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> </ul>

<sup>11</sup> Al final de la tabla descriptiva se puede observar un ejemplo.

<sup>12</sup> Solamente se muestran las actividades de la unidad muestra.

				a classroom: open, close, bring, show, copy, stand up, sit down, read, answer, go, drink, write, underline, circle	
3. My new friend's family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describe people for others to know about their physical appearance, personality, and occupation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Giving / Understanding personal information.</li> <li>Describing people</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Simple present</li> <li>Adjectives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is, are, am</li> <li>Have, has</li> <li>Professions: doctor, teacher, lawyer, cook, accountant, actor, actress, student, housewife,</li> <li>Adjectives that describe the physical appearance of people: Tall, short, thin, pretty, handsome,</li> <li>Adjectives that describe personality: kind, nice, grumpy, smart, intelligent, active, lazy</li> <li>Vocabulary that describe physical features: Long/short hair Curly /straight hair Blonde, brunette, Big/ small eyes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students will be given the objective.</li> <li>Students will read a conversation in which the vocabulary and structures are included.</li> <li>Students will be asked questions for monitoring comprehension; if they have problems understanding any of the words, other students or the teacher can help-synonyms, explanations, analogies, etc.</li> <li>Students will draw family members according to the characteristics mentioned in the text.</li> <li>Students will write the description of new family members.</li> <li>Students bring a picture of their family; student 1 describes a family member, and student 2 guesses who that family member is.</li> <li>Game: divided in teams, students prepare cards with famous personalities (drawing and name); team 1 asks Yes/no questions to team 2, in order to guess who</li> </ul>

					the personality is.
4. At the Party	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Express likes and dislikes regarding food.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expressing what one likes or dislikes (food)</li> <li>Offering food</li> <li>Accepting or rejecting offers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Simple present</li> <li>Would you like _____?</li> <li>A/ an</li> <li>Countable and uncountable</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Verbs that express preference: Like, love, hate, dislike</li> <li>Vocabulary related to food: Soda, chips, hamburger, hot dog, fruit, apple, banana, pear, orange, tomato, cucumber, eggs, sausage, ketchup, mustard, mayonnaise, pie, cake, grapes, watermelon</li> <li>Adjectives for countable and uncountable: Many, much, little, few, some.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> </ul>
5. What Happened at the Party?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describe past events of social life.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Talking about past events.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Simple past</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vocabulary related to a party: Dance, talk, laugh, sing, eat, drink, play, enjoy, have fun, meet, tell.</li> <li>Time expressions: Yesterday, last night.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> </ul>
6. Which is your hobby ?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Talk about hobbies, habits, routines and the usual time at which they take place.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Talking about routine.</li> <li>Talking about what you like, dislike, love, etc.</li> <li>Telling the time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Simple present</li> <li>The clock</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vocabulary related to hobbies: skating, swimming, soccer, football, tennis, basketball, paint, sing, run, read, watch T. V., listen, music, play, hang out, mall, cinema, shopping</li> <li>Time expressions: every day/morning/evening/ weekend, daily, once / twice a week, often, frequently, sometimes, always, never.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> </ul>
7. I Can Do It Better!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describe / suggest / ways of doing sports better.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Comparing two moments.</li> <li>Expressing ability.</li> <li>Giving suggestions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Modals: can, should</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Actions that involve sports like: run, throw, lift, jump, etc.</li> <li>Comparatives and superlatives like: better, best, faster, fastest, higher, highest, harder, hardest, more, most, etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> </ul>
8. Plans for the spring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make social plans with friends.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Talking about plans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Simple future</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Time expressions: Tomorrow, next week/month/weekend</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> </ul>

break				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vocabulary related to trips: tickets, plane, hotel, bus, visit, swim, ride, horse, bike, rest, shop, etc.</li> </ul>	
9. At the beach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Compare people, places, prices, etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describing places</li> <li>Comparing things, people, and places.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adjectives</li> <li>Positive, comparative, superlative.</li> <li>Countable and uncountable</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vocabulary for describing people and places: Beautiful, pretty, cheap, expensive, big, small, luxurious, tall, short, elegant, ugly, good, bad, many, much, few, little,</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> </ul>
10. At the Doctor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Express how health is.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expressing needs, pain,</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Simple present</li> <li>Simple past</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vocabulary related to a visit to the doctor: Prescription, pills, medicine, etc.</li> <li>Vocabulary related to symptoms: feel, have, fever, vomit, throw up, break a bone, headache, stomachache, nausea, to hurt, dizzy, sore throat, sore body, etc.</li> <li>parts of the body</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> </ul>
11. Our Ancestors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read, understand, and explain past historical events .</li> <li>Express opinions about a historical event.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Summarizing a text.</li> <li>Expressing one's opinion about a text.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Simple past.</li> <li>Simple present</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vocabulary related history.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> </ul>

## Second part

OBJECTIVES	GRAMMAR / STRUCTURES	VOCABULARY	ACTIVITIES
<p>Students will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Practice the structures from the regular course in which they have had problems. (Either students express they have had problems or the teacher notices in the regular course classes or quizzes)</li> <li>Explain the causes and effects of important events of the United States History: The First Americans.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Regular and irregular verbs</i></li> <li><i>Simple present</i></li> <li><i>Simple past</i></li> <li><i>Simple future</i></li> <li><i>Present perfect</i></li> <li><i>Past perfect</i></li> <li><i>Future perfect</i></li> <li><i>Present progressive</i></li> <li><i>Past progressive</i></li> <li><i>Future progressive</i></li> <li><i>Present perfect progressive</i></li> <li><i>Past perfect progressive</i></li> <li><i>Future perfect progressive</i></li> <li><i>Subject-Verb Agreement</i></li> <li><i>Sentence, Sentence Fragments, and Run-on Sentences.</i></li> <li><i>Adjective or Adverb</i></li> <li><i>Comparisons (with modifiers: adjectives and adverbs)</i></li> <li><i>History topics</i></li> </ul>	<p>Words to own or words from Spelling Bee list.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A student expresses his doubts about a certain topic from the regular course.</li> <li>Teacher elicits answer from other students.</li> <li>Students answer exercise provided by teacher.</li> <li>Students practice in a game.</li> </ul>

# E V A L U A T I O N

Rate 0, 1, 1.5, or 2.

2 means “always ”

1.5 means “almost always”,

1 means “almost never”

0 means “never”

	2	1.5	1	0
The student expresses the functions and notions clearly.				
The student understands functions and notions expressed by others.				
The student uses the new vocabulary correctly.				
The student understands the vocabulary expressed by others.				
The student participates in class.				
Total				

## 5. Conclusiones

En cualquier área laboral, las actitudes y aptitudes que desarrollemos son necesarias para llevar a cabo nuestro trabajo de una manera adecuada. Pero si además queremos hacerlo satisfactoriamente, el conocimiento y la constante renovación son indispensables.

Gran parte de este trabajo fue precisamente adquirir el conocimiento y renovarse por medio de la investigación, a partir de lo cual se han identificado áreas de oportunidad en mi desempeño docente y me ha permitido buscar alternativas, sustento a ideas y estrategias obtenidas con anterioridad. A la vez, ha sido un entrenamiento para la futura solución de problemas que puedan aparecer en mi ámbito laboral.

Por otro lado, hablando específicamente del área docente, confirmé la teoría de que trabajar con seres humanos le agrega un toque especial a nuestra labor, pues nunca encontraremos dos alumnos que sean iguales y aquello que hemos utilizado exitosamente con algunos, no necesariamente funcionará con otros.

Sin duda, esa variabilidad en la enseñanza de una lengua extranjera puede llevarnos a tomar un sinnúmero de decisiones y aplicar una gran diversidad de estrategias; sin embargo, las decisiones que tomemos deben estar bien fundamentadas y sobretodo, debemos atrevernos a romper con esquemas que hemos manejado durante mucho tiempo, pues de lo contrario corremos el riesgo de no crecer en nuestra profesión.

Por último, cabe aclarar que a pesar de que en el presente trabajo se desarrolló un programa de apoyo basado en el constructivismo social y en el método comunicativo, no se considera que éstos sean la respuesta única para el desarrollo de un programa de enseñanza de una lengua. Los maestros no podemos buscar simplemente la receta mágica que aliviará todos nuestros males y con la cual, inequívocamente, los alumnos aprenderán una lengua extranjera. Siempre será importante analizar nuestro contexto, es decir, la edad, entorno social, características personales y cognoscitivas de nuestros alumnos, intereses, objetivos



perseguidos al querer estudiar una lengua extranjera, etc. Ese será nuestro punto de partida, para tomar las mejores decisiones sobre los contenidos, estrategias y materiales que vamos a elegir. Y considero de suma importancia, la evaluación. Definitivamente debemos evaluar los resultados obtenidos a lo largo y al final de la aplicación de los programas; debemos tener la mente abierta y preparada para llevar a cabo las mejoras, los cambios pertinentes para el bien de nuestro trabajo, pero sobretodo, de nuestros alumnos. Es así como se puede afirmar que este trabajo no está totalmente acabado; como dice Gago Huguet (1977:40) ningún programa podrá tomarse como definitivo; su revisión y mejoramiento deben ser permanentes.

## 6. Anexos

### 6.1 EJEMPLO DE EXAMEN DIAGNÓSTICO

1st. \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **GAMES ARE MY LIFE**

By Rushley Ebero

It was a gloomy day. The boy watched as the rain fell down from outside his window. He was a lonely boy. He had no friends; all he had were games to play every day. He would talk to random people online and boast about his character he made inside the game and how cool it was. "I wish I was as cool as my game character", he thought to himself, "Everything would be easier." As soon as that thought came to mind, his mum burst into the room, nearly breaking the door hinges. "Hurry!" His mum shouted in a distressed manner, "Your dad is having a heart attack!" "Ok, just wait." He calmly responded, "I need to save my game first." "We need to go now!" His mum responded immediately and aggressively. "MUM!" He rudely answered, "Do you think I can save it wherever I want in the game, it's not like I'm made of save points." The boy's mum slammed the door behind her, without saying another word. A few minutes later, he took a look outside. It was still pouring down with rain. He watched as his mum was struggling to push the wheelbarrow with his dad inside of it towards the car. "No!" The boy yelled full of rage, "How did that monster kill my character?" Seconds turn into minutes, minutes turn into hours, hours turn into days but both his mum and dad did not return. "Why has mum not cooked my dinner yet?" The boy thought to himself. "I might go downstairs to have a look." In his food stained pajamas, he made his way downstairs to see broken antiques in the living room, where someone had fallen over. "What clumsy people." The boy assumed, oblivious to what had really happened. "I guess I'll just warm something up from the fridge and eat it." He continued to the kitchen to find unclean dishes in the sink, rotten food left on the table swarming with flies and a menacing and unfortunate sight of a filthy, starved, dead cat lying next to its emptied food bowl. "Such disgusting people." The boy was still unaware of what had happened. He opened the fridge to see a cheeseburger (his favorite) still wrapped in its original McDonald's wrapping. He grasped it into his hands and, without even warming it up, he took a bite and then another, and another until the whole burger was gone, left only with a half-eaten wrapper. "Ok, I'm going to play some more games and show off my character to random people." The boy stated out loud to nobody in particular. He continued his usual routine, playing games. However only a few moments into playing his games, he started to feel sick. "Owww, my stomach feels like it's about to explode like the monsters I love killing." He groaned in agony. Without a warning, he barfed all over his computer. The computer sparked up and burst into flames. "Nooo! He screamed, I was so close to killing the boss! I'd better get mum and tell her what happened." He ran down to the living room. "Mum, where are you? I need help!" No answer. He sprinted to his parent's room, no one was there. He searched the kitchen, still no one. "Of course mum and dad are not here, they must have gone out to McDonald's to buy me dinner." He convinced himself. "Time to play some more games then..." He returned to his room to find the whole place was on fire.

"How can I play now in this stupid fire? I don't feel too good as well..." With that, the boy collapsed to the floor unconscious. Slowly the boy opened his eyes for the first time again. All he saw was white everywhere. "Am I in Heaven?" He thought to himself. Before that thought could become real, somebody hugged him tightly around his neck. "Look everyone, he's alive!" A woman's voice shouted in excitement. His eyes slowly adjusted to the light. The woman helped sit him up, to see it was his mum, grandma and grandpa standing beside him. "What happened?" The boy asked. A doctor walked in, "How are you doing?" The doctor examined the boy. "Good I guess." He replied back. "Our diagnosis says here, you were unconscious from high levels of E-coli and suffered third degree burns to your face, arms and legs." The doctor explained. "Unfortunately we could not save your limbs from the extreme damage from the fire." "What does that mean?" He questioned in confusion. "It basically means you were knocked out by food poisoning and you won't be able to walk or write anymore." The doctor clarified. The boy's face started to fill up with tears; he knew without his hands he could not play any more games. "Where is Dad then?" He inquired barely able to talk from the shock. "Your dad." His mum muttered trying to hold back tears. "Died... a few days ago... from a heart attack..." "I'm sorry to hear about your lost one." The doctor expressed his sympathy. "Let's go home now." His mum finally articulates with her shaky voice. "We are staying at your grandparents' house." It was a gloomy day. The boy watched as the rain fell down from outside the window. He was a lonely boy. He had no friends; all he had were his memories of playing games every day. He couldn't talk to anyone but his family because of his disability. "I wish I was my game character." He thought to himself, "Life would be so much easier..."

I. Based on the story, complete the story map.

TITLE	
MAIN IDEA	
THEME	
SETTING (TIME, PLACE, AND GENERAL ENVIRONMENT)	
MAIN CHARACTER	
CONFLICT	
COMPLICATIONS	
CLIMAX	
RESOLUTION	

II. In five lines, write your opinion about the text. (Did you like it? Do you agree with the boy? Do you think this can happen? Do you know anybody like this? Has this ever happened to you? What suggestions could you give?)

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III. Copy the underlined verbs from the text and complete the chart of verbs.

INFINITIVE	PAST	PAST PARTICIPLE	PRESENT PARTICIPLE

IV. Dictation

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## 6.2 MARCO EUROPEO DE REFERENCIA

Comprensión auditiva		Comprensión de lectura	
<b>A1</b>	Reconozco palabras y expresiones muy básicas que se usan habitualmente, relativas a mí mismo, a mi familia y a mi entorno inmediato cuando se habla despacio y con claridad.		Comprendo palabras y nombres conocidos y frases muy sencillas, por ejemplo las que hay en letreros, carteles y catálogos.
<b>A2</b>	Comprendo frases y el vocabulario más habitual sobre temas de interés personal (información personal y familiar muy básica, compras, lugar de residencia, empleo). Soy capaz de captar la idea principal de avisos y mensajes breves, claros y sencillos.		Soy capaz de leer textos muy breves y sencillos. Sé encontrar información específica y predecible en escritos sencillos y cotidianos como anuncios publicitarios, prospectos, menús y horarios y comprendo cartas personales breves y sencillas.
<b>B1</b>	Comprendo las ideas principales cuando el discurso es claro y normal y se tratan asuntos cotidianos que tienen lugar en el trabajo, en la escuela, durante el tiempo de ocio, etc. Comprendo la idea principal de muchos programas de radio o televisión que tratan temas actuales o asuntos de interés personal o profesional, cuando la articulación es relativamente lenta y clara.		Comprendo textos redactados en una lengua de uso habitual y cotidiano o relacionada con el trabajo. Comprendo la descripción de acontecimientos, sentimientos y deseos en cartas personales.
<b>B2</b>	Comprendo discursos y conferencias extensos e incluso sigo líneas argumentales complejas siempre que el tema sea relativamente conocido. Comprendo casi todas las noticias de la televisión y los programas sobre temas actuales. Comprendo la mayoría de las películas en las que se habla en un nivel de lengua estándar.		Soy capaz de leer artículos e informes relativos a problemas contemporáneos en los que los autores adoptan posturas o puntos de vista concretos. Comprendo la prosa literaria contemporánea.
<b>C1</b>	Comprendo discursos extensos incluso cuando no están estructurados con claridad y cuando las relaciones están sólo implícitas y no se señalan explícitamente. Comprendo sin mucho esfuerzo los programas de televisión y las películas.		Comprendo textos largos y complejos de carácter literario o basados en hechos, apreciando distinciones de estilo. Comprendo artículos especializados e instrucciones técnicas largas, aunque no se relacionen con mi especialidad.
<b>C2</b>	No tengo ninguna dificultad para comprender cualquier tipo de lengua hablada, tanto en conversaciones en vivo como en discursos retransmitidos, aunque se produzcan a una velocidad de hablante nativo, siempre que tenga tiempo para familiarizarme con el acento.		Soy capaz de leer con facilidad prácticamente todas las formas de lengua escrita, incluyendo textos abstractos estructural o lingüísticamente complejos como, por ejemplo, manuales, artículos especializados y obras literarias.
Interacción oral		Expresión oral	
<b>A1</b>	Puedo participar en una conversación de forma sencilla siempre que la otra persona esté dispuesta a repetir lo que ha dicho o a decirlo con otras palabras y a una velocidad más lenta y me ayude a formular lo que intento decir. Planteo y contesto preguntas sencillas sobre temas de necesidad inmediata o asuntos muy habituales.		Utilizo expresiones y frases sencillas para describir el lugar donde vivo y las personas que conozco.
<b>A2</b>	Puedo comunicarme en tareas sencillas y habituales que requieren un intercambio simple y directo de información sobre actividades y asuntos cotidianos. Soy capaz de realizar intercambios sociales muy breves, aunque, por lo general, no puedo comprender lo suficiente como para mantener la conversación por mí mismo.		Utilizo una serie de expresiones y frases para describir con términos sencillos a mi familia y otras personas, mis condiciones de vida, mi origen educativo y mi trabajo actual o el último que tuve.
<b>B1</b>	Sé desenvolverme en casi todas las situaciones que se me presentan cuando		Sé enlazar frases de forma sencilla con el fin de describir experiencias y

	viajo donde se habla esa lengua. Puedo participar espontáneamente en una conversación que trate temas cotidianos de interés personal o que sean pertinentes para la vida diaria (por ejemplo, familia, aficiones, trabajo, viajes y acontecimientos actuales).	hechos, mis sueños, esperanzas y ambiciones. Puedo explicar y justificar brevemente mis opiniones y proyectos. Sé narrar una historia o relato, la trama de un libro o película y puedo describir mis reacciones.
<b>B2</b>	Puedo participar en una conversación con cierta fluidez y espontaneidad, lo que posibilita la comunicación normal con hablantes nativos. Puedo tomar parte activa en debates desarrollados en situaciones cotidianas explicando y defendiendo mis puntos de vista.	Presento descripciones claras y detalladas de una amplia serie de temas relacionados con mi especialidad. Sé explicar un punto de vista sobre un tema exponiendo las ventajas y los inconvenientes de varias opciones.
<b>C1</b>	Me expreso con fluidez y espontaneidad sin tener que buscar de forma muy evidente las expresiones adecuadas. Utilizo el lenguaje con flexibilidad y eficacia para fines sociales y profesionales. Formulo ideas y opiniones con precisión y relaciono mis intervenciones hábilmente con las de otros hablantes.	Presento descripciones claras y detalladas sobre temas complejos que incluyen otros temas, desarrollando ideas concretas y terminando con una conclusión apropiada.
<b>C2</b>	Tomo parte sin esfuerzo en cualquier conversación o debate y conozco bien modismos, frases hechas y expresiones coloquiales. Me expreso con fluidez y transmito matices sutiles de sentido con precisión. Si tengo un problema, sorteo la dificultad con tanta discreción que los demás apenas se dan cuenta.	Presento descripciones o argumentos de forma clara y fluida y con un estilo que es adecuado al contexto y con una estructura lógica y eficaz que ayuda al oyente a fijarse en las ideas importantes y a recordarlas.

### Expresión escrita

<b>A1</b>	Soy capaz de escribir postales cortas y sencillas, por ejemplo para enviar felicitaciones. Sé rellenar formularios con datos personales, por ejemplo mi nombre, mi nacionalidad y mi dirección en el formulario del registro de un hotel.
<b>A2</b>	Soy capaz de escribir notas y mensajes breves y sencillos relativos a mis necesidades inmediatas. Puedo escribir cartas personales muy sencillas, por ejemplo agradeciendo algo a alguien.
<b>B1</b>	Soy capaz de escribir textos sencillos y bien enlazados sobre temas que me son conocidos o de interés personal. Puedo escribir cartas personales que describen experiencias e impresiones.
<b>B2</b>	Soy capaz de escribir textos claros y detallados sobre una amplia serie de temas relacionados con mis intereses. Puedo escribir redacciones o informes transmitiendo información o proponiendo motivos que apoyen o refuten un punto de vista concreto. Sé escribir cartas que destacan la importancia que le doy a determinados hechos y experiencias.
<b>C1</b>	Soy capaz de expresarme en textos claros y bien estructurados exponiendo puntos de vista con cierta extensión. Puedo escribir sobre temas complejos en cartas, redacciones o informes resaltando lo que considero que son aspectos importantes. Selecciono el estilo apropiado para los lectores a los que van dirigidos mis escritos.
<b>C2</b>	Soy capaz de escribir textos claros y fluidos en un estilo apropiado. Puedo escribir cartas, informes o artículos complejos que presentan argumentos con una estructura lógica y eficaz que ayuda al oyente a fijarse en las ideas importantes y a recordarlas. Escribo resúmenes y reseñas de obras profesionales o literarias.







II. Circle the correct verb.

1. Sharon or her friends ( do , does) it correctly.
2. James and I ( know , knows ) the correct answer.
3. Matt or you (is , are) not allowed to leave.
4. She ( has, have ) come early.
5. Mary and I ( was, were) at the airport.
6. ( Do , Does ) he know how to do it?
7. (Have, Has) they left?
8. Jack and James (have , has) gone to Canada.

III. Circle the nouns in the following fragment of an article. Then write them in the first column of the chart and put an X in its characteristics.

America is an interesting country for many reasons, not least for its rich ethnic diversity. And, of the 50 states that comprise the Union, few can be more intriguing in this respect than the former French colony of Louisiana. New Orleans is fascinating, but so too is the hinterland. Louisiana, particularly the area around Lafayette, is home to two unique groups, the Cajuns and the Creoles. The Cajuns are the descendants of those French Communities that were expelled from Canada by the English in the eighteenth century. Defining the Creoles is a little more complicated.

NOUNS	COMMON	PROPER	CONCRETE	ABSTRACT	COLLECTIVE


IV. Change the following sentences to the eleven tenses.

- a) Do they come to school?
- b) He isn't angry.
- c) Mark always cuts the grass.

a) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

b

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c)

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V. Write SENTENCE, FRAGMENT OR RUN –ON SENTENCE to the following groups of words.

1. The actress had made her entrance. \_\_\_\_\_
2. From then on, she worked non-stop in the cinema and television. \_\_\_\_\_
3. If Sharon Stone is number one at the moment. \_\_\_\_\_
4. Demi was born in New Mexico and she set her sights on being an actress at a very early age. \_\_\_\_\_
5. Julia Roberts was the unquestioned princess of Hollywood but Sharon Stone dethroned her. \_\_\_\_\_
6. Uma Thurman is an actress she is named after a Hindu goddess \_\_\_\_\_
7. What nobody can dispute is that this young actress. \_\_\_\_\_

VI. Correct the fragments and the run –on sentences of exercise V.

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VII. Change to the tense in parentheses.

1. Nathan will cut the grass.(future perfect progressive)
2. Aaron doesn't come early. (past perfect progressive)
3. Danny is drinking milk. (present perfect progressive)
4. Joe will not draw a horse. (future progressive)
5. Elizabeth did not eat shrimp (past progressive)
6. Jack will not repeat the answers. (present progressive)
7. Roger has fought with her. (future perfect)
8. You got the first prize. (past perfect)

9. I will not forget it. (present perfect)
10. We were giving him money. (future)
11. They have hit it. (past )
12. Julie hangs her bag there. (present)

- 1 \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 \_\_\_\_\_
- 4 \_\_\_\_\_
- 5 \_\_\_\_\_
- 6 \_\_\_\_\_
- 7 \_\_\_\_\_
- 8 \_\_\_\_\_
- 9 \_\_\_\_\_
- 10 \_\_\_\_\_
- 11 \_\_\_\_\_

VIII. Write the correct form of the verb in parentheses. Then write the name of the tense of each sentence.

1. Snow had \_\_\_\_\_ during winter. (to fall)  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Her parents were \_\_\_\_\_ her a present. (to give)  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. They have \_\_\_\_\_ to see the exhibition. (to go)  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. What did the \_\_\_\_\_ last weekend? (to do ) \_\_\_\_\_
5. We were \_\_\_\_\_ the game. (to begin)  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. Was the wind \_\_\_\_\_ hard? (to blow) \_\_\_\_\_
7. Will they have \_\_\_\_\_ all the scores? (to break)  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. Did he \_\_\_\_\_ the car? (to bring) \_\_\_\_\_

9. Have they \_\_\_\_\_ the games? (to choose)

\_\_\_\_\_

10. The low temperature had \_\_\_\_\_ the lake. (to freeze)

\_\_\_\_\_

IX. Circle the correct form of the verb.

1. The books of Annie (is / are) interesting.
2. Joe and Alice (know / knows) the new teacher.
3. Michael or the team (is / are) with the coach.
4. The members of the team (don't / doesn't) miss a game.
5. (Do / Does) the computer of your parents process information fast?
6. The car of my cousins (is /are) broken.
7. Mike or Alex (have / has) taken the test.

X. Change to the eleven tenses.

a) She fights with her brother

b) He doesn't forget dates.

c) Does Molly find clues?

a) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ b

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\_\_\_\_\_





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c) Write three examples of adjectives that answer each of the questions.

e. g. How many? Many, three, several.

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XII. Circle the adjectives and draw an arrow to the word each modifies. Include articles. .

- a) Manuel was the fourth child.
- b) He looked like many kids in his neighbourhood.
- c) He had black hair, brown face, and skinny legs.
- d) The trees were becoming red, and the pomegranate trees were heavy with fruit.
- e) Manuel walked to school in the frosty morning.
- f) He was still amazed.
- g) He wanted loud applause; he wanted to impress the girls.

XIII. Answer the questions

a) What is an adverb?

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b) Which are the questions adverbs answer?

