



Fourth Grade

Reading Materials

Gold Rush Boomtowns

Cross-Curricular Focus: History/ Social Sciences



The discovery of gold in the California Territory sparked not only national interest, but even worldwide attention. California was not even a state yet when gold was discovered in 1848. There were few regulations on treasure hunting. Gold was there for the taking. The adventurous risked everything and came by the thousands. The cities of Sacramento, Stockton and San Francisco expanded from tiny little villages to huge, active towns almost overnight. A town that grows rapidly due to new business opportunities became known as a **boomtown**.

Towns grew increasingly larger as more and more settlers came to the area. People from all over the world came to San Francisco in particular. They brought a variety of goods and services with them, making San Francisco an international cultural center. People of the time compared it to London, England. Prices were very high, but goods from around the world were available.

Usually, boomtown populations were mostly men. Few women came to California in the early days of the Gold Rush. The men who came to find their fortunes believed they would quickly make lots of money to take back home to loved ones.

When it became clear that people were not going to become wealthy overnight, some miners returned to their home. Those who stayed began to send for their families. Women with skills like cooking, washing clothes and sewing were highly regarded. Men did not like to do these things for themselves. Women willing to travel to the West could make a very good living marketing their homemaking skills. If single women wanted to marry, they had their choice of hundreds of men.

Though gold is what attracted people to the boomtowns, few made their fortunes by finding it. Those who really struck it rich were the **entrepreneurs**. They took advantage of the opportunity to sell things to the large numbers of people around them. A good example of this is Levi Strauss. He invented and sold durable pants for miners. They caught on in a big way. We know them now as blue jeans. Today, you don't have to be a miner to wear jeans. Some discoveries endure over time.

Name: _____

Answer the following questions based on the reading passage. Don't forget to go back to the passage whenever necessary to find or confirm your answers.

1) What is a boomtown?

2) What is the name of one California boomtown? _____

3) What were some of the things that motivated women to come eventually?

4) What did an entrepreneur do during the Gold Rush? _____

5) Would you have wanted to go to California for the Gold Rush?

Why or why not? _____

Name _____ **The Gold Rush**



Impact of the Gold Rush

The Gold Rush brought about many significant societal changes that still impact us today. The land where gold was found had just been ceded to the United States from Mexico in the Treaty of Guadalupe

Hidalgo. Most regions that became U.S. states were first U.S. territories, until their population grew to the necessary 60,000 residents that were required in order to become a state. It might have taken decades for the population of California to grow to the requisite 60,000. But because of the Gold Rush, it had well exceeded the population requirement by 1849, and California became the 31st U.S. state on September 9th, 1850.

The Gold Rush turned many sleepy California towns into permanent major cities. For example, once a small town of 1,000 people, San Francisco became a boomtown as its population grew exponentially in 1849.

The Gold Rush also had a profound impact on the U.S. transportation system. Before 1848, most travel was done by horse and carriage. It could take between three and six months for would-be miners to reach California. But as California became a popular destination, it provided even more impetus for the Transcontinental Railroad project which began construction in 1863.

On a personal level, many people became rich overnight. Many others made fortunes selling supplies and equipment to miners. The impact on John Sutter, however, the man on whose property gold was first discovered in 1848, was not so positive. Prospectors and squatters stole and destroyed his property and his livestock. The U.S. courts refused to recognize Sutter's title to his land, which Mexico had granted him, and he was bankrupt by 1852. In 1864, Sutter was granted a monthly pension by the California legislature as a reimbursement for the taxes he had paid on the land, but though he continued to petition Congress for restitution, he never did recover his losses.

Name _____ **The Gold Rush**

QUESTIONS: Impact of the California Gold Rush

Circle the correct answer.

1. Most regions that became U.S. states:
 - A. once belonged to Mexico
 - B. were first territories
 - C. first had to have 90,000 residents
 - D. were once sites where gold was found

2. California became a state quickly:
 - A. because it was always so highly populated
 - B. because the Gold Rush brought many people to the area in a short time
 - C. because the U.S. didn't want it to fall back into Mexican control
 - D. the U.S. needed it to expand transportation

3. Which of the following is NOT an effect the Gold Rush had on California?
 - A. it turned many sleepy California towns into permanent major cities
 - B. California became the 31st U.S. state on September 9th, 1850
 - C. the land where gold was found was ceded to the U.S. from Mexico
 - D. many people became rich overnight

4. What is the irony of the fact that gold was discovered on Sutter's land?
 - A. Sutter got rich
 - B. Sutter was ruined
 - C. Sutter's land was returned to Mexico
 - D. the U.S. courts let Sutter keep all the gold in California

5. Why was Sutter given a pension by the state of California?
 - A. as a reimbursement for the taxes he had paid to Mexico on the land
 - B. as a payment for the gold found on his land
 - C. as a reimbursement for the damage prospectors did to his land
 - D. as a repayment for what was stolen from him

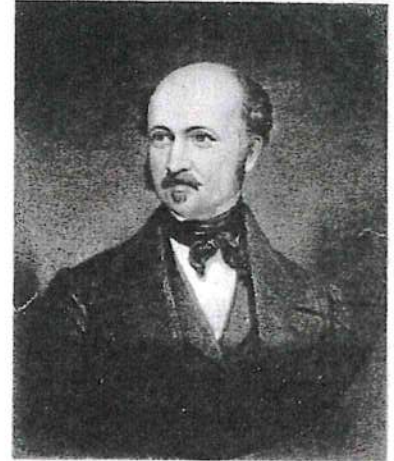
The California Gold Rush

Westward Expansion Articles

Article 7

1848-1855

There had been rumors of gold in California for years. John Sutter was a Swiss emigrant who arrived in California in 1839. Because California was claimed by Mexico, he became a Mexican citizen and received a land grant of 50,000 acres in Sacramento Valley on the Sacramento River. He built a fort and developed a farm and other businesses. Sutter's Fort became a rest stop for travelers and immigrants to California. In 1846, California was occupied by the United States as they tried to acquire it from Mexico. The U.S. obtained California in February of 1848 in the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo after the Mexican-American War.

