

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

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

# History of Snowboarding

Mankind has always sought to push the boundaries of his existence by enjoying the land around him through extreme sports. There are rock carvings from the ancients depicting men strapped to boards as they navigate the snowy hills. As long as man has been alive, he has sought to create ways to travel through the snow. Snowboarding is the combination of surfing and skiing. It has not been around as long as skiing, but it is nearly as popular.

It is not easy pinpointing the exact time snowboarding was invented or who actually invented it. Over the years many people have thought up ways to slide down snowy hills. The snurfer was a snowboard first designed by Sherman Poppen around 1965. He came up with the idea to bolt two skis together for his daughter. The idea caught on quickly, but had no staying power.

A surfer was the next to try his hand at creating a snowboard. In 1970, Milovich used a cafeteria tray from his college to slide down a hill in an attempt to surf the snow. Milovich's idea was popular with students. He designed his snowboard like a surfboard, and for a decade he made money off of them. Then, just like with Sherman Popper, it was over. People stopped buying them.

Eventually someone tried again this time making the snowboard lighter and more tailored to the snow. Today, snowboarding is reaching new levels of international fame. It is even included in the Olympic games.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Words Correct					
Words Incorrect					

### Tips for Teachers

**PARENT LETTER**  
I will send out this letter once a week with the student passage either stapled to it or copied to the back. Parents will record how they practiced that week and sign that they read with their child.

**STUDENT PASSAGE**  
The student passage does not have the numbered column on the progress tracking on the bottom of the page. The font is larger to make it easier to read. You can use this to send home every week for the child to practice. I would also print a copy and laminate it for the classroom. This way, when you test fluency, the students have a durable copy to read from while you track on the teacher's page.

**TEACHER PASSAGE**  
This passage contains numbers along the side for easy counting and a table to keep track of correct and incorrect words. This can be used daily or as many times as you can fit into your schedule. I would test the students on Monday and Friday to allow them time to practice at home. To keep track of the errors on the different days, I would use a different color pen each time I would test the fluency so I could easily differentiate errors.

**TRACK YOUR PROGRESS GRAPHS**  
These two graphs, one for Fiction and another for Nonfiction, will show student progress. If you decide to test your students twice a week, you or the student can record their "cold read" or their "first read" in blue and their "hot read" after they practice in red.

**COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS**  
Use the comprehension questions to quickly assess whether or not the students understand what they are reading. This can be used as homework, or immediately after reading the passage.

### Weekly Home Reading Fluency Log

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

Dear Parents,  
Thank you for helping your child read and understand the weekly reading fluency passage. Reading at home will significantly help your child improve. Thank you for taking an active role in your child's reading development!

One of the best ways to become a better reader, writer, and speaker is to spend some time reading every day. Please help your child keep track of their weekly reading fluency practice at home. You can use some of the strategies listed on the Post It note above to vary your child's reading practice. Also, you can ask questions to better determine if your child's understanding what they are reading. Please use the chart below to indicate what strategy your child used to practice reading fluency for the week.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
How did you practice? (circle all that apply)	Parent Read to Child Child Read to Parent Parent and Child Read Together	Parent Read to Child Child Read to Parent Parent and Child Read Together	Parent Read to Child Child Read to Parent Parent and Child Read Together	Parent Read to Child Child Read to Parent Parent and Child Read Together	Parent Read to Child Child Read to Parent Parent and Child Read Together
Parent Signature					

### Fiction - Track Your Improvement!

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

Track your improvement on each Fiction reading passage. Color the first column for each story in blue for your cold read. Then after practicing the fluency passage multiple times, color the second column in red for your hot read.

Passage	Cold Read	Hot Read
Atlanta		
Bad Hair Day		
The Great Day		
Time Machine		
Dog Days		
Sleep Away Camp		
Kings Bad Temper		
Playoffs		
Down on the Farm		
Pranking Fun		
Spring		
Jungle Adventure		
Rescue		
Missing Homework		
Fossil Dig		
The Attic		

### Nonfiction - Track Your Improvement!

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

Track your improvement on each Nonfiction reading passage. Color the first column for each story in blue for your cold read. Then after practicing the fluency passage multiple times, color the second column in red for your hot read.

Passage	Cold Read	Hot Read
Pollution		
United Nations		
The Great Day		
Time Machine		
Dog Days		
Sleep Away Camp		
Kings Bad Temper		
Playoffs		
Down on the Farm		
Pranking Fun		
Spring		
Jungle Adventure		
Rescue		
Missing Homework		
Fossil Dig		
The Attic		

### Fiction Reading Passages

Title	Lexile Level	Word Count
Atlanta	80	234
Bad Hair Day	80	244
Time Machine	80	230
Dog Days	820	224
Sleep Away Camp	830	247
Kings Bad Temper	840	284
Playoffs	850	205
Down on the Farm	860	244
Pranking Fun	870	252
Spring	870	252
Jungle Adventure	890	258
Rescue	890	265
Missing Homework	90	21
Fossil Dig	930	256
The Attic	950	257

### Nonfiction Reading Passages

Title	Lexile Level	Word Count
Pollution	800	244
United Nations	80	220
The Great Day	850	196
Time Machine	870	204
Dog Days	870	204
Sleep Away Camp	880	254
Kings Bad Temper	880	284
Playoffs	880	244
Down on the Farm	880	236
Pranking Fun	900	208
Spring	920	222
Jungle Adventure	920	244
Rescue	940	24
Missing Homework	950	24
Fossil Dig	960	223
The Attic	970	20

### Atlanta

Atlanta was a disappointment to her kingly father because she was born a girl and not a boy. The king decided the only proper thing to do was leave Atlanta to die in the forest. Fortunately for Atlanta, hunters found her and raised her as their own daughter, helping Atlanta become a wonderful huntress. Her reputation grew and grew until everyone knew of her skills, including her father. To make amends, he invited her back to the palace to live.