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9. Dan will not come to the library. \_\_\_\_\_

10. Today, we will practice Math. \_\_\_\_\_

XVII. Circle the adjective in each sentence. Do not include articles. Write the questions each one answers.

1. Many animals were at the zoo. \_\_\_\_\_

2. She loves eating green vegetables. \_\_\_\_\_

3. I need little sugar for the cake. \_\_\_\_\_

4. That lady will teach Mathematics. \_\_\_\_\_

5. I brought our mother a present. \_\_\_\_\_

6. Alice used several colors for the picture. \_\_\_\_\_

7. Sam was playing with the new computer. \_\_\_\_\_

8. The kettle is on the round table. \_\_\_\_\_

9. The small car is mine. \_\_\_\_\_

10. The German player went to the hospital. \_\_\_\_\_

XVIII. Change to the tenses in parentheses.

1. They don't light the aisles. (past)

2. Willie has not made a vase. (future)

3. Rachel did not move the chairs. (present perfect)

4. Will Miriam need a hammer? (past perfect)

5. Are the speakers in your locker? (future perfect)

6. Ian will order his food. (present progressive)

7. Aaron didn't put on his jacket. (past progressive)

8. Pam had picked up her trash. (future progressive)

9. Do you run every Saturday? (present perfect progressive)

10. Did she read good novels? (past perfect progressive)

11. Peter doesn't ride motorcycle. (future perfect progressive)

XIX. Complete the chart.

INFINITIVE	PAST	PAST PARTICIPLE	PRESENT PARTICIPLE	SPANISH
<b>*TO BEAT</b>				
TO BECOME				
TO BEGIN				
TO CUT				
TO COME				
TO CHOOSE				
TO DO				
TO DRIVE				
<b>*TO DIG</b>				
TO EAT				
TO ENTER				
TO ENJOY				
TO FIND				
<b>*TO FEED</b>				
TO FIGHT				
TO GET				
TO GO				
TO HIT				
TO HIDE				
TO HANG				
TO RING				
TO RUN				
TO RIDE				
<b>*TO SLEEP</b>				
TO SWIM				
TO SWING				
TO TEACH				









XXII. Complete the chart.

	One syllable	Two Syllables	Three syllables
Positive	e.g.	e.g.	e.g.
Comparative	e.g.	e.g.	e.g.
Superlative	e.g.	e.g.	e.g.

XXIII. Complete the chart.

POSITIVE	COMPARATIVE	SUPERLATIVE
GOOD		
WELL		
MANY		
MUCH		
FAR		
PRETTY		
SHORT		
LONG		
NICE		
INTELLIGENT		
FEARFUL		

FAST		
QUICK		
QUICKLY		
THOUGHTFUL		
CAREFUL		
SLOW		
SLOWLY		
SMART		
BRAVE		
MYSTERIOUS		

XXIV. Underline the verb phrase. Then write the name of the tense in each sentence

1. Henry had noticed the problem before. \_\_\_\_\_
2. Sharon was using her cell phone. \_\_\_\_\_
3. Matt will be at the office. \_\_\_\_\_
4. John was not the actor. \_\_\_\_\_
5. Were they celebrating something? \_\_\_\_\_
6. Marion has a beautiful blue fish. \_\_\_\_\_
7. Do you hear that noise? \_\_\_\_\_
8. We will have practiced that by August. \_\_\_\_\_
9. Has Nelly caught a fish? \_\_\_\_\_
10. They will be resting by 11 o'clock. \_\_\_\_\_

XXV. Write a sentence with:

- |                    |                   |
|--------------------|-------------------|
| a) Better          | f) fastest        |
| b) Worst           | g) tallest        |
| c) More expensive  | h) bigger         |
| d) Least difficult | i) cheap          |
| e) Easier          | j) most important |

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XXVI. Write a sentence with each of the specified tense.

a) past perfect

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b) Past perfect progressive

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d) Future

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e) Future perfect

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f) Future perfect progressive

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g) Present

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h) Present perfect

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i) Present perfect progressive

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j) Present progressive

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XXVII. Circle the correct verb.

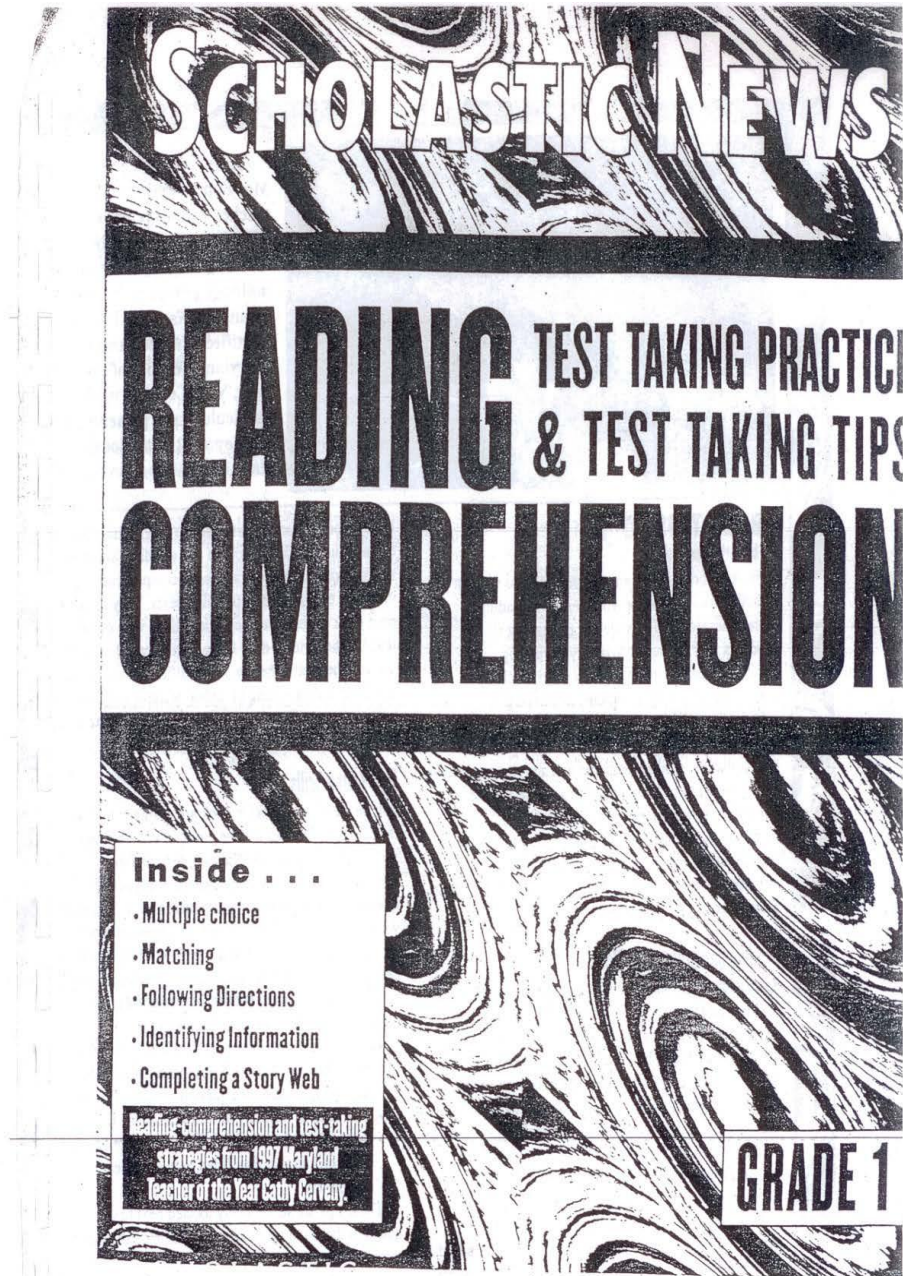
1. I (do, does) the dishes every day.
2. My brother (work, works) as a lawyer in that company.
3. My grandmother and my mother (have, has) been very special for me.

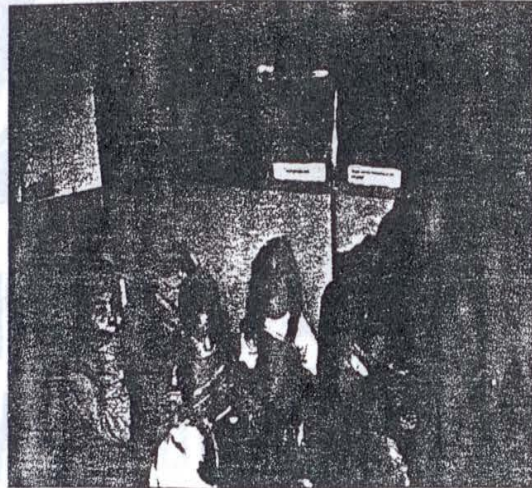




4. I \_\_\_\_\_ take a bath in the morning.
5. We \_\_\_\_\_ have lunch together.
6. He is a \_\_\_\_\_ kind person.
7. She \_\_\_\_\_ loses her keys.
8. We do \_\_\_\_\_ know how to bake a cake.
9. Fabiola will \_\_\_\_\_ accept her mistake.
10. Louis has \_\_\_\_\_ understood the lesson.

6.4 Programa en su primera etapa: Manual de comprensión de lectura





Cathy Cerveny, a veteran Maryland elementary school teacher with over 20 years of experience, is currently teaching language arts to multiage groups in Baltimore County. A National Board Certified educator and 1997 Maryland Teacher of the Year, Mrs. Cerveny writes curriculum and presents staff development at the local, state, and national levels.

## ABOUT THIS BOOK

by Cathy Cerveny

This skills book is designed to provide you with an effective tool to develop your students' reading comprehension skills as well as test-taking skills. Students will encounter a variety of reading comprehension formats, such as multiple choice, matching, following directions, identifying information, and completing a story web.

As you preview *Reading Comprehension*, you will notice that the reading passages and activity pages have been leveled to provide you with a whole year of periodic assessments for your students.

Levels 1, 2, and 3 are designed to be used in the early, middle, and end of first grade. Take into consideration the developmental needs of your students as you decide which activity page to use.

## Reading Comprehension Skills

*Reading Comprehension* exposes primary students to the reading comprehension skills that they must master to become competent readers. Students must find meaning in stated information by understanding sentences, passage details, sequence, and concepts. Students must be able to interpret passage meaning through identifying main ideas and themes, reaching conclusions, and making predictions. Additionally, readers must develop word meaning through categories, definitions, and relationships with other words.

Currently, national standards are driving the instruction that students are receiving. These standards have been written to define what students should know and be able to do. Standard 3 of both the National Council of the Teachers of English (NCTE) and the

International Reading Association (IRA) is interwoven throughout this skills book. In this standard, students apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts. They draw on their prior experience, their interactions with other readers and writers, their knowledge of word meaning and of other texts, their word identification strategies, and their understanding of textual features (e.g., sound-letter correspondence, sentence structure, context, and graphics).

## Test-Taking Skills

All the pages in this skills book are designed to build reading comprehension. The multiple-choice pages serve a second purpose. They are designed to familiarize students with the format and types of questions found on many standardized tests. You may want to tell your students that these pages are practice for "real" tests down the road. They will help students become more confident and relaxed for future tests.

A unique feature of *Reading Comprehension* is the *test-taking tips* that remind students to

- read each choice before they pick the best answer,
- think about what the story is mostly about when answering a main idea question;
- look back in the story to find a detail; and
- check to see that they filled in one bubble for each question and that they filled in the bubbles completely.

These tips are strategically located next to the question that each tip relates to. This helps students use the tips with greater ease, and helps students internalize the tips.

◆ Turn to the back inside cover for reading comprehension and test-taking strategies.



# ANSWER KEY

## Page 1: Matching

Jill - car; Matt and Pam - walk;  
Tim - bus

## Page 2: Following Directions

brown house; red ball; yellow sun; orange cat

## Page 3: Fill in the Bubbles

1. First-Grade Learners (main idea)
2. math (detail)
3. Will and Ann (detail)

## Page 4: Fill in the Bubbles

1. Bath Time (main idea)
2. every day (detail)
3. the father lion (detail)

## Page 5: Fill in the Bubbles

1. Jim Takes a Ride (main idea)
2. on a hill (detail)
3. a bike (detail)

## Page 6: Fill in the Bubbles

1. All About Spiders (main idea)
2. eight (detail)
3. swim (detail)
4. what spiders eat (predicting)

## Page 7: Fill in the Bubbles

1. A Big Cat (main idea)
2. cat (detail)
3. lions (detail)
4. Lions are bigger than house cats.  
(drawing conclusions)

## Page 8: Matching

1. worm - "I dig a hole in the ground."
2. hare - "I turn white and blend  
with the snow."
3. goose - "I fly to a warm place."

## Page 9: Following Directions

dogs; pigs; fish; tigers

## Page 10: Fill in the Bubbles

1. Good Pets, Bad Pets (main idea)
2. dogs (detail)
3. go get (vocabulary)
4. It might hurt you. (inference)

## Page 11: Fill in the Bubbles

1. Animals That Are Awake at Night (main idea)
2. owl and skunk (detail)
3. its nose (detail)
4. a mouse (detail)

## Page 12: Fill in the Bubbles

1. Amazing Teeth! (main idea)
2. tusks (detail)
3. strong (making inferences)
4. another animal with amazing teeth  
(making predictions)

## Page 13: Fill in the Bubbles

1. Rabbits (main idea)
2. hear sounds from far away (detail)
3. in holes in the ground and in people's homes  
(detail)

## Page 14: Making a Story Web (There is more than one correct answer.)

Write one way that the friends help each other.

- Kate helps Ben read a book.
- Sam helps David feed the fish.

Write one way that the friends share.

- Mike and Jill share paints and brushes.
- Lisa shares her cookies with Jane.

Write one way that the friends take turns.

- Brad and Pam take turns talking.
- They take turns listening.

## Page 15: Fill in the Bubbles

1. six (detail)
2. bug (vocabulary)
3. It has strong back legs. (cause and effect)
4. It eats tiny bugs. (detail)

## Page 16: Fill in the Bubbles

1. school bus safety (main idea)
2. when the bus comes to a full stop (detail)
3. so the driver can see you (detail)
4. help kids to stay safe (author's purpose)

## READING COMPREHENSION STRATEGIES

Strategic comprehension instruction begins with opportunities for numerous reading experiences, such as free choice, read alouds, and guided reading.

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**Before-reading strategies** allow students to use prior knowledge and experiences. These strategies include:

- Thinking about the title, illustrations, cover, and topic.
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Try these *before-reading activities* to enhance student comprehension:

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- Use cooperative groupings to have students retell and/or summarize what has been read.
- Share your reading process to model appropriate reading behavior by "thinking aloud." Describe what you do and how you do it.
- The teacher or a student act as a character from the story and classmates can interview the character, asking questions about story events.

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- Remind students that strategies that help us on tests can help us across the curriculum and in other decision-making situations.
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- Help children locate key words in the questions to focus on what is really being asked.
- Use interchangeable testing vocabulary in a variety of situations to familiarize students with synonyms that may be used in actual testing.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Read the story below.

## Getting to School

There are many ways to go to school.

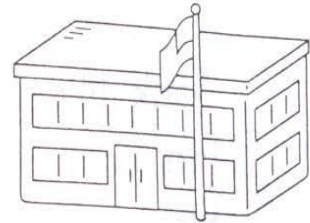
Tim rides on a bus.

Jill rides in a car.

Pam walks to school.

Matt walks with Pam.

How do you go to school?



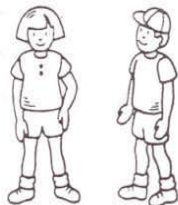
Now draw a line from each child to the way he or she gets to school.



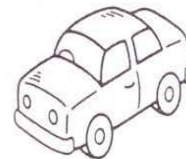
Jill



walk



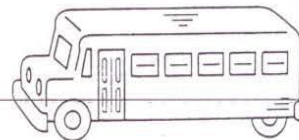
Pam Matt



car



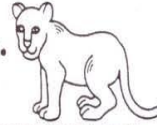
Tim



bus

Name \_\_\_\_\_

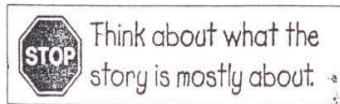
Read the story. Then answer each question.  
Fill in the bubble next to the best answer.



A baby lion is called a cub. The father lion gives his cub a bath. He licks the cub clean. The cub gets a bath every day. Then the cub takes a nap.

1. What is a good title for this story?

- Bath Time
- Baby Monkeys
- Mother Lion



2. When does the <sup>S</sup> cub <sup>V.M.</sup> get a <sup>C</sup> bath?

- every week
- on Monday
- every day

3. Who gives the cub a bath?

- the father lion
- the red dog
- the mother lion

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Read the story. Then answer each question.  
Fill in the bubble next to the best answer.**

My friends are in first grade.  
They like to learn. Meg likes math.  
Sam likes science. Will and Ann like  
art. All the kids like reading and  
writing. My friends learn a lot in first grade.



Read each choice before you pick the best answer.

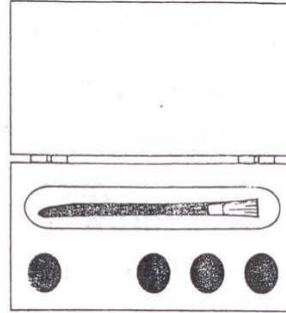
1. What is a good title for this story?
  - First-Grade Learners
  - Math Is Fun
  - Reading and Writing
2. What does Meg like?
  - science
  - math
  - hot dogs
3. Who likes art?
  - Will and Ann
  - Sam
  - all the kids

Name \_\_\_\_\_

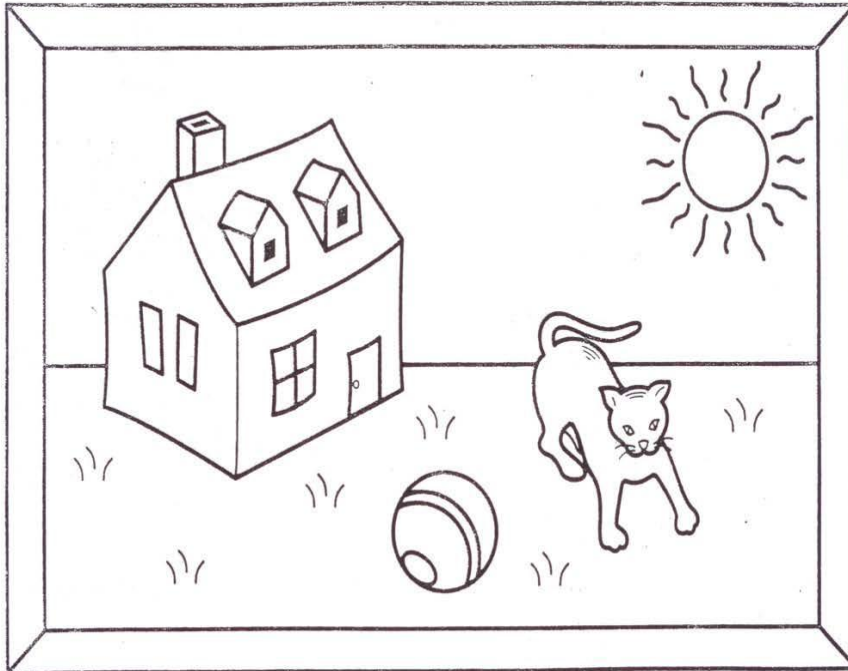
Read the story below.

### Jack Likes to Paint

Jack likes to paint.  
He paints a brown house.  
He paints a red ball.  
He paints a yellow sun.  
He paints an orange cat.  
Jack paints all the time.



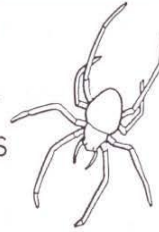
Color the picture so that it looks like Jack's painting.



Name \_\_\_\_\_

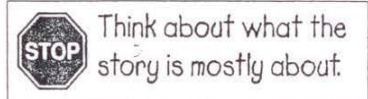
**Read the story. Then answer each question.  
Fill in the bubble next to the best answer.**

A spider has eight legs. It has two body parts. A spider can spin a web. Some spiders can jump. Other spiders can swim.



1. What is a good title for this story?

- All About Spiders
- Spiders That Swim
- Spiderwebs



2. How many legs does a spider have?

- ten
- two
- eight

3. What can some spiders do?

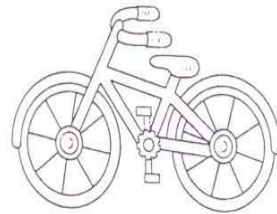
- read
- fly
- swim

4. The next part of this story might tell about

- ants.
- what spiders eat.
- places to swim.

Read the story. Then answer each question.  
Fill in the bubble next to the best answer.

Jim's house is on a hill. There is a shed by his house. Jim gets his bike from the shed. Then he rides very fast. Jim rides his bike down the hill.



1. What is a good title for this story?

- Jim's Shed
- Jim Takes a Ride
- Jim Goes to School



Think about what the story is mostly about.

2. Where is Jim's house?

- on a hill
- in the shed
- in town

3. What does Jim ride?

- a sled
- a bus
- a bike

5



Name \_\_\_\_\_

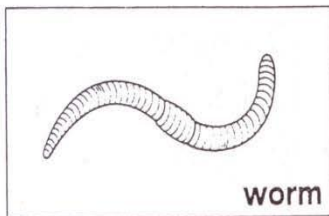
Read the story below.

## Getting Ready for Winter

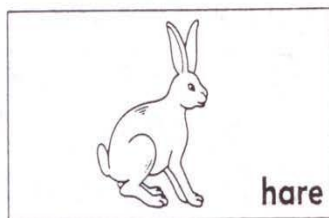


The animals get ready for winter. The hare turns white. It blends with the snow. The goose flies away. It goes to a warm place. The worm digs a hole. It goes deep in the ground.

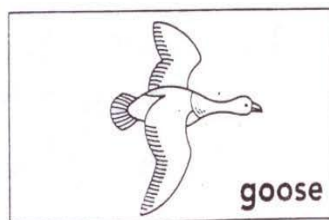
Now draw a line from each animal to the way it gets ready for winter.



"I dig a hole  
in 'the ground."



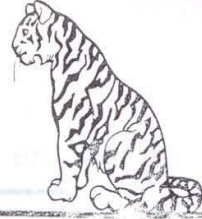
"I fly to a  
warm place."



"I turn white  
and blend with  
the snow."

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Read the story. Then answer each question. Fill in the bubble next to the best answer.



A tiger is a big cat. A tiger is bigger than a house cat. Most tigers are even bigger than lions. Tigers are really big cats.



Read each choice before you pick the best answer.

1. What is a good title for this story?
  - House Cats
  - A Big Cat
  - Baby Tigers
2. A tiger is a
  - lion.
  - dog.
  - cat.
3. Most tigers are bigger than
  - houses.
  - lions.
  - dogs.
4. Which sentence do you think is true?
  - House cats are big cats.
  - Baby tigers are very tiny.
  - Lions are bigger than house cats.

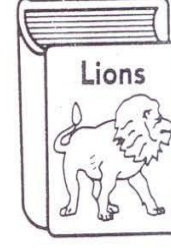
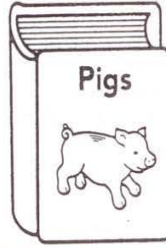
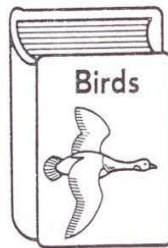
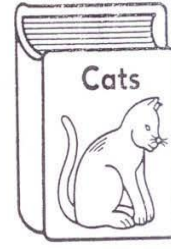
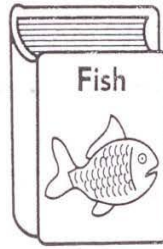
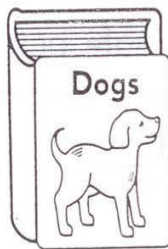
Name \_\_\_\_\_

Read the story below.

Emma likes to read books. She reads books about dogs. She reads books about pigs. She reads books about fish. She reads books about tigers, too. Emma really likes to read.



Now **circle** the books that Emma likes to read.



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Read the story. Then answer each question.  
Fill in the bubble next to the best answer.



Some animals make good pets. Some animals do not. Dogs are good pets. A dog can live in your home. It can run and jump. It can fetch a ball. A dog can help keep you safe.

Sharks are bad pets. A shark cannot live in your home. A shark lives in the water. It needs lots of salt water. A shark is not a safe pet.

1. What is a good title for this story?
  - Good Pets, Bad Pets
  - Everyone Loves Dogs
  - Why Sharks Are Great Pets
2. What animals are good pets?
  - sharks
  - dogs
  - dogs and sharks
3. The word fetch means
  - jump.
  - go get.
  - walk.
4. Why do you think a shark is not a safe pet?
  - It lives in water.
  - It might hurt you.
  - It cannot play ball.



Check your work. Did you fill in just one bubble for each question?  
Did you fill in the bubbles completely?

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Read the story. Then answer each question.  
Fill in the bubble next to the best answer.



Many animals sleep at night. But some animals are awake at night. The owl hunts at night. The owl has big eyes to see in the dark. It sees a mouse on the ground. The owl flies down and catches the mouse.

The skunk is another night animal. It uses its nose to smell food in the dark. The skunk smells a tasty bird's egg far away. It follows its nose to the egg.



Read each choice before you pick the best answer.

1. What is a good title for this story?
  - Skunks and Owls
  - How Owls Hunt
  - Animals That are Awake at Night
2. What two animals are night animals?
  - owl and dog
  - owl and skunk
  - skunk and egg
3. What does the skunk use to help it hunt?
  - its wings
  - its nose
  - its eyes
4. What does the owl eat?
  - a mouse
  - an egg
  - a skunk

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Read the story. Then answer each question.  
Fill in the bubble next to the best answer.



Some animals have amazing teeth! A walrus has two long teeth called tusks. The walrus uses its tusks to dig for shellfish. Then the walrus eats the shellfish.

A beaver uses its teeth to cut down trees! The beaver chews and chews around the tree trunk. Then the tree falls over. The beaver uses the tree to build a home.

1. What is a good title for this story?  
 Amazing Claws!  
 Amazing Teeth!  
 The Teeth of the Beaver
2. What are a walrus's long teeth called?  
 horns  
 tusks  
 diggers
3. A beaver's teeth must be very  
 white.  
 strong.  
 weak.
4. The next part of this story probably tells about  
 beaver tails.  
 animals with big ears.  
 another animal with amazing teeth.