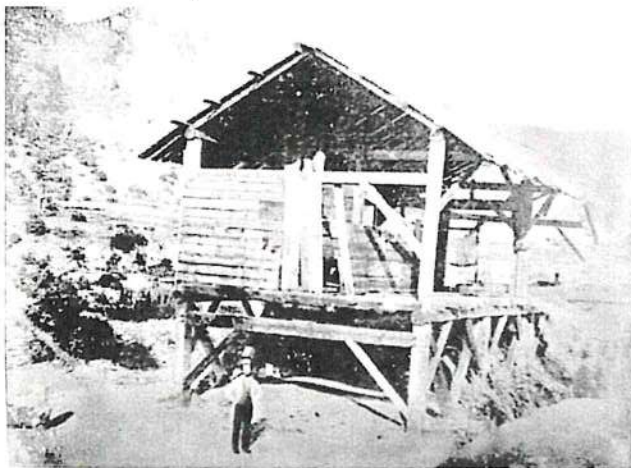


John Sutter

In 1847, John Sutter hired James Marshall to build a sawmill on his property at a site named Coloma, on American River. On January 4, 1848, as they were building the mill, James Marshall found a piece of metal that looked like gold. He quickly took it to Sutter and they did some research to find out if it was actually gold. After some testing, they discovered it was gold. Sutter became very worried about others finding out about the gold. He knew that the discovery of gold would bring many people to his property, and he did not want this. He asked all of his workers to keep it a secret. Unfortunately, the secret got out when merchant and publisher Samuel Brannan returned to San Francisco with a gold nugget from Sutter's Mill and published his finding. Large groups of people proceeded to Sutter's Mill and began a search for gold. This destroyed Sutter's property and all he had worked for. He was disappointed that his land would not become the businesses he had hoped. He gave the land to his son, who realized the potential of the land, and quickly began planning a town, calling it Sacramento. It eventually became the capital of California.

On August 19, 1848, *The New York Herald* was the first major East Coast newspaper to report about the discovery of gold. On December 5, 1848, President James Polk spoke about the discovery of gold to Congress and confirmed gold had been found. This made gold in California national news. Just as Sutter had feared, more and more people poured into California in search of gold from all over the world.

The first people to rush to find gold were people who already lived in California. Many abandoned their homes, stores, and boats for the opportunity to find gold. Entire families could be found searching for gold, including women and children.



SUTTER'S MILL AT COLOMA
A reproduction of photograph in possession of Charles H. Fennell, of San Francisco.
First original daguerrotype taken on the spot by J. H. Vance in 1848.

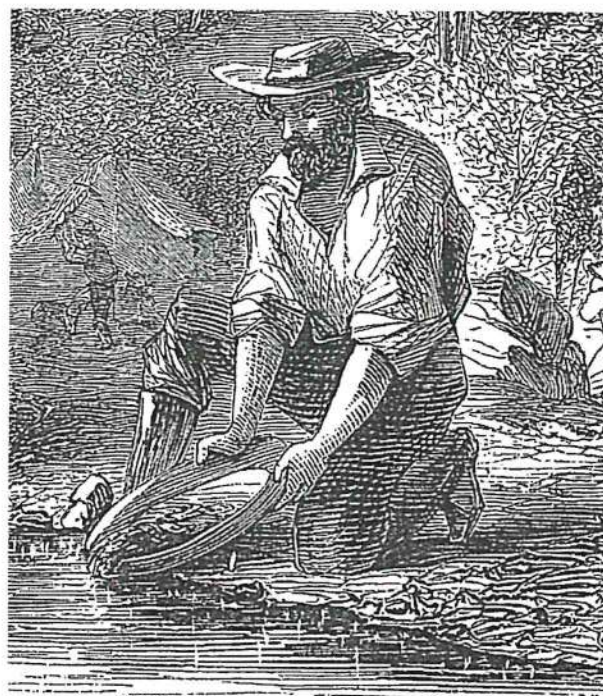
A picture of Sutter's Mill in Coloma, California

The first prospectors, people who search for minerals, that came to California were able to get rich off of gold. This is because there were only about 6,000 people that came to California in 1848. Only 500 came by land. Many heard about the discovery of gold and sailed to California. Many wanted to get rich quick and then go home. Others were able to make money by building cabins, stores, and cooking food for the men that came to mine for gold.

By 1849, the news of gold had spread around the world. Gold-seekers and merchants caught "Gold Fever" and began to arrive in California from all over the world. These people were called forty-niners because they arrived in 1849. About 90,000 people came to California hoping to get rich that year. They expected to find rivers of gold, but instead found fields crowded with miners. By 1855, nearly 300,000 people had arrived in California. Many were Americans, but there were also large groups from China, Mexico, Australia, France, Italy, and Latin America.

The trail to California by land was the cheapest route, but also the slowest. Many Americans traveled by covered wagon to California. They started the trail just as those did that went to Oregon, but split away from the Oregon Trail and took the California trail. One of the benefits of taking a covered wagon was that they could take all of their supplies with them. They were also able to take food and tools they would need once they made it to California. The trail was dangerous, and it was important for the prospectors to get through the Sierra Nevada Mountains before winter. Many would make it to California, but many would also die from illness or starvation.

Most prospectors were previously store owners, innkeepers, teachers, and farmers. After the surface gold had all been panned, it was difficult to find gold. When prospectors didn't get rich quick, they often started businesses and trading posts. They imported goods to sell to the miners and some began farming and ranching. They used the skills that they already had to be successful in California. By the mid 1850s gold was very difficult to find. People were making fortunes from selling supplies to miners rather than actually mining for themselves.



Panning for gold on the Mokelumne



California Trail

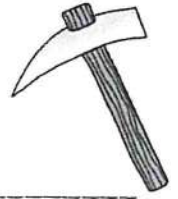


Portsmouth Square, San Francisco, California in 1851

Although many went to California hoping to get rich quick, there were only a few who actually did. However, many people moved to California and lived there permanently, creating towns and businesses that helped California and the United States become more successful.

The California Gold Rush

Comprehension Questions



1. Who was the first to find gold in California? _____
2. How did they find the gold? _____
3. Why did John Sutter want to keep the discovery of gold a secret? _____

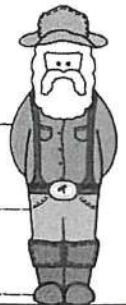
4. How did everyone find out about the gold? _____

5. How did most people get to California? _____

6. Who came to California? Where were they from? _____

7. When gold became difficult to find, what did many people do to make money? _____

8. If you had lived during this time, and you heard about gold in California, would you have traveled west to California? Why or why not?