The king demanded she marry as soon as possible, but Atlanta had dedicated her life to the Goddess Athena, swearing off marriage forever. She didn't want to displease her father, so she reached a compromise. She promised to marry any man who could beat her in a race.

Atlanta was the fastest human. No one was able to beat her, even though she raced with her armor. Hippomenes was in love with Atlanta, but he knew he could never run fast enough to beat her. He went to Aphrodite, the goddess of love, and asked if she would help him gain Atlanta as a wife. Aphrodite gave him three golden apples.

Hippomenes raced Atlanta. Each time she ran ahead of him he threw a golden apple. Atlanta was unable to resist the apples. Hippomenes won the race and married Atlanta, but their happiness was short lived. Aphrodite turned the pair into lions for not paying tribute to her kindness.

### Atlanta Comprehension Questions

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

- Why did the king not approve of Atlanta?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- What was the only way Atlanta would agree to marry someone?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- How did Hippomenes win the race?  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Bad Hair Day

The moment Melinda got on the bus, she knew something was amiss. The other students looked different, but she wasn't sure how. She took her seat at the back where she found her friends staring at her, looking her up and down as though they disapproved of her outfit.

"What's the matter with you guys?" Melinda asked glancing down at her ripped jeans, and t-shirt. "You don't like my outfit?"

Her two friends glanced at each other, then back at Melinda who was beginning to think something very bad was about to happen. What was going on? She looked around the bus once more and then looked back at her friends. Why did everyone look so nice?

"Did you both cut your hair?" Melinda asked them. She felt the top of her head for the messy bun she'd quickly done while she ate breakfast. Then it hit her. She knew why everyone looked so nice. "Oh no! It's picture day!"

Her friends nodded.

"Isn't that the shirt you wore yesterday?"

"And isn't that the same mustard stain?"

Melinda groaned and nodded. "I slept in and completely forgot about picture day, what am I going to do?"

In a flash, her friends had her messy bun out and were brushing her long locks. One of them handed her a sweater from her bag.

"There," she said with a smile. "No more mustard stain."

"No more ugly picture!" Melinda was thankful to have such good friends.

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

### Bad Hair Day Comprehension Questions

1. Why was Melinda confused when she got on the bus?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What problem did Melinda face in the story?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. How was the problem solved?  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Time Machine

Ronald had a mess on his hands. He had done the very thing his mother had warned him never to do. He'd made a terrible mess in the kitchen. Ronald paced back and forth as he stared at the damage. Dishes filled the sink and littered the counter, while uneaten food lay on the table. Ronald was in big trouble.

He tried to think of a solution to his problem. His mother would be home in an hour, and if the kitchen was still messy, he'd probably be grounded. Then Ronald had a great idea. He would build a time machine and go back to before the kitchen was messy.

Ronald rummaged through his dad's storage room looking for scrap material. He worked hard on his time machine by hammering nails and painting the walls until finally his time machine was ready. He was about to press the button to send himself hurtling back in time when someone tapped his back.

"What's going on here?" his mother asked him looking around at the mess he'd made in the garage. Paint, wood shavings, and nails littered the ground.

"I'm building a time machine to take me back to before the kitchen was messy. I didn't want you to see it."

His mother sighed. "Did you ever consider just cleaning up the mess?"

Now Ronald had a double mess on his hands.

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

### Time Machine Comprehension Questions

1. Describe what the kitchen looked like.  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. How did Ronald decide to solve his problem?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. How did his mom react when she got home?  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Dog Days

The backyard looked like hurricane had ripped through it. I pushed my hair off my face, wiping at the sweat pouring down my temples, and wondered why I had thought running a doggy day care for the summer was a good idea. It sounded fun when my buddy Mike mentioned it. Take care of dogs and get paid for it? I didn't even have to think about it, and when the last day of school came, we already had ten dogs signed up.

"People sure take a lot of vacations," Mike said coming to stand next to me. "And all at the same time."

I nodded, too exhausted to do much else. We leaned against each other for support, watching the dogs tear up the backyard. The worst of the bunch was a small, chubby pug that spent all her time chasing the other dogs.

"Stella! Stop barking!" I shouted for the millionth time. "You're going in a time-out!" I marched over to the trouble making pug and put her in the pen. The other dogs stopped their barking and chasing now that the instigator had left, but a skinny Chihuahua stepped in for Stella and the pandemonium was back.

"This is fun," Mike said.

"So fun," I agreed.

We looked at each other then burst into laughter.

"At least we're getting paid."

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

### Dog Days Comprehension Questions

1. How did the narrator feel at the beginning of the text about his summer job?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Which dog gave the boys the most trouble?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. How did the boys feel about their job at the end of the text? How do you know?  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Sleep Away Camp

My first time at sleep away camp was not at all what I thought it would be. I got on the bus, waved goodbye to my parents, and cried like a baby. All I could imagine were the horrible things I was about to endure. How could my parents get rid of me like that? The other kids didn't look unhappy, no one was crying, no one was chewing their nails, and no one was banging their head against the window. I dried my tears and fortified myself for the experience coming my way.