Look back in the story to find the sentence about the walrus.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Read the story. Then answer each question.**  
**Fill in the bubble next to the best answer.**



Have you ever seen a rabbit? Rabbits come in many colors. Their fur can be brown, black, white, or gray. Rabbits have long ears to help them hear sounds from far away.

Rabbits can be wild animals or pets. Wild rabbits live in holes in the ground. Pet rabbits live in homes with people.

1. What is a good title for this story?
  - Rabbit Homes
  - Rabbits
  - Wild Animals
2. What do a rabbit's long ears help it to do?
  - hear sounds from far away
  - make holes in the ground
  - see things that are far away
3. Where are two places that rabbits can live?
  - on land and in the sea
  - in holes in the ground and in people's homes
  - in people's homes and in treetops

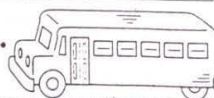


Think about what the story is mostly about.



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Read the story. Then answer each question.  
Fill in the bubble next to the best answer.



### School Bus Rules

Do you know these rules for riding the school bus?

1. Be on time.
2. Stand back from the curb.
3. Wait until the bus comes to a full stop before you get on or off.
4. Stay in your seat.
5. Always obey the driver.
6. Don't push, shove, or yell.
7. Never crawl under a bus for any reason.
8. Cross at least 10 feet in front of the bus so the driver can see you.

1. These rules are about  
 riding in a car.  
 school bus safety.  
 how to cross the street.
2. When should you get off the bus?  
 whenever you want  
 as soon as the driver steps on the brake  
 when the bus comes to a full stop
3. Why should you cross in front of the bus?  
 so the driver can hear you  
 so the driver can see you  
 to get to school on time
4. The writer probably wrote these rules to  
 help adults learn to drive buses.  
 help kids to stay safe.  
 make kids laugh.



Check your work. Did you fill in just one bubble for each question?  
Did you fill in the bubbles completely?



# SCHOLASTIC NEWS

## READING TEST TAKING PRACTICE & TEST TAKING TIPS COMPREHENSION

### Inside . . .

- Multiple choice
- Completing a Story Web
- Sequencing
- True or False
- Classifying
- Following Directions

Reading-comprehension and test-taking strategies from 1997 Maryland Teacher of the Year Cathy Cerveny.

**GRADE 2**

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Fill in the bubble next to the best answer.



Many animals sleep at night. But some animals are awake at night. The owl hunts at night. The owl has big eyes to see in the dark. It sees a mouse on the ground. The owl flies down and catches the mouse.

The skunk is another night animal. It uses its nose to smell food in the dark. The skunk smells a tasty bird's egg far away. It follows its nose to the egg.

1. What is a good title for this story?
  - Animals That Sleep at Night
  - How Owls Hunt
  - Animals That Are Awake at Night
2. What two animals are night animals?
  - owl and dog
  - owl and skunk
  - skunk and egg
3. What does the skunk use to help it hunt?
  - its wings
  - its nose
  - its eyes
4. What does the owl eat?
  - a mouse
  - an egg
  - a skunk

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Read the story. Then answer each question.  
Fill in the bubble next to the best answer.



Some animals have amazing teeth! A walrus has two really long teeth called tusks. The walrus uses its tusks to dig for shellfish. Then the walrus eats the shellfish.

A beaver uses its teeth to cut down trees! The beaver chews and chews around the tree trunk. Then the tree falls over. The beaver uses the tree to build a home.

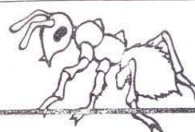


Read each choice before you pick the best answer.

1. What is a good title for this story?
  - Digging for Shellfish
  - Amazing Claws!
  - Amazing Teeth!
2. What are a walrus's long teeth called?
  - horns
  - tusks
  - diggers
3. A beaver's teeth must be very
  - white.
  - strong.
  - weak.
4. The next part of this story probably tells about
  - beaver tails.
  - animals with big ears.
  - another animal with amazing teeth.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Read the story. Then answer each question.  
Fill in the bubble next to the best answer.



## Backyard Bugs

You share your backyard with many bugs, or insects. How can you tell an insect is an insect? An insect has three body parts. An insect has six legs.

A ladybug is an insect that lives in backyards. Ladybugs eat lots of tiny bugs. This helps some trees because the tiny bugs make the trees sick.

A grasshopper is another backyard insect. A grasshopper has strong back legs. It can jump very high. The grasshopper jumps onto a leaf. It eats the leaf for dinner.

1. How many legs does an insect have?  
 eight  
 six  
 two
2. Insect means almost the same as  
 leaf.  
 bug.  
 backyard.
3. How can a grasshopper jump so high?  
 It has strong back legs.  
 It eats leaves.  
 It has six legs.
4. How does a ladybug help trees?  
 It eats tree leaves.  
 It eats tiny bugs.  
 It makes some trees sick.

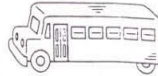


Look back in the story to find the sentences about ladybugs.

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Name \_\_\_\_\_

Read the story. Then answer each question.  
Fill in the bubble next to the best answer.



### School Bus Rules

Do you know these rules for riding the school bus?

1. Be on time.
2. Stand back from the curb.
3. Wait until the bus comes to a full stop before you get on or off.
4. Stay in your seat.
5. Always obey the driver.
6. Don't push, shove, or yell.
7. Never crawl under a bus for any reason.
8. Cross at least 10 feet in front of the bus so the driver can see you.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. These rules are about                                       | 3. Why should you cross in front of the bus?            |
| <input type="radio"/> riding in a car.                         | <input type="radio"/> so the driver can hear you        |
| <input type="radio"/> school bus safety.                       | <input type="radio"/> so the driver can see you         |
| <input type="radio"/> how to cross the street.                 | <input type="radio"/> to get to school on time          |
| 2. When should you get off the bus?                            | 4. The author probably wrote these rules to             |
| <input type="radio"/> whenever you want                        | <input type="radio"/> help adults learn to drive buses. |
| <input type="radio"/> as soon as the driver steps on the brake | <input type="radio"/> help kids to stay safe.           |
| <input type="radio"/> when the bus comes to a full stop        | <input type="radio"/> make kids laugh.                  |



Check your work. Did you fill in just one bubble for each question?  
Did you fill in the bubbles completely?

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Read the story. Then answer each question.**  
**Fill in the bubble next to the best answer.**



A whale is a very big animal. Whales live in the sea. Some whales swim with each other. They travel in large groups, called pods. They swim around, looking for food.

Whales feed on sea life. Some whales eat plants. Other whales have teeth and can eat seals and small fish.

Whales must stay wet all the time. However, they also must come to the top of the sea to breathe. When a whale leaps out of the water to catch a breath of air, it is an amazing sight.



Read each choice before you pick the best answer.

1. What is a good title (name) for this story?
  - The Sea
  - Fish
  - Whales
  - Pods
2. What are pods?
  - whale food
  - groups of whales
  - sea animals
  - small fish
3. What must all whales do?
  - eat seals and fish
  - spend time on land
  - eat plants
  - stay wet
4. Why do whales sometimes jump out of the water?
  - to warm up
  - to get air
  - to catch fish
  - to swim faster

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Read the story. Then answer each question.  
Fill in the bubble next to the best answer.



We get many useful things from trees. Wood comes from trees. The wood can be used to make houses, desks, and chairs. Rubber comes from trees. Rubber is used to make balls and boots. We also get fruit and nuts from trees. Birds and other animals like these tree treats, too.

Trees can be helpful. Some medicines are made from tree bark. These medicines help sick people get well. Trees also give us shade on a sunny day. Many animals make their homes in trees. Birds build nests on tree branches. Owls, foxes, and other animals can live in tree holes.

1. What is a good title for this story?

- Growing Trees
- Animals and Trees
- Trees Are Important
- Tree Homes

3. What animal makes its home in a tree?

- the fox
- the horse
- the elephant
- the dog

2. What do people and animals get from trees?

- desks
- food
- rubber
- nests

4. What other things might you make from a tree?

- a car
- a pencil
- a television
- a telephone



Think about what the story is mostly about.



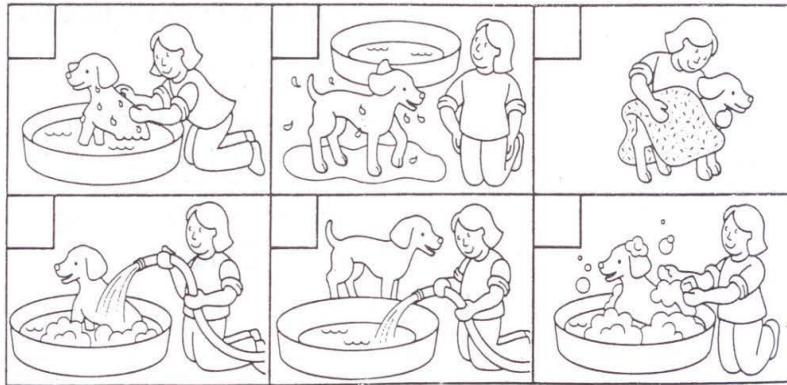
Read the story below.

## Max Gets a Bath

Sara has a dog named Max. She takes good care of Max. Every Saturday at nine o'clock, she gives Max a bath.

- First, she fills a tub with water.
  - Then, she puts Max in the tub. He gets good and wet.
  - Next, Sara covers Max with soap. She uses her hands to scrub Max. She scrubs until the soap is foamy.
  - Then, Sara turns on the hose. She uses the hose to rinse Max. She sprays Max until the soap is all gone.
  - After that, Max gets out of the tub.
  - Last, Sara rubs Max dry with a big, fluffy towel.
- Max is glad that his bath is over! Now he will run and run!

Now put the pictures in order. Write the numbers 1 to 6 to show the correct order. We did the first one for you.



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Name \_\_\_\_\_



Read the story below.

## Meet Two Presidents

George Washington lived more than 200 years ago. First, he was a famous leader in the army. After that, he became really famous for something else. George Washington was the first President of the United States! So sometimes he is called the Father of Our Country.

Abraham Lincoln is also a famous president. He was President around 130 years ago. Back then, people in our country still owned slaves. But Lincoln freed the slaves. He made it against the law to own slaves.

Read each sentence. Fill in the bubble to show that the sentence is true or false.

1. George Washington was a famous leader in the army.  
 true                       false
2. Abraham Lincoln was President around 10 years ago.  
 true                       false
3. George Washington was the second President of the United States.  
 true                       false
4. Abraham Lincoln made it against the law to own slaves.  
 true                       false

**Read the song. Then answer each question.**

**Fill in the bubble next to the best answer.**

This is the way we wash our clothes,  
Wash our clothes, wash our clothes.

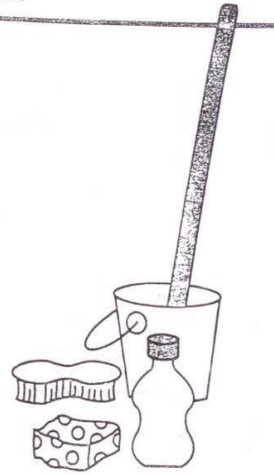
This is way we wash our clothes,  
So early Monday morning.

This is the way we iron our clothes,  
Iron our clothes, iron our clothes.

This is the way we iron our clothes,  
So early Tuesday morning.

This is the way we scrub our floors,  
Scrub our floors, scrub our floors.

This is the way we scrub our floors,  
So early Wednesday morning.



1. What is this song mostly about?
  - how to iron clothes
  - how to clean a car
  - doing daily chores
  - baking a cake
2. What is the third thing that happens in this song?
  - washing clothes
  - scrubbing floors
  - ironing clothes
3. The next part of this song would tell what happens on
  - Monday morning.
  - Friday morning.
  - Tuesday morning.
  - Thursday morning.
4. The next part of this song is probably about
  - eating dinner.
  - doing another chore.
  - riding a bike.
  - ironing clothes.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Read the story. Then answer each question.  
Fill in the bubble next to the best answer.



Long ago, the American flag had 13 stars and 13 stripes. Why? Because America had 13 colonies. Each colony had its own star and its own stripe. Later, the 13 colonies became the first 13 states. Today, the American flag has 50 stars. They stand for our country's 50 states. Each state gets a star. The flag still has only 13 stripes, though. The stripes remind us of the first 13 colonies.

1. What is a good title for this story?

- The Story of Our Flag
- The First 13 Colonies
- The Story of Our Country
- How the West Was Won

3. What do the stars on today's flag stand for?

- today's 50 colonies
- the first 13 colonies
- today's 50 states
- the major cities of our country

2. How many stars does our flag have today?

- 50
- 30
- 13
- none

4. Why does today's flag have 13 stripes?

- to stand for our 13 states
- because 50 would not fit
- because 13 is a lucky number
- to remind us of the 13 original colonies



Think about what the story is mostly about.

Read the story. Then answer each question.  
Fill in the bubble next to the best answer.



## Rain and Snow



Do you know where rain and snow come from? They form inside clouds. A cloud is made of tiny drops of water. The drops inside the cloud come together and make bigger drops. These big drops of water are heavy enough to fall back to the earth as raindrops.

In cold weather, the tiny drops of water inside a cloud get very cold. Then, they turn into ice crystals. The crystals come together and get heavy enough to fall back to the earth. But they fall back as snowflakes instead of raindrops.



Read each choice before you pick the best answer.

1. This story is mainly about
  - big clouds.
  - how rain and snow are made.
  - things to do on a rainy day.
  - why it snows in the winter.
2. A cloud is made of
  - tiny drops of water.
  - huge drops of water.
  - snowflakes.
  - cotton.
3. Raindrops fall to earth when
  - they get small enough.
  - they get heavy enough.
  - it gets really cold outside.
4. You might find this story in a book about
  - animals.
  - trees.
  - weather.
  - the sun.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Read the story below.



## Our Earth

Take a good look at our planet. The planet Earth has many different habitats, or places in nature. Different animals live in each place.

A forest is an area with lots of trees. It is dark and cool because the treetops block the sun. In the forest, you might see a deer or a big brown bear.

A desert is another kind of place. The desert is very dry. It does not rain much there. Lizards and snakes live in the desert.

Another kind of place is a prairie. A prairie is a big, open space where tall grass and flowers grow. If you visit, you might see a prairie dog. You might even see buffalo.

Now write words to describe each habitat. Use the words from the word box. We did the first one for you.

### word box


prairie dogs      lizards      bears  
snakes            ~~deer~~            buffalo

forest	desert	prairie
deer	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____


**Read the story. Then answer each question.**  
**Fill in the bubble next to the best answer.**

Jumping jacks make your heart stronger. Here's how to do them.

1. Stand with your feet together.  
Put your arms at your side.
2. Jump up and land with your feet spread.  
At the same time that you jump, clap your hand over your head.
3. Jump back to the starting position.
4. Now do all three steps 10 times in a row.  
Do the steps fast.



- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <p>1. This story is mostly about</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> how to do jumping jacks.</li> <li><input type="radio"/> how jumping jacks were invented.</li> <li><input type="radio"/> favorite sports.</li> </ul> <p>2. What do you do in the middle?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> Clap your hands over your head.</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Put your arms at your side.</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Do the steps fast.</li> </ul> | <p>3. In this story, the word <u>spread</u> means</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> apart</li> <li><input type="radio"/> on your hands</li> <li><input type="radio"/> together</li> </ul> <p>4. You might find this story in</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> a book about animals that jump.</li> <li><input type="radio"/> a book about fitness.</li> <li><input type="radio"/> <i>Jack and the Beanstalk</i>.</li> </ul> |
|--|--|

 Check your work. Did you fill in just one bubble for each question?  
 Did you fill in the bubbles completely?

20

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Read the story.

## Earth and Its Neighbors

What do you know about the planet Earth and its neighbors?  
Here are a few facts:

Earth is the only planet with people. It has water that people, plants, and animals drink.

Jupiter is the biggest planet. There are storms on Jupiter.

Mars is covered with red dust. Mars looks bright red when seen from Earth.

Mercury is nearest to the sun. It is very hot and rocky.

Neptune is very cold and windy.

Pluto is covered with ice. It is always dark there.

Saturn has rings around it.

The sun is not a planet. It is a star.

Uranus is made of green gas.

Venus is the hottest planet of all. It is very close to the sun, but not as close as Mercury.

Read each sentence and follow the directions.

1. Circle the planet that is covered in red dust.
2. Underline the planet that is covered with ice.
3. Put a ✓ next to the planet that has rings around it.
4. Put a ○ next to the planet that is made of green gas.
5. Put a □ next to the biggest planet.
6. Put an ✕ next to the planet that you live on.



# SCHOLASTIC NEWS

## READING TEST-TAKING PRACTICE & SKILLS BUILDERS COMPREHENSION

### Skills Include...

#### READING COMPREHENSION

#### VOCABULARY

- Synonyms and Antonyms
- Multiple Meanings
- Filling in the Missing Word

#### STUDY-SKILLS BUILDERS

- Finding the Main Idea
- Reading a Diagram
- Using a Table of Contents
- Story Sequencing

**GRADE 3**

21

## HOW TO USE *Scholastic News*' READING COMPREHENSION SKILLS BOOK

This skills book is designed to provide you with an effective tool to develop your students' reading comprehension skills, as well as test-taking skills. Inside, you'll find four pages of **Study-Skills Builders**. These will help your students build some of the needed skills before taking the practice tests.

Between the skills builders, you'll find three **Reading Skills Practice Tests**. Each practice test provides test-taking experience for your students. On this page, and the inside back cover, you'll find tips on administering the tests, an easy-to-use answer key, and a chart outlining the specific reading skills tested with each question.

Before administering a test, you may wish to do the sample question together and review with students some basic test-taking strategies, such as reading the questions before reading the passages.

### WHY USE THESE TESTS?

Our tests can help you and your class in these ways:

- **Practice.** Your students probably take standardized reading tests. Our practice tests focus on the skills kids will be expected to demonstrate.
- **Diagnostic Tool.** Individual students' scores will help you detect strengths and weaknesses. Use the **Reading Skills Chart** on the inside back cover to

pinpoint specific areas where students may need more practice or instruction.

- **Instructional Tool.** You may decide to use the practice test for oral reading and discussion. Keep in mind that our practice tests are just that—practice. These tests are not standardized. They should not be used to determine grade level, to compare one student's performance with that of others, or to evaluate teachers' abilities.

### HOW TO ADMINISTER THE TESTS:

- Establish a relaxed atmosphere. Explain to students that they will not be graded and that they are taking the test to practice for "real" tests down the road.
- Review the directions. Then read the samples in each section and discuss the answers. Be sure to pay close attention to the directions in the vocabulary sections.
- To mimic the atmosphere of a real test, you may wish to set time limits. Students should be able to complete the reading comprehension sections in 20 minutes. Allow an additional 10 minutes for the vocabulary portions of the test.
- Use the answer key provided here to check students' work. If students answer a question incorrectly, the **Reading Skills Chart** can help you pinpoint the skills that students may need to practice.

## Answer Key for Study-Skills Builders

Please see inside back cover for Reading Skills Chart and Answer Key for tests 1, 2, and 3.

### SKILLS BUILDER 1

#### What's the Big Idea?

1. **Main Idea:** Paleontologists have exciting jobs.
2. **Main Idea:** At a fire scene, each piece of turnout gear helps keep a firefighter safe.
3. **Main Idea:** Have you ever heard of Sacagawea? She was a Shoshone woman who was a great help to the famous explorers Lewis and Clark. (All other sentences are supporting details.)

### SKILLS BUILDER 2

#### Table of Contents:

1. B 2. A 3. C 4. B 5. A 6. C

### SKILLS BUILDER 3

#### Reading a Diagram:

1. Siberian.
2. Siberian.
3. 150 pounds.
4. Answers will vary.
5. Statement (a) belongs under "Both," statement (b) belongs under "Siberian," and statement (c) belongs under "South China."

### SKILLS BUILDER 4

#### Put the Sentences in Order:

- Turtle Time - 4, 1, 5, 3, 6, 2, 8, 7  
What a Trip! - 4, 1, 6, 2, 8, 3, 5, 7

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

# SCHOLASTIC NEWS

EDITION 3

## Study-Skills Builder 1



### What's the Big Idea?

The **main idea** is what a paragraph is all about. It usually comes at the beginning or end of the paragraph. The main idea can be one or more sentences. **Supporting details** help support, or prove, the main idea. In each paragraph, circle the main idea and underline the supporting details. We did the first one for you.

#### Sample

Scholastic News tells what is going on in the world. It has exciting activities and maps. The pictures are colorful! (These are all reasons why many kids can't wait to read Scholastic News each week.)

2

A firefighter's big helmet looks uncomfortable, but it protects the firefighter's head from falling beams. The firefighter's mask keeps the thick smoke out and delivers oxygen so the firefighter can breathe. And the firefighter's heavy coat and pants are resistant to fire. At a fire scene, each piece of turnout gear helps keep a firefighter safe.

1

Paleontologists have exciting jobs. These fossil experts travel around the world looking for footprints, bones, and other fossils. They carefully measure or dig up the fossils. Finally, they study the fossils to get clues to the past.

3

Have you ever heard of Sacagawea? She was a Shoshone woman who was a great help to the famous explorers Lewis and Clark. Sacagawea helped Lewis and Clark make peace with other Native American groups. She found wild plants for the explorers to eat. When the explorers' boat turned over, Sacagawea saved some important mapping instruments.

SCHOLASTIC NEWS

22

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

# SCHOLASTIC NEWS

EDITION 3

## Reading Skills Practice Test 1

**Reading Comprehension** Read each story. Then fill in the circle that best completes each sentence or answers each question.

**SAMPLE**

Red-knee tarantula spiders are in trouble. Some people take these spiders from the wild and sell them as pets. Now, scientists hope to save the red-knee tarantula. They think the spider's **venom**, or poison, might be used to cure some diseases.

1. The best title for this story is  
 A. "The Spider's Knees."  
 B. "A Terrific Pet."  
 C. "Save the Spiders."  
 D. "How to Catch a Spider."
2. In the story, the word **venom** means  
 A. poison.  
 B. red knee.  
 C. tarantula.  
 D. disease.

**A.** Imagine a world where countries work together to solve problems. A group called the United Nations works to make that dream come true. The United Nations, or UN, is made up of 185 countries. It was formed in 1945, after World War II. The countries that started the UN wanted to **prevent** another big war from happening.

Today, the UN still tries to stop wars, but it has other jobs, too. UN workers bring food to people in poor countries. They try to wipe out deadly diseases. They even look for ways to help the environment.

1. The best title for this story is  
 A. "All About World War II."  
 B. "All About the UN."  
 C. "How to Help the Earth."  
 D. "How to Stop Wars."

2. Which of these happened last?  
 A. The UN was formed.  
 B. World War II ended.  
 C. World War II started.  
 D. The UN began to help poor people.
3. In the story, the word **prevent** means  
 A. help.       C. stop.  
 B. hungry.     D. begin.
4. You can guess from the story that  
 A. the UN started World War II.  
 B. peace is important to the UN.  
 C. the United States does not belong to the UN.  
 D. every country in the world belongs to the UN.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**B.** In the rain forest, orangutans swing from tree to tree all day. Now, they can feel right at home. at the National Zoo in Washington, D.C. The zoo has set up a pretend forest. Instead of trees, it has tall towers. Wires called **cables** run between the towers. Orangutans can swing from the cables—just like they would from branches. The zoo's six orangutans swing around the exhibit. Visitors sit in the middle and watch the apes swing overhead.

1. This story is mainly about
- A. what orangutans eat.
  - B. how to build a pretend forest.
  - C. how the National Zoo has made orangutans feel at home.
  - D. what visitors can buy at the National Zoo.

2. Instead of trees, the orangutan exhibit has
- A. towers.
  - B. flowers.
  - C. apes.
  - D. buildings.

3. In the story, the word **cables** means
- A. wires.
  - B. forests.
  - C. pretend.
  - D. monkeys.

4. Which sentence is an opinion about orangutans?

- A. They swing from tree to tree.
- B. They live in forests.
- C. They are cute.
- D. Six of them live at the National Zoo.

**C.** He was born in Italy more than 500 years ago. He is known as one of the world's greatest artists. But Leonardo da Vinci might also be one of the smartest people who ever lived.

People who have studied Leonardo's notebooks can't believe what they've found. Leonardo's drawings show that he was a scientist, an astronomer, and an engineer. He had ideas about how waves form, why the moon shines, and how humans could fly. Though no one knows why, Leonardo wrote all his ideas down backward! You need a mirror to read his writing.

1. The main idea of the story is that Leonardo da Vinci
- A. liked watching the moon.
  - B. may be one of the smartest people who ever lived.
  - C. lived a very long time ago.
  - D. was an astronomer.

2. Leonardo da Vinci was born in
- A. Italy.
  - B. the U.S.
  - C. England.
  - D. France.

3. You need a mirror to read Leonardo's writing because
- A. he had messy handwriting.
  - B. he wrote by moonlight.
  - C. he wrote in pictures instead of words.
  - D. he wrote backward.

4. You can guess from the story that
- A. Leonardo da Vinci could fly.
  - B. Italy ruled the world 500 years ago.
  - C. there were no airplanes 500 years ago.
  - D. people were smarter 500 years ago than they are now.

**D.** Thousands of years ago, people in Egypt preserved the bodies of their dead and wrapped them in cloth called **linen**. Today, these mummies can tell scientists about how the Egyptians lived. However, scientists have always had a big problem when they tried to study mummies. If they unwrapped a mummy, they would damage it.

Now, scientists have a way to study mummies without unwrapping them. An X-ray machine called a CAT scanner takes pictures of mummies right through their wraps.

The first mummy that scientists scanned was a female Egyptian mummy. The scanner took pictures of her from different angles. Then, a computer put all the pictures together to form a complete image.

1. In the story, the word **linen** means
- A. old.                       C. machine.  
 B. cloth.                     D. scientist.

**E.** Once there was a very fast rabbit. He bragged loudly to all the town about his speed.

Frog was annoyed by Rabbit's bragging. He challenged Rabbit to a race through some swamp grass down to the town pond. Rabbit agreed.

On the day of the race, Frog played a trick. Several of his frog friends were **concealed** in the swamp grass, one big leap apart from one another.

Rabbit ran as fast as he could through the grass, but no matter how fast he ran, Frog was always one jump ahead of him. By the time Rabbit got to the pond, he was running too fast to stop. He fell right into the pond, just as Frog leaped up from behind a rock and shouted, "I am the fastest!"