Westward Expansion - The California Gold Rush

by ReadWorks



panning for gold

The year was 1848. John A. Sutter was building a new sawmill in Coloma, near Sacramento, California. The area was mostly wilderness. He never expected the treasure that the unexplored land held. In January 1848, the chief builder of the sawmill found Sutter one rainy afternoon. The chief made him lock all of the doors to his office. Then, in a secret voice, the chief told Sutter about a discovery that would change the entire West Coast of the United States. He had discovered gold in the stream near the sawmill.

Sutter asked all of his workers to keep the news a secret for just 6 weeks. But it was hopeless. The news spread like wildfire. Everyone wanted some gold. The American West was advertised all over as a land full of promise and wealth. Soon accounts of gold were greatly exaggerated. In early 1849 the editor of the *New York Tribune* wrote: "Fortune lies upon the surface of the earth as plentiful as the mud in our streets." People had gold fever.

Tens of thousands of men traveled to the West Coast to seek their fortune. These men were nicknamed "forty-niners." Have you heard the song "Oh My Darling, Clementine"? That folk song is about the miners who came west. High in his hopes, one man called California "a land of glittering dreams."

However, life was not always rosy for the miners. Their day-to-day life was very difficult. Most miners never found the slightest trace of gold, much less enough to strike it rich. Still, the vast California countryside contained endless possibility. This sense of possibility was the allure of the American West.

One of the greatest fortunes made from the gold rush had nothing to do with gold. In the spirit of invention, Sam Brannan came up with a scheme. He had found out about the gold from a reliable source. But at first the tale seemed too tall to believe. Brannan changed all of this. He ran through the streets of San Francisco yelling and carrying a bottle of gold dust.

Why did he want everyone to know about the gold? Well, Brannan never even planned to search for gold. He had no interest in digging or panning for specks of yellow. Instead, he planned to make even more money. Brannan knew that the flocks of miners would need tools. He started a business selling them shovels. Brannan sold shovels to thousands and thousands of fortune-seekers. He made more money than all of them.

By the end of 1849, most of the gold was gone. Still people kept digging. The population of California grew steadily. At one point, on average, 30 homes a day were built in San Francisco! Soon the huge population increase of the West Coast would lead to the United States' decision to build a continental railroad.

Excerpt from "Oh My Darling, Clementine"

In a cavern, in a canyon

Excavating for a mine

Dwelt a miner forty-niner

And his daughter Clementine

Oh my darling, oh my darling

Oh my darling, Clementine

You are lost and gone forever

Dreadful sorry, Clementine

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. In the passage, it says that the chief builder spoke in a "secret voice". The chief probably spoke

- A. very loudly.
- B. carelessly.
- C. so everyone could hear.
- D. softly.

2. According to the passage, what was the "allure of the west"?

- A. It was the sense of possibility.
- B. It was the fact that you could find gold lying on the ground.
- C. It was the beautiful Pacific Ocean.
- D. It was the friendly pioneers.

3. During the California Gold Rush,

- A. millions of people struck it rich.
- B. only a few people found even a trace of gold.
- C. many people discovered silver.
- D. many people discovered oil.

4. The huge population explosion led to

- A. the need for a transportation system from the East to the West.
- B. people following the Oregon Trail from West to East.
- C. taxes being raised.
- D. men striking it rich from gold.

5. What does the author mean when he writes, "The news spread like **wildfire**."

- A. The news was dangerous.
- B. People could follow the news to an important location.
- C. The news spread quickly.
- D. Someone needed to stop the news quickly.

6. What was Sam Brannan's scheme?

7. In the passage the author writes, "... life was not always rosy for the miners. Their day-to-day life was very difficult." In what ways do you think the life a miner would have been difficult?

8. The question below is an incomplete sentence. Choose the word that best completes the sentence.

John Sutter asked all of his workers to keep the news of the discovery of gold a secret for just 6 weeks, _____ it was hopeless, the news spread like wildfire.

- A. finally
- B. but
- C. especially
- D. instead

Name _____

Read the passage. Use the reread strategy to help you understand and remember information.

A Child's Fight for Rights

11 At age 12, Craig Kielburger of Ontario, Canada, read a terrible
12 news story that changed his life. He read about Iqbal Masih. Iqbal
13 was a boy from Pakistan who was forced to work in a rug factory.
14 Craig read that children were taken from their homes. They were put
15 to work at very young ages. Craig was free. The thought of being
16 captive shocked him.

65 Iqbal's Story

67 Iqbal was the same age as Craig. He had been working constant
68 12-hour days since age four. Non-stop working kept Iqbal from going
69 to school. He was not treated well and lived behind large fences and
70 walls.
71

72 Iqbal was later set free by police. He tried to make his story known
73 and spoke to the press.
74

123 Free the Children

126 Craig was moved by Iqbal's story. It caused him and his friends
127 to write requests and reach out to world leaders to raise money for a
128 wonderful cause.
129

130 In 1996, Craig founded Free the Children. It was started as a group
131 of young people who wanted to stop the use of child labor around the
132 world.
133

Name _____

Craig Kielburger and Free the Children

Craig, Age 12-Starts
Free the Children

Craig, Age 14-Frees
children in South Asia

Craig, today-Continues to
fight for children's rights



Many people were not aware that children were being forced to work in factories. Free the Children helped make sure that Canada checked the rugs that were brought into the country. The rugs that were not made by children were labeled.

When Craig was 14, he went with police in South Asia to search for children who were being forced to work. The children were returned to their parents. Craig spoke with the parents and learned the families' stories.

Conflict and Results

Some people disagreed with Craig. They didn't agree with him because they thought he was too young. They didn't like that he was talking about these things.

That didn't stop Craig's group though. After two years, the group used the money they had raised to pay for a center in Pakistan. The center provided shelter and education for children who had escaped capture.

Free the Children still thrives today. It grows because countries like the United States and Germany have learned of Craig's mission. They have taken action. Children raise money with car washes and bake sales.

Craig has helped to build over 100 schools and centers for children in need. With his help and that of other interested people, Craig's group can complete its goal of fighting for children's rights—a very worthy cause.