Straight off the bus, I knew I was in for a wild time. The camp was large and intimidating with staff members in identical orange shirts calling out names. My leader called my name. Five others then proceeded to tell us about the ghost living in our cabin, then left us to unpack. All I could think about was the ghost and what bunk it might have.

At the end of the first night, I feared for my life. Dangers lurked everywhere. The director had warned us about sleep cliffs, raging rivers, bears, and wolves. Beware and be safe. I would have stayed in my bunk, but by that time I was pretty sure I'd chosen the one next to the ghost.

I spent the week participating in silly games, singing ridiculous songs, chasing wildlife, hiking and hiding in the forest, and having the best time of my life.

I never wanted to leave.

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

### Sleep Away Camp Comprehension Questions

1. Why was the narrator upset at the beginning of the text?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What was the narrator afraid of in his cabin?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. What were three things the author enjoyed doing at camp?  
\_\_\_\_\_

### King's Bad Temper

The king was in a foul mood and he let everyone in the kingdom know it. He pushed his head out the window and bellowed for everyone to hear.

"I am not happy!"

The queen tried to put a smile on the king's face by singing him a tune she'd written just for him, but the melody was sour and the king stormed away. The prince attempted to make the king laugh by telling him a joke, but the punch line was missing and the king stormed away. The princess tried her hand at putting a smile on the king's face by dancing for him, but her steps were clumsy and he stormed away.

"I'm not happy," yelled the king.

He stomped through the palace knocking things over, throwing dishes and treating everyone he saw badly. The servants did whatever he asked of him, but no matter what they tried, he remained ill tempered.

"I'm not happy," the king cried pounding his hands against the table. Finally, the queen called for the castle doctor. He inspected the king from head to toe then asked him to hold out his hand. With a flourish, he yanked out a small splinter embedded in the king's prickly finger.

Everyone stared at the King. He stared back. Then he smiled.

"I am happy!"

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

### Kings Bad Temper Comprehension Questions

1. What did the king bellow for everyone in the kingdom to hear?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Describe two ways people tried to make the king happy.  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. What did the doctor find that made the king unhappy?  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Playoffs**

Cam felt the thudding of his heart hard against his chest as he scanned the field looking at the players from the other team. He was trying to guess which one he needed to worry about. Cam was aware of the fans in the stands watching him, but their screaming cheers seemed far away. He didn't look at them and didn't care about them. Not in that moment. He patted the back of his center and crouched down with his hands ready.

"Ready, set," he took a deep breath, "hut!" The ball was snapped into his hands, he took three steps backward, looked to his right, but found no one open. He looked his left, but there were too many players from the other team. He looked down field and saw his receiver sprinting. He had his target.

Cam drew his arm back and launched the football. His breath caught in the back of his throat as he watched the ball soar in a perfect arc across the sky. When his receiver turned, the ball was already there dropping into his arms with precision.

Touch down.

The crowd was on their feet, their cheers reaching Cam's ears at last. He raised a fist in victory.

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

**Playoffs  
Comprehension Questions**

1. Why didn't Cam care about the Fans at the beginning of the text?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Which player was Cam's target?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. What did Cam do to show that his team won the game?  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Down on the Farm**

The morning sun rose as it always did, but the animals kept on snoozing. The farmer, his wife, and all of their children stayed in bed snoring away despite the late hour of the day. The cow was the first to awake and knew immediately something was terribly wrong. Where were the chickens, the horses, and the dog? The fields were empty, no tractor, no rider, nothing at all to show the day was underway.

"This can't be right," said the cow wandering around the farm. He didn't even see mice scurrying around or snakes slithering about. The cow looked up at the sky and determined it was well into the morning. Everyone on the farm had slept in, everyone on the farm was still sleeping!

The cow thought about this problem. He stomped back through the field to the barn considering the best way to wake everyone up. Then he remembered it wasn't his job to wake anyone. That job belonged to the rooster. The rooster had not crowed because the rooster had slept in too!

The cow hurried to the back of the barn to the rooster's nest. Sure there he lay, snoring away without a care in the world.

"Up, up, you lazy animal," said the cow mooing loudly in the rooster's ear.

"Cook-a-doodle-doo, good morning!" The rooster squawked upon waking.

"Cook-a-doodle afternoon," said the cow.

The rooster scrambled outside to the top of the barn awaking the farm at last.

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

**Down on the Farm  
Comprehension Questions**

1. Which animal was the first to awake?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What was the problem in this story?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Whose fault was it that everyone on the farm was still sleeping? How did he solve the problem?  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Pranking Fun**

I always knew I wanted to be a comedian. The first time I made someone laugh, I decided it was what I would do the rest of my life. I made an easy career out of humor. I spent all my days at school telling jokes and finding new ways to make people laugh. I was a funny guy, and I made it my mission to make sure everyone knew it.

Then, I discovered pranks. The first time I pranked someone, I got suspended and I learned principals should never be a target. I also learned that pranks were a different kind of funny. Their purpose was not to humor others, but the creator of the prank. Pranks can hurt people's feelings, but that was a lesson I had to learn the hard way.

I spent a summer pranking everyone I knew and I was having a great time laughing at others instead of trying to make them laugh. My goal for the end of the summer was to prank my next-door neighbor, Melanie. Little did I know, she had the same idea.