And that was that.

2. Which of these happened first?
- A. Scientists used CAT scanners to study mummies.  
 B. Scientists had trouble unwrapping mummies.  
 C. People in Egypt preserved their dead.  
 D. Egyptian mummies were discovered.
3. This story would probably go on to talk about
- A. what scientists learned about the mummies they scanned.  
 B. how the CAT scanner was invented.  
 C. machines in ancient Egypt.  
 D. different kinds of cloth.
4. Which of these is a fact?
- A. Mummies are disgusting.  
 B. CAT scanners are a great invention.  
 C. Mummies are boring.  
 D. Mummies can teach scientists about how people lived.

1. Frog's friends hid
- A. in grass.                       C. on a rock.  
 B. under a log.                     D. in a pond.
2. In this story, the word **concealed** probably means
- A. sleeping.                       C. hidden.  
 B. swamp.                         D. all.
3. You would probably find this story in
- A. a book about frogs.  
 B. a book of folktales.  
 C. a book about running.  
 D. a book about swamp life.
4. This story was probably created to tell
- A. where frogs live.  
 B. why bragging is a bad idea.  
 C. a few facts about rabbits.  
 D. all about ponds.

# VOCABULARY

## Synonyms

Read the underlined word in each phrase. Mark the word below it that means the same or nearly the same.

### Sample:

- S-1. damage the building  
 A. hurt       C. paint  
 B. give       D. roof

1. enormous balloon  
 A. shiny       C. huge  
 B. red       D. instant
2. wild blizzard  
 A. storm       C. monster  
 B. sunset       D. candy
3. angry child  
 A. smile       C. kid  
 B. happy       D. mad
4. sly thief  
 A. angry       C. quick  
 B. sneaky       D. robber
5. appear instantly  
 A. disappear       C. climb  
 B. work       D. show up
6. awoke late  
 A. away       C. ran  
 B. woke up       D. let out
7. choose wisely  
 A. never       C. think  
 B. eat       D. pick
8. the entire time  
 A. dinner       C. whole  
 B. lost       D. wasted

## Antonyms

Read the underlined word in each phrase. Mark the word below it that means the opposite or nearly the opposite

### Sample:

- S-1. silent evening  
 A. noisy       C. patient  
 B. quiet       D. perfect

1. rare coin  
 A. unusual       C. common  
 B. money       D. copper
2. lead the troops  
 A. hire       C. mail  
 B. metal       D. follow
3. expensive jewels  
 A. cheap       C. diamond  
 B. sparkly       D. precious
4. narrow path  
 A. rocky       C. dirt  
 B. trail       D. wide
5. foolish person  
 A. funny       C. wealthy  
 B. smart       D. human
6. darkened room  
 A. living       C. painted  
 B. lighted       D. small
7. danger signs  
 A. stop       C. safety  
 B. funny       D. animal
8. beneath the ground  
 A. above       C. beside  
 B. near       D. walk

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

# SCHOLASTIC NEWS

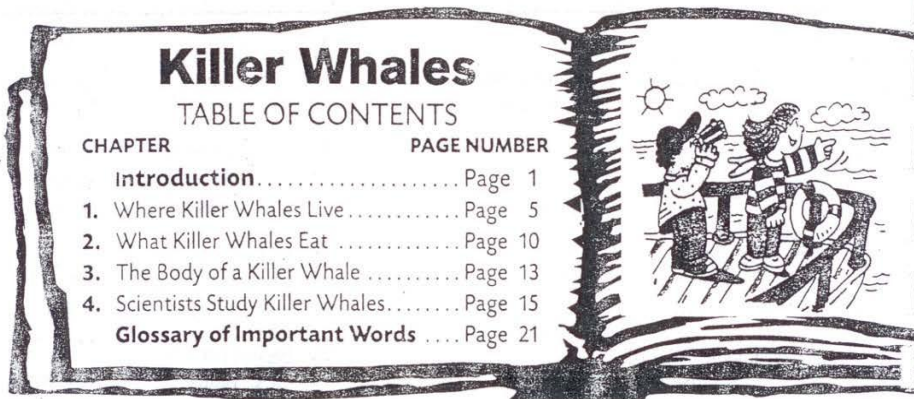
EDITION 3

## Study-Skills Builder 2



### Use a Table of Contents

A table of contents gives you a sneak peek at the topics a book will talk about. This is an example of a table of contents from a book about killer whales. Look at the table of contents, then answer the questions. Fill in the circle next to the best answer.



- In which chapter would you learn about the diet of killer whales?  
 a. chapter 1       b. chapter 2       c. introduction
- On what pages would you find information on where killer whales live?  
 a. pages 5 to 9       b. pages 21 to 23       c. pages 10 to 12
- Which chapter begins on page 15?  
 a. chapter 1       b. chapter 3       c. chapter 4
- Which chapter has two pages of information in it?  
 a. chapter 1       b. chapter 3       c. chapter 4
- Which chapter would have information on new studies that scientists are doing on killer whales?  
 a. chapter 4       b. chapter 2       c. chapter 3
- What might you learn about in chapter 3?  
 a. in what parts of the world killer whales can be found  
 b. how killer whales get along with other ocean animals  
 c. the size and weight of killer whales



# SCHOLASTIC NEWS

**EDITION 3**

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## Reading Skills Practice Test 2

**Reading Comprehension** Read each story. Then fill in the circle that best completes each sentence or answers each question.

**SAMPLE**

Thanksgiving has been around for over 350 years. That's when Pilgrims and Native Americans **dined** together. But this holiday has changed a lot! For example, potatoes are a hit today. But the Pilgrims had never even heard of potatoes! And apples were not yet grown in America, so there was no apple pie.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <p>1. What is the best title for this story?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> A. "Thanksgiving Then and Now"</li> <li><input type="radio"/> B. "Favorite Foods of the Pilgrims"</li> <li><input type="radio"/> C. "Why Thanksgiving Has Always Been the Same"</li> <li><input type="radio"/> D. "Home for the Holidays"</li> </ul> | <p>2. In this story, the word <b>dined</b> means</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> A. worked.</li> <li><input type="radio"/> B. planted.</li> <li><input type="radio"/> C. ate.</li> <li><input type="radio"/> D. sang.</li> </ul> |
|--|---|

**A.** Students at Table Mound Elementary in Iowa knew all about recycling and other ways to help the earth. So, they decided to teach the rest of their community about Earth Day. First, they borrowed 500 big brown paper bags from a local food store. Then, they decorated the bags with Earth Day messages and pictures. Later, the kids **returned** the bags to the store. Shoppers used the bags to take home their groceries.

1. This story is mainly about
- A. ways to save money on groceries.
  - B. Earth Day celebrations around the country.
  - C. one school's Earth Day project.
  - D. art projects using brown bags.

2. In this story, the word **returned** means
- A. took back.
  - B. sold.
  - C. took away.
  - D. shopped.
3. What happened first?
- A. Students decorated brown bags.
  - B. Students borrowed bags from a store.
  - C. Shoppers used the decorated bags.
  - D. Students returned bags to the store.
4. You can guess from the story that
- A. people in Iowa buy lots of groceries.
  - B. students at Table Mound Elementary are good artists.
  - C. the bags taught shoppers about Earth Day.
  - D. shoppers in Iowa love the earth.

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Name \_\_\_\_\_

**B.** An area called Patagonia, in Argentina, was home to some of the largest dinosaurs that ever lived. Fernando Novas is a scientist who studies dinosaur bones. He says, "The giants of all giants lived here." One of them, the Giganotosaurus, was a meat-eating monster. It was about 45 feet long and weighed 8 to 10 tons. Another huge dinosaur was called the Argentinosaurus. It was about 100 feet long and weighed 100 tons. It was no meat-eating monster, though. The Argentinosaurus was an herbivore. In other words, it ate only plants.

1. Which is the name of a giant dinosaur?
- A. Patagonia
  - B. Argentinosaurus
  - C. Argentina
  - D. Novas

2. What is the main idea of this story?
- A. Some of the largest dinosaurs ever lived in Patagonia.
  - B. Fernando Novas is a scientist who studied dinosaur bones.
  - C. The Giganotosaurus ate huge amounts of meat.
  - D. Some dinosaurs were quite small.
3. In this story, the word herbivore means
- A. meat eater.
  - B. giant dinosaur.
  - C. scientist.
  - D. plant eater
4. How large was the Giganotosaurus?
- A. about 100 feet long
  - B. over 500 feet long
  - C. about 45 feet long
  - D. less than 30 feet long

**C.** It's amazing what you can create from a field of maize, or corn. One summer, a farmer in Walden, New York, turned his cornfield into a giant maze! To make the maze, farmer Richard Hodgson planted rows and rows of corn. Then, when the corn was about 10 inches high, farm workers carefully pulled out some of the corn plants. That made a maze pattern in the fields. By late summer, the corn maze was 8 feet high and ready for visitors. Hundreds of people explored Hodgson's maze. Most people took a whole hour to find their way out. Each group of explorers was given a tall flag. If they got lost, they waved the flag and someone went to help. The maze shut down at the end of the summer. The corn was used to feed farm animals.

1. The maze was ready for visitors when the corn was \_\_\_\_\_.
- A. about 10 inches high.
  - B. about 8 feet high.
  - C. waving tall flags.
  - D. planted in rows.
2. What is the best title for this story?
- A. "How to Grow Tall Corn"
  - B. "A Farm in New York"
  - C. "What to Feed Farm Animals"
  - D. "An Amazing Maze"
3. Which happened last?
- A. Hodgson pulled out some corn plants.
  - B. Hodgson planted rows of corn.
  - C. The corn was fed to farm animals.
  - D. The corn plants grew 10 inches high.
4. You can guess from the story that
- A. few visitors came to the maze.
  - B. the maze was pretty hard to go through.
  - C. the maze was really simple.
  - D. everyone who entered the maze got lost.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**D.** Are you afraid of bees because they can sting you? Did you ever wish that there were no bees? According to experts, that would be a disaster. Bees help to provide our food supply.

**What's the big deal about bees?**

While the buzz of bees may scare kids, that buzz is music to a farmer's ears. Bees carry a sticky substance called pollen from flower to flower. The pollen helps flowers grow into food and vegetables.

**What's happening to bees?**

Since 1990, our nation's bees have been dying. One problem is mites. These tiny members of the spider family kill many baby bees before they have a chance to grow.

Pesticides are another problem. Pesticides are chemicals that farmers spray on crops to keep pesky insects away. The chemicals sometimes kill bees. So, farmers are now using pesticides that are less **harmful** to bees.

1. In this story, the word **harmful** means

- A. helpful.
- B. dangerous.
- C. tasty.
- D. insects.

2. This story is mostly about

- A. why kids are scared of bees.
- B. how bees make honey.
- C. why farmers don't like bees.
- D. why we need bees.

3. Farmers use pesticides to

- A. kill bees.
- B. keep pesky insects away.
- C. save bees.
- D. keep bees from stinging.

4. Which of these is an *opinion*?

- A. Bees help provide our food supply.
- B. Bees carry pollen from flower to flower.
- C. Bees are very scary.
- D. Mites sometimes attack baby bees.

**E.** Way back when, Sun and Moon were very good friends with Sea. Every day, Sun and Moon visited Sea. They talked and laughed and had a good time. But Sea never visited Sun and Moon, and that hurt their feelings.

Finally, Sun and Moon asked Sea why he never visited. "Your house is not big enough," said Sea. "You would need to build a very, very big house for me to visit."

So Sun and Moon built a huge house. It was so big that it took a whole day to walk from one end to the other. Sun and Moon felt **confident** that Sea would fit.

The next day, Sea visited. He flowed into the house until the water was waist high. "Should I stop?" he asked.

"No, no," said Sun and Moon. "Come on in." So Sea kept flowing. Soon, he reached the ceiling. Sun and Moon had to sit on the roof.

Finally, the whole house was underwater, including the roof. Sun and Moon had to leap onto a cloud floating by. And that's how Sun and Moon came to live in the sky.

1. In this story, the word **confident** means

- A. scared.
- B. sure.
- C. huge.
- D. ocean.

2. Sun and Moon leaped onto a cloud

- A. because they were angry at Sea.
- B. because their new house was too big.
- C. to stay above water.
- D. to visit friends in the sky.

3. This story might go on to tell about

- A. the biggest house in the world.
- B. tips for water safety.
- C. more adventures of Sun and Moon.
- D. eclipses.

SCHOLASTIC NEWS

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## VOCABULARY

### Which Word Is Missing?

In the following paragraphs, some words are missing. First, read each paragraph. Then, fill in the missing word from the list of words beneath the paragraph. Fill in the circle next to the word that is missing.

**SAMPLE**

S-1. I'm going to take a walk in the rain. But first, I'll grab my \_\_\_\_\_. I don't want to get wet.

- A. book       C. umbrella  
 B. sweater     D. socks

S-2. I had a really large lunch today. I ate two sandwiches, an apple, and a \_\_\_\_\_ slice of cake. I felt very full by the time I finished all that cake.

- A. tiny       C. fruit  
 B. thick      D. piece

- Some tigers live in zoos around the world. But tigers in the wild are found only in Asia. In the wild, tigers live in grassy, wooded areas. At one time, about 100,000 tigers roamed the \_\_\_\_\_ of Asia.  
 A. cities       C. forests  
 B. China       D. deserts
- The Siberian tiger is the world's \_\_\_\_\_ tiger. It weighs about 500 pounds and is over eight-and-a-half feet tall. The smallest tiger is the Sumatran tiger. It weighs about 250 pounds and is 8 feet long.  
 A. largest      C. fastest  
 B. pounds     D. heavy
- Today, tigers are \_\_\_\_\_ in number. There are only 7,500 tigers left in the wild. In fact, tigers are in danger of dying out.  
 A. size         C. dead  
 B. growing     D. shrinking
- What's happening to the mighty tiger? One problem is that tigers are losing their \_\_\_\_\_. People have built villages and farms on the land where tigers lived. They have destroyed tiger habitats.  
 A. homes      C. stripes  
 B. speed       D. cubs
- Another problem is hunters. They kill the tigers to make medicine from their bones and to sell the beautiful tiger skins. It is \_\_\_\_\_ to hunt tigers. But many people break the law.  
 A. exciting     C. scary  
 B. illegal      D. boring
- Who caused the tiger problem? People caused it. Now, it is up to people to \_\_\_\_\_ the problem. If we don't do something to help tigers they will surely become extinct.  
 A. cause       C. fix  
 B. hide         D. write
- Tiger experts around the world want to help tigers. They had a big meeting in Texas to talk about ways to stop tigers from dying out. School children are also working to keep tigers safe. Schools in the U.S. have raised thousands of dollars to \_\_\_\_\_ tigers.  
 A. hunt         C. spend  
 B. pet           D. save

# SCHOLASTIC NEWS

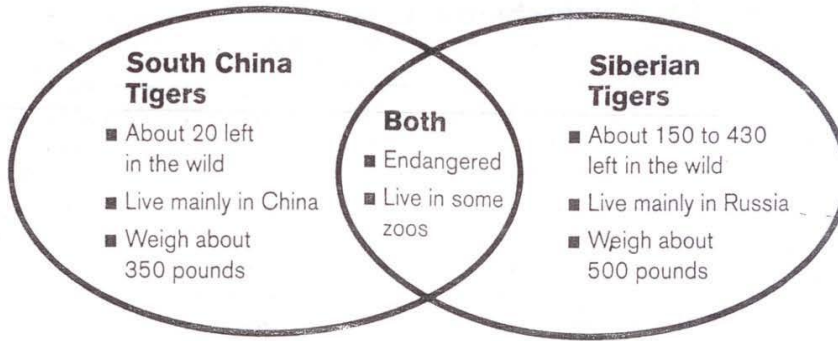
EDITION 3

## Study-Skills Builder 3

### Read a Diagram



A Venn diagram helps you compare two things. In the Venn diagram below, one circle tells about South China tigers. The other circle tells about Siberian tigers. The area where the circles overlap tells what the two kinds of tigers have in common. Use the diagram to answer the questions.



1. Which type of tiger lives mainly in Russia? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Which type of tiger is heavier? \_\_\_\_\_
3. About how many more pounds does the heavier tiger weigh? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Write one thing that the two types of tigers have in common.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Here are three new facts about tigers. Decide where each fact belongs inside the Venn diagram. Write the letter for each fact (**a**, **b**, or **c**) in the diagram.
  - a. Both types of tigers have been killed by hunters.
  - b. Siberian tigers have fewer stripes than other tigers.
  - c. South China tigers are the rarest tigers of all.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

# SCHOLASTIC NEWS

EDITION 3

## Reading Skills Practice Test 3

### Reading Comprehension

Read each story. Then fill in the circle that best completes each sentence or answers each question.

**SAMPLE**

Is your smile full of holes these days? You are not alone. Most kids your age are losing their baby teeth. Baby teeth fall out to make room for permanent teeth. Baby teeth fall out when their roots **shrink**. The roots are what hold the teeth in the jawbone.

- The best title for this story is  
 A. "Goodbye, Baby Teeth."  
 B. "How Cavities Form."  
 C. "How to Care for Teeth."  
 D. "The Tooth Fairy."
- In the story, the word **shrink** means  
 A. grow.  
 B. get sick.  
 C. get smaller.  
 D. appear.

**A.** Before money was invented, people **exchanged** one kind of goods for another. For example, long ago, people used shells, beans, or beads to buy food. Later, people began to make coins out of valuable materials like silver and gold.

Today, we use paper money and coins to buy things. Our money is not made of precious materials, but it is valuable all the same. Each bill or coin is worth the amount printed or stamped on it.

- The best title for this story is  
 A. "How Money Is Made."  
 B. "The History of Money."  
 C. "Rare Coins."  
 D. "Working at a Bank."
- What do we use for money today?  
 A. gold       C. bills and coins  
 B. shells       D. beans and beads
- In the story, the word **exchanged** means  
 A. helped.       C. lost.  
 B. traded.       D. made.
- Which of these happened first?  
 A. Silver coins were invented.  
 B. Gold coins were invented.  
 C. Paper money was invented.  
 D. People used beads to buy food.
- You can guess from the story that  
 A. beads have been around a long time.  
 B. people have always used paper money.  
 C. money was invented in the U.S.  
 D. shells are more valuable than coins.



SCHOLASTIC NEWS

**B.** On January 20, 1951, a snowstorm hit the village of Andermatt, Switzerland. For many hours, snow fell on the village and the tall mountains nearby.

Suddenly, around 2 p.m., a giant slab of snow rolled down a mountain onto Andermatt. It was an avalanche. Within hours, three more avalanches fell on the village. The avalanches crushed homes and buried the village's main street.

Rescuers worked quickly to help the villagers. Rescue dogs helped, too. They used their strong noses to sniff out people who were **trapped** in the snow.

1. This story is mainly about
  - A. Switzerland.
  - B. snowstorms.
  - C. dogs.
  - D. avalanches.
2. How many avalanches fell on Andermatt on January 20, 1951?
  - A. one
  - B. two
  - C. three
  - D. four
3. In the story, the word **trapped** means
  - A. stuck.
  - B. playing.
  - C. sniffed.
  - D. helped.
4. Which sentence is an opinion about avalanches?
  - A. They can happen suddenly.
  - B. They are the worst kinds of disaster.
  - C. They can crush a village.
  - D. They happen when snow falls down a mountain.

**C.** Hundreds of years ago, grasslands called prairies covered the middle part of the United States. The prairie land stretched from southern Canada to northern Mexico. Prairie dogs, buffalo, and other animals roamed the prairie and ate the wild grasses.

In the 1800s, the number of people in our country began to grow. All those people needed somewhere to live. Many of them built homes and farms where the prairie used to be. Most of the prairie disappeared.

Today, some people are working to bring back pieces of the prairie. First, they find a piece of land that used to be a prairie. Then they plant prairie-grass seeds and wait patiently for the wild grass to come back.

1. One example of a prairie animal is a
  - A. buffalo.
  - B. bear.
  - C. monkey.
  - D. squirrel.
2. The best title for this passage is
  - A. "Prairie Animals."
  - B. "Prairies: Then and Now."
  - C. "Where to Find Prairie Grass."
  - D. "Growth of Our Country."
3. The prairies disappeared because
  - A. people built homes and farms.
  - B. prairie dogs ate all the grass.
  - C. the prairie grasses all died.
  - D. Canada took over the prairie land.
4. You can guess from the story that
  - A. the prairie used to be very large.
  - B. there are no more prairie dogs.
  - C. prairie grass is ugly.
  - D. prairie land turned into forest land.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**D.** For a hundred years, people have told the tale of John Henry, one of the strongest men who ever lived.

According to **legend**, John Henry was born with a hammer in his hand. When John Henry grew up, he took a job with the railroad. He used his hammer to chip away mountains so the train tracks could pass through.

One day, a man with a fancy new drilling machine challenged John Henry to a contest. For nine hours, both men would chip away at the mountain. The man who carved farther into the mountain would be the winner.

As John Henry worked, sweat poured from his body. But his strong arms kept hammering. Finally, a judge measured how far each man had gone. John Henry won. With his simple hammer, he had chipped away 20 feet of rock—and beat a fancy machine!

1. What tool did John Henry use?

- A. a hammer     C. a drill  
 B. a saw         D. a tractor

2. In the story, the word **legend** means

- A. a story handed down from long ago.  
 B. a special kind of hammer.  
 C. a mountain made of rock.  
 D. a strong person.

3. Which of these did John Henry do last?

- A. He joined a contest.  
 B. He was born.  
 C. He chipped away 20 feet of rock.  
 D. He got a job with the railroad.

4. Next, the story would probably talk about

- A. John Henry's mom and dad.  
 B. John Henry's next adventure.  
 C. how to build a railroad.  
 D. other types of hammers.

**E.** Guide dogs are a big help to blind people. A guide dog helps its owner cross the street and do many other things. But it is not easy to become a guide dog. Here's what a dog must do to get the job:

1. When the dog is a puppy, trainers watch the dog to make sure it is friendly and calm.
2. For one year, the dog goes to live with a family. The family teaches the dog some **simple** commands, like "Sit!" and "Stay!"
3. Then the dog goes to school, where trainers teach the dog to lead a person. The dog must learn to steer clear of cars and other dangers.
4. The trainers take the dog into town to practice going into stores and banks.
5. If the dog has done well at school, it is ready to meet its blind owner. Now they will work as a team.

1. In this story, the word **simple** means

- A. easy.             C. hidden.  
 B. happy.          D. loving.

2. You would probably find this story in

- A. a book about families.  
 B. a book of folktales.  
 C. a book about working animals.  
 D. a travel book.

3. This story was probably created to

- A. explain how guide dogs are trained.  
 B. tell people to get pet dogs.  
 C. compare dogs to other pets.  
 D. help blind people find the right pet.

4. Which of these is a fact from the story?

- A. It is fun to train a dog.  
 B. Dogs are cute.  
 C. Guide dogs must be calm.  
 D. All dogs should be guide dogs.



# SCHOLASTIC NEWS

EDITION 3

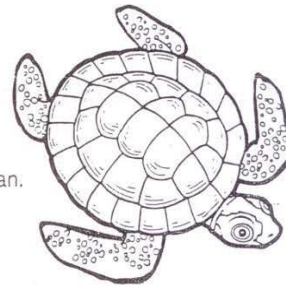
## Study-Skills Builder 4

### Put the Sentences in Order

The stories below are all mixed-up. Can you put the sentences in correct order?  
For each story, write the numbers 1 through 8 in the blanks to show the correct order.

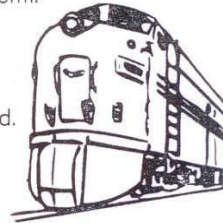
#### Turtle Time

- \_\_\_\_\_ After a long wait, the eggs hatched.
- \_\_\_\_\_ One day, a female turtle crawled onto a beach.
- \_\_\_\_\_ The tiny baby turtles slowly headed toward the ocean.
- \_\_\_\_\_ She laid 50 eggs in the nest.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Some of the turtles got lost and did not make it.
- \_\_\_\_\_ She found a perfect spot and dug a nest.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Now their ocean adventures would begin!
- \_\_\_\_\_ But a few lucky turtles made it, and crawled happily into the ocean.



#### What a Trip!

- \_\_\_\_\_ Violet found a seat on the train and went to sleep.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Early one morning, Violet went to the train station.
- \_\_\_\_\_ She got off the train, and saw her aunt waiting on the platform.
- \_\_\_\_\_ She bought a ticket and waited for her train.
- \_\_\_\_\_ "I don't know. I slept through it!" Violet exclaimed.
- \_\_\_\_\_ When her train roared into the station, Violet climbed aboard.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Violet awoke when she felt the train slow to a stop.
- \_\_\_\_\_ "How was your trip, dear?" Violet's aunt asked.



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Name \_\_\_\_\_

# VOCABULARY

## Synonyms

Read the underlined word in each phrase. Mark the word below it that means the same or nearly the same.

### Sample:

- receive the package  
 A. send       C. paint  
 B. get         D. file

1. create art  
 A. make       C. learn  
 B. buy         D. sight
2. stomachache  
 A. order       C. belly  
 B. pill         D. pain
3. imaginary place  
 A. school      C. sad  
 B. pretend     D. nice
4. a beautiful area  
 A. place       C. store  
 B. person      D. song
5. beneath the desk  
 A. sit          C. use  
 B. under       D. over
6. cellar door  
 A. attic        C. open  
 B. knob       D. basement
7. delicious feast  
 A. meal       C. eat  
 B. time       D. great
8. a long battle  
 A. bell        C. fight  
 B. day        D. jail

## Which Meaning?

Some words have more than one meaning. Read each pair of sentences, then choose a word to fill in the blanks. Mark the one word that makes sense in both sentences.