Name _____

A. Reread the passage and answer the questions.

1. What are two details from paragraphs 1 and 4 that tell us the author's point of view?

2. How are the two details similar?

3. What is the author's point of view in the passage? Give evidence or reasons from the passage.

B. Work with a partner. Read the passage aloud. Pay attention to accuracy. Stop after one minute. Fill out the chart.

	Words Read	–	Number of Errors	=	Words Correct Score
First Read		–		=	
Second Read		–		=	

Name _____

Read the passage. Use the reread strategy to make sure you understand the text.

A True Declaration

13 Do you like to write? What if you wrote words that helped form
13 laws? This is what Thomas Jefferson did. He was the third president
25 of the United States, but he might be best known for writing the
38 Declaration of Independence.

41 A Strong Start

44 Jefferson was born on April 13, 1743. At the age of nine, he began
58 to study Latin, Greek, and French. He would one day be able to speak
72 five languages and read seven.

77 When he went to school he studied law. In 1769 he was part of
91 the House of Burgesses, which was the first group of chosen law-
103 makers in our nation. While there, he was not known as a great public
116 speaker. It is not only spoken words that can make a change, though.
129 Sometimes written words can be just as valuable. People liked the
140 way he wrote about information from meetings while he was there.
151 They knew that he could write very well.

159 When the people wanted to be free from Britain, they asked
170 Jefferson to help. They asked him to write about why people wanted
182 to rebel against Britain. So he wrote the Declaration of Independence.

Name _____

The Power of Words

The Declaration said that we are all created equal. It said that we all have certain rights, including “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.” This means that we should all have the right to freedom and happiness. Jefferson wrote these words when the people had a lot of criticism for British law. They wanted to be free from these laws. The people did not agree with the king. They wanted to protect their happiness. They wanted to be in charge of making their own laws.



The words that Jefferson wrote were the thoughts of many people. The people did not want to live under British rule. They felt that it was not fair. Instead, they wanted to have a life of liberty. They wanted a life where all people were equal, where people could search for happiness. This is why Jefferson wrote that if a government is not working, “it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it.” This meant that the people had the power. They could change how they were ruled.

Jefferson’s words gave a voice to the people. His words filled them with optimism. His words gave them strength, too. The people felt ready to say they were free of Britain. The day on which they made this official is a special day. Do you know what day it is? It is the Fourth of July.

Jefferson was in law and politics. Yet, he is also known as a great writer. The Declaration that he wrote helped in the development of our nation. It came when the people needed it most. Without his strong words, America might not have been able to find its freedom when it did.

Name _____

Read the passage. Use the visualize strategy to make sure you understand what you read.

How Vera Helped

“Excuse me. Are you going to drink that extra juice box?”

11 Brad turned around to see who was speaking to him. It was Vera.
24 Not again, Brad thought. “Um, I guess not. Here you go.” Brad
36 handed Vera the second apple juice his mother always packed. She put
48 it in the reusable shopping bag she was carrying.

57 “Thank you so much,” she said, smiling, then marched to the next
69 table.

70 Brad rotated back to his friends who sat with him at his lunch table,
84 rolled his eyes, and said, “She’s so weird, always walking from table
96 to table, asking people for their food. Do you think she eats it all?”
110 His friends laughed. They wondered the same thing.

118 Vera had been collecting food since the beginning of the school
129 year. The first time she had asked Brad for his leftover food had been
143 back in September. Brad had been in the middle of deciding whether
155 to eat his extra apple, when Vera had asked him if she could have it.
170 He had been so surprised by her request, that he had just handed it to
185 her. It was November now, and Brad was curious about what happened
197 to all those juice boxes and food he gave away.

207 “Do you guys want to find out where all that food goes?” Brad
220 asked his friends. They didn’t seem very interested. But it was a
232 Friday afternoon, and there wasn’t any homework to do. So he decided
244 to go alone. He’d follow Vera after school and see what happened.

Name _____

After the last bell rang, Brad said good-bye to his friends. Then he waited around until he saw Vera leave. Her shopping bag was bulging. The edges of boxes were pushing out against the bag. Brad didn't know where she lived, so he stuck close behind.

When Vera walked into her house, Brad said out loud, "Wow, maybe she does eat it all. Maybe her family needs the food." He felt unsure as he said it. Her family had a beautiful house with a trimmed yard. But he was truly confused. He didn't know what to make of what he was seeing.

Brad was getting ready to go home when Vera came out of her house. She was carrying a small brown cardboard box. In it, Brad recognized all of the extra food she had collected at lunch!

Vera walked down her block to a house that was four doors down, as Brad quietly followed. She knocked on the front door. A moment later, an elderly man opened the door. Brad couldn't hear what the older man said to Vera, but they both smiled. He took the box from her, went back inside, and closed the door.



As Vera turned onto the sidewalk to walk back to her house, Brad was in front of her. "Hi, Brad," Vera said, looking a little puzzled. "What are you doing here?"

Brad said, "I wanted to know what you did with all that food! You just collect what other kids don't want. That is kind of odd."

Vera explained that her family was friendly with some of the older people in her neighborhood, and she collected the food to bring to them. "Sometimes it is hard for them to leave their homes," she explained.

"Okay, that's not odd. That's a great idea," Brad said. "What can I do to help?"

Name _____

A. Reread the passage and answer the questions.

1. What kind of narrator does the story use? How do you know?

2. What details at the end of the story help you figure out the narrator's point of view?

3. What is the narrator's point of view?

B. Work with a partner. Read the passage aloud. Pay attention to expression. Stop after one minute. Fill out the chart.

	Words Read	–	Number of Errors	=	Words Correct Score
First Read		–		=	
Second Read		–		=	

Name _____

Read the passage. Use the reread strategy to help you understand the text.

Is Nuclear Energy Safe?

12 Atoms are the tiny things that make up everything in the universe.
26 At the center of an atom is the nucleus. The energy that holds the
35 nucleus together is called nuclear energy. Scientists have discovered
49 how to use that energy as power in our everyday lives. This energy is
cheap and clean. But there are dangers as well.

58 Going Nuclear

60 In the 1930s, physicists learned how to use the energy inside atoms.
72 They split the atom. This released a huge amount of energy. This was
85 exciting to many people. We get much of our power from oil and coal.
99 But people knew that oil and coal would not last forever. Nuclear
111 energy was much easier to come by. It was a great discovery!