Melanie got to me before I could get to her. She invited me to a costume party at her house and I showed up as a giant hot dog. Her house was full of partygoers, but to my humiliation, no one else was wearing a costume.

Today I stick to comedy that makes other people feel good. No more pranks from me, and hopefully no more on me!

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

**Pranking Fun  
Comprehension Questions**

1. What was the narrator's mission?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What did the narrator soon learn about pranking?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. What happened that made the narrator stop pranking people?  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Spring**

The fox family is very excited. Winter is over and the grey skies and blustering winds that were keeping everyone inside are no more. The sun is warming the land, melting the snow, and transforming the landscape. The fox family creeps out of their burrows and greet the new day. They know the trees, bare and forlorn now, will soon blossom.

The fox family is feeling shy. It's been a while since they've seen their friends. They hurry along the forest, greeting all the animals, searching for one friend in particular. They pause at the young flowers beginning to blossom. How glorious it will be when they grow full and bright. They nibble on the green grass growing in the fields.

The young fox brothers run and chase each other around the trees. They've been cooped up for so long. It feels good to stretch their legs and run as fast as they can. They see birds flying back to their nests from their summer homes. Their sweet songs dance through the air.

Father fox sees his friend at the edge of the forest where the meadow meets the trees. Her wand taps and twirls, bringing spring to everything she touches.

"Hello Mother Nature," says father fox.

"Hello fox family," Mother Nature says, smiling at the group.

The fox family gathers close. "We just wanted to tell you how much we've missed you!"

They spend the rest of the day watching as Mother Nature worked hard turning the winter land into spring.

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

**Spring  
Comprehension Questions**

1. What does the Fox Family do after they creep out of their burrow?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Why did the Fox brothers enjoy running around?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Who was the one friend that the Fox Family was searching for?  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Jungle Adventure**

The trio tromped through the jungle without speaking. The only sound they made was that of their boots crunching on the vines and leaves beneath their feet. After a long stretch of silence, one of them finally talked.

"It's not my fault," he said with a pitiful look on his sunburned face. The boy leading them turned his head to look back at him.

"Terry, no one said it was your fault. I merely suggested if you hadn't lost the map we wouldn't be in this situation."

The only girl in the group snickered. "You mean lost in the jungle with only a couple hours left of daylight? I'm pretty sure it's your fault!" Terry stuck his tongue out at her, and sped up to dodge the fat she aimed at him.

"Sarah, lay off. It's bad enough we're lost. We can't turn on each other too."

Terry nodded. "See, John doesn't think it's my fault, and I know it wasn't my fault. That monkey ripped the map from my hands and took off with it."

Sarah sneered at both of them. "Monkey? What monkey, Terry? I didn't see a monkey. John did you see —"

Before she could finish, something brown and furry swung down from the branch above her head and stole her hat.

Terry pointed. "That monkey!"

John bent down and picked up a crumpled piece of paper. "Hey, he dropped the map."

"I told you there was a monkey," Terry said wagging his tongue then dodging her fists once more.

"What about my hat?"

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

### Jungle Adventure Comprehension Questions

1. What did Sarah blame on Terry?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. How did Sarah react when Terry said the monkey was the source of their problem?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. What did the monkey take from Sarah?  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Rescue

Jake and Tony cycled back to the old house one more time trying to look like they belonged there. It was his fourth time that day checking on the dog, so he was sure he looked suspicious. When they got to the house they saw the dog still chained to the fence without water and without shelter.

"He's been out here all week," Jake said. "I think we should call my mom."

Tony looked at Jake with eyebrows raised. He shook his head and said, "I thought we were just messing around, you know, playing a little detective. We can't call your mom, even if she is a vet."

Jake ignored Tony and slid off his bike in front of the house.

"What are you doing?" Tony slapped his hands over his face and looked away when Jake crept toward the dog. "We're going to get into trouble. It's not our dog."

"But it's suffering!"

After a moment, Tony dropped his bike and hurried after Jake. They approached the dog with care, not wanting to startle it, but when they got close, they could see the dog was too sick to move or bark.

Tony handed Jake his phone without a word spoken between them. Jake called his mom and filled her in on the situation. Twenty minutes later she arrived with the shelter's van and the police.

"Good job boys," she said after a quick check up on the dog. "He's dehydrated and suffering from heatstroke. It's a good thing you called." Jake patted the dog's back. "Someone's got to take care of him."

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

### Rescue Comprehension Questions

1. What made Jake want to call his mom?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. How did Tony feel about the situation?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. What ended up being wrong with the dog?  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Missing Homework

When my teacher asked me for my homework, I had to tell the truth. I explained that while on my way home from school the night before, I had heard shouts and cries coming from a very tall tree. Rushing over to the tree, I realized someone was stuck high in the branches without any way of getting down. I abandoned my bag, homework and all, at the foot of the tree and began to climb.

I saved the child stuck high in the tree with courage and strength, but upon reaching the ground once more, I saw my homework was missing.

"The wind must have taken it during one of its mighty gusts. I'm sure right this very second that my homework is flying through the air, dancing through the treetops, never to be found again."

My teacher thought about my story. She even asked a few questions, but in the end I could tell my tale had not impressed her. She cared not that I was a hero my community, nor that I had impressed the mayor. My teacher only wanted my homework.

The next time I forget to do it I'd better come up with a better excuse. Next time, I'll tell her my dog ate my homework.