### Sample:

- I have a complete \_\_\_\_\_ of sports cards.  
 My dad asked me to \_\_\_\_\_ the table.  
 A. move       C. box  
 B. set         D. collection

1. The crossing \_\_\_\_\_ helps me across the street.  
 Will you \_\_\_\_\_ my bike while I run into the library?  
 A. ride       C. light  
 B. watch     D. guard
2. I can't \_\_\_\_\_ to put this book down.  
 We saw a \_\_\_\_\_ running in the woods.  
 A. deer       C. bear  
 B. man       D. stand
3. Let's \_\_\_\_\_ the listings for a movie.  
 Ask your mom to write a \_\_\_\_\_ for your soccer uniform.  
 A. read       C. look  
 B. check     D. letter
4. It's hot, so we turned on the \_\_\_\_\_.  
 I am a big basketball \_\_\_\_\_.  
 A. fan        C. cold  
 B. air        D. player
5. The teacher asked the class to \_\_\_\_\_ a straight line.  
 Write your name on the \_\_\_\_\_.  
 A. run        C. form  
 B. blank     D. paper

### TEST 1 READING SKILLS CHART

SKILL	STORY (LETTERED)/QUESTION (NUMBERED)				
	A	B	C	D	E
Finding the Main Idea	1	1	1		
Reading for Detail		2	2		1
Understanding Vocabulary	3	3		1	2
Making Inferences	4		4		3
Sequencing	2			2	
Understanding Cause/Effect			3		
Predicting Outcomes				3	
Knowing Author's Purpose					4
Understanding Fact/Opinion		4		4	

\*Some questions review several skills. We have identified the dominant skill.

### TEST 1 ANSWERS

Sample: 1. C 2. A  
**Story A:**  
 1. B 2. D 3. C 4. B  
**Story B:**  
 1. C 2. A 3. A 4. C  
**Story C:**  
 1. B 2. A 3. D 4. C  
**Story D:**  
 1. B 2. C 3. A 4. D  
**Story E:**  
 1. A 2. C 3. B 4. B  
**Synonyms: Sample: A**  
 1. C 2. A 3. D 4. B 5. D 6. B  
 7. D 8. C  
**Antonyms: Sample: A**  
 1. C 2. D 3. A 4. D 5. B 6. B  
 7. C 8. A

### TEST 2 READING SKILLS CHART

SKILL	STORY (LETTERED)/QUESTION (NUMBERED)				
	A	B	C	D	E
Finding the Main Idea	1	2	2	2	
Reading for Detail		1, 4	1	3	
Understanding Vocabulary	2	3		1	1
Making Inferences	4		4		
Sequencing	3		3		
Understanding Cause/Effect					2
Predicting Outcomes					3
Knowing Author's Purpose					
Understanding Fact/Opinion				4	

\*Some questions review several skills. We have identified the dominant skill.

### TEST 2 ANSWERS

Sample:  
 1. A 2. C  
**Story A:**  
 1. C 2. A 3. B 4. C  
**Story B:**  
 1. B 2. A 3. D 4. C  
**Story C:**  
 1. B 2. D 3. C 4. B  
**Story D:**  
 1. B 2. D 3. B 4. C  
**Story E:**  
 1. B 2. C 3. C  
**Which Word Is Missing?**  
 S-1. C S-2. B  
 1. C 2. A 3. D 4. A 5. B 6. C  
 7. D

### TEST 3 READING SKILLS CHART

SKILL	STORY (LETTERED)/QUESTION (NUMBERED)				
	A	B	C	D	E
Finding the Main Idea	1	1	2		
Reading for Detail	2	2	1	1	
Understanding Vocabulary	3	3		2	1
Making Inferences	5		4		2
Sequencing	4			3	
Understanding Cause/Effect			3		
Predicting Outcomes				4	
Knowing Author's Purpose					3
Understanding Fact/Opinion		4			4

\*Some questions review several skills. We have identified the dominant skill.

### TEST 3 ANSWERS

Sample:  
 1. A 2. C  
**Story A:**  
 1. B 2. C 3. B 4. D 5. A  
**Story B:**  
 1. D 2. D 3. A 4. B  
**Story C:**  
 1. A 2. B 3. A 4. A  
**Story D:**  
 1. A 2. A 3. C 4. B  
**Story E:**  
 1. A 2. C 3. A 4. C  
**Synonyms: Sample: B**  
 1. A 2. D 3. B 4. A 5. B 6. D  
 7. A 8. C  
**Which Meaning?: Sample: B**  
 1. D 2. C 3. B 4. A 5. C

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# SCHOLASTIC NEWS

## READING TEST-TAKING PRACTICE & SKILLS BUILDERS COMPREHENSION

### Skills Include...

#### READING COMPREHENSION

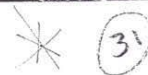
#### VOCABULARY

- Synonyms and Antonyms
- Multiple Meanings
- Filling in the Missing Word

#### STUDY-SKILLS BUILDERS

- Finding the Main Idea
- Reading a Diagram
- Using a Table of Contents
- Story Sequencing

**GRADE 3**



## HOW TO USE THE *Scholastic News* READING COMPREHENSION SKILLS BOOK

This skills book is designed to provide you with an effective tool to develop your students' reading-comprehension and test-taking skills. Inside, you'll find four pages of **Study-Skills Builders**. These will help your students build some needed skills before taking the practice tests.

Between the skills builders, you'll find three **Reading Skills Practice Tests**. Each practice test provides test-taking experience for your students. On this page and the inside back cover, you'll find tips on administering the tests, an easy-to-use answer key, and a chart outlining the specific reading skills tested with each question.

Before administering a test, you may wish to do the sample questions together and review with students some basic test-taking strategies, such as reading the questions before reading the passages.

### WHY USE THESE TESTS?

Our tests can help you and your class in these ways:

- **Practice.** Your students probably take standardized reading tests. Our practice tests focus on the skills kids will be expected to demonstrate.
- **Diagnostic Tool.** Individual student scores will help you detect strengths and weaknesses. Use the **Reading Skills Chart** on the inside back cover to

pinpoint specific areas where students may need more practice or instruction.

- **Instructional Tool.** You may decide to use the practice test for oral reading and discussion. Keep in mind that our practice tests are just that—practice. These tests are not standardized. They should not be used to determine grade level, to compare one student's performance with that of others, or to evaluate teachers' abilities.

### HOW TO ADMINISTER THE TESTS:

- Establish a relaxed atmosphere. Explain to students that they will not be graded and that they are taking the test to practice for "real" tests down the road.
- Review the directions. Then read the samples in each section and discuss the answers. Be sure to pay close attention to the directions in the vocabulary sections.
- To mimic the atmosphere of a real test, you may wish to set time limits. Students should be able to complete the reading comprehension sections in 20 minutes. Allow an additional 10 minutes for the vocabulary portions of the test.
- Use the answer key provided here to check students' work. If students answer a question incorrectly, the **Reading Skills Chart** can help you pinpoint the skills that they may need to practice.

## Answer Key for Study-Skills Builders

Please see inside back cover for Reading Skills Chart and Answer Key for tests 1, 2, and 3.

### SKILLS BUILDER 1

#### What's the Big Idea?

1. **Main idea:** There are many things people can do to save water.
2. **Main idea:** These tools help polar bears survive at the icy North Pole.
3. **Main idea:** Author Marc Brown has a great way of getting ideas for books. He keeps a story drawer! (All other sentences are supporting details.)

### SKILLS BUILDER 2

#### Table of Contents:

1. B 2. C 3. B 4. C 5. A 6. A

### SKILLS BUILDER 3

#### Read a Diagram:

1. spiders
2. two
3. Both live all over the world and both have an outer skeleton (either statement is an acceptable answer).
4. Statement (a) belongs under "Both," statement (b) belongs under "Spiders," and statement (c) belongs under "Insects."

### SKILLS BUILDER 4

#### Put the Sentences in Order:

**The White House** – 8, 1, 5, 2, 3, 7, 6, 4  
**Kate's New Bike** – 3, 7, 2, 4, 8, 6, 1, 5

# SCHOLASTIC NEWS

EDITION 3

## Study-Skills Builder 1



### What's the Big Idea?

The **main idea** is what a paragraph is all about. It usually comes at the beginning or end of the paragraph. The main idea can be one or more sentences. **Supporting details** help support, or prove, the main idea. In each paragraph, circle the main idea and underline the supporting details. We did the first one for you.

#### Sample

You can tell how close a storm is by paying attention to lightning and thunder. When you see a bolt of lightning, start counting seconds. Stop counting when you hear thunder. If you count three seconds, the storm is a half-mile away. If you count six seconds, the storm is a mile away.

1 .....  
There are many things people can do to save water. They can take short showers or shallow baths. They can stop running the water while they brush their teeth. They can also wash dirty dishes by hand, using just one pan of soapy water and one pan of rinse water.

2 .....  
Polar bears have a thick layer of fat to keep them warm. They have extra-large paws to keep them from sinking in snow. They also have hollow hairs that collect heat from the sun. These tools help polar bears survive at the icy North Pole.

3 .....  
Author Marc Brown has a great way of getting ideas for books. He keeps a story drawer! Here's how it works: Any time Brown has an idea for a story, he writes it down and tosses it in a special drawer. He throws in story titles, names for characters, even drawings. Sometimes he has 100 ideas in the drawer. When he gets ready to write a book, he digs through the drawer to find the best ideas.

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# SCHOLASTIC NEWS

EDITION 3

## Reading Skills Practice Test 1

### Reading Comprehension

Read each story. Then, fill in the circle that best completes each sentence or answers each question.



Almost every country has its own form of money, or currency. In the United States, the main unit of currency is the dollar. In Japan, people spend money called *yen*. And in Iraq, people use *dinars* to buy dinner!

- The best title for this story is  
 A. "Forms of Money."  
 B. "Life in Japan."  
 C. "How Much Does It Cost?"  
 D. "Foreign Languages."
- In the story, the word **currency** means  
 A. a type of food.  
 B. a country in Asia.  
 C. a form of money.  
 D. a very rich person.

**A.** Do your eyes sometimes feel sore and dry after you use a computer? It's probably because you spent a long time staring at the glowing screen. Doctors call this *eye strain*.

Give your tired eyes a rest by taking a break from the computer at least once every 30 minutes. If you can, put a bright light a few feet behind your shoulder to make sure you can see well. Finally, try to blink often to keep your eyes **moist**.

- This story is mostly about  
 A. some new computer games.  
 B. the different parts of a computer.  
 C. how the human eye works.  
 D. how to lessen eye strain.
- In the story, the word **moist** means  
 A. brown.       C. dry.  
 B. wet.         D. sore.
- According to the story, you should take a break from the computer  
 A. at least once a day.  
 B. at least once every hour.  
 C. at least once every 30 minutes.  
 D. every five minutes.
- You can guess from this story that  
 A. eye strain is a common problem.  
 B. eyes are supposed to be very dry.  
 C. children should not use computers.  
 D. it's best to use a computer in the dark.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**B.** Yellowstone National Park is one of the most beautiful parks in the country. It was also the home of one of the worst wildfires in U.S. history.

In the summer of 1988, the weather in the Western U.S. was hot and dry. There was very little rain. Everyone knew it would not take much to spark a fire.

Soon, disaster struck. Lightning started more than 45 fires in the park. Wind spread the flames all over the forest. The blaze destroyed more than a million acres of parkland. It killed trees and left thousands of animals homeless.

Firefighters worked hard, but they could not put the fire out. It burned until fall, when rain and snow finally came.

1. This story is mainly about
  - A. what firefighters do.
  - B. a famous forest fire.
  - C. serious thunderstorms.
  - D. summer weather in the U.S.
2. Which of these did NOT help cause the fire in Yellowstone?
  - A. heat
  - B. dry weather
  - C. volcanoes
  - D. lightning
3. The story would probably go on to talk about
  - A. famous places in the United States.
  - B. types of fire engines.
  - C. what causes lightning and thunder.
  - D. how the park recovered from the fire.

**C.** When Walt Disney was a child, he liked to draw funny characters for his friends. Later, Walt used this talent to make money. He got a job making cartoons. Back then, cartoons had no sound. People had to read the movie screen to see what characters were saying.

Walt decided to start his own company. He worked hard to make cartoons that people would enjoy. In 1928, he came up with a new character named Mickey Mouse. Walt was disappointed when audiences did not love his first two Mickey cartoons. Then he got an idea. He would add sound to the third cartoon.

Walt called the third Mickey cartoon *Steamboat Willie*. He recorded toots, whistles, and other sounds on the film. And he used his own voice for the part of Mickey.

*Steamboat Willie* became a big hit. And so did Walt Disney. He became one of the most famous entertainers in U.S. history.

1. This story is mostly about
  - A. how Disneyland was built in 1928.
  - B. the history of movies.
  - C. how Walt Disney invented Mickey Mouse.
  - D. what Walt Disney was like as a little boy.
2. The character Mickey Mouse became popular
  - A. before he even appeared in a cartoon.
  - B. when he appeared in his second cartoon.
  - C. in the late 1960s.
  - D. when sound was added to the cartoon.
3. The author probably wrote this story to
  - A. inform readers about Walt Disney.
  - B. inform readers about different kinds of jobs.
  - C. persuade people to become cartoonists.
  - D. persuade people to buy Mickey Mouse cartoons and toys.

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Name \_\_\_\_\_

## VOCABULARY

### Synonyms

Read the underlined word in each phrase. Mark the word below it that means the same or nearly the same.

#### Sample:

S-1. famous singer

- A. unusual       C. loud  
 B. well-known    D. good

- shut the door  
 A. open       C. turn  
 B. knock       D. close
- largest mountain  
 A. nicest       C. biggest  
 B. coolest       D. lowest
- reuse the bag  
 A. don't use       C. return  
 B. use again       D. remind
- create art  
 A. see       C. drop  
 B. make       D. color
- repair the machine  
 A. break       C. fix  
 B. use       D. open
- the same region  
 A. time       C. area  
 B. knock       D. meal
- discover treasure  
 A. find       C. buy  
 B. lose       D. dig
- purchase snacks  
 A. buy       C. pack  
 B. eat       D. share

### Antonyms

Read the underlined word in each phrase. Mark the word below it that means the opposite or nearly the opposite.

#### Sample:

S-1. chilly day

- A. new       C. warm  
 B. winter    D. school

- never forget  
 A. ever       C. please  
 B. always       D. few
- different rules  
 A. new       C. wrong  
 B. unfair       D. same
- straight line  
 A. yellow       C. crooked  
 B. thin       D. dark
- most important game  
 A. least       C. often  
 B. next       D. mine
- agree with him  
 A. agreed       C. agreeable  
 B. disagree       D. agreement
- walk separately  
 A. kindly       C. together  
 B. slowly       D. alone
- enormous creature  
 A. green       C. furry  
 B. mean       D. tiny
- rare animal  
 A. wild       C. large  
 B. common       D. spotted

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EMHOIL 2/27/21

**D.** Long ago, the Seneca people told a story to explain why bears have no tails. Here's how that Native American tale goes. Bear and Fox lived in the same forest. Bear was the biggest animal, but Fox was the smartest. Both animals were proud of their long, beautiful tails.

One day, the animals decided to go fishing. "Your tail is so long and strong," Fox told Bear. "Use it to catch us some fish."

Bear was **pleased** at what Fox had said. He went to the lake and dropped his tail in. Soon he pulled out some fish. He tossed them to Fox, who gobbled them all up.

Suddenly, the lake grew cold and still. Bear felt a tug on his tail. "It must be another fish," he thought. But when he tried to pull his tail from the water, the tail snapped off! The lake had frozen solid. Poor Bear was left with no fish and no tail. And that is why bears have no tails to this very day.

1. In the story, the word **pleased** means  
 A. tired.       C. angry.  
 B. happy.       D. old.
2. Which of these happened *last*?  
 A. Bear put his tail in the lake.  
 B. Bear and Fox decided to go fishing.  
 C. Bear's tail snapped off.  
 D. The lake grew cold.
3. You can guess that  
 A. animals used to be able to talk.  
 B. the Seneca people lived in Europe.  
 C. this story is not really true.  
 D. bears and foxes do not eat fish.
4. Which of these is a *fact*?  
 A. Bears are cuter than foxes.  
 B. This story is interesting.  
 C. The Seneca people told this story.  
 D. Fox should have shared the fish with Bear.

**E.** Did you ever wonder where rocks come from? One **type** of rock, called igneous rock, starts deep under the ground.

Miles beneath Earth's surface there is hot, melted rock called *magma*. Sometimes this melted rock bursts onto Earth's surface through openings called volcanoes. When the rock comes out of the volcano, it is called *lava*.

Soon the rock will get yet another new name. As the lava cools off, it gets harder and harder. Once it has hardened into a solid, it is called igneous rock.

Igneous rocks can be black, white, orange, green, or many other colors. They sometimes look very shiny, like pieces of glass.

1. When lava hardens, it is called  
 A. magma.       C. igneous rock.  
 B. glass.       D. lava.
2. A good title for this story is  
 A. "How Igneous Rock Forms."  
 B. "Different Kinds of Rock."  
 C. "Rocks and Minerals."  
 D. "Where Volcanoes Are Found."
3. In the story, the word **type** means  
 A. place.       C. kind.  
 B. match.       D. write.
4. Which of these is an *opinion*?  
 A. Magma is melted rock.  
 B. Igneous rocks are beautiful.  
 C. Igneous rocks are sometimes shiny.  
 D. Lava hardens as it cools off.

# SCHOLASTIC NEWS

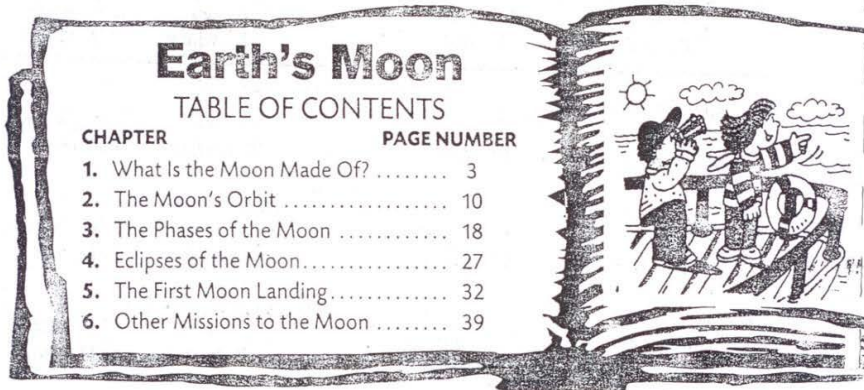
EDITION 3

## Study-Skills Builder 2

### Use a Table of Contents



A table of contents gives a sneak peek at the topics a book will talk about. Below is an example of a table of contents from a book about the moon. Look at the table of contents, then answer the questions. Fill in the circle next to the best answer.



- In which chapter would you learn about moon phases?  
 a. chapter 1       b. chapter 3       c. chapter 5
- On what pages would you read about the first time humans landed on the moon?  
 a. pages 3 to 9       b. pages 27 to 31       c. pages 32 to 38
- Which chapter begins on page 10?  
 a. chapter 1       b. chapter 2       c. chapter 3
- Which chapter is five pages long?  
 a. chapter 1       b. chapter 3       c. chapter 4
- In which chapter would you be most likely to read that the moon has a dusty surface and no atmosphere?  
 a. chapter 1       b. chapter 2       c. chapter 4
- What might you learn about in chapter 6?  
 a. space-shuttle missions that have studied the moon  
 b. how the moon orbits the Earth  
 c. the planets Mars and Jupiter

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# SCHOLASTIC NEWS

EDITION 3

## Reading Skills Practice Test 2

### Reading Comprehension

Read each story. Then, fill in the circle that best completes each sentence or answers each question.

**SAMPLE**

Some plants have interesting ways of protecting themselves. For example, in the South African desert, there are unusual plants called *lithops*. Lithops are not green and leafy like many other plants. Instead, they look like small gray stones. A hungry animal will usually pass right by a lithop without stopping for a taste.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <p>S-1. The best title for this story is</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> A. "The History of South Africa."</li> <li><input type="radio"/> B. "Powerful Plant Protection."</li> <li><input type="radio"/> C. "Life in the Desert."</li> <li><input type="radio"/> D. "What Animals Eat."</li> </ul> | <p>S-2. You can guess from the story that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> A. animals think lithops are stones.</li> <li><input type="radio"/> B. lithops are dark brown.</li> <li><input type="radio"/> C. lithops grow in cold places.</li> <li><input type="radio"/> D. South Africa has very few plants.</li> </ul> |
|---|---|

**A.** The airplane was not invented until 1903. But someone had the idea for a flying machine 400 years earlier. That someone was Leonardo da Vinci.

Leonardo was a talented artist and inventor. Experts think he was the first person to **imagine** such things as the bicycle, helicopter, and airplane. Leonardo drew these and other ideas on paper. Later, other inventors came up with the same ideas and made them a reality.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <p>1. In the story, the word <b>imagine</b> means</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> A. fly.</li> <li><input type="radio"/> B. throw away.</li> <li><input type="radio"/> C. think of.</li> <li><input type="radio"/> D. change.</li> </ul>   | <p>3. This story is mainly about</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> A. styles of airplanes.</li> <li><input type="radio"/> B. Leonardo da Vinci.</li> <li><input type="radio"/> C. how bicycles were invented.</li> <li><input type="radio"/> D. famous artists.</li> </ul>           |
| <p>2. Leonardo da Vinci drew a</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> A. microwave oven.</li> <li><input type="radio"/> B. map of Europe.</li> <li><input type="radio"/> C. cell phone.</li> <li><input type="radio"/> D. flying machine.</li> </ul>  | <p>4. You can guess that Leonardo da Vinci lived</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> A. in England.</li> <li><input type="radio"/> B. in the United States.</li> <li><input type="radio"/> C. around the year 1500.</li> <li><input type="radio"/> D. around the year 1600.</li> </ul> |
| <p>5. Which of these is an <i>opinion</i> about Leonardo da Vinci?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> A. He drew ideas on paper.</li> <li><input type="radio"/> B. He was the smartest man who ever lived.</li> <li><input type="radio"/> C. He was an artist.</li> <li><input type="radio"/> D. He was an inventor.</li> </ul> |   |

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Name \_\_\_\_\_

**B.** Everyone knows that catching a cold is no fun. But just how does it happen?

You may get a cold when a person with a cold sneezes or coughs near you. Tiny cold germs fly through the air and can get on your hands. If you put your hands near your face, the germs can enter your body through your mouth or nose.

Once they are inside your body, cold germs attack your cells. Cells are the tiny building blocks that make up your body. The cold germs make the healthy cells sick. Soon, millions of germs make your whole body feel sick.

Luckily, colds don't last forever. Special cells in your blood, called white blood cells, attack the germs. After a while, you feel well again.

1. A good title for this story is  
 A. "How You Catch a Cold."  
 B. "What Are Cells?"  
 C. "When to Visit the Doctor."  
 D. "Amazing Facts About Your Body."
2. What kind of cells attack cold germs?  
 A. red blood cells     C. super cells  
 B. white blood cells     D. sick cells
3. In the story, the word **enter** means  
 A. fly.     C. leave.  
 B. go near.     D. go into.
4. Which of these happens *first*?  
 A. The cold goes away.  
 B. Someone sneezes near you.  
 C. Cold germs attack your cells.  
 D. Cold germs get into your body.

**C.** Which Way (Weigh) Is It Spelled?

I'm the world's worst speller—  
And there's no one but me to blame.  
I never know which word to **choose**  
When two words sound the same!

Do I *see* or *sea* a movie?  
Do I *hear* or *here* a shout?  
Do I *know* or do I *no*  
How the cat got out?

Do I sleep at *night* or *knight*?  
Do I say *hi* or *high*?  
And do I take a *piece* or *peace*  
When it comes to eating pie?

I've heard the dictionary  
Has the answers that I seek.  
And so the next time I get stumped,  
I'll take a peek (or is it peak?).

—Karen Kellaher

1. This poem is mostly about  
 A. why the poet doesn't like math problems.  
 B. words that have a lot of vowels.  
 C. words that start with the same letter but have opposite meanings.  
 D. words that sound the same but have different spellings.
2. In the poem, the word **choose** means  
 A. ignore.     C. pick.  
 B. write.     D. read.
3. You would be most likely to find this poem  
 A. in an encyclopedia entry about spelling.  
 B. in a dictionary.  
 C. in a book of kids' poems.  
 D. in a book of science poems.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

SCHOLASTIC NEWS

**D.** In 1983, astronaut Sally Ride became the first American woman in space. But she was not the first woman in space. That honor belongs to Valentina Tereshkova, a Russian woman. Tereshkova went into space in 1963, 20 years before Sally Ride!

In the 1950s, Valentina Tereshkova was working in a factory. In her free time she liked to go parachuting and fly airplanes. One day, she wrote to her country's government and asked to be a cosmonaut. (That's the Russian word for astronaut.) Tereshkova got good news! She was accepted into a special training program for women.

After training to be a cosmonaut, Tereshkova went on her famous mission. On June 16, 1963, she blasted into space as the pilot of the *Vostok 6* spacecraft. She circled the Earth 45 times. Her trip lasted three days.

1. What did Valentina Tereshkova do first?  
 A. She piloted the *Vostok 6* spacecraft.  
 B. She trained to be a cosmonaut.  
 C. She worked in a factory.  
 D. She wrote to her country's government.
2. This story would probably go on to talk about  
 A. Tereshkova's childhood.  
 B. the rest of Tereshkova's space career.  
 C. how airplanes and spacecraft are alike.  
 D. the history of Russia.
3. The author probably wrote this story to  
 A. inform readers about a piece of history.  
 B. persuade readers to become astronauts.  
 C. make readers mad.  
 D. make Valentina Tereshkova feel proud.

**E.** Imagine a morning when you spilled your orange juice, missed the school bus, and forgot your homework. Ugh! You might tell a friend that you "got up on the wrong side of the bed."

This interesting expression got its start hundreds of years ago. It began in ancient Rome. Back then, people believed that the left side of anything was bad or unlucky. They would try to get out of bed on the right side and put their right foot on the floor first. The Romans believed that anyone who put his left foot down first would have bad luck.

The belief that the left side was unlucky lasted for centuries. That is how the saying, "Get up on the wrong side of the bed," got started.

1. The saying, "Get up on the wrong side of the bed," began in  
 A. China.       C. South America.  
 B. Rome.       D. England.
2. You can tell from the story that the "wrong side" of the bed means the  
 A. side farthest from the door.  
 B. side with no window.  
 C. right side.  
 D. left side.
3. The Romans thought that getting out of bed the wrong way would cause  
 A. bad weather.  
 B. a big fight.  
 C. bad luck.  
 D. confusion.

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Name \_\_\_\_\_

EDITION 3/10/17

## VOCABULARY

### Which Word Is Missing?

In the following paragraphs, some words are missing. First, read each paragraph. Then, look at the list of words beneath the paragraph. Fill in the circle next to the word that is missing.