123 Nuclear power plants have many benefits. They do not release
133 harmful chemicals into the air. The waste that is produced is in solid
146 form. This makes it easier to control. Also, there is a very small
159 amount of waste compared to other ways of making energy.

169 Nuclear power plants last much longer than coal plants. They can
180 sometimes last sixty years. Plus, nuclear power plants use only a tiny
192 amount of fuel to make energy. That means we could make nuclear
204 energy for many generations.

Name _____

Problems with Waste

Sadly, there are serious problems with nuclear power. The first problem is the waste that is produced. It is true, the waste is very small. Yet it is highly toxic. Physicians have discovered it can cause severe illness. It has to be contained. Sometimes though, the waste leaks out. It can get into drinking water. The waste can cause cancer in humans.

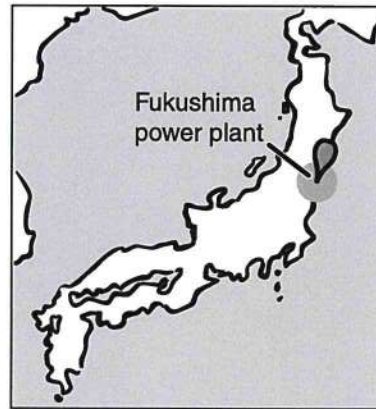
Japan Earthquake Disaster

It is true that accidents are rare. However, they can be very bad if they happen. In 2011, there was a large earthquake in Japan. As a result, one of the nuclear power plants was destroyed. The event is too recent to know all the effects it might have. Still, scientists believe that when the disaster is finally chronicled, it will prove to be one of the worst nuclear disasters ever.

Thousands of people had to be moved away from the plant. Waste leaked into the ocean. The cleanup will be long. It will take decades and it will be very costly.

Being Careful

There is no doubt that nuclear energy can be very good. It can give us energy. It can be safe and cheap. But it can also be dangerous. If we must use it, then we must use it carefully.



Five days after the earthquake, the U.S. government advised Americans within 50 miles of the plant to leave.

Name _____

A. Reread the passage and answer the questions.

1. According to paragraph 2, what is one way that nuclear energy is better than energy from coal and oil?

2. According to paragraphs 3 and 4, what is one of the benefits of nuclear power?

3. List two problems with nuclear energy that the author names in the text.

4. What is the author's point of view on nuclear energy?

B. Work with a partner. Read the passage aloud. Pay attention to rate. Stop after one minute. Fill out the chart.

	Words Read	–	Number of Errors	=	Words Correct Score
First Read		–		=	
Second Read		–		=	

Name _____

Read the passage. Use the make predictions strategy to help you make predictions about what will happen next.

Leonardo's Mechanical Knight

12 Leonardo scrambled out of bed early one clear spring day in 1464.
28 He was excited to get out to the barn where he was working on a new invention.

29 For months he had begged and pleaded with his father to get him a
43 suit of armor. On April 15—Leonardo's twelfth birthday—he got his
55 wish! He had set the armor up in the barn that day. The barn quickly
70 filled with Leonardo's notes and equipment as he worked and toiled
81 on his new invention: a mechanical knight.

88 High atop a rickety ladder, Leonardo was deep in concentration.
98 All his focus was on fixing the mechanical knight's arm, but it wasn't
111 easy work. No matter what he did, the knight's arm refused to lift!
124 Leonardo frowned and scowled at it.

130 "Leonardo!" yelled a voice. He jumped in surprise and shock as the
142 ladder teetered and shook under his feet.

149 "Oh no!" he exclaimed, losing his balance. He tumbled off the
160 ladder and into a pile of hay. The mechanical knight's arm lay broken
173 on the ground.

176 His good friend Albiera peered down at him. "Leonardo, are you
187 all right?"

189 "I'm fine," he said. He wasn't hurt, just upset that his mechanical
201 knight was broken.

204 Albiera glanced at the knight with the missing arm, the stacks of
216 notebooks, and the piles of papers. "What on earth are you doing in
229 here?" she asked.

232 "I was working on a new invention, but it's not going so well."

Name _____

Albiera knew the best way to cheer Leonardo up was to get him talking about his favorite subject: science. She picked up the mechanical knight's arm from the ground. "This looks interesting. Will you tell me about it?"

Sure enough, Leonardo's face lit up in a smile.

"This is my new invention. It's a mechanical knight," he said. "Watch what it can do!"

He cranked a handle behind the mechanical knight and stepped back to watch. Suddenly, the mechanical knight began to move on its own! It turned its head from side to side. It opened and closed its mouth. The attached arm clicked and ticked as it rose above the mechanical knight's head.



Albiera clapped her hands. "Bravo! That's amazing!"

"It's a simple system of pulleys and levers," he said in a humble voice.

"Don't be so modest. I've never seen anything like it before!"

"It's not finished yet. When it's completed, my mechanical knight will sit up, and maybe even walk, just as a human does."

"That would be quite a feat! But I don't understand what you can do with a mechanical knight. Why do we need machines like this at all?" asked Albiera.

Leonardo's face brightened with excitement. "There are so many reasons! Just think about it. A mechanical person will go where we can't go. A machine could explore the bottom of the sea or even the stars! There's so much we could learn from machines."

Albiera laughed. "You have such crazy ideas, Leonardo!"

"You never know," he said. "One day there might be a machine that helps people fly!"

Name _____

A. Reread the passage and answer the questions.

1. What pronouns are used in the first two paragraphs? Which character do these pronouns refer to?

2. What kind of narrator tells the story? Is the narrator part of the story?

3. In paragraph 7, how is Leonardo feeling? In paragraph 10, what does Albiera do to make Leonardo feel better?

4. What is the narrator's point of view about machines? Cite evidence from the text.

B. Work with a partner. Read the passage aloud. Pay attention to expression. Stop after one minute. Fill out the chart.

	Words Read	–	Number of Errors	=	Words Correct Score
First Read		–		=	
Second Read		–		=	

Name _____

As you read the poem, ask yourself what message the author wants you to understand.