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

### Missing Homework Comprehension Questions

1. How did the narrator lose his homework?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What did the teacher think about the story the narrator gave?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. What will the narrator tell his teacher the next time he loses his homework?  
\_\_\_\_\_

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

### Fossil Dig

The last place Jason wanted to be on a hot Friday afternoon was outside where the sun shone without cloud cover, causing sweat to pour down his temples. When he looked around, Jason saw all the other kids smiling, joking, and having a fun time. He looked down at the rocky, dusty ground and groaned. He was supposed to dig through the dirt looking for fossils. Jason usually enjoyed field trips, but that was when his teacher took them to a pool or baseball game. Going to a dinosaur quarry to dig fossils might have been enjoyable for the fools who believed in dinosaurs, but Jason knew better. He knew they weren't real, they never existed, it was all some practical joke.

"This is pointless," he said half-heartedly, shoveling stone and dirt from one pile to another.

"What makes you say that?" The quarry guide squatted next to Jason. "I see you're not having as much fun as your friends."

"I don't believe in dinosaurs, which means I can't believe in fossils."

The guide grinned at Jason. "A skeptic. Dinosaurs did walk the earth a long time ago. We know this because of the fossils they left behind. Fossils are the bones of a dinosaur that have turned into rock over time."

Jason was interested in hearing more. He started digging more thoroughly as the guide talked. When his shovel hit something he yelped in surprise.

"I found something!"

"Your first fossil," said the guide.

Jason was thrilled. "You keep talking and I'll keep digging."

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

### Fossil Dig Comprehension Questions

1. Why didn't Jason enjoy the field trip at first?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What did the guide say to change Jason's mind?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. How does Jason show that he is now interested in the field trip?  
\_\_\_\_\_

### The Attic

Tom sighed and tapped his hands against his thigh as his father drove through the city traffic. He was a prisoner held hostage against his will on a Saturday! He imagined all the fun his friends were having without him and scowled at his father who paid him no attention at all.

"Dad, please don't make me go," Tom said. "I won't have any fun."

"It's not about having fun," his father said sparing him a glance. "Your grandfather wants to spend time with you."

When they pulled up the long dirt road, his grandfather was waiting for him with a wide grin on his weathered face.

"Tom, you're finally here! Well come on, I have something to show you." His grandfather put an arm around his shoulders and escorted him into the house.

Tom followed his grandfather upstairs. He felt himself growing curious despite his reservations when his grandfather pulled down the attic stairs.

"What's in the attic?"

"Something special I've been waiting to give you." His grandfather climbed the rickety step, and Tom followed close behind.

A trunk, dusty and old, sat in the far corner of the dimly lit attic. Tom watched as his grandfather opened it and rummaged through the contents. When he turned back around he held a gold medal in his hands.

"I've saved this for you. It was mine from the war."

Tom smiled at his grandfather, sat on the wooden floor, and said, "how did you get it?"

"It's a long story."

"It's okay," said Tom. "I've got time."

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

### The Attic Comprehension Questions

1. How did Tom feel about going to his grandfather's house?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. How did Tom feel when his grandfather pulled down the attic stairs?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. What did Tom's grandfather show him?  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Pollution**

Pollution is an impurity, which is something filthy or toxic. It becomes a problem when it is introduced into the earth's environment. Water, air, and land can all be affected by pollution. When something is polluted, it can no longer be used.

Millions of people around the world are affected by pollution. It is a growing problem showing no sign of diminishing. The effects of pollution are wide-ranging: Birth defects, lower life expectancy, and cancer are consequences of high pollution. Even though thousands of people die each year because of pollution, it still remains an ongoing problem with no clear solution.

Not all pollution is created equal. The land can be polluted with waste from industrial companies and factories. The average family produces too much garbage, and little emphasis is put on recycling and waste management. Americans create over 250 million tons of garbage each year. Every individual is responsible for over four pounds of garbage each day.

Everyday chemicals pollute the earth's water. Sewage, pesticides, and chemicals dangerous to humans are in the water! Most streams and lakes are not safe to swim or fish in due to the large amounts of pollution. Millions of people are left without clean water.

Humans need air to breathe. Every day we take thousands of breaths into our lungs. The air is as polluted just like the water and land. Chemical particles escape into the air when fuel is burned. Mixed gases cause chemical reactions like smog or acid rain.

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

**Pollution  
Comprehension Questions**

1. What is pollution?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What are some affects of pollution?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. What happens when water becomes polluted?  
\_\_\_\_\_

**United Nations**

There are 194 countries in the world, resulting in seven billion people. The earth is crowded with cultures that do not share beliefs, opinions, or lifestyles, causing conflict that has devastated millions over the years. War has broken out all throughout the ages as people struggle to get along.

It is clear humans do not know how to cooperate with one another. In 1945, the United Nations formed as a way to help the people of the world maintain peace. After the Second World War, people knew something had to be done to ensure a world war would not happen again. They wanted a way for peace not involving bloodshed.

The United Nations has three branches. The first is the Secretariat, the administrative center. The Secretary General oversees the Secretariat. The second branch is the Security Council, which is responsible for maintaining peace throughout the world. They actively pursue ways to prevent war and settle disputes. The third branch is the General Assembly. This group talks about all the troubles affecting the world.

The United Nations has its problems. It relies on money from countries around the world to fulfill its budget. The countries that can give more expect more, resulting in a power struggle. Some countries end up doing what they want instead of listening to the United Nations.