**SAMPLE**

S-1. My friend Stephanie got a leading role in the school \_\_\_\_\_.

- A. year                       C. teacher  
 B. cafeteria                 D. play

S-2. Hurricane \_\_\_\_\_ lasts from June to November, but September is the busiest hurricane month.

- A. month                     C. season  
 B. floods                     D. lightning

1. About 40 million \_\_\_\_\_ lived in North and South America when Christopher Columbus landed there in 1492. Today they are known as Native Americans or Indians.  
 A. trees                       C. people  
 B. sailors                     D. bugs
2. The first Native Americans that Columbus met were the Arawak people. They lived on several \_\_\_\_\_ in the Caribbean Sea. They had their own language and culture, or way of life.  
 A. islands                     C. waters  
 B. oceans                     D. whales
3. The Arawaks used canoes to go fishing and get from place to place. They made their canoes from big, sturdy tree trunks. How did they do it? They burned small fires in a log, then they scooped out the ashes with handmade stone tools. Some Arawak canoes were \_\_\_\_\_ enough to hold 100 people!  
 A. hot                          C. open  
 B. nice                         D. large
4. The Arawak people also had an interesting diet. They dined on fish, sharks, turtles, and yams. They also ate a root called *manioc* (*MAN-ee-ock*). The root was poisonous, but the Arawaks knew a way to \_\_\_\_\_ the poison and make the root safe to eat. They used the manioc root to make bread.  
 A. see                         C. remind  
 B. remove                     D. buy
5. For fun, the Arawaks played a game called *batey* (*bah-TAY*). This game was a lot like soccer. The Arawaks played batey with balls made of rubber. They sometimes used the game to \_\_\_\_\_ problems without fighting.  
 A. play                         C. bounce  
 B. settle                       D. fight
6. Of course, the Arawaks were not the only Native American group living at the time of Columbus. Like the Arawaks, each group had its own culture, with \_\_\_\_\_ ways of working, eating, and playing.  
 A. different                     C. lonely  
 B. silly                         D. invisible

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

# SCHOLASTIC NEWS

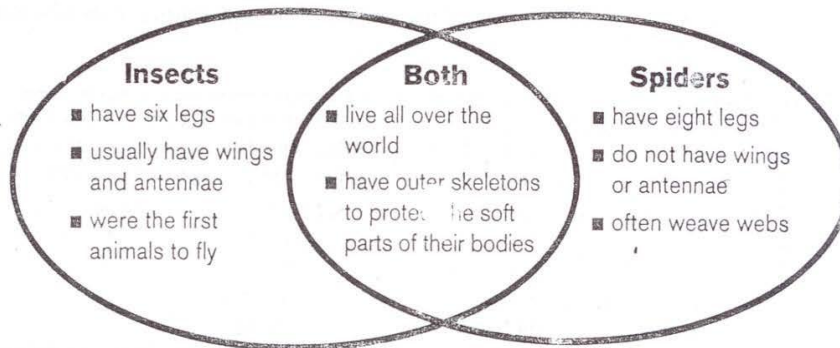
EDITION 3

## Study-Skills Builder 3

### Read a Diagram



A Venn diagram helps you compare two things. In the Venn diagram below, one circle tells about insects. The other circle tells about spiders. The area where the circles overlap tells what the two kinds of creatures have in common. Use the diagram to answer the questions.



1. Which creature does not have antennae? \_\_\_\_\_

2. How many more legs does a spider have than an insect? \_\_\_\_\_

3. In a complete sentence, write one thing the two types of creatures have in common.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Here are three new facts. Decide where each fact belongs inside the Venn diagram. Write the letter for each fact (**a**, **b**, or **c**) in the diagram.

- Both insects and spiders come in many sizes.
- A spider is related to a tick.
- There are 1 million types of insects.

SCHOLASTIC NEWS

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

# SCHOLASTIC NEWS

EDITION 3

## Reading Skills Practice Test 3

### Reading Comprehension

Read each story. Then, fill in the circle that best completes each sentence or answers each question.

**SAMPLE**

Many families fly the American flag outside their homes. They must follow a set of special rules. First, they should only fly the flag in the daytime. Second, they should not fly the flag in the rain. Third, they should never let the flag touch the ground.

S-1. The best title for this story is

- A. "Rainy Weather."
- B. "How to Make an American Flag."
- C. "Rules for Flying the Flag."
- D. "Flags of Different Nations."

S-2. In the story, the word **set** means

- A. box.
- B. group.
- C. table.
- D. bag.

**A.** Most dog owners think their pooches are **bright**. Now scientists have created a way to test dogs' smarts. It's a test people can give to their own pets. It works best when the dog is more than one year old.

Here's how to do part of the test:

1. Show your dog a doggy treat. Let him sniff it.
2. As your dog watches, put the treat on the floor and cover it with an empty can.
3. Tell your dog to get the treat. If your dog knocks over the can and gets the snack in 30 seconds or less, he's a doggy genius! If he can do it in 30 to 60 seconds, he's still a pretty smart pup. If he can't get the treat on his own, give it to him anyway. He may not be brilliant, but he's yours!

1. The best title for this story is

- A. "Caring for a Pet Dog."
- B. "Choosing a Pet."
- C. "The World's Smartest Animals."
- D. "How Smart Is Your Dog?"

2. To give this test to a dog, you would need a

- A. dog treat and can.     C. cat and bag.
- B. dog treat and tree.     D. leash and bone.

3. In the story, the word **bright** means

- A. helpful.                       C. loving.
- B. smart.                          D. cute.

4. Which step should you do *last*?

- A. Show your dog the treat.
- B. Put the treat under the can.
- C. See if the dog can get the treat.
- D. Let the dog sniff the treat.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**B.** What do squirrels, skunks, bears, and bats have in common? These mammals all **hibernate**, or sleep through the winter. Hibernation is a way for animals to **survive** the cold winter months. Since they are sleeping, they do not need to find food.

Some creatures, like bats and squirrels, sleep so soundly, it is impossible to wake them up. Others, like skunks and bears, sleep lightly. They might wake up for a few days, then go back to sleep.

Not all creatures get their beauty sleep in winter. In some places, animals rest during the summer instead! This is called *estivation*. Some desert squirrels, snakes, and toads sleep during the summer so they don't need to worry about finding water and staying cool.

**C.** Do you munch on peanut butter and jelly sandwiches? Do you love turkey on wheat bread? You have a man named John Montagu to thank. He is the one who invented sandwiches.

In the 1700s, John Montagu was the Earl of Sandwich, England. An **earl** was a rich and important man in a community. The Earl of Sandwich liked to spend his time playing cards. According to one story, he once played for 24 hours straight!

Montagu hated to leave the card table for meals. But he did get hungry. One day, he asked his servants to bring him a piece of meat between two slices of bread. That way, he could eat while playing. Later, his town name, Sandwich, became the word for food served between slices of bread.

1. This story is mainly about
  - A. the characteristics of mammals.
  - B. different species of bears.
  - C. hibernation and estivation.
  - D. how squirrels find food.
2. Estivation is when animals sleep during the
  - A. winter.       C. summer.
  - B. spring.       D. fall.
3. In the story, the word **survive** means
  - A. wake up.       C. get attention.
  - B. live through.       D. find water.
4. You can guess from this story that
  - A. bears sleep all winter and summer.
  - B. all animals hibernate.
  - C. winters in the desert are icy and harsh.
  - D. it can be hard for some animals to find food in winter.

1. In the 1700s, an **earl** was a
  - A. card game.
  - B. small town in England.
  - C. rich and important man.
  - D. type of fast and tasty meal.
2. You can guess from the story that Montagu
  - A. wanted a sandwich because it would be fast and easy to eat.
  - B. ate the first sandwich with a fork and knife.
  - C. was allergic to peanut butter.
  - D. ordered everyone in his town to eat sandwiches.
3. Which of these is a *fact*?
  - A. Cheese sandwiches are delicious.
  - B. Sandwich is a place in England.
  - C. John Montagu was very lazy.
  - D. Sandwiches make a great lunch.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

EDUCATION TESTS

**D.** You may have heard of the Underground Railroad. But did you know that it was not a real railroad at all? It was a way for slaves to get to freedom.

Before 1860, millions of black Americans were forced to work as slaves in the Southern part of our country. Many of them tried to run away. They wanted to get to the North, where slavery was against the law.

Running away was hard. The slaves had to travel a long distance to reach the North. They faced wild animals and bad weather. Many slave owners tried to find the runaway slaves and bring them back.

But many other people helped slaves get to freedom. They let the slaves hide in their attics and gave them food. They showed the slaves how to get to the next safe place. This journey to freedom was called the Underground Railroad.

1. This story is mostly about
  - A. how slavery started in our country.
  - B. how slaves ran away to freedom.
  - C. how railroads work.
  - D. interesting things to see in this country.
2. Slaves traveled to the North because
  - A. that's where their owners lived.
  - B. their train did not stop in the South.
  - C. they didn't like the weather in the South.
  - D. slavery was against the law in the North.
3. This story would probably go on to talk about
  - A. how to get from Chicago to Atlanta.
  - B. slavery in other parts of the world.
  - C. different types of railroad workers.
  - D. what slaves did when they got to the North.

**E.** Buzz...buzz. A pesky mosquito lands on your arm. Later, you notice an itchy bite mark at that spot. What happened?

To get food, most mosquitoes suck juices from plants. But some female mosquitoes also like to suck blood from humans. First, the mosquito pokes a hole in your skin and finds blood. Your blood is too thick for the mosquito to drink, so she squirts some saliva, or spit, into the hole. The saliva makes your blood thinner so the mosquito can drink it.

The **trouble** is that most people are allergic to mosquito saliva. Your body treats the saliva like a germ. Your body sends germ-fighting chemicals to the bite. These chemicals are called *antibodies*. As the antibodies go to work, an itchy bump forms. The bump goes away in a few days.

1. Most mosquitoes suck
  - A. worms.
  - B. blood.
  - C. plant juices.
  - D. saliva.
2. You can guess from the story that male mosquitoes
  - A. do not have saliva.
  - B. do not suck human blood.
  - C. do not suck plant juices.
  - D. are allergic to humans.
3. The author probably wrote this story to
  - A. explain mosquito bites.
  - B. explain allergies.
  - C. entertain his or her friends.
  - D. persuade people to protect mosquitoes.
4. In the story, the word **trouble** means
  - A. itch.
  - B. problem.
  - C. story.
  - D. insect.

SCOLASTIC NEWS

Name \_\_\_\_\_

# VOCABULARY

## Synonyms

Read the underlined word in each phrase. Mark the word below it that means the same or nearly the same.

### Sample:

S-1. a long battle

- A. fight
- B. wish
- C. day
- D. pain

1. a silent classroom

- A. cool
- B. new
- C. quiet
- D. large

2. finish the job

- A. prove
- B. help
- C. complete
- D. start

3. take a peek

- A. look
- B. break
- C. note
- D. top

4. a terrible day

- A. very hot
- B. very nice
- C. very bad
- D. very good

5. she paused at the door

- A. slammed
- B. curled
- C. ran
- D. stopped

6. he captured the treasure

- A. saw
- B. opened
- C. took
- D. locked

7. an early performance

- A. show
- B. dinner
- C. morning
- D. winter

8. he collapsed in the yard

- A. rested
- B. fell
- C. worked
- D. sat

## Which Meaning?

Some words have more than one meaning. Read each pair of sentences, then choose a word to fill in the blanks. Mark the one word that makes sense in both sentences.

### Sample:

S-1. I broke my \_\_\_\_\_ foot yesterday.

I \_\_\_\_\_ my umbrella outside.

- A. used
- B. poor
- C. right
- D. left

1. The villagers \_\_\_\_\_ wheat to make flour.

Hillary dropped her candy on the \_\_\_\_\_.

- A. bus
- B. mashed
- C. ground
- D. floor

2. My cousin is a famous movie \_\_\_\_\_.

Kevin saw a \_\_\_\_\_ twinkling in the sky.

- A. maker
- B. star
- C. screen
- D. light

3. I was standing in the \_\_\_\_\_ of the room.

My dad works at a \_\_\_\_\_ for scientific research.

- A. building
- B. center
- C. place
- D. middle

4. The second question was too hard, so

I \_\_\_\_\_ it.

The children \_\_\_\_\_ down the street.

- A. skipped
- B. missed
- C. ran
- D. erased

5. I don't think that law is very \_\_\_\_\_.

There will be rides and cotton candy at the \_\_\_\_\_.

- A. park
- B. good
- C. fair
- D. old

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

# SCHOLASTIC NEWS

EDITION 3

## Study-Skills Builder 4

### Put the Sentences in Order

The stories below are all mixed-up. Can you put the sentences in the correct order?  
For each story, write the numbers 1 through 8 in the blanks to show the correct order.

#### The White House

- \_\_\_\_\_ Now we can't imagine calling the President's home anything else.
- \_\_\_\_\_ The President's home was not always called the White House.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Workers painted the burned walls white.
- \_\_\_\_\_ When it was first built, it was called the President's Mansion.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Then, in the early 1800s, the mansion had a fire.
- \_\_\_\_\_ In 1902, Congress made that the building's official name.
- \_\_\_\_\_ People began calling the building the White House.
- \_\_\_\_\_ The fire made the walls look black.

#### Kate's New Bike

- \_\_\_\_\_ At the park, she showed everyone her shiny new bike.
- \_\_\_\_\_ She lathered it up and rinsed it off.
- \_\_\_\_\_ She strapped on her helmet and pedaled toward the park.
- \_\_\_\_\_ On her way home, Kate rode through a large mud puddle.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Now it looked brand new again!
- \_\_\_\_\_ When Kate got home, she decided to wash her bike.
- \_\_\_\_\_ One day, Kate decided to go for a ride on her new bicycle.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Mud splattered all over her bike!

SCHOLASTIC NEWS

### TEST 1 READING SKILLS CHART

SKILL	STORY (LETTERED)/QUESTION (NUMBERED)				
	A	B	C	D	E
Finding the Main Idea	1	1	1		1
Reading for Detail	3				2
Understanding Vocabulary	2			1	3
Making Inferences	4	4		3	
Sequencing			2	2	
Understanding Cause/Effect		2			
Predicting Outcomes		3			
Knowing Author's Purpose			3		
Understanding Fact/Opinion				4	4

\*Some questions review several skills. We have identified the dominant skill.

### TEST 1 ANSWERS

Sample: 1. A 2. C  
 Story A:  
 1. D 2. B 3. C 4. A  
 Story B:  
 1. B 2. C 3. D  
 Story C:  
 1. C 2. D 3. A  
 Story D:  
 1. B 2. C 3. C 4. C  
 Story E:  
 1. C 2. A 3. C 4. B  
 Synonyms: Sample: S-1. B  
 1. C 2. A 3. B 4. B 5. C 6. D  
 7. C 8. A  
 Antonyms: Sample: S-1. C  
 1. D 2. A 3. C 4. B 5. D 6. C  
 7. B 8. B

### TEST 2 READING SKILLS CHART

SKILL	STORY (LETTERED)/QUESTION (NUMBERED)				
	A	B	C	D	E
Finding the Main Idea	3	1	1		
Reading for Detail	2	2			1
Understanding Vocabulary	1	3	2		
Making Inferences	4		3		2
Sequencing		4		1	
Understanding Cause/Effect					3
Predicting Outcomes				2	
Knowing Author's Purpose				3	
Understanding Fact/Opinion	5				

\*Some questions review several skills. We have identified the dominant skill.

### TEST 2 ANSWERS

Sample:  
 S-1. B S-2. A  
 Story A:  
 1. C 2. D 3. B 4. C 5. B  
 Story B:  
 1. A 2. B 3. D 4. B  
 Story C:  
 1. D 2. C 3. C  
 Story D:  
 1. C 2. B 3. A  
 Story E:  
 1. B 2. D 3. C  
 Which Word is Missing?:  
 Sample: S-1. D S-2. C  
 1. C 2. A 3. D 4. B 5. B 6. A

### TEST 3 READING SKILLS CHART

SKILL	STORY (LETTERED)/QUESTION (NUMBERED)				
	A	B	C	D	E
Finding the Main Idea	1			1	
Reading for Detail	2		1		1
Understanding Vocabulary	3	1			4
Making Inferences		2			2
Sequencing	4		2		
Understanding Cause/Effect				2	
Predicting Outcomes			3	3	
Knowing Author's Purpose					3
Understanding Fact/Opinion		3			

\*Some questions review several skills. We have identified the dominant skill.

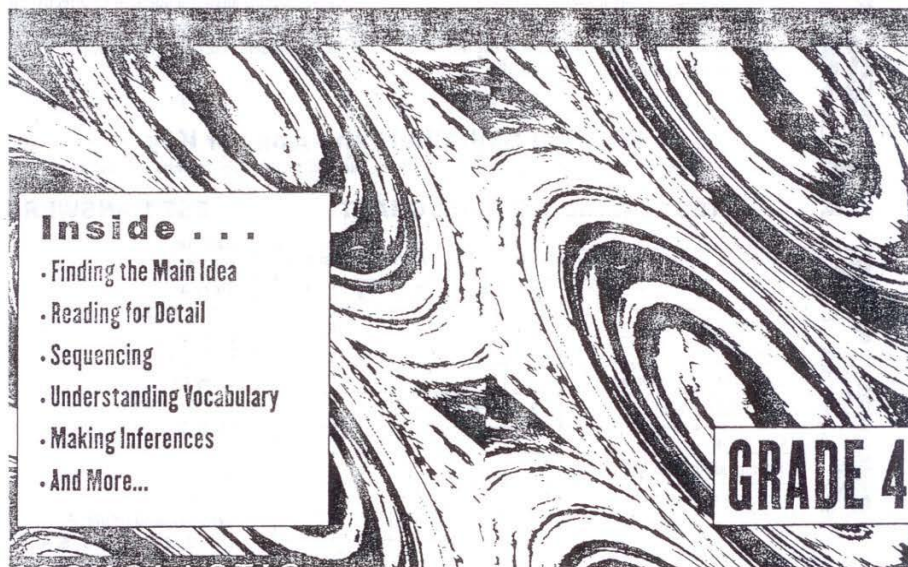
### TEST 3 ANSWERS

Sample:  
 S-1. C S-2. B  
 Story A:  
 1. D 2. A 3. B 4. C  
 Story B:  
 1. C 2. C 3. B 4. D  
 Story C:  
 1. C 2. A 3. B  
 Story D:  
 1. B 2. D 3. D  
 Story E:  
 1. C 2. B 3. A 4. B  
 Synonyms: Sample: S-1. A  
 1. C 2. C 3. A 4. C 5. D 6. C  
 7. A 8. B  
 Which Meaning?: Sample: S-1. D  
 1. C 2. B 3. B 4. A 5. C

\* (40)

# SCHOLASTIC NEWS

## READING TEST TAKING PRACTICE & TEST TAKING TIPS COMPREHENSION



**Inside . . .**

- Finding the Main Idea
- Reading for Detail
- Sequencing
- Understanding Vocabulary
- Making Inferences
- And More...

**GRADE 4**



## HOW TO USE *Scholastic News*' READING SKILLS PRACTICE TEST BOOK

**Take That Test!** is a *Scholastic News* practice test book that provides test-taking experience for your students. On this page, and the back inside cover, you'll find tips on administering the tests, an easy-to-use answer key, and a chart outlining the specific reading skills tested with each question.

Before administering a test, you may wish to do the sample question together and review with students some basic test-taking strategies, such as reading the questions before reading the passages.

### WHY USE THESE TESTS?

Our tests can help you and your class in these ways:

- **Practice.** Your students probably take standardized reading tests. Our practice tests focus on the skills kids will be expected to demonstrate.
- **Diagnostic Tool.** Individual students' scores will help you detect strengths and weaknesses. Use the **Reading Skills Chart** below to pinpoint specific areas where students may need more practice or instruction.
- **Instructional Tool.** You may decide to use the practice test for oral reading and discussion.

Keep in mind that our practice tests are just that—practice. These tests are not standardized. They should not be used to determine grade level, to compare one student's performance with that of others, or to evaluate teachers' abilities.

### HOW TO ADMINISTER THE TESTS:

- Establish a relaxed atmosphere. Explain to students that they will not be graded and that they are taking the test to practice for "real" tests down the road.
- Review the directions. Then read the samples in each section and discuss the answers. Be sure to pay close attention to the directions in the vocabulary sections.
- To mimic the atmosphere of a real test, you may wish to set time limits. Students should be able to complete the reading comprehension sections in 20 minutes. Allow an additional 10 minutes for the vocabulary portions of the test.
- Use the answer key provided here to check students' work. If students answer a question incorrectly, the **Reading Skills Chart** can help you pinpoint the skills that students may need to practice.

### Reading Skill Chart and Answer Key

Please see inside back cover for Reading Skill Chart and Answer Key for tests 2, 3, and 4

#### TEST 1 READING SKILL CHART

SKILL	STORY (LETTERED)/QUESTION (NUMBERED)				
	A	B	C	D	E
Finding the Main Idea	1				2
Reading for Detail	3	1			
Understanding Vocabulary			3		
Making Inferences	2	2	4		
Sequencing		3	1		
Understanding Cause/Effect				1	
Predicting Outcomes				3	
Knowing Author's Purpose			2		
Understanding Fact/Opinion				2	3

\*Some questions review several skills. We have identified the dominant skill.

#### TEST 1 ANSWERS

Sample:

1. B 2. D

Story A:

1. A 2. C 3. A

Story B:

1. C 2. A 3. C

Story C:

1. D 2. A 3. C

Story D:

1. C 2. B 3. A

Story E:

1. C 2. D 3. B

Synonyms: Sample: A

1. D 2. B 3. C 4. B 5. A

Antonyms: Sample: D

1. B 2. A 3. B 4. D 5. B



NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

# SCHOLASTIC NEWS

## Take That TEST!

EDITION 4

Test 1

READING COMPREHENSION Read each story. Then fill in the circle that best completes each sentence or answers each question.

**SAMPLE**

Do you think you own the world's tiniest dog? *The Guinness Book of World Records* is the place to check! For 40 years, the *Guinness Book* has been resolving arguments about the biggest, the smallest, the fastest, and the strangest things in the world. Want to find out who blew the biggest bubble-gum bubble? Now you know where to look.

1. In this passage, the word resolving means  
 A. starting.  
 B. settling.  
 C. causing.  
 D. recording.
2. What is the best title for this passage?  
 A. "The World's Smallest Dog"  
 B. "Arguing for 40 Years"  
 C. "How to Blow a Giant Bubble"  
 D. "The Book With All the Records",

A. One winter day, a young girl named Jenny was walking her dog named Hero. Jenny took Hero's tennis ball and threw it. "Rats!" she thought as the ball rolled onto the frozen pond. Hero ran out after it in a flash. "Hero!" Jenny screamed, running after her dog.

After about three large steps, the ice cracked under Jenny's feet and she fell into the pond. Hero ran to Jenny, but he fell in the water too. Jenny kept slipping as she tried to climb out. Meanwhile, Hero lifted his body up and slammed it down on the ice like a hammer until he made a path to the shore. That day Hero was a real hero.

1. What is the best title for this story?  
 A. "Hero Saves the Day"  
 B. "Recognizing Thin Ice"  
 C. "Favorite Pets"  
 D. "They Used to Play Fetch"
2. What can you guess from this story?  
 A. Hero hates the water.  
 B. Jenny can't swim.  
 C. Hero is a smart dog.  
 D. Jenny plays Little League baseball.
3. Why did Jenny go out on the ice?  
 A. to save Hero  
 B. to slide around on it  
 C. to see how strong it was  
 D. to play with Hero

TAKE THAT TEST! 1

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NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

**B.** It happened in 1947. For the first time, an African-American was stepping onto the field to play in a major-league baseball game. Jackie Robinson was playing for the Brooklyn Dodgers, the only team with enough courage to let this great athlete play. That day, baseball's color barrier was broken forever.

Despite the racism he met both on and off the field, Jackie was named Rookie of the Year and led the league in stolen bases. Two years later, he won the National League's Most Valuable Player (MVP) award. Robinson made it to the Baseball Hall of Fame in 1962.

Jackie changed baseball, but he also changed the way people thought. Civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. said, "Without Jackie Robinson, I could never have done what I did."

1. In 1947, Jackie Robinson
  - A. made the Baseball Hall of Fame.
  - B. was honored by Martin Luther King.
  - C. became the first African-American to play in the major leagues.
  - D. won the MVP award.
2. You can guess from this story that Robinson is most famous for
  - A. breaking baseball's color barrier.
  - B. leading the league in stolen bases.
  - C. playing for the Brooklyn Dodgers.
  - D. being named Rookie of the Year.
3. When did Robinson win the MVP award?
  - A. the year he joined the Dodgers
  - B. the year after he joined the Dodgers
  - C. two years after he joined the Dodgers
  - D. the year he made it to the Baseball Hall of Fame

**C.** Almost everyone likes bread. But not everyone knows how easy it is to make it. All you need are yeast, flour, and water.

First, mix a package of yeast with two cups of warm water. Let the mixture stand until bubbles form. Then start adding four cups of flour, a half a cup at a time. When the dough gets too thick to stir, scrape it onto a floured board and knead it. To knead, turn the dough in a circle and fold and punch it. Knead it for ten minutes as you add one more cup of flour. The dough is ready when it feels soft and smooth, not sticky.

After kneading, put the dough in a buttered bowl and cover it with a dish towel. Leave it there for an hour or more to rise. It should double in size. Then, knead it for another minute or so, and shape it into a loaf. Let it rise again for 45 minutes. Pop it in the oven to bake for 45 minutes in a 375-degree oven. When it's done, let it cool for ten minutes before slicing.

1. After the dough has doubled in size, you
  - A. knead it for ten minutes.
  - B. mix the yeast with two cups of water.
  - C. add flour a half a cup at a time.
  - D. knead it and shape it into a loaf.
2. The purpose of this article is to
  - A. teach you how to make bread.
  - B. tell you a funny cooking story.
  - C. persuade you to cook more.
  - D. make you like bread.
3. From this article, you can conclude that
  - A. bread requires many ingredients.
  - B. the author doesn't like bread.
  - C. making bread takes at least three hours.
  - D. dough is difficult to knead.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

D. Put away those surfboards! Even the best surfer wouldn't want to ride a tsunami. The name tsunami comes from the Japanese language. It's the scientific term for a seismic sea wave, a giant wave caused by an undersea earthquake.