Spelling Bee

5 Letters trip over each other
 as they race to leave my mouth.
 12 My tongue lines them up in order
 19 as they march to the microphone:
 25 A-S-
 26 I am almost alone on the stage.
 33 One last kid sags with his head
 40 in his hands. He is mouthing
 46 each letter as I say it:
 52 C-E-N-
 53 The hours I have spent on the floor
 61 of my room with books
 66 in my lap like wounded birds and cramping
 74 wrists now seem worth it:
 79 D-A-
 80 There are lists of words
 85 scribbled in my cursive and spelled
 91 out in my parents' print
 96 on top of dictionaries and thesauruses:
 102 N-C-Y
 103 There is applause and I smile.
 109 I shake the seventh-grade boy's hand
 115 and whisper, "I'll meet you back
 121 here next year for a rematch."
 127 A-S-C-E-N-D-A-N-C-Y



Name _____

A. Reread the passage and answer the questions.

1. What is this poem about?

2. What is the theme of this poem?

3. What in the poem lets you know what the theme is?

B. Work with a partner. Read the passage aloud. Pay attention to rate. Stop after one minute. Fill out the chart.

	Words Read	–	Number of Errors	=	Words Correct Score
First Read		–		=	
Second Read		–		=	

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Name _____

Read the passage. Use the ask and answer questions strategy to understand new information in the text.

Stars: Lights in the Night Sky

12 Long ago, people thought the stars were lights attached to a big
dome over Earth. The stars moved across the sky each night.
23 As a result, it looked as if the dome were rotating around Earth.
36 But now we know that this isn't true. Stars are actually huge,
48 glowing balls of plasma, or ionized atoms. Some stars look like
59 little pinpricks. Most are so far away that they can't be seen with the
73 naked eye.

75 What's a Star?

78 Stars are made of a mixture of plasmas like hydrogen. As you can
91 imagine, a star's core is extremely hot. When lots of pressure squeezes
103 the star's hot center, the hydrogen changes into helium. This process
114 produces lots of energy. As a result, the star shines a bright light
127 through space.

129 When you look up at the stars, you may think that most of them
143 produce a white light. Take another look. Stars generally lie on a
155 color spectrum. This range of colors goes from red to yellow to blue.
168 But what do the colors mean? Well, blue stars are much hotter. If you
182 compare the two stars Betelgeuse (BEE-tehl-jooz) and Rigel
190 (RIGH-jehl), you will see that Betelgeuse is reddish and Rigel is
201 bluish. Rigel has the higher core temperature.

Name _____

The Sun

The sun is the star at the center of our solar system. It looks bigger than other stars. That's because it's closer to Earth. The sun is actually an ordinary, middle-aged star. If you compare the actual size of the sun to the sizes of other stars, you'll realize that the sun is quite average. But the sun does a huge job for a star its size. It provides Earth with most of the energy it needs to support life. Without the sun, Earth would be just a barren rock floating in space! None of the life now on Earth's surface could exist.

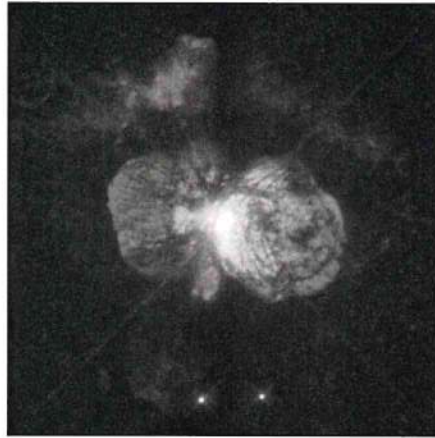
Turning Out the Lights

Stars don't last forever. After billions of years, a star will use up all its hydrogen. A small star simply stops shining. This will happen to the sun one day. Of course, this won't happen for billions of years.

A large star, however, ends in a big explosion. When a star does this, it is called a supernova (soo-per-NO-va).

After the explosion, all of the star's material gets crushed and stops shining. Especially large stars will then become large objects called black holes. In a black hole, the crushed material becomes so dense that it develops a gravitational (grav-i-TAY-shun-al) pull strong enough to keep even light from escaping. To this day, we still don't know what happens in a black hole.

The sun and other stars have fascinated astronomers for centuries. Stars light up the sky at night, and they make life on Earth possible. But they have a life of their own. Next time you're out on a clear night, look up at the stars. Which one do you think might be the next supernova?



NASA, ESA, and the Hubble SM4 ERO Team

After a large star goes supernova, it may become a black hole.

Name _____

A. Reread the passage and answer the questions.

1. Reread paragraph 2. What causes a lot of energy to be produced in a star's core?

2. What effect does this cause have on a star?

3. Under the heading "Turning Out the Lights," what is one example of a cause and an effect? Use text evidence to support your answer.

B. Work with a partner. Read the passage aloud. Pay attention to accuracy. Stop after one minute. Fill out the chart.

	Words Read	–	Number of Errors	=	Words Correct Score
First Read		–		=	
Second Read		–		=	

Name _____

Read the passage. Use the visualize strategy to help you understand the fantasy story.

The Oak Tree and the Tiny Bird

14 Far out in the country, in the middle of a grassy field, there lived
 28 a beautiful oak tree. The oak tree loved her home, there in the field.
 41 She loved the feel of squirrels jumping from limb to limb. She loved
 52 watching the sun rise every morning and dip below the horizon
 64 each night. She liked the feeling of wind in her branches. During
 74 rainstorms, she enjoyed feeling the water run down her trunk.

86 One morning, the tree heard a tiny bird chirping sadly in her
 97 branches. The tree looked and saw a baby bluebird there, trembling.
 111 He was alone in a nest of twigs and feathers. The baby bird was
 shaking with fright.

114 “What is the matter, little bird?” asked the tree.

123 The tiny bird jumped. He looked surprised, startled by the tree’s
 134 question. The bird choked back a few tears before saying, “It’s my
 146 mother. She left the nest two nights ago to go get me some food, and
 161 she still hasn’t come back.”

166 The tree had seen this happen before. Sometimes mama birds leave
 177 their nest to get food and run into danger. And sometimes, they stay
 190 away longer than they planned.

195 “Well, your mother may be gone, but you still have me,” said the
 208 tree. “First things first. Let’s get some food in that belly.”

219 The oak tree saw some squirrels scrounging around on the ground.
 230 They were running all over, picking up food.

238 “You there, squirrel,” whispered the tree. “Will you share some of
 249 your nuts and berries with this good little bluebird?”