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

**United Nations  
Comprehension Questions**

1. Why did the United Nations Form?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Name one branch of the United Nations and describe its purpose.  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. What is one problem the United Nations Faces?  
\_\_\_\_\_

**The Great da Vinci**

The middle ages was a period in time that was considered to be dark and bleak, where life was broken down to its simplest form: survival. After the middle ages came a time of rebirth and renewal called the Renaissance. The dark, hopeless age was in the past, and the world was ready for more. People put renewed importance on education and then, ultimately the pursuit of happiness.

Leonardo da Vinci was born during this period of renewal. He became an educated man, an artist, scientist, and inventor. To this day, Leonardo is considered one of the smartest people of all time. Born in Italy, young Leonardo was a natural and gifted artist. He painted the Mona Lisa and the Last Supper, two world famous pieces. However, Leonardo was not content with life as an artist. He became an inventor. His books are filled with sketches beyond his time. His drawings depicted things of the future.

Leonardo invented weapons, designed bridges that could move, and sketched helicopters and bicycles. He had an obsession with humans learning to fly. Known as the father of science, Leonardo's creations inspire new generations of young inventors and scientists still today.

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

**The Great da Vinci  
Comprehension Questions**

1. Describe the Dark Ages. What was it like?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Why is da Vinci considered one of the smartest men of all time?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. What was one thing that da Vinci was obsessed with?  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Vikings**

Scandinavia was home to the bloodthirsty pirates of the seas during the years 700 AD to 1100 AD. Vikings were renowned warriors eager for battle and quick to raid other villages and cities. They were vengeful and fierce, and they had an important impact on the world.

In 787, Vikings sailed their ships onto the shores of southern England, raiding every village they came across. They didn't come to conquer, but to fight, and fight they did. It was the first of many battles between England and the men of Scandinavia.

Vikings were spiritual people. They worshipped Thor, the god of thunder, and believed that when they died, they went to a place called Valhalla where they fought all day and feasted all night. It was this belief that made the Vikings fight like they did. They did not fear death. They welcomed it.

Eventually, some of the Viking warriors came to believe there might be more to life than fighting. They began to desire a more peaceful way of life. On their raids in different countries, some Vikings stayed behind and found land to farm. The Vikings have roots in Scotland, Ireland, and Britain. They were the founders of Normandy. Today, their legacy of ruthless greatness lives on.

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

**Vikings  
Comprehension Questions**

1. Describe what the Vikings were like.  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What did the Vikings believe would happen once they died?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. What did the Vikings do who wanted to live a more peaceful life?  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Aztec Warriors**

The Aztec empire stretched more than 80,000 square miles during its prime in the 1500s. The Mexican warriors claimed land from the Pacific Ocean to the Gulf coast. Millions of people lived in the empire, each one under the rule of Emperor Montezuma II.

The warriors of the great empire were famous for their fierceness in battle and their loyalty to the Emperor. They started training at a young age, moving up through the ranks as their talent and voracity for battle permitted. Boys in the empire were privy to a good education, which afforded them the luxury of establishing a decent, respected life for themselves. Most young men chose the life of a warrior when the time came to choose, knowing the power such a decision gave them.

A boy became a man at 17 years old in Montezuma's empire. Choosing to be a warrior meant beginning over at the lowest level. The young warriors served the older ones. They carried weapons and supplies. In order to rise up the hierarchy, a young soldier had to capture a prisoner. If that did not happen, he remained a servant forever.

The most elite rankings of an Aztec warrior were the Jaguars and the Eagles. Any man who made it to an elite level was given the honor of wearing uniforms depicting a jaguar or an eagle. The eagle division scouted the area. They were the eyes and ears of the army. The jaguars were the muscle, the strength. They were the full-time fighters.

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

### Aztec Warriors Comprehension Questions

- When did Aztec warriors begin their training?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- What did a warrior have to do in order to move up in the ranks?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Warriors who made it to the elite level wore uniforms depicting which two animals?  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Great Everest

The world's most famous mountain has lured people to its peak for decades, despite the climbing death toll. Mount Everest stands at 29,035 feet, bordering the countries of Nepal and Tibet. In Tibet, the word Everest means 'Goddess Mother of Snows'. In Nepal, the word Everest means 'Mother of the Universe'. Those who climb the mountain see it as nature's biggest challenge. Those who live in its shadow see it as a sacred monument.

The mountain has two different climbing routes. The climb from the Tibet side is the North Col Route. The climb from the Nepal side is the South Col Route. Climbers can choose which side to climb depending on which country they wish as their point of origin. Many climbers have summited the mountain more than once. Many of them are professional climbers. Sherpa are the native people living around the Everest region. They offer their services as guides to those wanting to climb the mountain. The Sherpa are expert climbers with an ability to navigate the mountain that rivals professional climbers.

Everest is no longer a destination point for the best climbers in the world. Today, thanks to the Sherpas, anyone can climb the mountain. At least it is for anyone who can afford it. Climbing Mount Everest is now more about money than skill.

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

### Great Everest Comprehension Questions

- Mount Everest borders which two countries?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- What is a Sherpa?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- How have Sherpas changed the way people view climbing Mount Everest?  
\_\_\_\_\_

### History of Snowboarding

ManKind has always sought to push the boundaries of his existence by enjoying the land around him through extreme sports. There are rock carvings from the ancients depicting men strapped to boards as they navigate the snowy hills. As long as man has been alive, he has sought to create ways to travel through the snow. Snowboarding is the combination of surfing and skiing. It has not been around as long as skiing, but it is nearly as popular.