Scientists believe tsunamis occur when an earthquake lifts or tilts the ocean floor. The quake creates very long waves that speed across the sea. Tsunamis travel at up to 500 miles an hour. The waves grow in height as they reach the shore. Some monster-sized tsunamis can tower 60 feet or more above the ocean's surface.

Tsunamis are sometimes called tidal waves, but that name is misleading. High and low tides never cause tsunamis, only earthquakes or volcanic eruptions do. But by any name, tsunamis can be very dangerous. Hawaii has been hit by over 40 tsunamis!

E. At 7:52 a.m. on May 20, 1927, Charles Lindbergh sat in the cockpit of his plane, the *Spirit of St. Louis*. The 25-year-old American was trying to fly nonstop across the Atlantic Ocean, from New York to Paris. The distance was 3,600 miles. No one had ever done this. If he made it, air travel would never be the same.

After taking off, Lindbergh had to find his way to Paris without the radar, radios, and computer equipment planes use today. Instead, he had a compass, maps, and the stars to help him find his way. Getting lost would be dangerous. He could easily run out of fuel before reaching land.

Finally, over 33 hours after he began his trip, Lindbergh landed in Paris. As he did, 25,000 people cheered. Lindbergh became an instant hero with a new nickname: the Lone Eagle.

1. What can cause a tsunami?  
 A. high and low tides  
 B. seismic sea waves  
 C. undersea earthquakes  
 D. scientific experiments
2. Which of these is an opinion?  
 A. Hawaii has been hit by over 40 tsunamis.  
 B. The best surfer wouldn't want to ride a tsunami.  
 C. Tsunamis grow in height as they reach the shore.  
 D. Tsunamis travel at up to 500 miles per hour.
3. This article would probably go on to talk about  
 A. destruction caused by tsunamis.  
 B. destruction caused by earthquakes.  
 C. surfers who like to ride tsunamis.  
 D. what causes high and low tides.

1. How was Lindbergh's plane different from planes today?  
 A. It didn't have a name.  
 B. It had to take off and land on water.  
 C. It didn't have computer equipment.  
 D. It needed two people to fly it.
2. What is the best title for this story?  
 A. "The Next Plane to Paris"  
 B. "Pilots and Their Planes"  
 C. "A Trip Across the Atlantic"  
 D. "Lindbergh's Famous Flight"
3. Which of these is an opinion?  
 A. Lindbergh's plane was named the *Spirit of St. Louis*.  
 B. Lindbergh was the greatest pilot ever.  
 C. Lindbergh's trip took over 33 hours.  
 D. When he landed in Paris, 25,000 people cheered.

TAKE THAT TEST! 3

43

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

## VOCABULARY

### Synonyms

Choose the answer that means the same, or nearly the same, as the underlined word in each phrase.

### Sample

abandon the ship

- A. leave                       C. board  
 B. sail                         D. hide

1. narrow corridor

- A. road                         C. door  
 B. minded                     D. hallway

2. riding solo

- A. quickly                     C. carefully  
 B. alone                         D. fast

3. unique flavor

- A. sweet                         C. one-of-a-kind  
 B. first-rate                     D. ordinary

4. soothe the pain

- A. ignore                       C. feel  
 B. relieve                       D. worsen

5. unravel the mystery

- A. solve                         C. forget  
 B. enjoy                         D. notice

### Antonyms

Choose the answer that means the opposite, or nearly the opposite, of the underlined word in each phrase.

### Sample

gush out of the tap

- A. spill                         C. topple  
 B. trickle                       D. flow

1. confident character

- A. funny                         C. smug  
 B. unsure                        D. pesky

2. gritty texture

- A. smooth                       C. tasty  
 B. stubby                       D. bumpy

3. expand your horizons

- A. visit                         C. color  
 B. shrink                       D. widen

4. an agreement between friends

- A. apology                     C. contract  
 B. formula                     D. dispute

5. coastal highway

- A. interstate                    C. frontier  
 B. inland                        D. circular

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

# SCHOLASTIC NEWS

## Take That TEST!

EDITION 4  
Test 2

READING COMPREHENSION Read each story. Then fill in the circle that best completes each sentence or answers each question.

**SAMPLE**

More hurricanes happen in September than in any other month. Why? In the late summer and early fall, ocean water is warm after a summer in the sun. The warm, moist air rises off the surface of the ocean and forms thunderstorms. The thunderstorms can spin into powerful hurricanes.

1. What is the best title for this story?  
 A. "Why Hurricanes Are So Powerful"  
 B. "Why Hurricanes Often Happen in September"  
 C. "Why the Ocean is Warm in September"  
 D. "Why Late Summer and Early Fall Are Great Seasons"
2. In this story, the word **moist** means  
 A. makes.  C. stops.  
 B. wet.  D. hides.

A. Kids at Dupuy Elementary School in Birmingham, Alabama, study more than reading, writing, and math. They also take classes in manners! They practice when to say "please" and "thank you" and learn the polite way to pass food at the lunch table.

They also learn to eat with a fork, not fingers; to say "hello" and not "yo" when they answer the phone; to shake hands when meeting someone—especially a grown-up; not to interrupt when others are speaking; and to say "excuse me" instead of pushing.

1. This story is mostly about  
 A. how to pass food at the lunch table.  
 B. a school's classes in manners.  
 C. why Alabama students are so polite.  
 D. how one school teaches reading, writing, and math.
2. At Dupuy Elementary School, kids learn the polite way to  
 A. study math.  
 B. interrupt when others are speaking.  
 C. pass food at the lunch table.  
 D. pass food on the school bus.
3. Which of the following statements is an opinion?  
 A. More schools should teach classes in manners.  
 B. Dupuy Elementary School teaches classes in manners.  
 C. Many schools don't teach classes in manners.  
 D. Dupuy's classes teach kids to shake hands when meeting someone.

TAKE THAT TEST! 1

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NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

**B.** When people think about wildlife, they often think about fields and forests. But many wild animals live in cities. One creature often found in city skies is the peregrine falcon.

In the wilderness, peregrine falcons make their homes on steep, rocky cliffs. In cities, these birds nest on skyscrapers. Peregrine falcons like to be high in the sky so they can spot their favorite food—pigeons. Then the falcons swoop down and snatch their **prey** right out of the sky!

So if you live in a city and you see something whiz by faster than 200 miles per hour, it may not be a jet plane. It may be a peregrine falcon—the fastest flying animal alive!

- In this story, the word **prey** means an animal that
  - A. can fly.
  - B. is hunted.
  - C. has wings.
  - D. lives in cities.
- A peregrine falcon can fly faster than
  - A. 2,000 miles per hour.
  - B. a jet plane.
  - C. a few other flying animals.
  - D. 200 miles per hour.
- From this story, you can guess that
  - A. peregrine falcons eat nothing but pigeons.
  - B. peregrine falcons build huge nests.
  - C. peregrine falcons live both in cities and in the wilderness.
  - D. peregrine falcons live only in cities.

**C.** If you're a kid under 18, and you live in New Orleans, Louisiana, you can't be out on the street on a school night after 8 p.m. If you are under 16 and you want to visit the country's largest mall—the Mall of America in Bloomington, Minnesota—on a Friday or Saturday night, you have to be with your mom or dad, or another grown-up.

Rules like these are called curfews. They prevent people from traveling freely, usually after dark. In many places, curfews are a cause of debate. Many people think curfews are a good way to **reduce** crimes committed by young people. They say curfews make communities safer. But other people say curfews are unfair because they punish all kids for the behavior of a few troublemakers.

- In this story, the word **reduce** means
  - A. make more.
  - B. stop totally.
  - C. make fewer.
  - D. spread.
- In New Orleans, kids under 18 can't be out on the streets after 8 p.m.
  - A. on any night.
  - B. on school nights.
  - C. on Fridays and Saturdays.
  - D. near the mall.
- The story tells
  - A. why the Mall of America is a safe place to visit.
  - B. why most people want curfews in their communities.
  - C. why most people think curfews are unfair.
  - D. why people disagree about curfews.
- Which of these is a fact about curfews?
  - A. They are unfair to kids.
  - B. They prevent people from traveling freely.
  - C. They always make communities safer.
  - D. The City of New Orleans is lucky to have one.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

D. If you saw Stan Herd at work, you'd probably think that he looked like an ordinary farmer. And most of the **materials** he works with—like seeds, soil, and a tractor—are just ordinary farm items. But in one very big way, Stan has little in common with other farmers. Stan Herd doesn't just plant crops, he's a crop artist! Stan plants and shapes crops into pictures so huge you need to view them from an airplane.

Many of Stan's pictures are modeled after famous works of art. For example, he once planted 20 acres of crops in the shape of Vincent van Gogh's painting "Sunflowers." Naturally, Stan used real sunflowers.

Stan does most of his work on his farm in Kansas. But recently, he traveled to New York City to plant a landscape along the East River. No need for an airplane in the city—you can see Stan's work from nearby skyscrapers!

E. One day the sun and the wind had an argument. The wind claimed that he was stronger than the sun. "Wrong," replied the sun. "I am stronger than you."

As they were disputing, a woman came down the road, wearing a heavy woolen coat.

"Here's how we can decide who is stronger," shouted the wind. "See that woman? Let's see which of us can remove her coat."

"Good idea," the sun replied. "You go first." So the wind started to blow. He blew and blew, as hard as he could. Trees swayed almost to the ground, but the woman only wrapped her coat more tightly around her.

Now the sun began to shine. She shone down on the woman, until the woman grew warm and unbuttoned her coat. The sun kept on shining. Soon, the woman removed her coat.

"Alas, you win," said the wind to the sun. "Your gentleness has succeeded where my rudeness failed."

1. What is the main idea of this story?  
 A. Stan Herd is a better artist than Vincent van Gogh.  
 B. Stan Herd uses some very strange materials on his farm.  
 C. Stan Herd's art is so big, you must view it from an airplane.  
 D. Stan Herd is not just a farmer, he's a crop artist.
2. In this story, the word **materials** means  
 A. tools.       C. fabrics.  
 B. crops.       D. tractor.
3. In this story, where did Stan Herd plant a landscape?  
 A. along the East River in Kansas  
 B. on top of a skyscraper in New York City  
 C. along the East River in New York City  
 D. near the Kansas River

1. This story is mainly about  
 A. solar power.  
 B. how the wind beat the sun in a contest.  
 C. how the wind learned a lesson from the sun.  
 D. why we don't wear coats when it's warm out.
2. The woman removed her coat because  
 A. the wind was blowing it off.  
 B. she became too warm in the sun.  
 C. she wanted the wind to lose.  
 D. she didn't like the coat.
3. This story teaches that  
 A. you shouldn't wear a coat in warm weather.  
 B. the wind shouldn't blow so hard.  
 C. bullies often get their way.  
 D. kindness may get you further than rudeness.

TAKE THAT TEST! 3

45

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

Edition 4/ Test 2

### VOCABULARY

#### Synonyms

Read the bold word in each phrase. Mark the word below it that means the same or nearly the same.

#### Sample:

annoy your brother

- A. help                       C. sister  
 B. bother                     D. please

#### 1. summer drought

- A. dry spell                 C. winter  
 B. rainy season             D. sunshine

#### 2. brief lesson

- A. long                       C. teacher  
 B. tennis                     D. short

#### 3. strong ability

- A. smell                     C. skill  
 B. muscle                    D. weakness

#### 4. hastily finished

- A. quickly                 C. purple  
 B. completed             D. slowly

#### 5. soar through the sky

- A. run                       C. float  
 B. fly                         D. cloud

#### Antonyms

Read the bold word in each phrase. Mark the word below it that means the opposite or nearly the opposite.

#### Sample:

grandmother's kindness

- A. age                       C. meanness  
 B. grandchild             D. happiness

#### 1. fortunate event

- A. unlucky                 C. happening  
 B. lucky                     D. exciting

#### 2. student's failure

- A. books                    C. problem  
 B. teacher                 D. success

#### 3. friendly youngster

- A. adult                     C. puppy  
 B. child                     D. rude

#### 4. amuse the child

- A. bore                     C. watch  
 B. scare                     D. entertain

#### 5. fled the disaster

- A. ran to                    C. ran from  
 B. caused                 D. tragedy



NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

# SCHOLASTIC NEWS

## Take That TEST!

EDITION 4  
Test 3

READING COMPREHENSION Read each story. Then fill in the circle that best completes each sentence or answers each question.

**SAMPLE**

Being bitten by a bedbug stinks in more ways than one. It hurts and the bug gives off a bad odor. These critters, each about the size of a grain of rice, nourish themselves on human blood. Their odor prevents other bugs from feasting on bedbugs!

1. What is the best title for this story?  
 A. "Why Bedbugs Live in Beds"  
 B. "How Bedbugs Live"  
 C. "Bugs That Eat Rice"  
 D. "Bugs That Smell Bad"
2. In this story, the word nourish means  
 A. feed.  
 B. clean.  
 C. hungry.  
 D. stink.

A. A club called the Graffiti Grapplers won't stand for a mess—especially not in their hometown of San Antonio, Texas. The group of teachers and kids paint over graffiti and sweep up litter in their community.

Since the club was founded in 1993, the Grapplers have won many awards. One year, they won \$32,500! The club members use the money they receive for projects such as planting trees and flowers around San Antonio.

"These kids have good hearts," Grappler and teacher Linda Pruski said. "They are seeing the positive effect they can have on the community."

1. What is the best title for this story?  
 A. "The History of San Antonio"  
 B. "A Club for Kids Who Care"  
 C. "The Growing Problem of Graffiti"  
 D. "How to Win Big Money"
2. Which of the following is an opinion about the Graffiti Grapplers?  
 A. Its members are teachers and kids.  
 B. It is based in San Antonio, Texas.  
 C. It is one of the best clubs in San Antonio.  
 D. Its members clean up litter and graffiti.

TAKE THAT TEST! 1

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NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

B. Once upon a time, most people thought the world was flat. Eventually, new discoveries proved them wrong. Scientists have always thought that all planets moved in nearly circular orbits. Now, they believe that idea may be wrong, too.

Why? Just a few years ago, astronomers discovered a planet outside of our solar system that moves around its sun in a very flattened, egg-shaped or oblong path.

The newly discovered planet is 17 times larger than Earth. It was spotted in a constellation called Cygnus, located 600 trillion miles, or about 70 light-years, from Earth. Now scientists are researching to find out what makes this planet move in such a wacky way.

- The purpose of this article is to
  - A. explain why Earth may be flat after all.
  - B. show that new discoveries can lead to new ideas.
  - C. show that scientists are always right.
  - D. discuss how humans could visit Cygnus.
- In this story, the word oblong means
  - A. orbit.
  - B. egg-shaped.
  - C. shaped like a circle.
  - D. discovery
- The newly discovered planet was spotted
  - A. in our solar system.
  - B. near the sun.
  - C. moving around Earth.
  - D. in the constellation Cygnus.

C. Animals can't speak in words, but they have many other ways to "talk" to each other. Here's a look at how several different creatures communicate in the wild.

- Giant otters speak in a unique language of whistles, whines, squeals, and snorts. Each sound means a different thing. For instance, one type of snort warns other otters of danger, such as a nearby human hunter.

- Red howler monkeys communicate by howling. Their howls can be heard up to three miles away. In fact, these monkeys are the world's noisiest land animals.

- Wolves curl their lips above their teeth and snarl at other wolves to show who's in charge, and to warn other wolves to back off. Wolves will also howl to signal danger.

- The elephant seal uses its amazing inflatable nose and its nostrils as a giant microphone.

- This article is mainly about
  - A. why red howler monkeys are so loud.
  - B. animals that use their noses to communicate.
  - C. ways different animals communicate.
  - D. how giant otters stay safe from hunters.
- According to the article, elephant seals communicate by
  - A. inflating their noses.
  - B. whistling.
  - C. snarling.
  - D. wagging their tails.
- The story would probably go on to talk about
  - A. what red howler monkeys eat.
  - B. how other animals communicate.
  - C. where giant otters live.
  - D. how wolves talk to giant otters.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

EDITION 4 / TEST 3

D. Once there was a rabbit who could run very swiftly. He enjoyed boasting to all the other animals in town about his great speed.

A frog became annoyed by Rabbit's bragging. Frog was so annoyed that he challenged Rabbit to a race. The two would race through tall swamp grass, down to the town pond. Laughing, Rabbit agreed.

On the day of the race, Frog deceived Rabbit. Several of his frog friends were hidden in the swamp grass, each about one good-sized leap apart.

Rabbit ran as fast as he could through the grass, but no matter how fast he ran, Frog was always a jump ahead of him.

By the time he got to the pond, Rabbit was running too fast to stop. He fell right into the pond, just as Frog leaped up from behind a rock and shouted, "I am the fastest!"

This story tells

- A. why rabbits are faster than frogs.
  - B. how far frogs can leap.
  - C. why frogs are faster than rabbits.
  - D. how a frog tricked a rabbit.
2. The frog beat the rabbit by
- A. running really fast through the swamp grass.
  - B. leaping out from behind a rock.
  - C. hiding several frogs in the swamp grass.
  - D. swimming across the town pond.
3. In this story, the word **deceived** means
- A. tricked.
  - B. boasted.
  - C. swamp grass.
  - D. outran.

E. Ghosts and ghouls have raised more than \$100 million to help poor children around the world. How? By trick-or-treating!

They were trick-or-treating for UNICEF. UNICEF is the United Nation's Children's Fund.

Founded in 1946, UNICEF has helped children in more than 140 poor or war-torn countries get food, shelter, and medicine. Every year it adopts a new slogan, such as "Increase the Peace!"

A group of kids from Philadelphia founded the trick-or-treat for UNICEF program in 1950. They raised \$17. Ever since, kids dressed in their Halloween best have followed suit—and, as the program has grown, the amount of money kids raise has grown far beyond \$17 annually. In fact, in a recent year, kids helped raise \$2.1 million. This year, they could raise even more!

1. What is the main idea of this story?
- A. Halloween is one of kids' favorite holidays.
  - B. Trick-or-treat for UNICEF is a successful program to raise money for poor children.
  - C. Trick-or-treat for UNICEF was founded in 1950.
  - D. Trick-or-treat for UNICEF is no longer a popular program.
2. From this article, you could guess that
- A. large numbers of children participate in trick-or-treat for UNICEF.
  - B. kids from Philadelphia are nicer than most other kids.
  - C. the trick-or-treat for UNICEF program made more money in the 1950s than it does now.
  - D. kids get more candy when they trick-or-treat for UNICEF.

TAKE THAT TEST! 3

47

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

Unit 4 Test 2

### VOCABULARY

#### Synonyms

Choose the answer that means the same, or nearly the same, as the underlined word in each phrase.

#### Sample:

argue loudly

- A. agree                       C. toaster  
 B. fight                         D. shout

1. current event

- A. funny                         C. recent  
 B. article                         D. old

2. sharp fang

- A. tooth                         C. mouth  
 B. knife                          D. eat

3. solid foundation

- A. rock                          C. breeze  
 B. base                          D. ice

4. eerie sound

- A. loud                          C. monster  
 B. spooky                       D. whisper

5. stroll downtown

- A. appear                       C. store  
 B. drive                          D. walk

#### Antonyms

Choose the answer that means the opposite, or nearly the opposite, of the underlined word in each phrase.

#### Sample:

latch the door

- A. unlock                       C. lock  
 B. slam                          D. knob

1. sturdy table

- A. strong                         C. fragile  
 B. dining                         D. chair

2. descend the staircase

- A. go down                     C. hide  
 B. sweep                        D. climb up

3. nasty person

- A. pleasant                    C. wise  
 B. mean                         D. human

4. widen the path

- A. enlarge                     C. hike  
 B. trail                          D. narrow

5. hero's bravery

- A. courage                     C. wealth  
 B. fear                          D. win

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

# SCHOLASTIC NEWS

## Take That TEST!

EDITION 4  
Test 4

READING COMPREHENSION Read each story. Then fill in the circle that best completes each sentence or answers each question.

**SAMPLE**

Since 1870, the National Weather Service has been trying to do a very difficult job—predict the weather. Today, this government agency gives out a weather forecast four times a day. To make its forecasts, the Weather Service uses information collected from land stations, ships, and weather radars.

1. In this article the word forecast means  
 A. warning.  
 B. prediction.  
 C. sample.  
 D. hurricane.
2. What is the best title for this story?  
 A. "Weather Forecasting in 1870"  
 B. "You Can't Predict the Weather"  
 C. "The National Weather Service"  
 D. "Land Stations, Ships, and Weather Radars"

A. Peer mediation helps cut down on playground fighting and school suspensions. With peer mediation, kids in grades 4 to 12 are trained to settle arguments before they turn into fights. When a disagreement breaks out, two mediators step in. They listen to both sides and ask students how they want to see the problem resolved. If both kids agree to the terms, the mediators draw up a contract for each to sign. As long as they stick to the agreement, everyone wins!

Peer-mediation programs also boost the mediators' self-esteem. As one mediator said, "I learned I could help people."

1. In this story the word mediation means  
 A. resolving conflicts.  
 B. writing contracts.  
 C. using violence to end arguments.  
 D. ignoring conflicts.
2. This story is mostly about  
 A. playground fights.  
 B. new playground games.  
 C. ways to boost your self-esteem.  
 D. peer-mediation programs.
3. What do peer mediators do first?  
 A. They draw up a contract.  
 B. They listen to each side.  
 C. They ask a teacher for help.  
 D. They force both kids to agree.

TAKE THAT TEST! 1

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NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

**B.** When people think about the countries of Europe, Andorra rarely comes to mind. That's probably because it's so tiny—just 180 square miles in all. It's located on the border of Spain and France, in a mountain range called the Pyrenees.

Andorra became independent in 1993. That year its 50,000 citizens voted in elections for the very first time. Most Andorrans speak a language called Catalan. Like French and Spanish, Catalan is a Latin-based language.

Visitors come to Andorra to hike or ski in the mountains, and also to shop. Andorra has no sales tax, so bargain hunters stream in from the neighboring countries. They can even use their French francs or Spanish pesetas because Andorra has no currency of its own.

**C.** Recent plane crashes have caused some people to wonder if airports can ever be made safe from terrorist attacks. Security experts say, however, that there are ways to prevent airport terrorism. The suggestions below are all ways to make airports safer.

- Airports should have only one or two vehicle entrances. Concrete walls should be used to guard against car bombs.

- All luggage should be X-rayed at check-in to detect bombs. All passengers should show a photo ID at check-in as well.

- Hand luggage should be passed through high-tech scanners at the entrance to the boarding gates. These scanners can detect metal and plastic explosives.

- At the boarding gates, guards should check passengers' photo IDs again.

- Service workers and maintenance people should not be allowed to wander freely around the airport.

1. What is the best title for this story?
- A. "The World's Tiniest Countries"
  - B. "Andorra, a Mountain Country"
  - C. "The Border of France and Spain"
  - D. "Why You Should Shop in Andorra"
2. From this article, you might guess that
- A. France and Spain probably don't have any sales tax either.
  - B. countries should charge sales tax.
  - C. Andorra will soon have a sales tax.
  - D. both France and Spain probably do have a sales tax.
3. Most Andorrans speak
- A. Catalan.
  - B. Latin.
  - C. French.
  - D. Andorran.

1. The article's main purpose is to
- A. inform you about ways to improve airport security.
  - B. persuade you not to worry about terrorist attacks on airplanes.
  - C. entertain you with airplane jokes.
  - D. apologize for terrorist attacks that have taken place in the past.
2. Some people have become concerned about airport safety because
- A. all luggage is not X-rayed.
  - B. experts say airport safety cannot be improved.
  - C. of recent plane crashes.
  - D. service workers are still allowed to wander around the airport.
3. According to the experts, passengers' photo IDs should be checked again
- A. after they board the plane.
  - B. at the plane boarding gate.
  - C. during check-in.
  - D. before they enter the airport.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

D. "I want to start a garden," Pablo told Mr. Cordiz, the store owner.

"Very good," Mr. Cordiz replied. "Which kinds of plants do you want to grow? They should be suited to the growing conditions in your backyard. Do you get a lot of sun?"

Pablo shook his head, meaning yes.

Mr. Cordiz pointed to some plants with colorful blooms. "Snapdragons, poppies, and pansies are annuals," he said. "They start and finish their life cycles in one growing season. They will die in late fall. Sometimes they reseed themselves, but most likely next spring, you'll have to buy more and plant them again. These annuals like the sun."

Then, he pointed to some other plants in small plastic containers. "These are perennials. They will come back every year if you care for them properly. These hostas are perennials that grow very well in the shade. These peonies are sun-loving perennials. Their flowers are nice."

"I'll start with some perennials, please. I don't see the point of growing something that may not return next year," said Pablo.

1. Unlike perennials, annuals
  - A. must be grown in hanging baskets.
  - B. cannot be grown in the sun.
  - C. need plenty of shade.
  - D. finish their life cycles in a year.
2. You can conclude from this story that Pablo might have purchased
  - A. snapdragons.
  - B. pansies.
  - C. hostas.
  - D. poppies.
3. Which is an opinion?
  - A. Hostas grow well in the shade.
  - B. Hostas are a perennial.
  - C. Peonies grow well with lots of sun.
  - D. Peony flowers are nice.

E. Large numbers of Asian eels are eating up the small fish in ponds near Atlanta, Georgia. Without this important food source, the ponds' bigger fish may starve to death. To make matters worse, this eel problem could spread to other areas.

The Asian eel is native to Southeast Asia and Australia. So how did these invaders get into U.S. ponds? Scientist John Biagi believes pet owners put them there. Baby Asian eels look like colorful little ribbons. As adults, however, they grow to three feet long. Biagi says fish-tank owners who didn't realize they were raising such monsters set the adult eels free.

It may sound kind, but releasing the eels into the wild was the wrong thing to do, says Biagi. "The eels upset the ecosystem and may cause some native species to die out in the ponds."

1. Why may bigger fish starve to death?
  - A. Asian eels are eating all their food.
  - B. Large fish don't make good pets.
  - C. Big fish don't like Asian eels.
  - D. They have outgrown their ponds.
2. Which is an opinion about Asian eels?
  - A. They are eating up small fish.
  - B. They are native to Southeast Asia and Australia.
  - C. They can grow to three feet long.
  - D. They are beautiful as babies.
3. This story would probably go on to talk about
  - A. which fish make the best pets.
  - B. fish that people in Asia like to eat.
  - C. what to feed a pet Asian eel.
  - D. why releasing any kind of pet into the wild is not a good idea.