Name _____

“Sure!” said the squirrel. He dashed into his home in the tree. He reappeared just as fast with his paws full of food. The squirrel ran again to the bird’s nest and tossed in nuts and berries. The tiny bird ate everything up and felt much better.

“You must be thirsty,” said the tree. The tree carefully shook her limbs. She cautiously bent her branches, and morning dew from her leaves trickled down to the bird’s open mouth.

With the help of the squirrels and occasionally other animals, the oak tree kept the tiny bird fed and watered. Every once in a while, an owl helped out. Sometimes a rainstorm passed over the grassy field, and the tree would gently put her limbs around the tiny bird to protect him from the wind and rain.

This went on for weeks. Slowly but surely, the tiny bird began to grow.

One day, the tree went to check on the tiny bluebird, but the bird was not in his nest. The tree searched all over her limbs and trunk, and even the ground, but she could not see the tiny bird anywhere. “What could have happened?” thought the tree. Just then, with a flutter of wings, the bluebird, which the tree had loved and cared for all these weeks, flew and landed among the branches. He had a mouthful of nice, juicy worms.

“Why, you’re all grown up,” exclaimed the tree. “And you can fly!”

“All thanks to you,” replied the not-so-tiny bluebird with a smile.



Name _____

A. Reread the passage and answer the questions.

1. What two pronouns are used in the first paragraph? Which character do the pronouns refer to?

2. Does the narrator take part in the events of the story? Explain. What point of view is the story told from?

3. What is the narrator's point of view about animals and nature? Give evidence or details from the story.

B. Work with a partner. Read the passage aloud. Pay attention to expression. Stop after one minute. Fill out the chart.

	Words Read	–	Number of Errors	=	Words Correct Score
First Read		–		=	
Second Read		–		=	

Name _____

Read the passage. Use the visualize strategy to help you understand the story.

The Stray Dog

11 Kwan was in his neighborhood, walking home from the bus stop,
24 when a medium-sized dog came running up to him. It was a shaggy
38 white dog with orange spots and floppy ears and looked as if it didn't
50 belong to anybody. Kwan bent down for a closer look. He didn't
61 recognize the animal from any of the families in the neighborhood.
77 The dog was a big fluffy ball of dirt and had no tags, so there was
90 little doubt. The dog was a stray. Kwan wondered what he should do.

103 Kwan walked the rest of the way to his house, the dog following
116 behind him. When Kwan reached his front door, he picked up the dog
127 and walked inside. The dog wagged his tail frantically with pleasure
141 at being held. He felt like a huge sack of marbles in Kwan's arms
153 as Kwan carried him into the kitchen. His father was there pouring
168 orange juice into a glass. He took one look at Kwan and the dog and
nearly dropped the carton of juice.

174 "You can't keep it, Kwan," his father said. "I've already explained
185 to you that we don't have the time or space for a dog."

198 "I know, Dad," said Kwan, putting the dog down on the floor. "But
211 he's definitely a stray, and I really want to help him." The dog ran
225 over to the kitchen door where Kwan's dad kept a pair of running
238 shoes. He took both shoes in his mouth and ran back over to Kwan
252 and plopped the shoes down in front of him. The dog sat there with
266 his tongue hanging out, wagging his tail. Just then, Kwan's mom
277 walked in.

Name _____

“I guess he likes shoes,” she said, smiling. “Why don’t you take him to Uncle Bae’s and see if he wants the dog?” She looked at Kwan pointedly and said, “He gets so few visitors.”

“Okay, okay. I’ll go see Uncle Bae,” said Kwan. He grabbed an old belt from the closet to use for a leash and walked out the door.

Uncle Bae was Kwan’s least favorite relative, mainly because he was a real grump. He was about as warm as a block of ice. As a young man, Uncle Bae had fought in the army and had his vision severely damaged so that now he could barely see.

“Come in!” his uncle called when Kwan rang the bell. Kwan walked into the living room with the dog, saying, “Hi, Uncle Bae. It’s me, Kwan.” His uncle was sitting in an easy chair.



“This stray dog followed me home this afternoon and Mom and Dad said I couldn’t keep it,” Kwan announced. “We thought you might like to keep him.”

“What am I going to do with a dog?” said Uncle Bae angrily. “Get him away. But first, go get my shoes. They’re in my bedroom.”

Kwan smiled knowingly at the dog. He walked the dog into Uncle Bae’s bedroom and brought him over to a pair of loafers. The dog grabbed the shoes in his mouth and ran back into the living room. He plopped the loafers right in Uncle Bae’s lap. Uncle Bae’s face lit up like the sun. It was the first time in a long time that Kwan saw his Uncle Bae smile. Uncle Bae looked at Kwan and said, “What should I name him?”

Name _____

A. Reread the passage and answer the questions.**1. What is the main problem Kwan faces in the story?**

2. What is Kwan's mother's suggestion?

3. What is Uncle Bae's first reaction to the dog?

4. What is the solution to Kwan's problem?

B. Work with a partner. Read the passage aloud. Pay attention to expression. Stop after one minute. Fill out the chart.

	Words Read	–	Number of Errors	=	Words Correct Score
First Read		–		=	
Second Read		–		=	

Name _____

Read the passage. Use the make predictions strategy to predict what will happen later on in the text.

The Sheep in the Wilderness

13 For years our herd of sheep was ruled by a cruel shepherd. At
26 last we couldn't stand it any longer. Every night we stayed up late
38 planning our escape. Finally we made our move. Late one night, our
50 herd quietly left the pasture while the shepherd slept. *We are finally
free!* I thought. Then the herd escaped into the dark forest.

61 Life was hard when we lived with the shepherd, but it was even
74 harder on our own. Trouble came when we needed to find a place to
88 graze. The herd came to a fork in the path. "There's a wide, green
102 pasture that way," a gray sheep said, and pointed to the path on the
116 right. "The shepherd once took us there to graze. The grass was fresh
129 and sweet. There was plenty for everyone."