It is not easy pinpointing the exact time snowboarding was invented or who actually invented it. Over the years many people have thought up ways to slide down snowy hills. The surfer was a snowboard first designed by Sherman Poppen around 1965. He came up with the idea to bolt two skis together for his daughter. The idea caught on quickly, but had no staying power.

A surfer was the next to try his hand at creating a snowboard. In 1970, Mitovich used a cafeteria tray from his college to slide down a hill in an attempt to surf the snow. Mitovich's idea was popular with students. He designed his snowboard like a surfboard, and for a decade he made money off of them. Then, just like with Sherman Popper, it was over. People stopped buying them.

Eventually someone tried again this time making the snowboard lighter and more tailored to the snow. Today, snowboarding is reaching new levels of international fame. It is even included in the Olympic games.

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

### History of Snowboarding Comprehension Questions

- What was the earliest piece of evidence of people snowboarding?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- What is a surfer?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Why is the current version of the snowboard better than the one that was invented in the 1970s?  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Migration

When animals move from one region to another during different seasons it's referred to as migration. Most people think of birds when hearing the term migration. Birds migrate each year leaving one home behind for another. Birds migrate for different reasons. When the season changes and temperatures drop, birds leave the area in search of a warmer one. They need a place where finding food is easy. Places that experience snow-covered frozen grounds during the winter makes finding food challenging for birds that eat bugs, seeds and nectar. Birds eat constantly. They need a ready supply of food to keep them alive.

There are some birds that do not migrate. These birds are permanent residents of their region. They stay in their home all year long and may change their nesting and feeding habits to accommodate the colder weather. Some birds leave their warm home in the south during the summer months for the north. These summer residents arrive in time to enjoy the beginning of spring. Some birds are transient, meaning they pass through various areas, stopping to rest for a time, but never staying for too long.

Birds are capable of long distance travel. They do whatever it takes to get to their destination point. They have the ability to know exactly where to go and the right time to leave. Most birds travel at night possibly in an attempt to avoid predators.

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

### Migration Comprehension Questions

- Why must birds migrate south during the winter?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- For those birds who do not migrate, what do they have to do to survive the winter?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- How do birds avoid predators when they migrate?  
\_\_\_\_\_

### The Chandler

When the colonists settled in the New World, they had to begin anew building new lives. This required settlers with a specialty trade to set up shop and pander their services to the growing population. One such trade was the chandler. The Chandler's sole responsibility was to make candles. In a world without electricity, candles were a necessity of life. Everyone needed them regardless of social standing.

The chandler's most valued possessions were the iron molds used to craft the candles. These molds were handed down from generation to generation. The molds offered a distinguishing factor of expertise. Without good molds, the chandler could not adhere to the supply and demand of his craft. The average colonial home required at least 400 candles per year. The more wealthy inhabitants of the town would splurge on more expensive bayberry, or beeswax candles, while the common folk used pig fat candles.

The chandler worked long hours in his barn. He lived on the edge of town where the foul odors of his labors would not affect town's people. He worked long hours over a hot fire designed especially for his needs. He had a store in town that his wife or children worked selling the candles to their many customers.

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

### The Chandler Comprehension Questions

- What was the Chandler's responsibility in the community?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- What were some more expensive materials that candles were made from?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Why did the Chandler live on the edge of town?  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Beethoven**

Few musicians are as beloved and cherished as Beethoven. A classical composer from Germany, Beethoven began making music after his father recognized in him a rare talent. Unfortunately for Beethoven, his father was unkind and cruel in his ways. He sought to create in Beethoven a musical talent that would rival the great Mozart's.

Beethoven learned at a young age to work hard or else he would be beaten by his father. His diligence proved successful as he continued to advance his musical career at a young age. When he was twenty-two years old, Beethoven began working with Joseph Haydn. Mozart was no longer alive, leaving Haydn the most talented composer at the time. Beethoven improved greatly under Haydn's guidance.

Beethoven would eventually become the world's greatest composer. He created intricate, beautiful works of art that stunned his audiences. It was to his great devastation he realized he was going deaf. This impediment did not stop Beethoven from composing or performing. Incredibly, it was later in his life when he was completely deaf that he wrote his most popular piece.

Beethoven has yet to be surpassed as the world's finest composer. He remains rooted in the hearts of his fans as the greatest talent of all time. Each generation discovers him anew, allowing his memory and his works to live on.

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

**Beethoven  
Comprehension Questions**

1. Why did Beethoven have to work so hard when he was young?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What devastated Beethoven when he was older?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. When did Beethoven write his most popular pieces?  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Popcorn**

A favorite snack food for many people is the salty, satisfying treat of popcorn. It has a long history with evidence that the indigenous people in 5000 B.C. discovered the tasty treat, though it was different from the standard popcorn variety people enjoy now. Spanish explorers in the Americas learned about popcorn from the Natives. Famous explorer, Hernando Cortes, discovered popcorn was important to the Aztec warriors who used it as decoration on clothing. Columbus, on one of his journeys, witnessed the natives selling popcorn. It wasn't until the 1820's that popcorn was sold in the United States. Twenty years after its debut it began gaining in popularity.