TAKE THAT TEST! 3

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NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

VOCABULARY

Synonyms

Choose the answer that means the same, or nearly the same, as the underlined word in each phrase.

Sample:

- essential equipment
- A. necessary       C. cheap
- B. expensive       D. sturdy

- 3. became hysterical
- A. emotional       C. tired
- B. calm               D. energetic

- 1. rigid material
- A. stiff               C. natural
- B. red                 D. soft

- 4. a vague idea
- A. bad                 C. new
- B. sketchy           D. great

- 2. elevate the book
- A. read               C. describe
- B. criticize           D. raise

- 5. an outlandish outfit
- A. outgrown         C. silly
- B. handsome         D. common

Antonyms

Choose the answer that means the opposite, or nearly the opposite, of the underlined word in each phrase.

Sample:

- an efficient worker
- A. busy               C. wasteful
- B. hard                D. slow

- 3. the courage to persist
- A. speak             C. act
- B. continue           D. quit

- 1. a defiant attitude
- A. unhappy         C. confused
- B. respectful         D. poor

- 4. renew the friendship
- A. end                 C. enjoy
- B. begin               D. abuse

- 2. an earned privilege
- A. punishment      C. treat
- B. paycheck          D. position

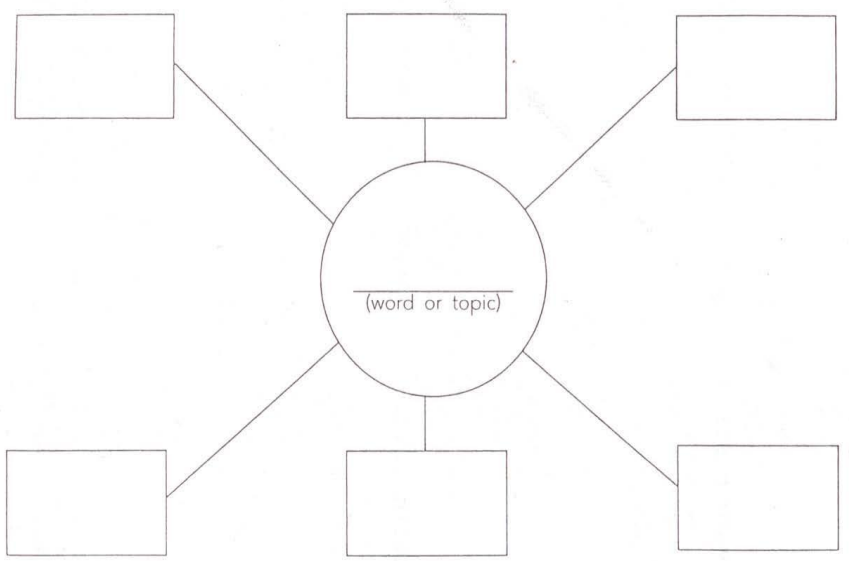
- 5. decline the offer
- A. ignore             C. debate
- B. accept             D. consider



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# Word Web

A web helps you think about a word or a topic. Write a word or topic in the circle. Then write what you know about the word or topic in the boxes.



### TEST 2 READING SKILL CHART

SKILL	STORY (LETTERED)/QUESTION (NUMBERED)				
	A	B	C	D	E
Finding the Main Idea	1			1	1
Reading for Detail	2	2	2	3	
Understanding Vocabulary		1	1	2	
Making Inferences		3			3
Sequencing					
Understanding Cause/Effect					2
Predicting Outcomes					
Knowing Author's Purpose			3		
Understanding Fact/Opinion	3		4		

\*Some questions review several skills. We have identified the dominant skill.

### TEST 3 READING SKILL CHART

SKILL	STORY (LETTERED)/QUESTION (NUMBERED)				
	A	B	C	D	E
Finding the Main Idea	1		1	1	1
Reading for Detail	2	3	2		
Understanding Vocabulary		2		3	
Making Inferences					3
Sequencing					2
Understanding Cause/Effect				2	
Predicting Outcomes			3		
Knowing Author's Purpose		1			
Understanding Fact/Opinion	3		4		

\*Some questions review several skills. We have identified the dominant skill.

### TEST 4 READING SKILL CHART

SKILL	STORY (LETTERED)/QUESTION (NUMBERED)				
	A	B	C	D	E
Finding the Main Idea	2	1			
Reading for Detail		3	3	1	
Understanding Vocabulary	1				
Making Inferences		2		2	
Sequencing	3				
Understanding Cause/Effect			2		1
Predicting Outcomes					3
Knowing Author's Purpose			1		
Understanding Fact/Opinion				3	2

### TEST 2 ANSWERS

Sample:  
1. B 2. B  
Story A:  
1. B 2. C 3. A  
Story B:  
1. B 2. D 3. C  
Story C:  
1. C 2. B 3. D 4. B  
Story D:  
1. D 2. A 3. C  
Story E:  
1. C 2. B 3. D  
Synonyms: Sample: B  
1. A 2. D 3. C 4. A 5. B  
Antonyms: Sample: C  
1. A 2. D 3. A 4. A 5. A

### TEST 3 ANSWERS

Sample:  
1. B 2. A  
Story A:  
1. B 2. C  
Story B:  
1. B 2. B 3. D  
Story C:  
1. C 2. A 3. B  
Story D:  
1. D 2. C 3. A  
Story E:  
1. B 2. A  
Synonyms: Sample: B  
1. C 2. A 3. B 4. B 5. D  
Antonyms: Sample: A  
1. C 2. D 3. A 4. D 5. B

### TEST 4 ANSWERS

Sample:  
1. B 2. C  
Story A:  
1. A 2. D 3. B  
Story B:  
1. B 2. D 3. A  
Story C:  
1. A 2. C 3. B  
Story D:  
1. D 2. C 3. D  
Story E:  
1. A 2. D 3. D  
Synonyms: Sample: A  
1. A 2. D 3. A 4. B 5. C  
Antonyms: Sample: C

## Strategy #2 — PREDICTING WITH AN ANTICIPATION GUIDE

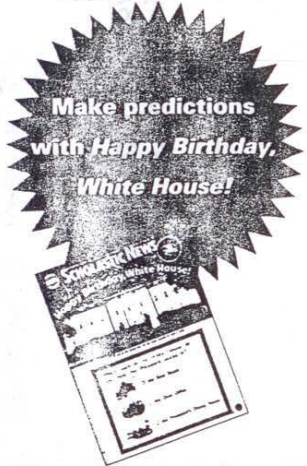
### Purpose

- Fluent readers instinctively make predictions the moment they begin reading a text. As they read, they either confirm or adjust their predictions.
- Anticipation Guides improve comprehension by asking students to make predictions about true and false statements, and then confirm or adjust these predictions.
- Anticipation Guides purposely create tension between students' prior knowledge and conceptions about a topic and what they will learn in the text. Students resolve these differences through discussion and reading.
- Anticipation Guides are especially effective when students are not familiar with a topic.



### Teaching Guidelines

1. Write three statements about the text your class is about to read on the *What Do You Think?* organizer. Make some of the statements true and some false.
2. Prepare an overhead or chart and a copy of the organizer on page 5 for each student. The overhead or chart and student organizer should include your three statements.
3. Pair students and ask partners to share how and why they marked each statement.
4. Prior to reading the text, have students fill out the first part of the organizer—predicting if each statement is true or false.
5. Read the text and then revisit the guide. Have students decide if the statements are true or false based on what they read. Encourage them to find parts of the text that support their choices.



Name: Maria

SCHOLASTIC NEWS  
Read-Along Page

\* Teachers' Note: 7 = 3 statements for your students. See directions on page 4.

### What Do You Think?

Predict if each sentence is true or false. **Circle** your answers **before** you read the story. Then **circle** your answers **after** you have read the story.

This is the title of what I read: Happy Birthday, White House!

Do you think these sentences are True or False?	Circle your answers below.	
	Before Reading	After Reading
1. <u>The White House will be 200 years old in November.</u>	True False	True False
2. <u>There is a roller-skating rink in the White House.</u>	True False	True False
3. <u>A pet raccoon once lived inside the White House.</u>	True False	True False

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

\* Teacher's Note: Fill in 3 statements for your students. See directions on page 4.

## What Do You Think?

Predict if each sentence is true or false. **Circle** your answers before you read the story. Then **circle** your answers after you have read the story.

This is the title of what I read: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you think these sentences are <b>True</b> or <b>False</b> ?	<b>Circle</b> your answers below.			
	Before Reading		After Reading	
1. _____ _____	True	False	True	False
2. _____ _____	True	False	True	False
3. _____ _____	True	False	True	False

## Strategy #3 — K-W-L

### Purpose

- K-W-L stands for three questions designed to engage readers in nonfiction texts: What do I know? What do I want to know? What have I learned?
- The questions elicit children's prior knowledge, pique their curiosity about a topic, and motivate students to find the answers to their questions through research.

### Teaching Guidelines

1. Prepare an overhead or chart and a copy of the organizer on page 7 for each child.
2. Introduce the topic of the article to the students. Next have pairs talk to each other about the topic.
3. Have students write what they would like to learn about the topic.
4. Have students record what they think they know about the topic on their K-W-L chart.
5. After reading the text, have students record what they learned.
6. Have students identify any information they still want to learn. Provide additional resources for students to extend their learning.

Complete a K-W-L  
chart with

*The Wampanoag!*

Name: Terry

My SCHOLASTIC NEWS  
Learn-Along Page

### My Learning Chart

Write the topic of the story you are going to read. Then write what you know and what you want to know about this topic. After you read the story, write what you learned.

Topic: How the Wampanoag lived long ago



<p>What do I know?</p> <p><u>The Wampanoag are Native Americans.</u></p> <p><u>The Wampanoag helped the Pilgrims.</u></p>	<p>What do I want to know?</p> <p><u>What were Wampanoag homes like?</u></p> <p><u>What games did the Wampanoag play?</u></p>	<p>What have I learned?</p> <p><u>The Wampanoag lived in wetus.</u></p> <p><u>The Wampanoag played football too.</u></p>
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Now Try This! How can you learn more about this topic? I can read *Tapenum's Day* by Kate Waters.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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## My Learning Chart

Write the topic of the story you are going to read. Then write what you know and what you want to know about this topic. After you read the story, write what you learned.

Topic: \_\_\_\_\_

What do I <b>know</b> ?	What do I <b>want</b> to know?	What have I <b>learned</b> ?
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

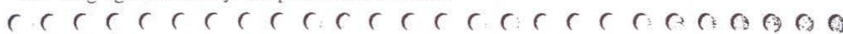
**Now Try This!** How can you learn more about this topic? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Strategy #4 — COMPARE AND CONTRAST

### Purpose

- When students compare and contrast, they recognize how things are alike and different. To do this, students need a strong knowledge of both things being compared.
- A Venn diagram is a visual way to present how two things are alike and different.
- Students can compare and contrast across the curriculum—from characters in books, to life long ago and today, to spiders and insects.



### Teaching Guidelines

1. Prepare an overhead or chart and a copy of the organizer on page 9 for each child.
2. Set a purpose: Read to discover two ways that topic #1 and topic #2 are the same and different.
3. After reading the article, have students discuss two ways that topic #1 and topic #2 are the same and different.
4. Have students fill out the two outer parts of the diagram with facts that show how topic #1 and topic #2 are different.
5. In the center, where the circles overlap, have students record facts that show how topic #1 and topic #2 are the same.

**Compare and contrast with *Go to Sleep, Groundhog!***

### John

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### How Do They Compare?

Write how two things are the same and different.

Topic 1: groundhog burrows      Topic 2: burrows from dinosaur days

My SCHOLASTIC NEWS  
Learn-Along Page

<p style="text-align: center; font-size: x-small; border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block;">Ways they are different:</p>	<p style="text-align: center; font-size: x-small; border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block;">Ways they are the same:</p>	<p style="text-align: center; font-size: x-small; border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block;">Ways they are different:</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Groundhogs live in these burrows today.</li> <li>• Garter snakes may hibernate in the burrow too.</li> <li>• Groundhogs are safe from foxes in their burrow.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They both have many rooms.</li> <li>• They both are under the ground.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Animals lived in these burrows 150 million years ago.</li> <li>• Animals were safe from dinosaurs in the burrows.</li> <li>• These burrows are now filled with rock.</li> </ul>

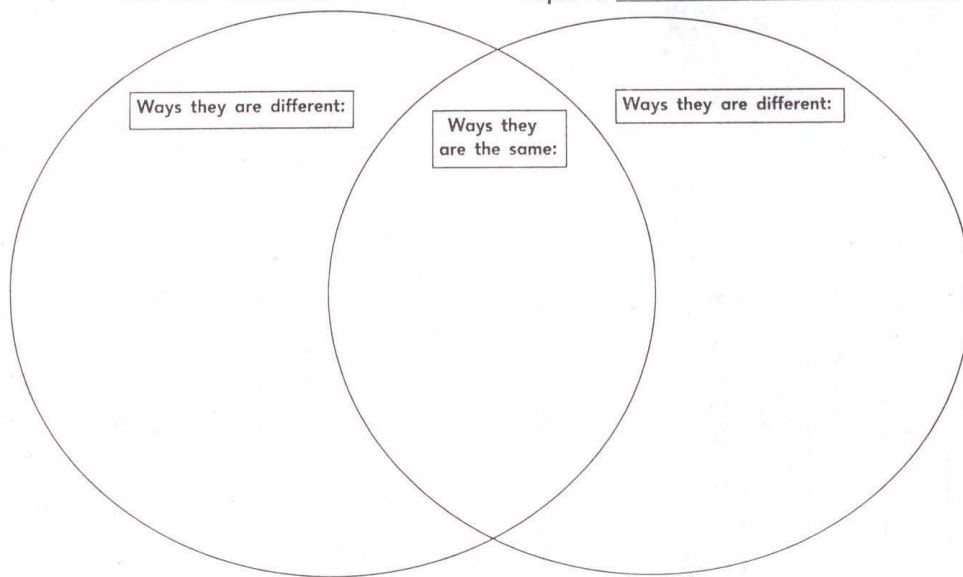
Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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## How Do They Compare?

Write how two things are the same and different.

Topic 1: \_\_\_\_\_ · Topic 2: \_\_\_\_\_



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## Strategy #5 — FINDING DETAILS

### Purpose

- As children read through text, they come across many details. Knowing how those details relate to the overall text is a strategy that helps fluent readers focus attention on what's important in a story.
- This organizer can be used after reading to help children identify important details in the text.



### Teaching Guidelines

1. Prepare an overhead or chart and a copy of the organizer on page 11 for each child.
2. Set a purpose for reading. With *The Wampanoag*, a purpose for reading is: Read to learn about a Wampanoag homesite.
3. Read aloud and show students how you select details by thinking about the purpose for reading.
4. Now have students find three details in the text. Have students write these on their organizer.
5. Think aloud and show students how you use the details to figure out the main idea of the article.
6. Have students record what the article is mainly about (a big idea) on their organizer.
7. Discuss the difference between details and the main idea.



Name: Ann

My SCHOLASTIC NEWS  
Learn-Along Page

### Finding Details

Think about what you read. Then fill in the chart below.

This is the title of what I read: The Wampanoag

My purpose for reading this is: to learn about a Wampanoag homesite.

These are 3 details:

Detail 1: The Wampanoag lived in wetus.

Detail 2: The Wampanoag made canoes.

Detail 3: The Wampanoag played football too.

Here is one big idea I found in my reading: Long ago, the Wampanoag lived in homesites.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Finding Details

Think about what you read. Then fill in the chart below.

This is the title of what I read: \_\_\_\_\_

My purpose for reading this is: \_\_\_\_\_

<p><b>These are 3 details:</b></p> <p><b>Detail 1:</b> _____ _____</p> <p><b>Detail 2:</b> _____ _____</p> <p><b>Detail 3:</b> _____ _____</p>
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Here is one big idea I found in my reading: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

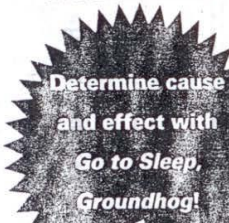

## Strategy #6 — CAUSE AND EFFECT

### Purpose

- Basal reading programs, informal reading inventories, and standardized tests all measure children's critical-thinking abilities through cause-and-effect questions. Given this, it's crucial to hone children's ability to recognize cause and effect.
- When there are cause and effect relationships in the article, have students identify what happened and why. Teach them that the cause is an event, or a character's actions. The effect is what happened as a result of the cause.
- Students should look for clue words that often signal cause-and-effect relationships (*because, if, reason, since, so, and so that*).

### Teaching Guidelines

1. Prepare an overhead or chart and a copy of the organizer on page 13 for each child.
2. Teach students cause-and-effect relationships with events and actions from their lives. Here is an example: Cause Statement—I cleaned my room. Effect—I can find things. My mom and dad are happy. I can go out and play.
3. After discussing many examples, move to a text that illustrates clear cause-and-effect relationships.
4. Write a cause statement from the text and have students find the effects.
5. Once students are successful finding effects, write two or three effects and have students determine the cause.

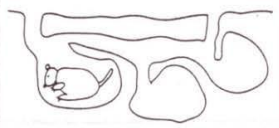




Name: José

**Why Did It Happen?**

Think about an event or a character's action that you read about. Then write what happened as a result of this.

is the title of what I read: Go to Sleep, Groundhog!

<p><b>This is the cause statement:</b></p> <p>Groundhogs hibernate all winter.</p> <p>Draw a picture to show the cause.</p> 	<p><b>Here are the effects:</b></p> <p>Groundhogs eat a lot before their long sleep. They don't eat all winter.</p> <p>Draw a picture to show one effect.</p> 
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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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\* Teacher's Note: Write a statement under *This is the cause statement:* for your students. See page 12.

## Why Did It Happen?

Think about an event or a character's action that you read about. Then write what happened as a result of this.

This is the title of what I read: \_\_\_\_\_

This is the <b>cause</b> statement:	Here are the <b>effects</b> :
<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Draw a picture to show the <b>cause</b> .	Draw a picture to show one <b>effect</b> .

## Strategy #7 — RETELLING

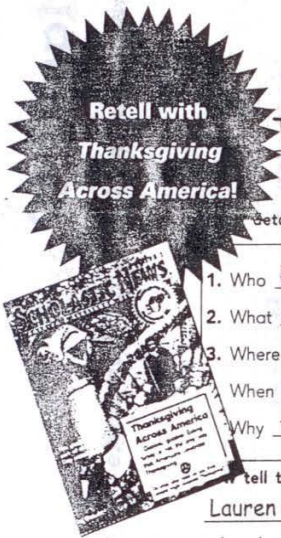
### Purpose

- Retelling stories is an excellent way for students to monitor how much they remember. The point is not to memorize the exact words, but for a child to recall in his or her own words the details in a reading selection.
- With this two-step organizer, children first pick out as many of the 5 W's (who, what, where, when, why) in a story as they can. Children then use this information to help them retell the story they read.



### Teaching Guidelines

1. Prepare an overhead or chart and a copy of the organizer on page 15 for each child.
2. Model and think aloud how to mark a text with a pencil or sticky notes when you come across words that tell who, what, where, when, and why.
3. Explain to students that not all stories have all 5 W words. Students should pick out what they can.



Terry

My SCHOLASTIC NEWS  
Learn-Along Page

### Retell the Story

Details from a story, using the 5 W's chart below.

#### The 5 W's

1. Who Lauren Quade
2. What decorated bags
3. Where Crown Point, Indiana
- When last Thanksgiving
- Why to help people who could not cook for themselves

Retell the story in your own words. Use the 5 W's to help you.

Lauren Quade lives in Crown Point, Indiana. Last Thanksgiving,  
she decorated bags. The meals were put in the bags. They  
were given to people who could not cook for themselves.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Reading Power Bookmarks

Reproduce these bookmarks for your students to encourage active reading.

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Before I Read...	While I Read...	After I Read...
<p>_____ I predict.</p> <p>_____ I look over the pictures, charts, and graphs.</p> <p>_____ I read words in bold type and headings.</p> <p>_____ I think about the cover, title, and topic.</p>	<p>_____ I stop and check to see if I understand what I am reading.</p> <p>_____ I reread to understand confusing parts and unfamiliar words.</p> <p>_____ I read the captions under and above photographs, charts, and graphs.</p>	<p>_____ I think about why I liked what I read.</p> <p>_____ I reread my favorite parts.</p> <p>_____ I reread to find details.</p> <p>_____ I retell.</p>

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Retell the Story

Write details from a story, using the 5 W's chart below.

The 5 W's	
1. Who	_____
2. What	_____
3. Where	_____
4. When	_____
5. Why	_____

Now tell the story in your own words. Use the 5 W's to help you.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

6.5 Modelo de unidad (Adaptado de Nunan, 1989:121)

**UNIT 3**

STEP 1. Reading.

Read the conversation Emily and Mike have before he meets her family.

Emily: Finally, you will meet my family!

Mike: Yes! I want to know how they look like so I don't confuse them. Describe them to me.

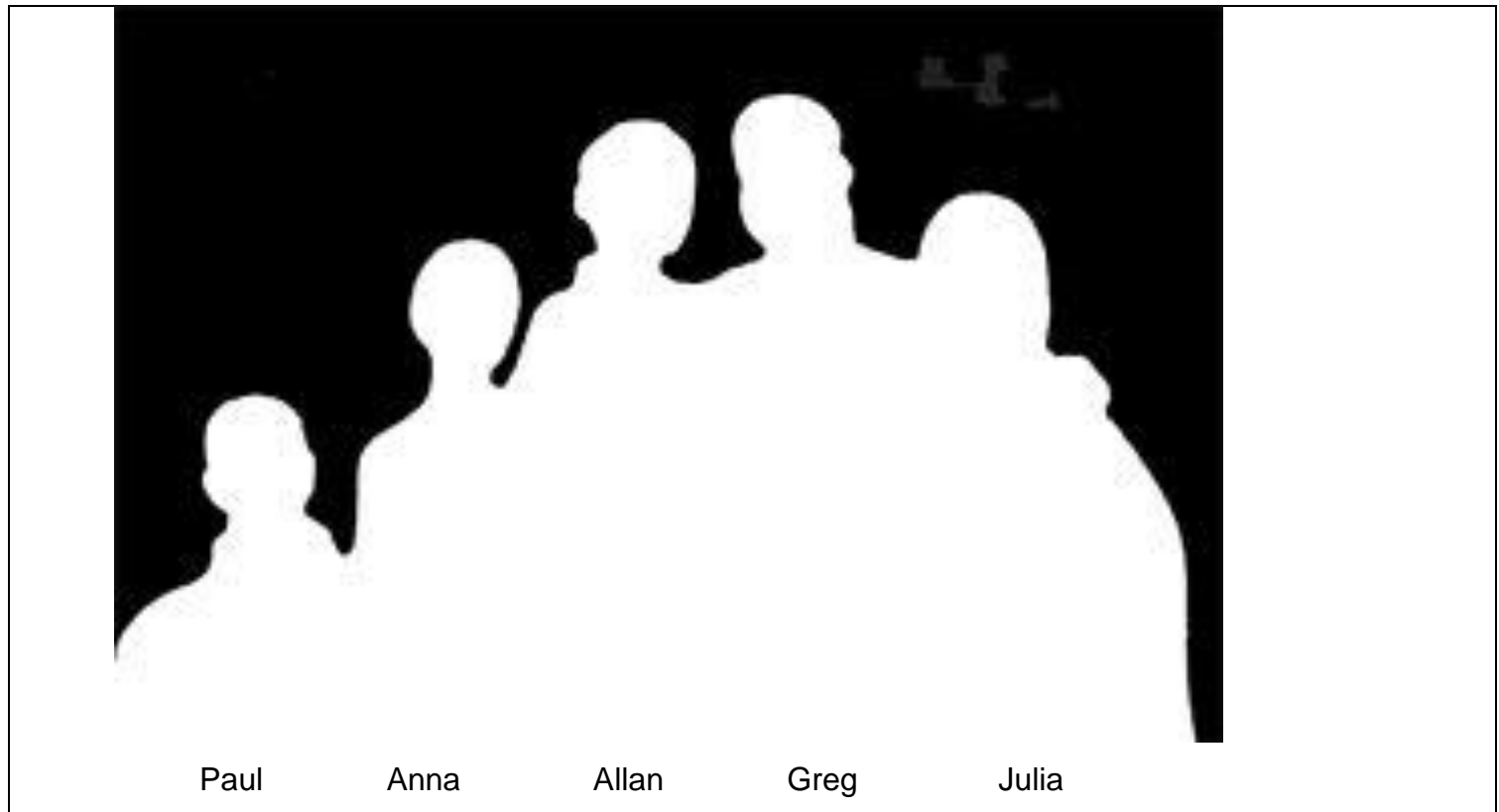
Emily: My mother's name is Anna. She is short, thin, and pretty. She has straight, black hair and big brown eyes. My father's name is Paul. He is tall and handsome. He has short wavy hair and small brown eyes. My grandma's name is Julia. She has short, wavy, gray hair. She is short and thin. My brother's name is Allan; he is tall and plump. He has short, straight brown hair and big brown eyes.

My grandpa's name is Greg. He is short and thin. He has curly, black hair.





STEP 2. You want to help Mike identify the members of Emily's family in a picture. Draw the members of the family as you imagine them according to the descriptions Emily gave.



Step 3. Writing. Emily's cousins are visiting her family. Describe them so that Mike does not confuse them with Emily's brother. Complete the chart.



This is Peter.	He h_____			
This is Tom.				
This is Carl.				

Step 4 **Task 1** Take out a picture of your family. Orally, describe a member of your family that appears in the picture. According to the description you give, a classmate will guess which that member is by pointing him out in the picture.

**Task 2** Game: Make two teams and create a game. Each team prepares 5 cards with different personalities in them (see the example); discuss with your teammates in order to decide which characters you will include in the cards.

E.G.



After the cards are ready, team A chooses a member from team B; this member will orally describe the character that appears in the card; he may not say the name of the character. The rest of the members in team B will have one minute for guessing who the character is.

Then, team B will choose a member from team A for him to describe a character, and so on.

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