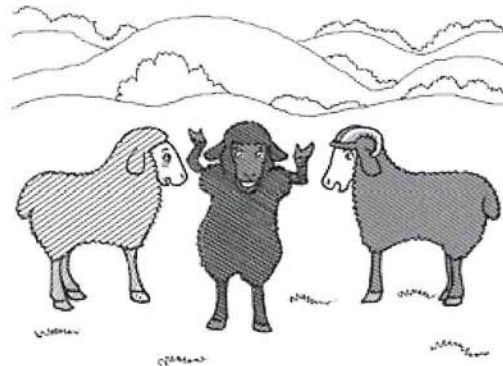
136 "We cannot graze in that pasture!" a brown sheep said. "If the
148 shepherd took you to that pasture, then he knows where it is. We
161 should find a pasture that he doesn't know about." He pointed to the
174 other path, which led up a mountain. "There aren't many trees on this
187 mountain. There must be a pasture there. We should look for a pasture
200 the shepherd doesn't use."

Name _____

Half of the sheep took the side of the gray sheep, and half of the sheep took the side of the brown sheep. The herd argued and argued, but no one could decide where to graze. We all argued for so long that we got tired and fell asleep.

But I couldn't stay asleep. I thought about our argument. *How can we all share our ideas and still make decisions?* I thought. What we needed was a leader. A leader could hear each sheep's ideas and decide what to do. I would tell the herd in the morning.

When I woke up, the sheep had already taken up where they had left off. The argument from last night continued. I knew it would never end. So I shouted, "Quiet, everyone!" Everyone was quiet. They all looked at me. I said, "We cannot argue about every decision.



We should choose one sheep to be our leader. Our leader should be a sheep we trust, someone who will listen to our ideas. We may not like all of our leader's decisions, but our voices will be heard. And if we choose a new leader each month, the herd can try new ideas."

The sheep liked my idea. We voted using leaves. The sheep put a brown leaf into a pile if they wanted the brown sheep to lead. They put a green leaf into a pile if they wanted the gray sheep to lead. And they put a red leaf into a pile if they wanted me to lead. The sheep voted. Then we counted the leaves. I had the most votes! The sheep wanted me to lead!

Name _____

A. Reread the passage and answer the questions.

1. What kind of narrator tells the story? How do you know?

2. Is the narrator part of the story? What do we learn about the narrator in the first paragraph?

3. How would the story be different if it were told from another point of view?

B. Work with a partner. Read the passage aloud. Pay attention to phrasing and expression. Stop after one minute. Fill out the chart.

	Words Read	–	Number of Errors	=	Words Correct Score
First Read		–		=	
Second Read		–		=	

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Read the passage. Use the visualize strategy to help you understand the story.

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38 white dog with orange spots and floppy ears and looked as if it didn't
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61 recognize the animal from any of the families in the neighborhood.
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90 little doubt. The dog was a stray. Kwan wondered what he should do.

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116 behind him. When Kwan reached his front door, he picked up the dog
127 and walked inside. The dog wagged his tail frantically with pleasure
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168 orange juice into a glass. He took one look at Kwan and the dog and
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3. What is Uncle Bae's first reaction to the dog?

4. What is the solution to Kwan's problem?

B. Work with a partner. Read the passage aloud. Pay attention to expression. Stop after one minute. Fill out the chart.

	Words Read	–	Number of Errors	=	Words Correct Score
First Read		–		=	
Second Read		–		=	

Name _____

Read the passage. Use the ask and answer questions strategy to understand difficult parts of the text.

We the People

11 Ms. Quibble stood by the chalkboard in front of her fourth-grade
12 class. “Who can tell me why the American colonies wanted to
22 separate from England and become their own country?”

30 The class was quiet. Some students scribbled in their notebooks
40 or shuffled their feet. Finally, a single hand shot up. Ms. Quibble
52 adjusted her spectacles. “Yes, Kwan?”

57 “People wanted to separate because they wanted liberty,”
65 Kwan said. “They felt that they didn’t have a voice in the British
78 government.”

79 “Very good!” Ms. Quibble said. “What was the name of the
90 document that declared the colonies’ freedom?”

96 Kwan was the only volunteer. “It was the Declaration of
106 Independence,” she said.

109 “Kwan, I can tell you will ace this test.” Ms. Quibble sounded
121 impressed. “I *highly* suggest that everyone else study during lunch.”

131 Sam Jones ran to catch up with Kwan after class. “You sure know a
145 lot about history,” he said.

150 “That’s because I’m studying for my naturalization exam. I’ve been
160 memorizing a lot about America,” she said.

167 “Your *what* exam?” Sam asked.

172 “It’s a test to become an American citizen,” Kwan said. “My
183 parents have been studying with me for months. We are so excited for
196 the chance to become citizens!”

Name _____

The Document that Launched a Country

Sam and Kwan sat together at lunch. They inspected a copy of the Constitution that was printed in their textbooks. Kwan explained that the Constitution sets the rules for the government. It also explains the three branches of government. The legislative branch makes laws. The executive branch makes sure laws are followed. The judicial branch makes sense of the laws.

“All of the branches have checks and balances on each other,” Kwan said. “This is so no one branch has complete power.”

Rights for All People

“I’m still not sure why a piece of paper from hundreds of years ago is still so important,” Sam said.

“Do you know the first three words of the Constitution, Sam?”

“We the people...”

“Right! The government of the United States is supposed to speak for all the people in every community. But there are times when the government has needed to make a change or addition to the Constitution. We call these changes *amendments*. The Bill of Rights is made up of the first ten amendments to the Constitution. Do you know what the Bill of Rights is?”

“I think it gives Americans freedoms, like the freedoms of speech and religion,” Sam said.

“Exactly! So, the Bill of Rights makes sure everyone is free.”

Sam and Kwan placed their trays on the cafeteria counter. “Good luck on the test today, Sam. I think you’re going to do great,” Kwan said and winked.



Tetra Images/Corbis

To amend the Constitution, both houses of Congress or three-fourths of the states must approve.

Name _____

A. Reread the passage and answer the questions.

1. What is the cause in the following sentence from the passage?

People wanted to separate because they wanted liberty.

2. What is the effect in the following sentence from the passage?

People wanted to separate because they wanted liberty.

3. In paragraphs 8–10, what is the cause of the situation Kwan describes?

What is the effect?

B. Work with a partner. Read the passage aloud. Pay attention to phrasing and rate. Stop after one minute. Fill out the chart.

	Words Read	–	Number of Errors	=	Words Correct Score
First Read		–		=	
Second Read		–		=	