Not all corn is best for popping. There are six different varieties of corn, and popcorn is just one kind. Most of the world's popcorn is grown in the United States. It begins with a tiny seed planted in the spring. After ten days, the seed sprouts and begins to grow. A full-grown corn stalk can reach eight feet in height. Corn ears are covered in green husks that protect the golden kernels within. Corn is harvested when the kernels harden. The ears are stored for several months before they are ready for processing. When the time comes, the kernels are cleaned and polished then packaged and prepared for market.

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

**Popcorn  
Comprehension Questions**

1. How did Aztec warriors use popcorn?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. When did popcorn become popular in the United States?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. How long are kernels stored before they can be processed?  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Mount Vesuvius**

In 79 A.D., the volcano, Mount Vesuvius, erupted destroying the entire city of Pompeii within hours. This catastrophic event would go down in history as one of the worst volcanic eruption of all time. Ash and lava buried whoever resided within the shadow of Vesuvius.

Perhaps the most interesting thing about the destruction of Pompeii is the detailed description written down for future generations to read. A young man named Pliny the Younger witnessed the event, then documented all he saw in a letter to a friend.

It is Pliny the Younger's description of the eruption that helped scientists define and categorize the different types of volcanoes. Mount Vesuvius is a strato volcano. This means it has a steep-sided cone. Based on the description recorded in history, it is referred to as a Plinian type of volcano. Any volcano that erupts with a column of ash and lava spewing into the air is considered a Plinian type.

There are different kinds of volcanoes. Not all of them resemble a cone shaped mountain. Not all of them erupt with the same kind of violence that Mount Vesuvius does. Some volcanoes are active, which means they have erupted in the last 1000 years. Others are considered dormant. They have not erupted in some time, but they are still active. There are some volcanoes that are extinct. These ones have not erupted in over 10,000 years and are not expected to ever again.

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

**Mount Vesuvius  
Comprehension Questions**

1. Why was the eruption of Mount Vesuvius so catastrophic?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Describe the eruption of a strato volcano.  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. How do the words, active, dormant, and extinct describe a volcano?  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Wolves**

For centuries, wolves have been misunderstood and classified as monsters eager to kill and destroy anything in their way. It has only been in recent studies that scientists have discovered wolves are a keystone species, important for the balance of their ecosystem.

There are two species of wolves in North America: the grey wolf and the red wolf. The grey wolf is the most common of the two. Wolves are pack animals. They travel in groups, sharing their lives with the young and old teaching, playing, and hunting as a family.

A wolf pack does not stay in one area for too long. They move to where the food is, always keeping their eyes out for danger. Family is important to the wolves. They care for their young in an exemplary fashion taking turns teaching them all the skills they need to survive.

Humans are the biggest threat to wolves. In the 1970s, the wolf population suffered dramatic loss, leading to their protection in the Endangered Species Act created in 1973. Since this time, wolves have managed to reestablish themselves with a healthy population.

While wolves prove a small threat to humans, it is the belief of many they are too dangerous to roam free. Hunters advocate for the right to kill wolves now that their population has increased.

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

**Wolves  
Comprehension Questions**

1. Which species of wolves are found in the North America?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Why doesn't a wolf pack stay in one area for too long?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. How did the Endangered Species Act help the wolves?  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Charles Dickens**

During the Victorian era of British power and queenly influence, one author made a name for himself. He wrote about the lower classes in such memorable works as *A Tale of Two Cities*, *Oliver Twist*, and *David Copperfield*. The author, Charles Dickens, was beloved by all regardless of whether they were rich or poor. He had the ability to create memorable characters so believable in nature, people had difficulty understanding they were fiction and not real.

Charles Dickens was born in 1812 in Kent County England. His happy childhood was short lived when his father was imprisoned for debt. Charles' mother and siblings stayed with their father in jail. Later, he was sent to a factory to work.

England during the 1800s was not friendly place for children. More often than not, children found themselves at the mercy of cruel adults that forced them into hard labor. It was a dreary existence, but one that offered Charles inspiration for his many books.

Charles' father sent him back to school upon his release from prison. Charles took on a job as a law clerk and he worked hard, but his love of the written word could not be denied. He spent all the time he could at the library reading. His first book was released six years after he started at the law office.

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

**Charles Dickens  
Comprehension Questions**

1. Why did people love Charles Dickens' books so much?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Describe Dickens' early life.  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. What job did Dickens hold?  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Under the Sea**

There is a vast, mysterious world under the surface of the ocean. Mountains, waterfalls, and volcanoes lay under the water, waiting for discovery and study. Down deep, where humans cannot go, is an ecosystem seething with life.

Many bottom dwellers have been discovered after hurricanes and tsunamis when the waters are churned and turned upside down. The giant spider crab lives on the ocean floor, and can go down as deep as 1,000 feet. These huge monsters grow up to 12 feet long. Spider crabs are hard to find and nearly impossible to catch.

One alien-like creature in the deep parts of the ocean is the basket star. This strange starfish is unlike anything else, with its many arms and branches five times bigger than its body. The basket star opens its arms and waits for the current to bring unsuspecting ocean animals straight into its embrace.

The yell crab is so strange, scientists were unsure how to classify it. The unusual creature was discovered 7,000 feet under the water. Triggerfish have a lot of color. They are bottom dwellers that like to eat clams by blasting dirt away with squirting water from their mouths. These fish are not friendly, and will often bite humans to protect their nests.

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

**Under the Sea  
Comprehension Questions**

1. What types of landforms can also be found under water?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. How does the basket star catch food?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Why are the animals described in the text so difficult to find?  
\_\_\_\_\_